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## My personal turn to the dark side

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“You are beaten! It is useless to resist!”

So said Darth Vader to Luke Skywalker in the original Star Wars trilogy so many years ago. Nowadays, it is as if that line was aimed at me in terms of the entire Star Wars franchise.

You see, I have been aware of Star Wars for years, whether through comments in reference to the movies, Weird Al songs or other various parodies. I never even saw the actual films until the special editions were released to theatres in 1997. Only then was I truly introduced to the likes of Darth Vader, Luke Skywalker and Obi-Wan Kenobi.

As the years passed, Star Wars remained something that I was at least vaguely aware of, particularly when the prequels started with 1999's Episode I: The Phantom Menace. I wasn't fond of the Jar Jar Binks character that movie introduced and agreed with the vocal online discussions that the prequel was subpar to the originals. Episode I itself did little to turn me.

During the summer of 2000, when an entire section of Star Wars toys were clearanced for less than \$4 each and buy-one-get-one-free, I bought quite a few of the toys. However, after that summer and my return to school, Star Wars again faded to the background of life.

When Episode II: Attack of the Clones came out, I saw the movie relatively early in its run, and for the most part enjoyed it — certainly more than I had enjoyed the previous movie. I also recall keeping an eye on prices in the toy departments of various stores halfway hoping for another clearance. Despite that, I continued to resist and not allow Star Wars to become an actual part of my life.

A few months ago, I realized that the new Star Wars movie was due out this year and made note of it. A couple of weeks before the movie's official release, a friend invited me to attend a midnight showing of the film, which I jumped at. In the week leading up to the release, I found myself thinking more about it, and Star Wars in general, and figured I was geeking out before the movie. Still no big deal, though. Just the same sort of excitement as when I was getting ready for the final Lord of the Rings movie ... right? I was still resisting.

After seeing the movie and very much enjoying it, I was determined to see how it stacked up against the originals. Rather than just take others' word for it, I borrowed the originals from a friend and watched Episodes IV, V and VI. Additionally, I dug through my comics collection and uncovered several Star Wars comics, bought the soundtrack for Episode III, located several graphic novels from the library, spent more than a half-hour looking at the Star Wars books available at Borders, and spent hours reading many cross-referenced entries at wikipedia.com branching out from the search term "star wars."

At long last, I am beaten, and it is useless to resist. I am now officially a Star Wars Geek.

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