

I chose to interview my mother to learn a little more about her movie habits. She said that she does not watch many movies now-a-days, but without a doubt her most memorable film was *Star Wars, Episode IV: A New Hope (1977)*. Along with the rest of the original trilogy, she said that it was really a defining experience of her childhood. "I remember going to the theatres after school with mom and dad to watch it when it was released – I feel like I came out of the theatre a different person." She said that the special effects at the time were mind-blowing and it really opened up her imagination, especially because she didn't watch much television. She fell in love with everything about the universe and has watched every *Star Wars* film since. Expecting some negativity, I asked if watching the originals in theatre affected her opinion on the newer sequels. Instead, she said that they help her relive some of the nostalgia back then and that while she does have some quarrels, she feels like the spirit of *Star Wars* is there. She doesn't mind at all.

There aren't many other personal reasons why she liked it so much, but the imagination aspect had a really large impact on her. Mom said that afterwards she started reading more books and watching more shows, and that sci-fi and fantasy quickly became her two favorite genres. This influenced the rest of her favorites list, like *Lord of the Rings*, which she got to see realized as a two decades later

I really do not think that any movie has made a significant personal impact on my life, but there is definitely a film that stands out in my mind. Out of all of the movies I have watched, the only one that I remember exactly when, with who, and how I felt about was *Arrival* (2016) with Amy Adams and Jeremy Renner. I watched it with a close friend just two summers ago (2017) around eight in the evening in the Benedum Hall basement. I am not partial the sci-fi genre, but everything about the film was absolutely perfect – the pacing was steady, the intrigue was phenomenal, the characters and motives were compelling, the focus was concentrated, and the plot was impactful. It is my number one film recommendation.

Upon rewatching *A New Hope* myself, I can't really say that I appreciate it as much as mom. I love *Star Wars*, but I just didn't have as much to gain from it as she did. I appreciate the story, and the original trilogy are my favorite of the (soon to be) 2 other trilogies by far. However, again, the special effects are no longer special after 41 years (though I had seen the movie before this rewatch), and I guess I'm what you would call jaded compared to my mom. By this I mean the universal effect that technology has had on differing generations. I have already consumed so much other media in books, movies, shows, poems, art, games, etc... that it's significantly harder for something to standout. To me, Episode IV is just one of the many great films I've seen – even the entire *Star Wars* saga is rivalled near annually in terms of new releases. For me, *Arrival* is the outlier that stands on top like Episode IV was to my mom.

"Some of it must be nostalgia, but nothing has been nearly as good as those early *Star Wars* movies." This probably speaks to our viewing habits. I would have thought that my mom would watch a variety of genres, but she really sticks to fantasy since she was so enamored with *Star Wars*. This limits her pool, and it's really hard to dethrone a long-time favorite film, especially since she watches so few films. On the other hand, I like pretty much every genre. It comes down to the individual film for me since I tend to pay more attention to the cinematography and formal elements of the film than becoming invested in the movie universe. If I can, I actually read the full plot of most movies I watch so that I can pay attention to other things in the film and get more out of a first watch. Is that deadly sin in movie watching? *Arrival* and *A New Hope* are both sci-fi films, but I think that *Arrival* was an **objectively** better film. The latter was a pioneer and landmark movie, but there are always better things to come.