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### *Star Wars Versus Star Trek*

*Star Wars* and *Star Trek* are both science based and involve space travel and aliens. The *Star Trek* television series was originally produced in 1966, and it influenced the 1977 beginning of the popular *Star Wars* films. In 1979, the first *Star Trek* movie was released. *Star Wars* and *Star Trek* movies have more or less the same setting or surroundings but have extremely different levels of on-screen conflict, unique recognizable characters, and slightly different genres.

*Star Wars* movies all center around the conflict between the Rebel Alliance, who fight for their freedom, and the Galactic Empire, who fight to keep control. A child can identify this as a conflict between good and evil. Adults identify the sides of the conflict by their names: the Sith (evil) and the Jedi (good). *Star Wars* even color-codes these groups by their lightsabers, as if to highlight the ongoing conflict by labeling the good guys with green lightsabers and the bad guys with red lightsabers. These two powerful groups, the Sith and the Jedi, can even further be identified as the dark side and the light side. Without these conflicts, the *Star Wars* movies would essentially have no plot.

On the other hand, *Star Trek* movies feature the conflict of a crew having to make moral decisions about various dilemmas. For example, they are put into situations in which they have to decide whether or not to protect the peace of others, stand against racism, and solve other political or ethical problems.

One of the most recognizable characters from *Star Wars* is Darth Vader, also called Lord Vader because he is a Sith lord. Darth Vader was a former Jedi (Anakin Skywalker), who was tempted by the dark side and chose poorly. He has remarkable strength and looks extremely intimidating because of his apparel. He dresses in all black and has an overall dark appearance. He has an exceptionally deep, raspy voice, and his breaths sound labored and mechanical through his dark helmet. Darth Vader is a fierce and unforgiving leader, a leader whom few people have dared to stand up to.

While the most-recognizable character of *Star Wars* is an evil character, the most widely known character of *Star Trek* is a good guy, Spock. Spock, or Mr. Spock, is a half-human, half-Vulcan crew member. Spock, Captain Kirk's first officer, uses his Vulcan mind and his beyond-average intelligence to help make the decisions that he and his fellow crewmates are faced with on their many Starfleet voyages. Spock faces slight conflicts within himself throughout the movies due to being only part human. His Vulcan side makes him think with only pure logic, so when his feelings and emotions arise from his human side, he is often left confused.

*Star Wars* and *Star Trek* also differ in their genres. *Star Wars* is science fantasy. The force that *Star Wars* revolves around is more magical than fictional, making it science fantasy. The force could essentially be described as a universal energy source that is a part of all living things, and with particular skill or abilities, it can be manipulated. The force is pure fantasy compared to the real world, considering it allows people to control others' minds, allows telekinesis to take place, and can even make a person or being more physically skilled. All of these abilities that are accessible through the force are science fantasy instead of science fiction because they are not even remotely possible.

*Star Trek*, however, is classified as science fiction. Unlike its cousin, the main concepts

in *Star Trek* are slightly based on capable technology and/or concepts. None of the concepts that *Star Trek* uses are as farfetched as that of the force seen in *Star Wars*. For example, the main pieces of technology that the crew is constantly using are their personal communication devices and their triangulation devices. Both of these are nearly identical in concept to the smart phones society uses today. Some of the other technology in *Star Trek* is slightly less feasible, yet there remains the slight possibility that one day in the future science will have the capability to teleport people. Perhaps weaponry that uses lasers, such as the ones in *Star Trek*, may also become a technology norm sometime in the future.

*Star Wars* and *Star Trek* are two films that are very similar in their settings but have tremendously diverse levels of conflict throughout the movies, exceptionally exclusive characters, and genres that differ from one another. *Star Wars* is a movie series which relies almost entirely on war or good versus evil, while *Star Trek* is much more concerned with moral dilemmas and ethical decisions. The characters that are most commonly associated with each series are also different because Spock is only half-human and is not a villain, but Darth Vader is a human villain. *Star Wars* is classified as science fantasy because the presence of the force is a rather magical concept. *Star Trek*, on the other hand, is thought to be science fiction because the contents of the movies are not fantasy based and have at least the possibility of being true or achievable.