

Cover Story

Very Soon, Right Here in the Milky Way

In *The Force Awakens*, which hits theaters Dec. 18, J.J. Abrams gives new life to that old *Star Wars* magic. TIME watched him do it **By Lev Grossman 56**



Fans in Times Square in 1983 await the premiere of *Return of the Jedi*

Unsafe at Any Altitude?

Since 9/11, the U.S. has spent billions of dollars on failed airport security measures. A TIME investigation reveals how emergency powers given by Congress to TSA are to blame

By Massimo Calabresi 44

Sisters in Arms

Defense Secretary Ashton Carter will soon decide whether to allow women to serve in all combat roles. The Marines have made their opinion known

By Mark Thompson 52

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Photograph by Marco Grob for TIME

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