

# unMitigated Audacity

BEAM ME OUTTA HERE!  
I'M DROWNING IN TREK DREK!  
(or "Preyin' on the Geeky - Star Trek gone  
overboard")

If you've come here today looking for something profound, then you're in the wrong place, sunshine. It's that time of year when the creative juices are almost completely dried up, the stress is to the point where you're thinking about grabbing a semi-automatic weapon and playing postal worker (but this isn't Arkansas, is it? Hoo-boy, I'm going to hell for that one...) and UPEI is a more apathetic place than usual. All of the above are hitting me like a freight train this week, so there's no witty social commentary. Instead, it's a healthy heaping helping of fluff for y'all...

There's a little ritual that I follow regularly: from seven until eight on Saturday nights, I hunker down in front of my TV with some junk food and my action figures and soak up the latest adventures from the gateway to the Gamma Quadrant. As my friends and roomies know, the world as I know it comes to a halt when "Star Trek: Deep Space Nine" is on the airwaves. Likewise, if there's a "Next Generation" rerun playing or I've got one of the Trek movies in the VCR, there's to be no interruptions unless the sky is falling. And even then, it's better to wait until a commercial.

Star Trek has been around for over thirty years, thus my whole life has been spent in the U.S.S. Enterprise's warp trail. Ever since I learned how to turn the TV on, I've been a rabid Trekkie (yes, *Trekkie*. The now-fashionable term "Trekker" is too pretentious).

I can identify every episode by its title (anyone up for "The Doomsday Machine"?), know what Captain Kirk's middle initial stands for (Tiberius), and have more than my share of useless Trek junk scattered between here and Vulcan (another trivial fact: the day I'm writing this -- March 26 -- is Leonard "Mr. Spock" Nimoy's 68th birthday). But as much as much fun as being a Trek-geek is, I find that there's been a sharp decrease in the fun factor in the past few years. Dare I say it, there's even some Trek-affiliated stuff out there which makes me run away screaming. Oddly enough, I blame this decrease on the phenomenon's success.

I admit that part of the fun of being a Trekkie stemmed from the fact that plenty of other people ignored Trek or hated it outright. When you discovered someone else was a fan, it was almost like you'd found a long-lost sibling; someone you could discuss Klingon weaponry or argue Dax vs. Deanna Troi with. This was an economically and socially diverse club, but a small one. Knowing this stuff was one of several things that set you apart from most other people.

Unfortunately, like a good, quiet restaurant, once everyone's in on the secret the fun goes downhill fast. By about 1990 it seemed like everyone and their dog was a Trek fan, and phrases like "he's dead, Jim" and "resistance is futile" are now part of everyday language.

And what's worse is that The Powers That Be at Paramount Studios figured that with such a gigantic fan mass to prey on, they'd milk this cash cow for all they could, and promptly flooded the market with stuff. I admit that Trek products have always been around, and actually helped to keep the phenomenon alive after the original series' cancellation (I myself have bought more Star Trek toys, models and books than anyone should deserve), but it seems that the goods have taken priority over the product and content of the Star Trek franchise.

I mean, the original series did many thought-provoking episodes, The Next Generation was quality television and Deep Space Nine is one of the most intelligent and gutsiest programs airing today, but how can anyone justify Star Trek: Voyager as a quality, intelligent TV series? Likewise, the feature film Generations was slapped together in haste to keep the faithful from climbing the walls, and it shows. The quality of Trek has been replaced by the quantity of it in the eyes of the studio execs.

It seems like Paramount's only concern is that if people spend cash on anything with a comm badge on it (and believe me, we Trekkies have a bad habit of doing just that), they can put no effort into their product. Their profit is guaranteed, so why bother to produce anything more than tripe? If this attitude continues, fed-up Trekkies may soon be abandoning ship, searching for another sci-fi series to call home. Babylon 5, anyone?

(...jeez, why can't I get this worked up about something *serious* anymore?)  
- Ross Williams, captain of the U.S.S. Obnoxious



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