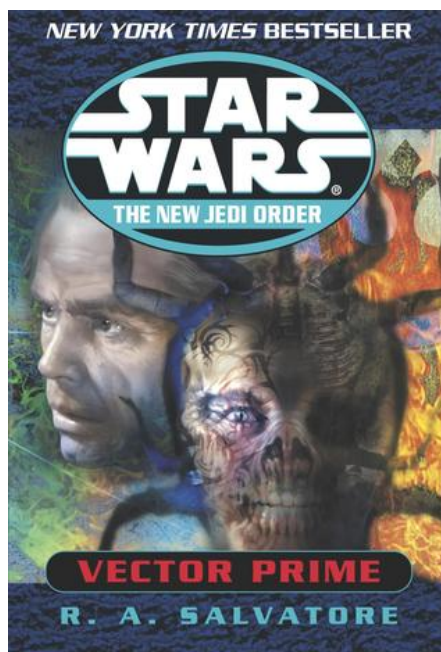




Vector Prime

R.A. Salvatore

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Twenty-one years have passed since the heroes of the Rebel Alliance destroyed the Death Star, breaking the power of the Emperor. Since then, the New Republic has valiantly struggled to maintain peace and prosperity among the peoples of the galaxy. But unrest has begun to spread and threatens to destroy the Republic's tenuous reign.

Into this volatile atmosphere comes Nom Anor, a charismatic firebrand who heats passions to the boiling point, sowing seeds of dissent for his own dark motives. And as the Jedi and the Republic focus on internal struggles, a new threat surfaces from beyond the farthest reaches of the Outer Rim--an enemy bearing weapons and technology unlike anything New Republic scientists have ever seen.

Suddenly, Luke Skywalker; his wife, Mara; Han Solo; Leia Organa Solo; and Chewbacca--along with the Solo children--are thrust again into battle, to defend the freedom so many have fought and died for. But this time, the power of the Force itself may not be enough . . .

Vector Prime Details

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From Reader Review Vector Prime for online ebook

Virginia Lacefield says

I loved RA Salvatore's Dark Elf series and I think he's a good fantasy writer, but this book didn't resonate well with me. I don't think he had a good grasp of the characters - they all seemed a little off throughout the novel. The writing felt very forced, especially during the emotional parts, which lacked subtlety and nuance. Overall, this was a disappointing and depressing novel that did not make me want to read more of the New Jedi Order series.

Grace says

Killed. Chewbacca. I am not okay with this.

Is that a shallow reason to give the book a single star? Perhaps, but it was the tipping point for me. With full understanding that the characters we love cannot live forever in an extended universe, the method of Chewie's demise remains a sore point for me; not merely the fact that it happened.

Aubrey says

This was both my first Star Wars book and my first Salvatore book. I made a deal with my husband, who has read and loved MANY a Star Wars book, that if I read Vector Prime that he would read The Hunger Games. So, game on!

With that said, I was intrigued because I thoroughly enjoyed the Star Wars series and Vector Prime takes place after the films end and the main characters are married and have kids. I was surprised at how much I enjoyed this book but I also love the characters anyway. It helped that Salvatore kept the characters true to themselves and the storyline true to a Star Wars storyline. I very much enjoyed Salvatore's writing and revisiting some of the greatest characters around. (view spoiler)

Ron says

I marked this book as fantasy because there's not much science in Salvatore's fiction. He used shield ships (SW regulars will know what they are) to heat a ice-crustated water planet, supposedly increasing evaporation so much that the water cools and freezes in HOURS!

The galactic map is nice, but he talks about the "edge" and the entry point of the galaxy as if it has a wall around it, instead of stars and matter--for that matter--petering off to nothingness.

The cover art was repulsive. Yeah, I know the head bad guy was ugly, but I wouldn't buy a book with art like that on it. (No, I didn't buy this copy; it was borrowed and will be returned.)

Benjamin Thomas says

I read over 100 novels every year, in many different genres. I have read a lot of science-fiction and about 11 of the Star Wars novels. Just so you'll know where I'm coming from, I admit to a certain bias for RA Salvatore. I regard his fantasy works as among the best of contemporary authors. Having said that, I was thrilled when I first learned he would pen a volume of the SW universe. Finally I would get to read high quality SW adventure the way it was meant to be (Timothy Zahn also achieves this in his SW novels).

I was not disappointed. Salvatore remains true to his strengths, especially when it comes to action sequences. The novel is easy to read, with a plausible, yet exciting plot. The characters are in-line with the movies and the story fits in well with the extensive background already created with all of the other SW novels. Salvatore is not afraid to test the boundaries of the SW conventions either, especially when it comes to the safety of the major characters. Frankly, before this novel, most of the SW stories had gotten a little too predictable and I started to lose interest. Other authors have let themselves be managed by the characters but Salvatore makes it clear that the story is primary.

In short, a great addition to the SW line. I know George Lucas is happy or he wouldn't have picked Salvatore to do the novelization of Episode II.

Markus says

The book itself was quite okay, but unfortunately it did nothing to recover my lost motivation.

Disney, what have you done?

The Mistah says

I read quite a few SW books when I was a teenager - then they got boring and routine and were all about the same thing: some bad guy has a superweapon and the gang has to save the universe, yada yada yada.

So, I was in a bookstore looking for something to read on vacation and I saw a Star Wars book called Exile and thought, "well, golly! I haven't read one of those in over ten years - this will be fun!" Well, that book was fourth in a series - and there was a whole other series that came before.

This book is the first in that series, the New Jedi Order. It has a great story line and this novel really kicks it off well. I ended up reading one of these puppies every five days or so until I finally caught back up to the Legacy of the Force series (and am waiting for that next one at the end of February). I was having an incredibly difficult time with work (finding a new job, that is) and STRESS was the word of the day in our house - so these books were an absolutely incredible diversion.

I doubt I'll review the others in this series, so I'll say this: if you like Star Wars, you'll like these books. They're fun. Enjoy.

Michael Minutillo says

For fans of the original Star Wars films this is a good solid story with adventure and excitement galore. Set 25 years after the events of the original A New Hope film, the galaxy comes under threat from an invading force of frightening warriors. And who should stumble across this invading force? Han Solo with his ever-present sidekick, Chewie. Han's wife Leia, their jedi-trained kids Jacen, Jaina and Anakin (it's been 25 years after all). Luke and his wife Mara, whose rapidly failing health will play a part in the story to come. C-3PO and R2-D2 are present of course and even Lando makes an appearance or two.

A lot of the action takes place in the form of space battles (although there are one or two Lightsaber-style fights the enemies are not lightsaber wielders). The new threat to the galaxy, the extra-galactic Yuuzhan Vong, are scary, evil and quite formidable. They quickly raise the ante by, among other things, killing a major character from the films (and no, not just some random Ewok, someone important). The effect is, as intended, to make the reader treat the threat as being quite credible and ensure that you feel that no-one is safe in the books to come.

Speaking of which, this book is the start of a nineteen book cycle (The New Jedi Order). This put the story in danger of being left way too open ended but the author manages to make this book entirely self-contained while hinting that the story is far from over.

I do have a few gripes about the book that took me out of it a few times (how do you land on a planet without realizing that the moon is going to do 2 orbits in the next few hours and then collide with the surface) but I'm happy to cast those aside and treat this as the Space Fantasy that it is.

For people that haven't read any of the Star Wars Expanded Universe novels this is a reasonable place to jump on board. Many events of the last 25 years are referred to and many characters are handled comfortably that may be entirely new to you but it's still good Star Wars-y fun :)

Crystal Starr Light says

"I had built this bubble around us...Nothing could hurt us—could really hurt us."

Twenty-five years have past since Luke Skywalker went from a farm boy on Tatooine to destroyer of the Death Star. Han and Leia are married with three teenagers, Jaina, Jacen, and Anakin. Luke has married once-enemy, Mara Jade. But things are never easy for our heroes. Mara is inflicted with a strange illness. And on a far away scientific station on Belkadan, Danni Quee receives the first hint of a menace about to invade the galaxy.

NOTE: Based on audiobook and novel.

The year is 1999. *The Phantom Menace* is in theaters, the first Star Wars movie in over fifteen years. Del Rey has acquired the license for Star Wars novels. And The Powers That Be knew that there had to be changes. Readers complained about the lack of a cohesive storyline, about the invulnerability of our major characters, about the lack of a decent threat. And thus, "Vector Prime" was born.

For me, "Vector Prime" isn't much different than the *Battlestar Galactica* miniseries. The stories both tell are very similar: the impending doom of a nation/galaxy. Neither know what is about to come, both are pretty contented (even if peace is constantly just barely out of reach for the New Republic), and both have enemies they don't know/understand.

The Yuuzhan Vong threat was wonderfully executed. Salvatore nicely introduces (but not TOO much) this strange and foreign culture and begins laying the foundation for novels to come. Yammosks. Dovin basals. Ooglith masquers. The blankness in the Force (though exacty what this means still remains a mystery to me). I personally like the new "darker" edge, and I like the movement back to an epic war and story. Many of the Bantam novels were one shots or trilogies; there was little overall story and enemies appeared suddenly in one novel, only to be killed off or arrested by the end. Furthermore, many of these enemies (such as Admiral Daala) lacked the punch to make them ominous villains. What villains could be more scary than ones you don't know and ones who are invulnerable to your greatest asset?

Salvatore did a fair job with the recurring characters. Han, Luke, Leia, and Mara were well done for the most part, and these aren't the easiest characters to recreate (trust me, I've read loads of poor attempts). Many could criticize Han for his actions, but given what happens in the course of the novel (no spoilers, although it has been 11+ years so you probably know already), I thought it was believable. A real, major character dies in the novel, and his death was well done and poignant. I even liked how Salvatore brought Jacen out of the "goofy, animal dork" that the Young Jedi Knight novels painted him as.

But that doesn't mean the characters were perfect. I honestly groaned when I read about "battle hardened" Jaina at the ripe old age of 16. Really? I get she's been through those YJK adventures, but to go so far and say she's battle-hardened and a superbly wonderful pilot able to outbeat Kyp Durron in a pointless scene at Lando's Folly is just over-the-top. Anakin and Jacen are slightly annoying in the same regards. I liked how they bickered about the Force and what it means, as that does feel like something teenagers would do, but please, stop treating the kids like they are 20-year olds.

The worst was Danni Quee. I can't imagine a then-18 year-old being allowed on such an uber special mission, nor can I imagine a now-21 year-old being an "inspiration" for the entire team. Unless she is the Littlest Cancer Patient. Then she can be an inspiration.

There are some nice action scenes in the novels, particularly the one between Mara and Corr (Mara gets the first YV kill! WOOHOO!). I also like the introduction of the Battle Meld. But the way that the Helska Yammosk is dealt with is more goofy science (melting ice can make a planet EXPLODE??? Gosh, maybe I was a bit harsh on my Rule of Two review!). Not to mention, probably because I listened most recently to an audiobook, not everything goes from A to B to C. For example, Sernpidal's moon is about to impact, so Han takes off only to return in the next section. Talk about Huh? factor!

If you haven't been following the Star Wars novels, this is an excellent place to start. There is little backstory you need that isn't already given. Even with goofy science, some extreme characters, a skippity-do-da plot and a highly controversial character death (that I think was well-done and appropriate, but not everyone will agree with me), this is a decent novel, a nice entrance to the rest of the series, but also a decent "standalone" should you decide you just don't care for the rest of the series.

Jeff says

Vector Prime was a great read. I am not the biggest fan of R.A. Salvatore, but in this book, I found that his writing style is not quite the same as his other books. He does some things that are unexpected, but not always unwelcome. However, after a while, you start to get the feel for what the characters are going to do just based on the way that Salvatore writes them.

There are some interesting insights into the various characters in this book, particularly Han and Anakin. The story sets up The New Jedi Order series well, and I am anxious to keep reading.

Mike says

Surprisingly, I didn't hate "Vector Prime" by R.A. Salvatore as much as I thought I would. I would never recommend it to anyone, of course. And it's pretty bad.

"Vector Prime" is the first book of the "New Jedi Order" series. It covers the war with the Yuuzhan Vong, a race of extra-galactic ritually self-mutilating aliens with organic technology and an immunity to the Force. And "Vector Prime" will be the LAST book I'll be reading of this series.

Why? It's not very good. Not at all. Sure, it's better than trash like "Darksaber." But almost anything would be.

Only because I've been catching a lot of trains and buses lately did I finish this book. I needed something to read that also fit in my back pocket. And since I got "Vector Prime" for free during my local Borders' death throes sale (yet, oddly, I still want my money back...), it was easier to read this book than buy something new.

As I've mentioned elsewhere, the Yuuzhan Vong were a bad, BAD idea. And the war with them is not only depressing and icky, but also boring as hell. If you're bound and determined to read all 19 of the books in this series, you're a better Star Wars fan than I am. Even I, who has not much resembling a social life, can find better things to do.

If the Yuuzhan Vong had been defeated in just this book...instead of lasting through 18 others...then maybe...and I stress maybe...it might have been an okay decision for the Star Wars Universe. Even a trilogy might have been okay.

But I digress. Let's talk about "Vector Prime." I'll tell you why it's not a good book.

The first half of the book is just plain dull. It's a long struggle just to get from one page to the next. The characters we care about aren't doing much of interest. The bad guys are icky and strange in a not too interesting way. The innocent bystanders are just silly. The battle scenes are written poorly and are hard to picture in one's mind. And way too much time is taken with Lando's asteroid run thingy. Yes, the asteroid belt run does set up a later portion of the book, but there's set-up and there's wasting pages. This is the latter.

Salvatore is a master at undermining any kind of suspense. In writing, the basic rule is SHOW, not TELL. But Salvatore, instead of leaving us in suspense, basically says in the first few pages...these guys are the Yuuzhan Vong and they're going to try to take over the galaxy--watch out, everybody! It's a total failure of Writing 101. A more talented writer would have done a slow reveal of the Vong and their intentions. If we learn what's going on along with the main characters, not only do we feel as smart as they are (smarter in some cases), but we as the reader are more like to suspend our disbelief that these freaky BDSM aliens could really do some damage to the Star Wars Universe.

Let's look at page 200, also known as the end of chapter 13. Salvatore writes: "The Millennium Falcon took off an hour later, for a one-day trip that would prove to be the most harrowing journey of Han Solo's life." That's not just foreshadowing, that's the narrator reminding you that you're reading a book and patting himself on the back smugly for the gut-wrenching he's about to put you through.

And, yes, this is the book where they kill Chewbacca. I understand why they did it. And I don't blame

Salvatore. I doubt he had any part in the decision to kill the big Wookiee. They killed Chewbacca to make a point that no one in the Star Wars Universe is safe. They wanted to up the ante, as it were. And they wanted to sell books. I say all their reasons are crass ones, some are marketing driven (and we all know what geniuses marketing people are...yup, that's sarcasm) and some people probably just wanted to "shake things up."

Chewbacca does die a hero's death. He saves Anakin Solo, who goes on to give his life in a noble death somewhere down the line to fight the Vong in one of these NJO books I won't be reading. Then Anakin's death may be part of the reason his older brother becomes a Sith Lord in the Legacy of the force series of books...and so on and so forth.

And the readers, like Han Solo, are supposed to hate the Vong for their evil, destructive ways because they killed Chewbacca. The other millions of people who died at the Vong's hands are somewhat incidental, it seems.

But after the halfway point of the book, things begin to get interesting. There's the moon crashing into Sernpidal. There's Chewbacca's death and the narrow escape from Sernpidal. There's Luke and Mara fighting Yomin Carr on Belkadan. There's the standoff at Dubrillion with the Vong. Then there's the disastrous raid on the ice planet the Vong are using for a base. The Vong and their Yammosk (war coordinator / giant tentacle creature) kick the crap out of the New Republic forces.

They spend so much time and energy on that first battle that the second battle--the last battle of the book--where they use basic science (Jedis as Mr. Wizard) and moxie to destroy the ice planet Vong base seems tacked on to provide some kind of "happy" ending. Reminds me of the Doolittle raid ending of the lousy "Pearl Harbor" movie. The whole second battle takes less than 20 pages and it's supposed to be the climax of the whole novel. Yet it reads like a hasty rewrite, perhaps because the powers that be behind the Star Wars books don't want to alienate their audience with anything like an unhappy ending.

Anyway, you get the point. If you're determined to read this book and the whole NJO series, don't say I didn't warn you.

Wade Schacht says

Engrossing novel with new aspects not included in the canon Star Wars Series.

Ernest Junius says

The first English-language book I read when I was in highschool. My fascination for Star Wars stretched so far even beyond the galaxy far, far away brought me to this book. I trudged through its pages, getting to know obscure words that filled every page of this book. I remembered there was one sentence in this book which needed me to open my dictionary for thirteen times. OK, that was my effort. However, I'm quite disappointed with the book, after my laborious effort, I thought the book just getting more and more Trekkie. I think the creature called Yuuzhan Vong is too Trekkie. They looked like Klingons! Story-wise, also

standard, still everybody would depend on Luke. But aside all of that I still enjoyed reading it (what else would keeping me flipping through 360pages full of wicked words of sci-fi otherwise?). But I just think Star Wars does better in graphic novels and movies compared to sci-fi novels to me.

Pam (The Girl Who Cried Books) says

If you're a Star Wars fan like I am, then this book is a definite must-read for you! There were times that I find the story slow and/or dragging but it was still a great read.

It was well-written and was as detailed as can be. I didn't actually know about the series until a very good friend (who is also a Star Wars geek) recommended it to me.

In conclusion, I loved it and I will definitely continue reading the series :)

Sara says

[the major character death was pretty damn pointless. It opened the gate to senseless killing off of characters near and dear to us. I understand the giving up a life for another life, (hide spoiler)]

SC2083 says

The book was alright until a beloved Star Wars character was killed off. Its not so much that the character was killed off that bothers me it is the way. The death was so ... not very well written and lame. The character could have had a better send off. This for me ruined the book and it was hard to finish after. I haven't read a Star Wars book since reading this book when it first came out in hardcover.

UPDATE 1/9/16 I just saw episode VII... how the hell is Chewbacca in this movie and when did Han and Leia have a son named Ben? I've done some digging and can't find a book right before Episode VII chronologically that would explain these 2 characters existing in episode VII.... help?!

Robert Wright says

Media tie-ins are always going to be a mixed bag.

Very few in the Star Wars series really rose above average, and they quickly became a matter of diminishing returns for the time and money invested.

Vector Prime is the point where it just dove off a cliff for me.

Salvatore is a capable writer, and though I don't follow his other work, people do seem to look favorably on it.

I think the problem here lies with the editors and the course they chose for the overall ongoing storyline of

the series. It's a vision that just doesn't resonate with me.

Now that there are so many other ways to get my Star Wars "fix," I can pass these by. Unless you're one of those who thinks that bad Star Wars is better than no Star Wars, I'd recommend you do the same.

Scott Rhee says

R.A. Salvatore, best known for his work in the fantasy genre and the popular "Dungeons & Dragons RPG," joined the Star Wars Expanded Universe team in 1999 with his novel "Vector Prime", which set the tone and direction for an entirely new and different series within the SWEU called the New Jedi Order.

Darker, more violent, and more mature, "Vector Prime" was a much-needed shot in the arm for a franchise gradually going stale. Two years prior to Salvatore's novel, Timothy Zahn's "Hand of Thrawn" series re-invigorated the SWEU and opened the door for a variety of new approaches by a variety of new writers.

The universe that Lucas envisioned was a fun, vibrant space opera. Salvatore's universe is much scarier.

He introduces into the SWEU one of the most terrifying and fascinating alien species, the Yuuzhan Vong.

This race is a warrior race from another galaxy based solely on one thing: total conquest of the universe. Vehemently and violently anti-technology, the Yuuzhan Vong has evolved to work symbiotically with lower life forms. They have "trained" numerous animal species to do the work for which most species in the galaxy use computers or machines. Their spacecraft are living organisms, and the suits they use to survive in atmospheres different than their own are creatures that encase their bodies as protection. (I envision Venom in the Spider-man comics.)

At the beginning of "Vector Prime", a Yuuzhan Vong sleeper cell named Yomin Carr has disguised himself as a human on a remote scientific outpost on the Outer Rim of the galaxy, awaiting orders for a planned invasion.

Meanwhile, another sleeper cell named Nom Anor has risen to power on another planet on the brink of civil war, a war that he himself has secretly fomented and orchestrated. This, it turns out, is one of the Yuuzhan Vong's more popular modus operandi: infiltrate planets on the brink of war and subtly steer events to the point that the indigenous cultures ultimately kill themselves before the Yuuzhan Vong's invading force arrives to finish the job. It is a highly calculated, vicious, and effective method of conquest.

Salvatore's experience in the fantasy genre actually works well within the SWEU, as "Star Wars" has, arguably, always been less sci-fi and more sword-and-sorcery masked as sci-fi. "Vector Prime" is an excellent fusion of both genres by a writer who can deftly operate in both genres.

Without giving too many spoilers away, I will say that something happens in this novel that forever changes the SWEU. It will make some SWEU fans angry, to be sure. It will be heart-breaking and traumatic to some.

I daresay, though, that it was necessary. As one major character within the novel says, "This should have, logically, happened a long, long time ago, after all... They had been living on the very edge of disaster for so very long, fighting battles, literally, for decades... (p.397)"

That it had to happen to a much-beloved character is unfortunate, but it's a game-changer that raises the stakes of the subsequent novels to a more mature, and realistic, level. No one is safe anymore.

Stephen says

4.0 stars. I just reread this book as I was going to read the next books in the series and it had been a long time since I read this story. It was terrific. As a "Star Wars" book, this is clearly meant to be the literary equivalent of a "summer blockbuster" which is not a bad thing by any means (I equate it to a lot of the other "fun" read books like the Dresden Files Series and the Harry Potter series). Well this book was an incredibly fun read. On top of being a fun read, it had the added bonus of being well-written and having a tight, well conceived plot. Best of all, it introduces an original "villian" that is as good as any that has ever been created in the Star Wars universe (and that is saying a lot). The "villian" is the race known as the Yuuzhan Vong who are a "savage warrior" race that uses only organic technology (some of which is just amazing) and are absolutely immune to the force which makes them incredibly difficult to fight for the jedi.

Bottom-line, along with the excellent "Thrawn" trilogy by Timothy Zahn, this is among the best Star Wars' novel ever written. Now this is coming from someone who hasn't read a lot of Star Wars novels, but given the quality of this book, I feel confident that this is an accurate statement. RECOMMENDED!!!

William says

I remember when Vector Prime first came out some ten years ago, and all of the talk was about Chewbacca's death. Some fans felt betrayed, while others liked the vulnerability of the main characters. I thought Salvatore (the author) did a fantastic job in making Chewie's death both heroic and tragic, and liked the idea that "even the good guys could die" in this burgeoning series.

I also enjoyed the action scenes and in particular, the fight between Mara Jade and Yomin Carr, a Yuuzhan Vong warrior. The author really gets to put a spotlight on the "technological" weaponry of the Vong, and still leave us believing that there is more to come.

I have heard many complaints that the series is too long, and that some of the books are terrible, but if this start is any indication as to how the rest will go, it shouldn't be that bad.
