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**A Tour of the House of Popular Culture with *Star Trek* as a Guide**

Senior Honors Thesis  
Northern Kentucky University  
Fall 1992

by Terrie Holahan

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Chapter 11 is the bibliography. The sources I've used are articles that can be found in your local library in the periodical/microform section. If you have some spare time, please check these articles out. They are very informative and sometimes offer an alternative look at the *Star Trek* universe from the scholar's point of view.

I would like to especially thank Gail and Eric Sakurai, both of whom taught me the wonders and mysteries of BBSing and gave me the inspiration as well as enthusiasm and encouragement to do this project. Jim Daily, Michael "Defender of the Great Ter" Smith, Andy "Landru" Harman, Sherry Hopper, Kirk Houser, Ed Tunis, Dennis Gray... I can't possibly name all of the *Spock's Adventure!* users whose commentaries, arguments, and sheer joy of *Star Trek* gave me the best quotes and supportive material around. Their discussions were fresh and insightful and helped show that the original series, no matter how old or dated it may seem, still sparks discussions. I believe this is the first time that BBS messages have been used in a scholarly work, and while those messages may raise eyebrows among some faculty and scholars, using the fans reactions and explanations to back up my theories was the most important part of it all.

Viva *Star Trek* and *Spock's Adventure!* BBS of Cincinnati, Ohio! Visit the stars of my thesis by calling (513) 779-9717 by modem.

Terrie Holahan  
December 29, 1992

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by Terrie Holahan

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## Chapter One: An Introduction

"...There are millions of planets with intelligent life. We haven't begun to map them"--Kirk.<sup>1</sup>

According to the *Star Trek 25th Anniversary Special*, over 50% of the American population consider themselves Trekkers, or followers of *Star Trek*. The series, which only lasted 3 seasons (79 episodes) on NBC, is perhaps the most successful television series of all time. In 1972, a *Star Trek* animated series was produced, followed by an attempted television revival in 1977. Instead of relying solely on television, Gene Roddenberry, series creator, decided to head for the stars, movie stars that is, and in 1979, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* was released. Five more movies followed, spanning from 1982 to 1991, with the cast of the original series in the lead roles. Roddenberry eventually returned to the television market after the release of the fourth movie, *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, in 1986. In 1987, *Star Trek: The Next Generation* premiered as a syndicated television series which featured a new crew and new actors who were signed to a six year contract. *Variety's* December 2, 1991 issue reported that the *Star Trek* franchise has earned almost two billion dollars since the original series first aired in 1966.<sup>2</sup>

*Star Trek* has been called the "little science fiction show that refused to die."<sup>3</sup> In fact, the original series' rocky ratings during its three years on NBC had almost guaranteed it as a fad in the late 1960's that would fade from the memories of the audience. That wasn't the case, however. *Star Trek* made its name off of being "firsts" and its longevity proves it. *Star Trek* started one of the most important cultural phenomena of late-twentieth century America.

In *The Popular Culture Reader*, both Ray Browne and Russel Nye offer extensive explanations of what popular culture is. Browne declares that it "consists of all the aspects of civilization that make up a way of life"<sup>4</sup> and that it gives "often a more truthful picture of what the people were thinking and doing at any given time."<sup>5</sup> Nye points out that the rise of popular culture came from a population explosion in the late nineteenth century, the emergence of the middle class, and the development of the electronic age.<sup>6</sup> Popular culture becomes a reflection of the boom in technology and the mass media.

Perhaps an easier way to grasp the concepts of popular culture is to use the House of Popular Culture presented by Christopher D. Geist and Jack Nachbar. There are five rooms to the house and each of them represents a concept of popular culture: icons, stereotypes, heroes, rituals/events and arts. The foundation of the House is the cultural myth which is reflected in all the rooms. *Star Trek* is seen as being a part of popular culture and the easiest way to access information about the beliefs and the effects that this series has had upon the public is to take a tour of this house. In *Star Trek*, there are myths, stereotypes, heroes, rituals/events, formulas, and normal daily activities of the fans.

The cultural myth refers to the deeply ingrained cultural belief which we, as society, think true and worth preserving. These cultural beliefs include the Myth of Technology as a Savior and the Myth of Regeneration through Violence. There are others, too numerous to list, that *Star Trek* does incorporate into itself, and along with these myths, of course, come the icons, the stereotypes, and the heroes that reflect these myths.

Icons are three dimensional objects that have special meaning to people. "Modern man is starved for ideas and objects that give coherence to electric-age culture," writes Marshall Fishwick.<sup>7</sup> They "create order out of chaos," "define what is important," "serve as a tangible reminder of our origin and destiny," "ease our sense of isolation," and "give significance to the world around us."<sup>8</sup> Television is the greatest promoter of these cultural objects such as the

nuclear family, Barbie dolls, and automobiles.

The most obvious icon on *Star Trek* is the *USS Enterprise*, the starship that Captain James Kirk commands. It is the starship that the action is centered on, the ship that Kirk refers to as his "lady" and that he has a love-hate relationship with. The *Enterprise* evokes emotions in viewers. For instance, when the ship was destroyed in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, many fans were shocked and appalled that the Paramount Studios would do such a thing to such a fine ship. The *Enterprise* is the physical embodiment of the myths listed above.

The term stereotype is generally associated with negative images and connotations, but stereotypes are neither good nor bad since they are a "general classifications assigned to whole groups of people."<sup>9</sup> It is a normal function of humans to generalize certain characteristics about a group of people and "tend to erase individual identities altogether."<sup>10</sup> Again, the mass media conveys these recognizable traits to the viewing audience so that they will relate to them. The conservative United States during the mid to late 1980's is directly reflected in stereotypes of Yuppies on television and promoted by the media. Alex P. Keaton of *Family Ties* is a combination of the annoying older brother, a satire of Nixon-loving Republicans, and money loving economics major in college because people could relate to one or more of those factors.

Each *Star Trek* series has its own cultural stereotypes and they reflect the time period that each series was produced in. The elimination of the female first officer in the first pilot of *Star Trek* was a result of NBC's rejection of the idea of a woman having that much power. Roddenberry accepted the loss of the character and the series reflected the stereotypes, but at the same time he continually tried to push the limits on what was accepted and tried to break stereotypes. The original series broke ground with the first televised inter-racial kiss and their multi-ethnic crew. *The Next Generation* still battles with the women in command issue. While there have been several women in command positions such as high ranking ambassadors, fleet admirals, academy commandants, starbase commanders, and starship captains, the two female series regulars Deanna Troi and Beverly Crusher are ship's psychologist and chief medical officer and hold no real command position.<sup>11</sup> Their professions in the caring field are traditionally female occupations.

Heroes are considered human icons and embody the best stereotypes. The hero can be traditional, rebellious, or a celebrity, but he/she gains recognition through his/her accomplishments that are focused on by the mass media.<sup>12</sup> While fictional heroes such as Batman, James Bond, and Hawkeye Pierce are long-lasting because of their constant exposure by the media, real-life heroes such as John Walsh (crusader for children's rights) and Ophra Winfry (talk show host who has overcome battles with weight and child abuse) last only as long as the media focuses on them.

Both captains from *Star Trek* represent the different types of heroes. From Captain Picard's cool, diplomatic style to Captain Kirk's bare fisted approach to a problem, the debate over who is the better captain rages on. *TV Guide* even polled its readers, and Kirk won. In reality, however, *Star Trek* has the unique ability to appeal to all viewers because the show has a character that becomes a hero for each viewer of its audience. This partly explains the enormous and lasting popularity of *Star Trek*.

For every fictional hero, there is a formula behind him/her that reaffirms the existing myths, stereotypes, and heroes that are a part of culture. A formula is a recipe that is a combination of conventions, such as an action-adventure show like *Knight Rider*, and inventions, the twist that makes the show unique. In *Knight Rider*, the hero Michael Knight travels around dealing justice to those above the law. The invention of the show is that he drives a futuristic,

computerized Trans-Am capable of travelling at high speeds, electronic phone tapping, and talking.<sup>13</sup> Also, "any given kind of popular art [*Star Trek*] contains many elements which are familiar to both the creator and the audience."<sup>14</sup> Good versus evil is one of the most popular and timeless themes and almost all of the science fiction genre depend upon this formula.

A formula also includes "setting, cast of characters," and "patterns of action."<sup>15</sup> *Star Trek* uses these formulas extensively. Kirk deals with ignorance more than anything else. Here, ignorance is seen as being evil and Kirk is delivering justice, righting the wrongs. In the original series, the most popular action formula is that of the parallel universe (a planet whose evolution closely parallels that of a certain Earth time period, such as the 1930's). For *The Next Generation*, the setting (the *Enterprise*) and cast (the number of regular cast members) are the same. The two formulas that are used most often are an alien being possessing a member of the crew and an alien that takes over the ship.<sup>16</sup> Picard plays almost strictly to the laws while Kirk usually does away with them.

All these factors lead into a ritual because it provides "participants and spectators with means to express significant, though sometimes obscured, cultural beliefs and values," and it usually involves icons, stereotypes, and heroes.<sup>17</sup> According to Ray Browne, ritualism:

is the mystique that draws forth from deep in psychology and sociology of a people certain attitudes and potential actions, codifies and forms them and then imposes them on the people in the form of approved forms of behavior with certain mystical (sometimes religious) overtones which tend to make the actions all the more acceptable.<sup>18</sup>

The rite of unity, which is one of the most recognized rituals, are parties or conventions where groups of people who share the same interests meet and celebrate a feeling of togetherness.<sup>19</sup> Family reunions and Super Bowl parties are the most popular forms of the rite of unity.

William Blake Tyrrell equates the rite of unity to *Star Trek* by stating:

...*Star Trek's* message of revitalized mythic narratives [was] brought directly to the emotional needs of the viewer, [and] engendered the feeling that the shows were more than escapist entertainment. That feeling transformed the 48 minute episodes into rituals, and rituals, being group-creating, led to clubs and to the convention. This feeling and the power to generate it are...what is unique about *Star Trek* and the reason for the phenomenon.<sup>20</sup>

It is the fan clubs and the conventions that are the biggest part of the *Star Trek* phenomenon, going beyond the media blitz of merchandise and spinoffs. The fan clubs bring *Star Trek* into everyday life of the members as they work on projects to raise money for charities or scholarship foundations which are sponsored by the stars of the series (such as the Patrick Stewart [Captain Picard] Scholarship and the James Doohan [Scotty] Scholarship). Moreover, there are many international fan clubs such as *Starfleet*, the *Klingon Assault Group*, and the *Romulan Star Empire* who have members in the United States, Canada, Britain, and other countries, even as far away as Australia.

The *Star Trek* phenomenon, which includes various elements of popular culture, can easily act as a tour guide through the House of Popular Culture and furnish the house as well with its unique brand of science fiction that has lasted over a quarter of a century.

## Notes

1. The original series episode "Metamorphosis."
2. Charles Paikert, "After 25 Years Still... Cruising at Warp Speed," *Variety*, 2 Dec 1991, p. 49.
3. Edward Gross and Mark A. Altman, *Great Birds of the Galaxy: Gene Roddenberry and the Creators of Trek* (New York: Image Publishing, 1992), p. 28.
4. Ray B. Browne, "Popular Culture--New Notes Toward a Definition," in *The Popular Culture Reader*, 3rd ed., ed. Christopher Geist and Jack Nachbar (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 15.
5. Browne, p. 17.
6. Browne, pp. 21-2.
7. Marshall Fishwick, "Entrance," *Icons of Popular Culture*, ed. Marshall Fishwick and Ray B. Browne (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1970), p. 3.
8. Christopher D. Geist and Jack Nachbar, "Part Two: Popular Icons," *The Popular Culture Reader* Third ed. (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 99.
9. Geist and Nachbar, "Introduction: What is Popular Culture?" *The Popular Culture Reader*, p. 7.
10. Geist and Nachbar, "Part Three: Stereotypes and Popular Culture" and "Introduction," *The Popular Culture Reader*, pp. 153-4, 7.
11. Security chief Tasha Yar was supposed to be the strong, aggressive female member of the bridge crew, but was killed off in the first season episode "Skin of Evil." Actress Denise Crosby felt that her character Yar was not developed enough during the first dozen episodes and asked to be let out of her contract. Since then, she has made six guest appearances as Yar and Yar's daughter Sela.
12. Geist and Nachbar, "Part Four: Popular Heroes," *The Popular Culture Reader*, pp. 206-9.
13. The car's name was KITT, an acronym for Knight Industries 2000, and it provided the logic and the sarcasm while Michael provided the emotion and the action.
14. Geist and Nachbar, "Introduction," p. 8.
15. Geist and Nachbar, "Part Six: Popular Formulas," *The Popular Culture Reader*, p. 300.
16. The use of alien possession and "the little glowing ball of light that takes over the

Enterprise" are so often used that members of *Spock's Adventure!* electronic bulletin board system in Cincinnati, Ohio debated how almost any person or thing could gain control of the ship, including themselves.

17. Geist and Nachbar, "Part Five: Popular Rituals," *The Popular Culture Reader*, p. 263.
18. Ray B. Browne, "Ritual One," *Rituals and Ceremonies in Popular Culture* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1970), p. 1.
19. Geist and Nachbar, p. 266.
20. Wm. Blake Tyrrell, "Star Trek as Myth and Television as Mythmaker," *Journal of Popular Culture*, Spring 1977, p. 712.



## Chapter Two: The History of the Original Series, the Movies, and *The Next Generation*

*"Most legends have their basis in facts"--Kirk.<sup>1</sup>*

### The Voyages of the 1960's

It has always been a battle between the network executives who want high ratings with "safe" programs and visionaries who want to take a more serious approach to television and have the audiences actually think. The 1960's was no different and neither was science fiction. science fiction at that time generally had the good versus evil plot, action-adventure, and a monster. Above all else, the networks thought that a monster was essential to good science fiction.

*Star Trek* was not the first ground-breaker with television that made the audience think and that did not use a monster in every episode. Rod Serling's creation of *The Twilight Zone* in 1959 was television's first step away from the situation comedies, westerns, and police shows that were popular during that time. "By couching his stories in a science fiction, horror or fantasy setting, he [Rod Serling] was able to cover dramatic ground that no one else had been able to," writes Edward Gross.<sup>2</sup>

The next step away from traditional television series was *The Outer Limits*. Leslie Stevans and Joseph Stefano wanted a more Gothic horror and drama show that had a little of the science fiction elements, but not much. Stefano was just coming off the success of the horror movie *Psycho* and wanted to do a show with very little sex and violence. There was violence "in the scary sense, not violence as in shooting eight people" he clarifies.<sup>3</sup> Gross goes on to point out that, because of *The Twilight Zone* and *The Outer Limits* and their "psychological challenges to the audience," *Star Trek* had a chance in 1966.<sup>4</sup>

*Star Trek* creator Gene Roddenberry had written pilots and episodes for several television series in the late 1950's and early 1960's, including *The Lieutenant* and *Have Gun, Will Travel*.<sup>5</sup> Pilots were introductory episodes for each new series that were viewed by network executives and the executives decided from there whether or not to purchase the series. Roddenberry had a contract with Desilu Productions to develop several different pilots over the next three years. *Star Trek* was one of the first that he did.

*Star Trek* was first viewed by CBS, who after the story line was pitched to them, turned it down because they had "one of [their] own that [they] like better."<sup>6</sup> Roddenberry was understandably angry after spending all the time explaining and discussing *Star Trek*, but "*Star Trek*, frankly, was a giant risk. The series format indicated an extremely expensive series and represented a completely new and untried concept."<sup>7</sup> Roddenberry had been fascinated by science fiction since he was 11 or 12 years old and, like Serling, saw science fiction as a way to explore the "big picture." He presented his ideas in an outline format to NBC in 1964. Here are a few excerpts from it:

*Star Trek* will be a television "first"... The format is "Wagon Train to the Stars"--built around characters who travel to other worlds and meet the jeopardy and adventure which become our stories. The time could be 1995 or even 2995--close enough to our times for our continuing cast to be people like us, but far enough

into the future for galaxy travel to be fully established.<sup>8</sup>

Finally, NBC gave Roddenberry money to write the *Star Trek* pilot and Roddenberry would write three stories based on *Star Trek's* concept. NBC chose "The Cage" and *Star Trek* was in production.

The cast of characters for the *Star Trek* pilot was Captain Christopher Pike (Jeffrey Hunter) who "is capable of action and decision which can verge on the heroic--and at the same time lives a continual battle with the self-doubt and the loneliness of command."<sup>9</sup>

"Number One" (Majel Barrett) was the female first officer who was "probably superior in detailed knowledge of the equipment, departments, and personnel aboard the vessel." Jose Tyler (Peter Duryea) was the ship's young navigator and was "in the process of maturing." Dr. Philip "Bones" Boyce (John Hoyt) was the ship's doctor and also Pike's closest and probably only friend on the ship. Yeoman J.M. Colt (Laurel Goodwin) was described as being an "uncomfortably lovely" female crew member who wanted more than just to be Pike's secretary on the ship. Finally, there was Mr. Spock (Leonard Nimoy), the only person in the entire crew who was Pike's equal physically, emotionally, and in leadership. Spock was a half-human, half-Vulcan male who at first glance "can be almost frightening--a face so heavily lidded and satanic you might almost expect him to have a forked tail."<sup>10</sup>

Nimoy reflects on "The Cage" and NBC's reaction to it:

The first pilot of *Star Trek* was filmed at Desilu Studios in Hollywood in 1965. It was the most expensive television pilot ever produced up to that time....That first pilot had some great production values and it had some wonderful ideas, but NBC decided that it was too cerebral and it wouldn't sell.<sup>11</sup>

Roddenberry admitted that he had not given the network what he had promised: an action/adventure story. Instead, he had given them "a beautiful story, in the opinion of many the best science fiction film ever made up to that time...I forgot my plan and tried for something proud."<sup>12</sup>

For the first time in television history, a second pilot was ordered. NBC executives had seen something that they liked, had seen something they thought would sell, and so the crew and the pilot were redone. NBC even had suggestions on how to improve it. The female first officer as well as the alien would have to go.

Roddenberry argued to keep Spock and won, but Number One had been sacrificed. Majel Barrett explained at a convention on August 1, 1992 that NBC didn't think that there would be a woman in that high of a command position. She regrets that her character was removed, but she went on to portray Nurse Christine Chapel in later episodes of *Star Trek* (as well as other roles in *Star Trek*) and Barrett eventually married Roddenberry.<sup>13</sup>

The next problem came with re-casting the captain. Roddenberry's original notes list the captain of the Enterprise as Captain Robert April, but after Jeffrey Hunter was cast in the role, the name was changed to Captain Winter then to Captain Christopher Pike. Jeffrey Hunter was unavailable to do the second pilot and Roddenberry had changed the name of the captain of the Enterprise again, this time to James T. Kirk.<sup>14</sup> William Shatner was cast to play the young, heroic captain who Roddenberry described as the 23rd century's equivalent of Captain Horatio Hornblower.<sup>15</sup> Shatner, a Shakespearian trained actor, had an extensive stage career in his native Canada as well as the United States and had turned down a seven year contract with Twentieth Century Fox in order to work on a play he'd written himself.<sup>16</sup> He also had roles on American television shows *Playhouse 90*, *The Twilight Zone*, and *Outer Limits*.<sup>17</sup>

Most of the character's qualities remained intact: Kirk is a man of action who took enormous risks. He has the crew's respect and loyalty, but he only confides in the first officer and chief medical officer. He forces himself to keep physically fit by working out in the ship's gym but also has a vast library of classical literature that he reads during his off-duty time.<sup>18</sup> Of course, Kirk is ultimately a romantic who can't help himself when it comes to women.

Spock had been promoted to first officer and chief science officer, but his character had been altered slightly. Now, Spock was more emotionless than he was in "The Cage," never smiling or showing any facial expression besides mild surprise and curiosity. His logical half-Vulcan heritage has been clouded somewhat by his human, emotional side, but he possesses the same mental powers such as telepathy and "mind melding" only in a lesser degree. Spock is only telepathic when he comes into physical contact with a being, and "mind-melding" is a technique that allows a Vulcan to share the mind of another.<sup>19</sup>

Nimoy had been the only actor to survive both pilots and the first filmed episode "Where No Man Has Gone Before." He had several television credits such as roles in *Rawhide*, *The Virginian*, and *Outer Limits* to his name before joining *Star Trek*'s cast.

James Doohan was brought in as Chief Engineer Montgomery "Scotty" Scott, who believes he owns the ship and just allows Kirk to "drive her."<sup>20</sup> He is one of the most respected engineers in Starfleet and his technical manuals have already become part of Starfleet Academy training. Doohan, like Shatner, was from Canada and had numerous stage credits to his name as well as television roles before entering into the realm of *Star Trek*. A master dialectician, Doohan had no trouble altering his Canadian accent to that of a thick Scottish brogue.

Helmsman Sulu was played by George Takei who was featured in several plays, television series, and motion pictures. Sulu is of Asian decent, being mostly Japanese, and has an insatiable curiosity.

Also featured in "Where No Man Has Gone Before" were Lloyd Haynes as Communications Officer Alden, Paul Fix as Dr. Mark Piper, and Andrea Dromm as Yeoman Smith. "Where No Man Has Gone Before" was filmed, shown to NBC, and *Star Trek* was approved for the first season in 1966.

As mentioned before, the network executives felt it necessary to have a monster in science fiction shows. "Where No Man Has Gone Before" did not have a monster, but "The Man Trap" did; so, while it was the second episode that was produced, it was the first one that aired. Again, there was a change in the crew from the second pilot to "The Man Trap." Beside Kirk and Spock, only Scotty and Sulu remained on board after the pilot episode. Leonard "Bones" McCoy came in as the chief medical officer and the trio of Kirk, Spock, and McCoy was born.

DeForest Kelley, like the rest of the crew, had made several appearances as guest stars on television series before landing the role of McCoy. Roddenberry had worked with Kelley on previous projects and brought him in as the third chief medical officer.

McCoy delivers the emotional, humanistic reasons in Kirk's decision making process while Spock gives out sound, logical advice. He is passionate about medicine, compassionate about his patients, and cynical and distrustful of machines. McCoy is from the "old school" of medicine and is considered eccentric by some of the crew, but he and Kirk have a very strong friendship. Of course, McCoy and Spock are known for their verbal sparring because of the clash between emotion and logic, but both men have a great deal of respect for each other.<sup>21</sup>

Alden and Smith were replaced by Lieutenant Uhura (Nichelle Nichols) and Yeoman Janice Rand (Grace Lee Whitney). Nichols represented "one of the first times that a black actress was a network series regular."<sup>22</sup> Nichols had been trained as a dancer and singer as well

as an actress, and did most of her work in theater instead of television.<sup>23</sup>

Twenty-eight episodes were produced the first year and the first season is considered by many fans to be the best season in terms of over-all *Star Trek* episodes. Roddenberry's list of top ten favorite episodes features eight from the first season as well: "The Naked Time," "The Menagerie," "The Return of the Archons," "Where No Man Has Gone Before," "The Devil in the Dark," "The Enemy Within," "Balance of Terror," and "The City on the Edge of Forever."<sup>24</sup> In fact, "The City on the Edge of Forever" is considered the best *Star Trek* episode by the fans and no other original series episode can come close to the characterizations and the beauty of the story.<sup>25</sup>

While the production quality was there, the ratings were not. "NBC underestimated their audience and lived and died by the ratings systems," stated Oliver Crawford.<sup>26</sup> Rumors that *Star Trek* might be canceled in the middle of the first season prompted science fiction writer Harlan Ellison (who wrote "The City on the Edge of Forever") to organize a letter writing campaign to keep the series on the air. The word was spread to NASA, two World Science Fiction Conventions, Science Fiction Writers of America and others to keep *Star Trek* on the air.<sup>27</sup> For the first time in the history of television, NBC not only kept the series on for the rest of the first season but renewed it for a second season because of the letter writing campaign.

When the second season started, a new character was added to the Enterprise's regular roster: Ensign Pavel Chekov, a Russian helmsman played by Walter Koenig. New York born Koenig had limited stage and television credits before coming to the *Star Trek* series. His character reflected the youth of all ensigns, complete with hero worship for the captain, and he was very proud of his Russian heritage.<sup>28</sup> That love of his motherland became part of the ongoing original series jokes as did McCoy's "I'm a doctor, not a..." fill in the profession statements, McCoy's and Spock's bantering about logic, and Scotty's complaints that the engines not being able to handle more stress. It was Chekov who "made the bridge of the Enterprise a true United Nations-like ensemble in space," observes Gross.<sup>29</sup>

According to Roddenberry, Chekov joined the crew because the Russian paper *Pravda* charged that Americans were doing a space show and forgot who was in space first. Koenig recalls his character's origins being somewhat different from what Roddenberry claimed. "All that stuff about *Pravda*--you know, the complaining--that's all nonsense," said Koenig. "That was all publicity....They wanted somebody who would appeal to the eight-to-fourteen year olds and they decided to make him Russian."<sup>30</sup> No matter what the reason behind the creation of Chekov was, it was in the second season that the crew of the Enterprise was finalized: Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scotty, Sulu, Uhura, and Chekov.<sup>31</sup>

Although *Star Trek* staples such as "Mirror, Mirror," "Amok Time," "The Trouble with Tribbles," "The Doomsday Machine," "Journey to Babel," and "The Ultimate Computer" were produced during the second season, *Star Trek* began to lose its edge. Budget cuts hurt the production of the series and Paramount Pictures Corporation's buy out of Desilu Productions resulted in strict filming schedules. *Star Trek* episodes generally took six and one-half to seven days to shoot. Paramount limited it to six days only. Gene Coon, one of the key writers and producers during the first season of *Star Trek*, left during the middle of the second season because of "burnout."

The plots were being recycled over and over again, the most popular being the "parallel-universe" in which the Enterprise visited a world that was almost a direct copy of Earth during a certain time period. Shatner and Nimoy were counting lines in the script, making sure they felt

that they had enough lines per episode.

John Meredyth Lucas was brought in to take over Coon's place, and as he tried to work things through, "NBC made the announcement: *Star Trek* would be canceled at the end of the [second] season."<sup>32</sup> The ratings had not improved since the first season and the quality of the show was spiralling downward significantly.

Ellison was not there to spear-head the renewal campaign, but fans John and Bjo Trimble were. They used science fiction convention mailing lists to spread the word all over the country. After over one million letters came pouring in, NBC announced that *Star Trek* would return for a third season. *Star Trek* fans were overjoyed at the news as was Roddenberry, but Roddenberry left the helm of the show in the hands of Fred Freiberger who had produced *Slattery's People* and *Ben Casey*.<sup>33</sup>

During the first two seasons, Roddenberry had exclusive control over the scripts. He could rewrite them to conform with his ideals and how he thought the story should go. That iron-handedness led to the revolving door of writers, some of whom cited *Star Trek* as their worst experience in the industry ever.<sup>34</sup> The door was used by producers and directors as well, but by the third season, Roddenberry was tired and wanted to work on other projects. The veto-man had left, but *Star Trek* was in a sorry-state already and his absence did not help.

The troubles from the second season carried over into the third, and budget cuts were even greater. According to Margaret Armen who had written for both Roddenberry and Freiberger, Freiberger was intent upon action stories while Roddenberry preferred to focus on the people in action stories. The show had changed air times each season: from 8:00 pm Thursday nights (first season) to 8:00 pm Friday nights (second season) to 10 pm Friday nights (third season). "If your audience is high school kids and college-age people and young married people," producer Robert Justman explains, "they're not home on Friday nights. They're out, and the old folks weren't watching. So our audience was gone."<sup>35</sup> The ratings got worse and no amount of letters was going to keep *Star Trek* alive on NBC.

Two crucial members of the *Star Trek* production team, director Marc Daniels and producer Robert Justman, left the show during the early part of the third season. Writers John D. Black, Harlan Ellison, Dorothy Fontana, and Gene Coon had left as well. The plots were hackneyed and worn out. Morale among the cast and staff was getting lower and lower.

The demise of *Star Trek*'s third season is often argued by fans. Gail Sakurai states that there were "a couple of episodes I'm not particularly crazy about, but I'd say the overall quality was good as the first season... I disagree with the basic premise that third season was the worst."<sup>36</sup> She points out that every season of *Star Trek* had their top notch episodes and also the "stinkers" and she lists "Paradise Syndrome," "Enterprise Incident," and "All Our Yesterdays" as her third season favorites. While Andy Harman liked those three, he views them as "fully qualified 'typical' third season episodes"<sup>37</sup> and he does not list any third season episodes in his top ten. Sherry Hopper adds that she's "still haunted by the memory of watching 'The Empath' for the first time. And back to characters, I put 'The Tholian Web' in my Top 20."<sup>38</sup> Harman also comments that *Star Trek* "was caught in much more of a formula loop" and "there is a distinct lack of the serious Sci-fi [sic] stories seen in the first [season]."<sup>39</sup>

As far as NBC was concerned, the series was dead and Paramount hoped they could make some money on syndication to make up for the dollars lost on producing the show. Roddenberry was very frank about his expectations of the show and reflected:

I thought it would be nice in future years if someone would stop me and say,

"Hey, I saw that thing called *Star Trek* you did and I liked it!" That was the most I had hoped for and that would've been nice. But the phenomenon I wasn't prepared for. You can't be prepared for those things. What kind of idiot is going to sit down one afternoon and say, "Well, let's see, what will I do today? I think I'll create a phenomenon!"<sup>40</sup>

The series was offered in syndication. The legend began.

#### Revival Fever!

"*Star Trek* had been such a ratings disappointment for NBC," Gross writes in *The Making of the Trek Films*, "that the final episode, 'Turnabout Intruder,' was not aired until the summer reruns of 1970."<sup>41</sup> With *Star Trek* officially off the air and into syndication, interest in the series grew. The famous lunar landings happened in the summer of 1969 and suddenly the idea of traveling in outer space didn't seem too far-fetched, but *Star Trek* had already completed its three year run. "Network cancellation was the best thing that could have ever happened to *Star Trek*," Gross goes on. "Had NBC renewed for a fourth or even fifth year, the series would have undoubtedly continued to chug along...and it would have undoubtedly faded into the annals of television history."<sup>42</sup>

In January of 1972, the first *Star Trek* convention was held in New York cities. Episodes were shown, merchandise was available, and fans talked to the creative forces behind *Star Trek*. Joan Winston was one of the fans who helped put together the first con and expected only three to four hundred people to show up.<sup>43</sup> Instead, over two thousand fans were packed into the Statler Hilton. Winston said:

We did it. Our January 1972 convention did it. We lit the fuse, and fandom burst into flame. Up until that time, *Star Trek* fandom had been underground. Fans here and there all over the country, printing their fan magazines, holding club meetings, and each thinking they were the only ones. The publicity our convention received appeared in hundreds of papers all over the United States and around the world. Thousands and thousands of fans discovered a most marvelous fact: They were *not* alone.<sup>44</sup>

Each year, the number of fans grew by the thousands, from two thousand in 1972, six to seven thousand in 1973, to ten to fourteen thousand in 1974. Paramount executives had been watching with mild interest. Finally, the costly series that proved to be such a ratings "dog" began making money from the "stripping" of the series, or syndicating the episodes to independent stations who could air the show every night. Although the syndication started in the fall of 1970 and they received a return on their investment, Paramount did not make any moves toward revival until 1973.

It was the animation companies who approached Roddenberry and Paramount about doing a Saturday morning cartoon series. Filmation won the bid to produce the animated series, and Roddenberry and Paramount liked the idea enough to have the original cast signed to provide the voices of their animated counter-parts. Dorothy Fontana and other writers involved with the original series were brought in and twenty-two well crafted episodes were filmed and shown in the fall of 1973. Again, the series had trouble with ratings and it only lasted one season. "Unfortunately, like its predecessor, *Star Trek Animated* was canceled prematurely, with Roddenberry and the original cast going their separate ways, apparently forever, though *Star Trek* fandom certainly lived on," comments Gross.<sup>45</sup>

Roddenberry produced several pilots for TV, all leaning heavily towards science fiction, but none became a series. The original cast went on to do other projects, but Doohan, Nichols, Takei, and Koenig found themselves typecast as their *Star Trek* characters. Shatner, Nimoy, and Kelley achieved minimal success outside of *Star Trek*, but all the cast were still remembered by the roles they played in the series.

On the other hand, Del-Rey books began publishing novelizations of the original series episodes, fans began writing their own fiction, clubs were popping up all over the United States, and conventions were packed to capacity all because of "the little science fiction show that refused to die."<sup>46</sup>

Nineteen seventy-six marked the tenth anniversary of *Star Trek*'s debut and fans kept trying to pressure Paramount into a live action series. While the United States was preparing for its first space shuttle launch, President Gerald Ford was avalanched with letters from *Star Trek* fans asking that the name of the shuttle be *Enterprise*. Ford made it so.

Subsequently, Paramount realized that they had an untapped resource: the fans of *Star Trek*. Man had landed on the moon, there was such a thing as a space shuttle, and there was an audience craving science fiction television. Paramount had toyed with the idea of producing a movie in 1976, but decided to try *Star Trek* on television again. The executives wanted to begin a fourth network to compete with NBC, CBS, and ABC. Since the studio produced both movies and television series, they had a stockpile of movies to use and several possible series ideas from writers such as Roddenberry. It was a way to increase revenue by relying on materials that Paramount already had. They had all the rights to the *Star Trek* franchise when they bought out Desilu in 1968 and what better way to help start off a fourth network but with a revived series that had a large viewing audience? The network's base was independent television stations who agreed to broadcast certain programs during certain hours.<sup>47</sup>

Roddenberry began work on the *Star Trek II* "bible"--the writing and direction guideline for the new series that featured characters, races, enemies, and set descriptions and the subjects for scripts that were allowed or unacceptable. All of the original cast was signed to the *Star Trek II* weekly series except for Leonard Nimoy (Spock), who had opted to stay out because of personal and legal reasons. With the science/first officer Spock gone, two new characters were created to fulfill the role: Xon would be a full-blooded Vulcan science officer and Commander Will Decker would serve as the first officer. The final addition to the cast was Lieutenant Ilia who was a bald Deltan. Deltans were known for their sexuality and were sworn to celibacy if they were to leave their home planet, but she and Decker had a previous romantic involvement. Scripts were being written, the *Star Trek II* bible was finished, and sets built. Suddenly, Paramount decided that they didn't want a television show, but they wanted a movie.<sup>48</sup>

Starting a network was a big risk, especially when the cornerstone series was going to be expensive to produce. Moreover, two blockbuster science fiction films, George Lucas's *Star Wars* and Stephen Spielberg's *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, came out in 1977 and broke all types of box office records. It was an eye-opening reminder to Paramount that money could be made from films and the subsequent merchandising. *Star Wars* set new standards on special effects which were provided by Industrial Light and Magic, and *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* proved that a science fiction movie could be serious and not depend solely on space battles to do well at the box office. *Buck Rogers in the 25th Century* and *Battlestar Galactica* were both television series that tried to cash in on the new science fiction trend and both of these shows had network affiliation. Although the *Star Trek* series would have an established audience, unlike the other shows, the market would be saturated with space-oriented science fiction shows. The

risk Paramount wanted to take was with films where more money could be made.

### *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*

On March 28, 1979, *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* was officially announced. Again, the original cast was signed to do the movie, and this time Leonard Nimoy would reprise his role as Spock. David Gautreaux had been signed as the Vulcan science officer Xon who was to replace Spock in the *Star Trek II* series, but told Roddenberry that he didn't want his character to be the bell hop for Mr. Spock in the film; so, Xon was written out of the film.

Decker and Ilia survived the change from series to film, but Decker's relationship with Kirk was altered. Instead of Decker being ready to lay down his life for Kirk out of loyalty and near hero-worshipping, the first officer was the commander of the Enterprise and resented the fact that Kirk, now an admiral who had served two years behind a desk after the original series, took over command of the ship.

Like the original series, production problems were a huge factor in the making of *The Motion Picture*. First, the original fifteen million dollar budget ballooned into over forty-four million dollars because of an incomplete script and expensive, state of the art special effects. Harold Livingston, who is credited as co-writing the screenplay with Roddenberry, quit *The Motion Picture* project three times during production because he could not get along with Roddenberry. Livingston wanted to update the views of the *Star Trek* crew while Roddenberry held steadfastly onto the ideals that were set in the Sixties. They also fought about who would receive screen credit for writing the screenplay, but it was Alan Dean Foster who wrote the original story from a one page premise by Roddenberry.<sup>49</sup> According to Foster, he was initially denied screen credit for the film. After a long debate, Foster received the sole story credit and Livingston received the screenplay credit.

"Considering the critical scorning that *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* received, it hardly seems to have been worth all the battles," comments Gross.<sup>50</sup> The special effects were state of the art, on par with Lucas's *Star Wars*, but the story didn't rate nearly as well as Spielberg's serious and thoughtful *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*. Shatner admits that the cast didn't know how the story was going to end all through production, mainly because production started while it was still unfinished.<sup>51</sup>

*The Motion Picture*, released in 1979, was seen as a direct rip-off of "The Changeling," a second season episode written by John Meredyth Lucas.<sup>52</sup> Both scripts involved a lost Earth probe (Voyager in *The Motion Picture* and Nomad in the original series) that had gained enough power to make it a threat to the ship (and the universe) and was searching for its "creator." In "The Changeling," Kirk was mistakenly identified as the creator Roykirk and Spock mind-melded with the machine (essentially was able to read its mind by touching it). Kirk had to trick Nomad into destroying itself by convincing the machine that it had made a mistake.

In *The Motion Picture*, the probe had evolved into a life form known as V'ger that was returning to Earth to find out who its creator was. Again, Spock felt compelled to become one with it but it was Ilia who it initially absorbed into itself (presumably to communicate better with humans). Instead of Spock mind-melding with it or Kirk outwitting it, Decker joins Ilia and V'ger so that V'ger could touch its "creator."

The movie made over one hundred forty-five million dollars in its initial release, but it did not fare well with the critics. Gross writes that "the powers that be decided to remake *Star Trek* by violating every principal the series' popularity was based."<sup>53</sup> He goes on to point out that the plot was confusing and pointless. Andy Harman states, "Even with a multi-zillion dollar



budget, they still couldn't keep it from being boring."<sup>54</sup> Fans dubbed *The Motion Picture* as *The Motionless Picture* and it was considered the worst of the worst, but it still made money because of merchandising. Paramount knew that they had made the right decision by going with a movie.

#### *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan: The "Space Seed" that Flourished*

The hardest thing that *Star Trek II* had to overcome were the memories of the disaster of *The Motion Picture*, both in budget and the fact that the film focused more on special effects than on actual plot. Paramount wanted to do a second film because of the commercial success of *The Motion Picture* and Roddenberry had already started working on a second script. However, Roddenberry was given the title of executive consultant and did not have any direct control over the new *Star Trek* movie. He could only approve the scripts.

Harve Bennett was brought in as executive producer and was told to produce a movie whose budget was under forty-five million dollars. Bennett's background was in television, producing the miniseries *From Here to Eternity* among others, and "it was the approach Paramount wanted him to take."<sup>55</sup> Robert Sallin, a veteran of critically acclaimed television commercials, was hired by Bennett to be the producer and was also responsible for making *Star Trek II* "quickly and cheaply."<sup>56</sup> Both he and Bennett focused on the problems of *The Motion Picture* and realized that the film had left out the most important factor of *Star Trek*--characters. It was Bennett, Sallin, and art director Michael Minor who started working on a script for the sequel.

Minor provided the idea of the terraforming to Bennett, who instantly loved the idea. Minor comments:

The Federation is involved with playing God, but at the same time, trying to take barren dead planets and convert them into lovely worlds. Harve [Bennett] like the idea a lot. At the story conference the next day, he came over, hugged me, and said "You saved *Star Trek*!"<sup>57</sup>

Originally titled the *Omega Project*, the idea of a device that could be used for both creation and destruction was a key element in *Star Trek II*. Omega was eventually renamed Genesis.

Bennett, Minor, and Sallin wanted to include the fact that the cast had aged and that crew was not the same group of people from fifteen years ago. *The Motion Picture* had ignored that fact, but the writers wanted to capitalize on it. Sallin explains it simply as Kirk having a mid-life crisis, complicated by the fact that he meets up with his son, David, who he'd stayed away from because of his mother's (Carol Marcus) request.

It was Bennett who wanted to use Khan Noonian Singh from the original series episode "Space Seed" as the main villain and he wrote the one page outline called *Star Trek: The War of the Generations*.<sup>58</sup> He enlisted the help of Jack Sowards, who was a movie-of-the-week writer, to assist him with the screenplay. But while the production team was steadily gaining momentum, Leonard Nimoy had decided that he wasn't going to do a second *Star Trek* movie. The disaster of the first film enforced his fears of being typecast, and Nimoy had stated that he had no interest in doing a second movie. He had also been frustrated with the lack of organization and the way the characters were treated in *The Motion Picture*. Both Bennett and Soward knew they had to have the Spock character for the second film and they began to brainstorm. One of the key elements in *Star Trek II* was born from trying to figure out a way to get Nimoy interested in doing the movie.

Most notable among them [the ideas that Soward gave to Bennett] was the idea of killing the Spock character as a means of enticing Leonard Nimoy to star in the

film....<sup>59</sup>

The idea worked and Nimoy agreed to do the second film.

Nicholas Meyer, who had directed *Time After Time* and written both the book and screenplay of *The Seven Percent Solution*, was brought in to direct the movie. He also helped smooth out the rough edges of the screenplay and emphasized that besides the Genesis Project as the science fiction element, "its [*Star Trek II*] themes are entirely earthbound--death, aging, friendship."<sup>60</sup>

While the script was on the verge of completion, Meyer ran into the problem of two of the original series' actors wanting to jump ship. George Takei and DeForest Kelley were not satisfied with the way their characters had been written. Takei in particular resented having his character demoted to a "talking prop."<sup>61</sup> Bennett had added some scenes to the script that featured Sulu, but Takei was still unhappy. He agreed to film the movie's opening scenes in the simulation room, although by the time *Star Trek II* was finished, the scenes that were added to woo Takei back ended up on the cutting room floor.<sup>62</sup> Kelley, on the other hand, received a much better deal. Meyer rewrote key scenes and, according to Kelley, essentially made *Star Trek II* more like the original series than *The Motion Picture* or the original *Star Trek II* script. He liked the changes and he stayed on.

Ricardo Montalban had been recruited to reprise his role of Khan and four new characters were added to the Trek lore: Carol Marcus (Bibi Besch), David Marcus (Merritt Butrick), Lt. Saavik (Kirstie Alley). Carol and David were Kirk's only close family at the time, and Lieutenant Saavik was a half-Romulan, half-Vulcan female whose mentor was Captain Spock.

*Star Trek II*'s subtitle had many incarnations: *The Omega Project*, *The War of the Generations*, *Worlds That Never Were*, and *The Undiscovered Country*, and Meyer particularly liked the last one. The studio rejected *The Undiscovered Country* in favor of *The Wrath of Khan* which Meyer thought was "trashy and foolish sounding."<sup>63</sup> Released in 1982, the cast was excited about how well the movie turned out particularly because of Ricardo Montalban's Khan versus William Shatner's Kirk. One of the few people not overly impressed with the film was Roddenberry:

Montalban saved their ass. Khan was not written as that exciting of a character, he was rather flimsy. The Khan in the TV episode was a much deeper and better character than the movie Khan, except Montalban pulled it off.<sup>64</sup>

There was also his dispute over Kirk killing the life form that Khan had used to render Chekov submissive. Roddenberry says:

Now how dare he destroy a life form that had never been seen before! It needs studying. They had him [Kirk] act like an old woman trampling on a tarantula. Now that's not the Kirk we built up for three years.<sup>65</sup>

Despite Roddenberry's problems with *The Wrath of Khan* and the fact that the movie grossed a little more than half of what *The Motion Picture* did, it was deemed a critical success. Nimoy's improvisation during Spock's death scene (Spock placed his hand on McCoy's face and said, "Remember") set the stage for the next movie.

### *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*: Part Two of the Trilogy that Never Meant to Be

Although Nimoy denied the fact that he set up the Spock death scene in *The Wrath of Khan* so that there would be a sequel, the mysterious "Remember" uttered when Spock placed his hand on McCoy's face started up the idea mill for the third *Star Trek* movie. Fans never

doubted the fact that there wasn't going to be a third movie and that Spock was not going to stay dead. Paramount had killed off one of the most popular, if not *the* most popular, character in *Star Trek* and felt that it would be idiotic if they didn't resurrect him.

Bennett was called in again to write a script, but this time he wrote solo. He commented that it was the easiest one he had to write because it was a direct continuation of *The Wrath of Khan*.<sup>66</sup> Diving into the depths of Vulcan mysticism, Bennett used the idea of *katra* or the spiritual essence of a Vulcan as the vehicle for another adventure. *The Wrath of Khan* had set up many loose ends that needed to be tied up: Spock's death, his body on the Genesis planet, Kirk's son, Saavik, and the Genesis planet and device. By using the "Remember" scene from *The Wrath of Khan* to plant Spock's *katra* into McCoy's mind, Bennett remarked that the story fell into place easily.

Sarek, Spock's father, meets with Kirk back on Earth in search of Spock's *katra*. When Kirk admits that he has no knowledge of the *katra*, both of them review the ship's logs of Spock's death and discover that McCoy is the *katra* keeper, but McCoy has been arrested for trying to charter a ship to the Genesis planet, which has become an off-limit topic since the crew's return to Earth. Kirk enlists the aid of Sulu, Scotty, Chekov, and Uhura to free McCoy from a holding cell and hijack the E. Uhura is the only one to remain behind on Earth; she wishes the rest of the crew good luck, and travels to Vulcan to await their return.

Meanwhile, the *USS Grissom* is conducting scientific research of the Genesis planet and both Saavik and David are members of that crew. When they detect lifesigns down on the planet, they beam down and discover that Spock's casket is empty and that there is a young Vulcan male. While Saavik and David discuss the effects of Genesis on both the planet and on Spock, a Klingon ship appears and destroys the *Grissom*. Both Saavik and David are stranded on the planet and the Klingon commander wants to know the secrets of the Genesis "weapon."

The E and her crew of 5 arrive on the scene and the E is immediately disabled by the Klingon ship. Saavik, David, and young Spock are being held hostage and the Klingon commander, Kurge, wants Kirk to tell him about the Genesis device. Kirk at first refuses and Kurge orders the death of one of the hostages--David. Kirk surrenders and agrees to beam over to the ship to tell the commander about Genesis, but he sets the E's self destruct device so that the Klingons could never get their hands on a Federation ship. Kirk and crew beam down to Genesis and watch the Enterprise blow up and burn up in the atmosphere.

For Bennett, it was a matter of balance in action--Kirk wanted to bring Spock back to Vulcan but there was a price: his son and the E. "The reason David dies, structurally, is because he's messed with mother nature," Bennett states.<sup>67</sup> David, like his father, changed the rules so that he could accomplish something quickly. He had put proto-matter into the Genesis matrix to speed the processes along and also to work out a few kinks in the programming. Saavik tells David that he is "just like your father" when she finds out, but David had told no one else about what he did. David's death causes one of the strongest emotional responses from Kirk audiences have ever seen. His litany of "You Klingon bastard. You killed my son" repeated over and over again drive the point home that "it was the moment where Kirk realizes he has lost a good portion of the fight with the Klingons because they have in their hands everything he loves or cares about."<sup>68</sup>

Blowing up the E, on the other hand, caused a much greater stir than David's death.

The loss of the E was the big risk in the script, the big surprise, though word of it leaked to the fans and campaigns, not unlike the ones to save Spock, were begun to save the E from its demise.<sup>69</sup>

Kirk's love-hate relationship with the ship was touched upon several times during the original series, and he had admitted that he was married to it. Kirk Houser comments:

As they [the E crew] were watching the Big E [*Enterprise*] fry in the atmosphere, and Kirk asked, "What have I done, etc..." I thought to myself -- You just made a few million trekkers wet their pants....<sup>70</sup>

To Bennett, the E was Kirk's sacrifice, his no-win scenario that he avoided in *The Wrath of Khan*, and it was the only logical thing to do.

While the problems with David were solved ultimately by the character's death, Bennett still wondered what to do with Carol Marcus, and since Spock would be brought back to Vulcan, it was only logical that his human mother, Amanda, would be there with Sarek.<sup>71</sup> He admitted, however, that he didn't want to deal with either one, feeling that both Carol's and Amanda's emotional responses would slow the script and hurt the intensity of the scenes; so, he left them both out.

The script was falling into place easier than *The Motion Picture* or *The Wrath of Khan* and although there was another budget limitation, it did not pose a problem. One of the biggest differences between the first two movies and this one was Leonard Nimoy's feelings about the project. Nimoy had refused to play Spock in the revival television series, but agreed to do the film with little problem, and he again refused to do *Star Trek II* until he was assured that his character was to be killed off. After both films, Nimoy felt that he "[knew] more about *Star Trek* than either of them [directors Robert Wise from *The Motion Picture* and Nicholas Meyer from *The Wrath of Khan*]."<sup>72</sup> Nimoy wanted to do more than just act, he wanted to direct, and Paramount agreed to it.

The clash between Nimoy and Shatner was inevitable, but the confrontation took place before the final draft of the film was finished. Shatner wanted to play more key roles and have more film time during critical scenes between Spock and McCoy. Both Nimoy and Bennett said no, and after a short discussion, Shatner agreed that he should stay out of the scenes.<sup>73</sup> Although the rest of the cast was leery about the former co-star turned director at first, there were no problems among them.

The film came in under budget, opened to positive critical reviews (although they were not as good as *The Wrath of Khan's*), and grossed as much as *The Wrath of Khan*. Edward Gross notes that it is the closest film to the original series in terms of characterization and focus because each of the cast had his or her moment to shine.<sup>74</sup> Fan reaction was mixed to the film, though. Sherry Hopper says, "it may not be my ultimate [favorite], but I put *The Search for Spock* up pretty high because of a lot of elements," and those elements are the characterization, the finest acting Shatner's ever done, and the sight of Scotty, Chekov, Sulu, McCoy, and Kirk watching the E's fiery descent into Genesis' atmosphere.<sup>75</sup> "Nothing could approach the solid characterizations we watched in *Star Trek-III*," she adds.<sup>76</sup> Other fans strongly disliked the film because it negated everything that was done in *The Wrath of Khan* and *The Motion Picture*. David is introduced and then killed, Genesis creates a planet but it is unstable and it destroys itself, Spock dies but is revived, and the E, which went under major refits from the original series to *The Motion Picture*, has been destroyed. For them, the movie is weakened considerably because of those points.

One thing remained, however. Spock's body was reunited with his *katra*, but the E crew had broken direct orders by going to the Genesis planet, sabotaged a fleet vessel (the *USS Excelsior*) so that it would not pursue the E to the Genesis planet, and destroyed the E. The

movie ends with the tag line "The Adventure Continues..." and the fourth movie was almost immediately under production.

#### *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home: The Star Trek Comedy Hour*

Like *The Wrath of Khan*, *The Search for Spock* left a lot of unanswered questions. Spock was healed, but he wasn't the same character that was introduced back in 1966 or in *The Wrath of Khan*. The E crew used a stolen Klingon vessel to get Spock back to Vulcan and they were considered renegades by both the Federation and the Klingons. Things were not as easy to put together as *The Search for Spock* had been. First of all, Shatner refused to return as Kirk unless he was given a considerable pay increase. Nimoy had no trouble with securing the position of director for the fourth movie, but Bennett did not want to write the entire screenplay for it. While they were searching for a writer, Eddie Murphy expressed a strong interest in playing a part in the movie as well. Nimoy and Bennett had an idea in hand, but didn't know what to do with it.<sup>77</sup>

While Nimoy and Bennett waited to hear the outcome of Shatner's demand in increased salary, they worked on a Starfleet Academy story, a prequel to the original series that showed a young Kirk and crew before they came together on the E, that would not involve Shatner at all. Once the money was approved and Shatner was ready to do the fourth film, the idea was immediately dropped.<sup>78</sup> After that, Bennett and Nimoy settled on Steve Meerson and Peter Krikes to write the screenplay for the movie.

Meerson and Krikes worked on the outline given to them by Bennett and Nimoy. An alien probe travels to Earth and creates enormous amounts of environmental damage, so much in fact that ships are ordered away from Earth. On their return from their Vulcan exile, Kirk and company discover what the probe is looking for--a pair of humpback whales--and realize that they must travel back in time to the late 20th century because the whales had been hunted into extinction. The crew encounter various cultural and technological differences in their visit to 20th century Earth and risk almost everything to return to back to the future with a pair of humpback whales.

Like *The Motion Picture*, major revisions took place between Meerson and Krikes's script and what finally went on screen. Bennett and Nicholas Meyer rewrote the final version in 20 days, and the lead writing credits were originally going to them.<sup>79</sup> Meerson and Krikes were not pleased at all, asked for the Writer's Guild to intervene, and claimed that Bennett told Paramount one thing, told them something else, and then denied both. Eventually, Meerson and Krikes were listed first for the screenplay writing credits and Bennett and Meyer second.

There was one other major dispute that disrupted the *Star Trek* set--the falling out between Nimoy and Bennett. Bennett claimed that he was emotionally beat up by Nimoy, but Nimoy made no comment to the press over the details. One insider reported that Bennett had been barred from the set as well, but it did not stop the upbeat feel of the film.<sup>80</sup>

After three very serious films, *The Voyage Home* took a different turn, relying on tongue-in-cheek humor that earmarked favorite the original series episodes such as "Trouble with Tribbles" and "A Piece of the Action." Also added to the film was marine biologist Dr. Gillian Taylor, (Catherine Hicks) who is Kirk's first love interest in any of the films.

Despite the problems with Shatner's salary, screenwriting credits, and Bennett's dispute with Nimoy, *The Voyage Home* grossed over \$126 million when it was released in 1986.<sup>81</sup> While it is one of the most popular *Star Trek* films with the fans, Gail Sakurai and Andy Harman have trouble because it "messed with history so much that it is laughable."<sup>82</sup> Sakurai goes on to

argue:

...they did it ON PURPOSE to get cheap laughs! And what is worse is that no one involved with that film will even acknowledge that they blatantly violated some of the most fundamental precepts of the Trek universe.<sup>83</sup>

*The Voyage Home* ended with the crew being absolved of the charges against them, Kirk being demoted from admiral to captain, and Kirk being given command of the *USS Enterprise* NCC-1701-A. For Shatner, the critical and financial success of *The Voyage Home* meant one thing: a fifth movie.

#### *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier: The Search for Something*

One of the agreements in Shatner's contract for *The Voyage Home* included the opportunity for him to direct the fifth movie and after the fourth movie finished filming, he already had ideas for his own screenplay. Almost immediately, however, Shatner ran into problems.

The critical and box office success of *The Voyage Home* was difficult to follow up to. There had been no loose ends to tie up as with *The Wrath of Khan* and *The Search for Spock*, and *The Voyage Home* had "achieved its goal of being the much sought after 'cross-over film;' a Trek film that appealed to the mainstream audience."<sup>84</sup> Eric Von Lustbader, author of *Ninja*, was approached to do the screenplay, but wanted too much money and was rejected by Paramount. Shatner and Paramount wanted Bennett to produce the fifth film, and Bennett at first refused. He and Shatner then met for several hours and Bennett agreed to produce the film, but had reservations about the story idea. Bennett felt that the premise, the E crew searching and meeting God, was "faulty" and something that a person would read in *TV Guide*. The audience would be one step ahead of the story at all times because they knew that the crew was not going to actually meet God, only someone or something that was impersonating God.<sup>85</sup>

David Loughery of *Dreamscape* fame was brought in to do the screenplay to Shatner's "An Act of Love" outline which had been approved by Paramount. Edward Gross sums up the plot:

...[it deals] with the E being commandeered by a rogue Vulcan, Sybok, and being led into a world beyond the Great Barrier where they encounter God, who turns out to be the Devil.<sup>86</sup>

The outline was "a little too dark," remarks Loughery, and Paramount "wanted to make sure that we retained as much humor and fun as possible."<sup>87</sup> Roddenberry, serving his part as executive consultant, did not like the encounter with God theme at all, although back in 1976, he had written the proposed *Star Trek* movie script *The God Thing*, which dealt with similar themes.<sup>88</sup>

Loughery and Bennett tackled the next draft without Shatner, who was acting in *Voice of the Planet*, and when Shatner returned, he felt that Loughery and Bennett had gone too far in rewriting the script, but eventually agreed to it. In their version, Sybok is Spock's half-brother and has enormous mental powers. He gains his followers by allowing people to purge their personal pain, and even persuades McCoy and Spock to join him. Kirk is left to take on Sybok alone. DeForest Kelley and Leonard Nimoy objected to the portrayals of their characters as betraying Kirk. The scene was rewritten to have McCoy and Spock hold out from Sybok's persuasion and both actors felt better about it.<sup>89</sup>

Another flood of problems hit Shatner as the final draft was written. Although the 1988 Writer's Guide strike lasted for six months and held up production of films and television, the

script had been finished shortly before that. Nimoy had accepted a directing assignment on *The Good Mother* while waiting for the movie to develop, and caused a delay of several months. The film had gone over budget in Paramount's opinion; so, severe cuts were made. Chaos in production caused Shatner's complicated and very conceptualized plot to be significantly pared down, and the budget crunch caused Bennett to change special effects companies from Industrial Light and Magic, which had handled all the *Star Trek* films, to Associates and Ferren.<sup>90</sup>

When *The Final Frontier* was released in 1989, the reviews were terrible and the film grossed just under \$50 million. While Gross balances the problems with the script and directing with all the production problems Shatner encountered, he comments that Shatner didn't have nearly the skill or the confidence that Nimoy had in directing. Roddenberry simply commented, "No one person made it terrible, and no one wanted it to be terrible." James Doohan (Scotty) did not have anything nice to say about Shatner after the release of *Star Trek V*. He was upset that he only had a very limited role, something he termed as "cheap shots" because his character wasn't developed like Kirk, McCoy, and Spock. "He tried to do too much for *Star Trek V*, and look what happened--it wasn't a good story and it wasn't a good movie." George Takei (Sulu) also was disappointed with the lack of his character's development and said, "we're really just there." Walter Koenig notes that *The Motion Picture* and *The Final Frontier* could be compared with each other because of production and writing problems, and felt that "it was an okay film."<sup>91</sup>

*The Final Frontier's* performance at the box office and the response to it were so bad that it was unlikely that another *Star Trek* movie would be made. The only thing that changed anyone's mind about the possibility of a sixth film was that *Star Trek's* 25th anniversary was in 1991.

#### *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country: Two Different Stories, Two Different Crews*

After *The Final Frontier* brought back strong memories of the disaster of *The Motion Picture*, Harve Bennett decided to work on the *Star Trek* prequel as a premise for *Star Trek VI* and asked David Loughery (who co-wrote *The Final Frontier*) to join him. They saw it as a back up plan, in case the studio could not get the original series cast members to star in the film. *Starfleet Academy* dealt with Kirk and Spock's first meeting and their first heroic actions in battling against slavery and racism. Roddenberry refused the idea. He feared that it would turn into a lampoon like the *Police Academy* films. the original series cast opposed the idea as well, and Walter Koenig (Chekov) and George Takei (Sulu) even enlisted the help of the *Star Trek* fans to organize a letter writing campaign against the story. Bennett's frustration was evident when he commented that he gave Paramount "the choice of doing another movie with the young kids [*Starfleet Academy*] or The Over-the-Hill Gang Returns to save the Galaxy."<sup>92</sup>

Neither Roddenberry nor the original cast had to worry, though, because Paramount rejected Bennett's and Loughery's idea in favor of recruiting Nicholas Meyer to write and direct *Star Trek VI*. Leonard Nimoy became the executive producer, replacing Harve Bennett, and also worked out the story with Lawrence Konner and Mark Rosenthal.<sup>93</sup> Nicholas Meyer and Denny Martin Flynn wrote the screenplay.

While *The Motion Picture* and *The Final Frontier* had focused on conceptualized plots and depended heavily on F/X and *The Wrath of Khan*, *The Search for Spock*, and *The Voyage Home* became the trilogy of Spock's death, resurrection, and healing, Nimoy decided to take a much stronger political tone in *Star Trek VI* than any of the other movies. The Cold War was ending between the United States and the Soviet Union, and Nimoy wanted the wall to fall between their 23rd century counterparts, the Federation and the Klingons.

A mass explosion on Praxis, a moon of Klingon homeworld, radically altered conditions on their homeworld so much that the Klingon race faces extinction within the next 50 years. They go to the Federation for help, and Spock, now an ambassador, volunteers Kirk and the E crew as the "olive branch." Ten years have passed since David's death in *The Search for Spock*, and Kirk, Scott, McCoy, Uhura, and Chekov are ready to retire while Sulu has been given command of his own ship, the *USS Excelsior*. Kirk is resentful that Spock volunteered him for the mission and still hasn't forgiven the Klingons for David's death.

After a disastrous dinner with the Klingon Chancellor Gorkon (David Warner), who is in favor of a loose alliance between the two governments, and his staff, Gorkon is assassinated by two people dressed in Starfleet anti-gravity gear and helmets on his own ship. To make matters worse, the Klingon ship was damaged by photon torpedoes that appeared to have been fired from the E. In a desperate attempt to save his ship, Kirk surrenders and beams over to the Klingon ship with McCoy, and McCoy attempts to save Gorkon's life. When Gorkon dies, McCoy and Kirk are arrested, put on trial, and are sentenced to life imprisonment on the ice planet Rura Penthe.

The E crew desperately search for a way to clear Kirk and McCoy's name, but they are helpless. Spock orders Valeris, a female Vulcan he has groomed to take his place on the E, to conduct the search and she turns up with several dead ends, including two murdered crew members. Spock orders the E on a heading to Rura Penthe in order to rescue Kirk, against the direct order not to do so from Starfleet Command and the new Klingon Chancellor, Azetbur, who was Gorkon's daughter.

Kirk and McCoy are rescued, and Valeris is revealed as the traitor on board the ship, in league with high ranking Federation officials. After that, the missing links begin filling in. It wasn't the E that fired on the Chancellor's vessel, but a prototype Klingon vessel that could fire when cloaked.<sup>94</sup> Another assassination attempt on both the Klingon Chancellor and the Federation president is planned at Camp Khitomer, where the peace talks have been moved. The E arrives just in time to destroy the prototype Klingon ship, and Kirk saves the Federation president's life, reveals the other traitors, and salvages the peace conference.

The only problems that *The Undiscovered Country* faced was casting. Nicholas Meyer wanted Kirstie Alley to reprise her role of Saavik in *The Wrath of Khan* for *The Undiscovered Country*, but she refused. Meyer did not want to hire Robin Curtis, *The Search for Spock*'s Saavik, for the role; so, he opted to change Saavik into Valeris and cast Kim Cattrall.<sup>95</sup> Rumors spread about George Takei's refusal to return as Sulu unless the character was given his own command and had much more screen time. Meyer gave Takei both, making Sulu and his ship, the *USS Excelsior* seen in *The Search for Spock*, Kirk's only supporters.

The film was made for \$27 million, \$6 million less than *The Final Frontier*, and grossed \$80 million from the box office following its December 1991 release. While Roddenberry, Nimoy, Meyer, and others were satisfied with the film, *The Undiscovered Country* received lukewarm reviews from critics and took a bashing from *Star Trek* fans who claim that Kirk was too much out of character for what took place. Gail Sakurai complains that Kirk's hatred of Klingons completely blew away everything that was established in *The Final Frontier* and the original series. In *The Final Frontier*, he "interacted with those Klingons just fine. He even invited them to a party aboard his ship, and made no mention at all of any distaste at having to be in such close quarters with them."<sup>96</sup> In *The Undiscovered Country*, he claims that he cannot forgive the Klingons for killing David ten years ago. As for the original series, Sakurai says:

...such cause and effect [David's death causes the hatred of all Klingons] *might* be



believable IN SOME PEOPLE. But NOT in James T. Kirk. Kirk has never had a prejudiced bone in his body... He was always making eloquent speeches about high principles such as equality and justice and tolerance. And what's more, he believed in what he said.<sup>97</sup>

She also cited that Kirk's backing down from a fist fight on Rura Penthe should never have happened.

...the Kirk in *The Undiscovered Country* wimps out, backs down, and tries to run away when confronted in prison by a large, belligerent alien. Only when forced into it does he put up a fight. The "old" Kirk would have never shown such weakness. He would have either tried to bluff, or come out swinging. Just being a few years older (and physically out of shape) doesn't begin to explain this drastic change in his personality.<sup>98</sup>

Sakurai doesn't blame the actors for what was done to their characters, but she does the script. She also points out that Spock is the only crew member that was not out of character in the film, and theorizes that it was because Nimoy had a major role in developing and writing the story.<sup>99</sup> Sherry Hopper believes that the writers were only trying to develop Kirk more, and "in some ways they succeeded, in others failed."<sup>100</sup>

As mentioned before, Roddenberry approved of the final version of the film, but did not survive to see it open in December. On October 24, 1991, Gene Roddenberry died. The ailing creator of *Star Trek* had suffered a series of strokes that left him partially paralyzed, and he had all but removed himself from the mechanics of *Star Trek*, leaving the work to Meyer, Nimoy, and a few other trusted men. A dedication to Roddenberry was added to the opening credits of the film.

From all reports, *The Undiscovered Country* is supposedly the last *Star Trek* film featuring the original series cast, but Shatner, Koenig, and Takei have started up campaigns to make a seventh feature film. Takei reportedly wants it to focus on the adventures of Sulu on the *Excelsior* while Shatner wants to feature the entire the original series crew. Fan reaction is mixed to the idea, but critics definitely think that the *Star Trek* movie legacy should be passed on to a new crew.

### *Star Trek: The Next Generation: Creating the Second Legend*

Nineteen eighty-six marked *Star Trek's* twentieth anniversary and the release of *The Voyage Home*, and Paramount approached Roddenberry that spring with a way to capitalize on the anniversary. They offered him a chance at doing a new series because they feared that their franchise may lose momentum knowing that the studio could only produce one movie every 2 years.<sup>101</sup> Studio executives suggested story lines, but Roddenberry turned them down. He remembered the problems of the original series, the long hours and the hassles with the network, and did not wish to repeat it.

There was also the concern over the original series cast: their availability, their age, and their salaries.<sup>102</sup> For *Star Trek IV* alone, Shatner and Nimoy received \$4 million each, Kelley received \$500,000, and the rest of the original series cast received \$125,000 each, and a weekly series only meant that the budget would have to be substantially higher than Paramount was willing to spend.<sup>103</sup> Only after Paramount promised that the new series would not be a sequel to the original series did Roddenberry agree to helm the show and he opted to set it sometime in the

near distant future of the original series.<sup>104</sup> Robert Justman, who produced the original series's first two seasons, began working with Roddenberry on the "bible" for the new series in November of 1986.

Besides Justman, Eddie Milkis, a former producer of the original series, Dorothy "D.C." Fontana, a writer for both the original series and the animated series, and David Gerrold, another writer from the original series, were brought in to help out with the new show. It was turned down by NBC, ABC, CBS, and the newly premiered Fox network, however what would have been a disaster 20 years ago turned into a plus for the new series.<sup>105</sup> It would be released through first-run syndication, meaning that it would be sold to independent stations to be shown at a set time designated by the station every week. For Roddenberry, it meant that there were no censors and he was in complete control of the series.

The title went through several changes before it was christened *Star Trek: The Next Generation* and originally it was set in the twenty-fifth-century on board the *USS Enterprise* NCC 1701-G. Gerrold lobbied for several flaws of the original series to be corrected in *The Next Generation*: the captain always beaming down into a dangerous situation, the five year mission and the impact it would have on those both single and married ("How did humans...deal with such a career?"), and the fact that the equipment on the starship was constantly breaking down. The first and last problems were overused plot devices, but provided easy drama week after week.<sup>106</sup>

Roddenberry had already changed the idea of the captain always beaming down into danger in the aborted *Star Trek II* series developed in the mid-1970's. He gave the risk-taking job to the first officer (then Will Decker) and had the captain stay on board the ship.<sup>107</sup> In response to the second problem that Gerrold pointed out, Roddenberry made the new E "outfitted for an assignment of ten years or longer. Because of that, officers and crew would be allowed to bring their families along..."<sup>108</sup> As for the malfunctioning technology, Roddenberry became "adamant in his insistence that the new series would not rely on failed technology as a plot device week after week."<sup>109</sup>

By March of 1987, several revisions had been made in *The Next Generation* "bible." First, the series would take place in the 24th century instead of the 25th, some 78 years after the original series, and secondly, the E would be the NCC 1701-D. Meanwhile, Fontana was writing the script for the series pilot called "Encounter at Farpoint" and sets were being built on the Paramount lot. Because of the *Star Trek* movies, there were already several standing sets that were inexpensively redressed for *The Next Generation*, saving several thousands of dollars in the production costs.<sup>110</sup>

A new universe had been created for *The Next Generation*, and while paying homage to the original series, the new characters were distinctly different from the original series. Fans initially balked at the idea of a new series complete with a new crew. After all, how could it be *Star Trek* without Kirk, Spock, and McCoy? They were the driving force behind the original series and, at that time, four movies.<sup>111</sup> The question of "What is *Star Trek*?" cropped up at conventions, in magazines, and on television, and fans wrote letters in attempts to make *The Next Generation* being a sequel to the original series. Roddenberry ignored the pleas because to him, *Star Trek* was about people first and foremost and it didn't matter if it was Kirk and Spock or Smith and Jones who were starring in the program. He had a formula that he used and crafted a set of characters that would work well within that formula.

The casting call that was sent out in December of 1986 listed eight characters: Captain

Julien Picard, Commander William Ryker (first officer), Lieutenant Commander Data (second officer), Lieutenant Deanna Troi (chief psychologist), Lieutenant Macha Hernandez (chief of security), Doctor Beverly Crusher (chief medical officer), Leslie Crusher (Beverly's daughter), and Lieutenant Geordi La Forge (helm officer).<sup>112</sup> While Kirk and company reflected Roddenberry's ideas and attitudes at age 45, Picard and crew reflect the changes in Roddenberry's beliefs in the 20 years that had passed.<sup>113</sup> Instead of the captain beaming down in the middle of a fight, being the first one to throw a punch, or wooing all the beautiful women in the galaxy, Captain Picard would be almost the exact opposite--an almost celibate diplomat.<sup>114</sup>

The basic outlines for the characters had been given, but like the original series, many changes were made between the initial casting call list and the writer's "bible" which was finalized in March of 1987. First of all, the captain's name was changed from Julien to Jean-Luc, the spelling of "Ryker" was altered to "Riker," and Deanna Troi was promoted from lieutenant to lieutenant commander.<sup>115</sup> Macha Hernandez was inspired by the tough, Hispanic female marine Vasquez from the 1986 movie *Aliens*, but both her name and her nationality were changed to Natasha "Tasha" Yar and she was of unspecified Ukrainian descent. Leslie Crusher first started off as a teenage boy named Wesley, Roddenberry's middle name, then rewritten as a teenage girl named Leslie, and finally back to Wesley. Geordi La Forge had been demoted to ensign and then promoted to lieutenant junior grade in the final writer's guide.<sup>116</sup>

Besides those changes, Roddenberry had to set apart these eight characters from the original series. In his drive to further distinguish the two *Star Trek* captains from one another, Roddenberry made Picard older, more cautious, and stricter, but with a strong respect for honor and duty.<sup>117</sup> The traits that made the new captain seem like a "burrhog" were tempered by those that made him more of a "romantic" stylized captain.<sup>118</sup> He was a reflection of the 1980's United States government under both Bush and Reagan because he "is governed by consensus and was far more concerned with foreign policy and external threats than with the domestic bliss which permeated every corridor of [the E]."<sup>119</sup>

Picard had also been given a stronger, more definitive background than Kirk ever had. He had commanded starships for over 22 years, his longest tenure on the *USS Stargazer*, and one of his best friends and officers, Jack Crusher, died under his command. Crusher's widow is the E's Chief Medical Officer Doctor Beverly Crusher and their son is Wesley. Many unresolved emotions still harbor over Jack's death, but Picard and Beverly are not antagonistic towards each other.<sup>120</sup>

Beverly Crusher and Picard knew each other before their assignment to the E, and they knew that they would be serving on the same ship together. There is a definite attraction between the two, but it, like Riker and Troi's, has been kept at the barest minimum. She has a "profound sense of medicine, the kind of skill that takes years to develop" and has very sharp "wit and intelligence" that makes her one of the most formidable doctors in Starfleet.<sup>121</sup>

But the qualities of Kirk's Kennedy-like captaincy were not lost, but only transferred to the first officer William Riker. Called "Number One" by the captain only, Riker shares "a very strong, solid relationship with the Captain" and "is pleasant looking with sex appeal."<sup>122</sup> He was pegged right off as the Kirk-in-training and a retread of William Decker from *The Motion Picture* and the aborted original series revival.

While Kirk's qualities were divided among Picard and Riker, Spock's characteristics were split between Lieutenant Commander Data and Deanna Troi. Data is a sentient android created by Doctor Noonian Soong and his greatest quest is to understand "what it is to be human."<sup>123</sup>

Because he is an android, he is capable of storing incredible amounts of information and also calculate statistics faster than the ship's computer. He has no emotions but tries to emulate them unlike Spock who had emotions but tried to suppress them.

Deanna Troi takes on the more spiritual characteristics of Spock because they have mental abilities and both are half-human. Troi's other side is Betazoid, a race of telepathic people, and she is empathic or able to sense other's emotions. She, like Spock, has to deal with her human side, but like Data, does not attempt to suppress it.<sup>124</sup> She and Riker at one time had a "tempestuous relationship" that "somehow didn't work," but "now that fire is only embers, a warm and comfortable friendship."<sup>125</sup>

Beverly's fifteen-year-old son, Wesley, has "an eidetic (photographic) memory in areas of starship engineering and related sciences" who "can not only visualize the starship's working parts but also the potential of the designs."<sup>126</sup> His incredible abilities would earn him a commission as an "acting-ensign" from Picard and he would also emphasize the concept of the E as a family and exploratory vessel than a military vessel.

Security chief Tasha Yar sees much of her lost childhood in Wesley: she had grown up on a failed space colony that was filled with drugs and rape gangs. She is an expert in martial arts, "treats Captain Picard and Number One [Riker] as if they were saints," and has a fierce protectiveness about the ship and her crew.<sup>127</sup> While Yar is often very serious, Lieutenant junior grade Geordi LaForge is "the starship's 'blithe spirit'" who was born without optical nerves. He wears a "Visual Instrument and Sensory Organ Replacement" or VISOR that allows the otherwise blind helm officer to see the entire electromagnetic spectrum and act as a "walking tricorder."<sup>128</sup>

During the evolution of the first season "bible" and the "Encounter at Farpoint" script, no mention was made of Worf, a "Klingon marine" that Justman, among others, had lobbied for. Roddenberry had a strict rule of not featuring "old races" from the original series in *The Next Generation*, but after realizing that the presence of a Klingon bridge officer would be the most obvious character difference between the original series and *The Next Generation*, he agreed to it.<sup>129</sup>

The most obvious visual difference between the original series and *The Next Generation* is the updated technology, spacious bridge, conference room, captain's office, the holodeck, sickbay, main engineering, captain's and crew quarters, turbolifts, transporter rooms, and cargo decks. Andrew Probert, whose design credits include television series *Battlestar Galactica* and *Airwolf* and the movie *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*, had worked on the *Enterprise* model from *The Motion Picture* and was signed on for the design staff.<sup>130</sup> Rick Sternbach who had worked on *The Motion Picture* as well as *The Last Starfighter* and the PBS series *Cosmos*, and Michael Okuda, whose design credits included *The Voyage Home* and *Flight of the Intruder*, were brought in as well to give *The Next Generation* its futuristic feel.<sup>131</sup>

The sets of *The Next Generation* were very impressive and extremely modern, and lacked the stark nakedness of the original series in order to further emphasize *The Next Generation's* non-battleship-sterile look. Communicators were changed into Federation insignias and attached right onto the uniforms while phasers looked like mini vacuum cleaners. The bulky, box style tricorders that were worn like a purse were reduced to fold up, hand held devices that could fit into the side pockets of the uniform. Gone were the switches, dials, and rows of blinking lights on the consoles, and they were replaced by flat, touch sensitive control panels while hypospays were modified to look more like inhalers than the original series ones.<sup>132</sup>

Three major new additions--the captain's office or ready room, replicators, and the holodeck--had their roots in the original series and the animated series. While it was assumed that Kirk had his own private office in the original series, the captain's ready room of *The Next Generation* is directly off the main bridge where Picard can retreat from the bridge to confer with Riker or another member of the bridge crew, receive and respond to private messages from a starbase or Starfleet, or to complete paperwork and leave the bridge under the command of a junior officer.

While replicators had been mentioned on the original series, the animated series, and in the movies, their widespread use of reproducing any inanimate object, from food to crystal wedding gifts to engineering components, did not happen until *The Next Generation*. Most medications as well as clothes and personal items could be readily produced. In the 24th century, there would be no need to pack a large suitcase because everything would be available to a person on board a Starfleet vessel.

The holodeck was an idea proposed back during the pre-production of the original series that was called the "rec room" and later became the focus of "The Practical Joker," one of the animated series episodes.<sup>133</sup> This "rec room" was "a holographic entertainment center...but the idea of combining transporters and replication with a hologram system was not fully developed and finally filmed until *The Next Generation* was born."<sup>134</sup> The holodeck can create a variety of settings, from a wooded glade to San Francisco circa 1940's to a version of London directly from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes. It can be used for training exercises, funeral ceremonies, and weddings, but overuse and misuse of the holodeck to fulfill personal fantasies of the crew can lead to "holodiction."<sup>135</sup>

The only set to escape major transformation was the transporter room. In paying homage to the original series, especially to Scotty, the room was only slightly modified in keeping with the 24th century decor, but the three controls that Scotty always slid upwards to transport to and from the ship remained the same, except that they were now three bars on the touch sensitive control pad.

While the sets and props were being finished for use in the "Encounter at Farpoint" screenplay, producer Eddie Milkis decided that he no longer wanted to be part of *The Next Generation* and was replaced by Rick Berman.<sup>136</sup> It was Berman and Justman who selected the actors and actresses for *The Next Generation* with Roddenberry only having to approve of their final decisions.

Justman chose Patrick Stewart, a London born member of the Royal Shakespeare Company, to be Captain Jean-Luc Picard. Stewart's screen credits included PBS's *I, Claudius* and minor roles in the movies *Excalibur*, *Dune*, and *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. His extensive work in the Royal Shakespeare Company only added to the aristocratic, almost royal demeanor of Captain Picard, but Roddenberry wasn't quick to accept him. After screening others for the role and considering Stewart for the part of Data, Roddenberry finally decided to go with Stewart as Picard, and tailored the role to Stewart's style.<sup>137</sup>

While Justman was trying to bring Stewart on as Picard, Jonathan Frakes of *North and South* television miniseries fame auditioned for the role of William Riker, and according to the Frakes, he received coaching on the side from Roddenberry himself.<sup>138</sup> The role of Data was awarded to on-stage and mime veteran Brent Spiner, whose most memorable television role was Bob Wheeler, "the luckless hick," on NBC's *Night Court*.<sup>139</sup> Another experienced mime who also served as a choreographer for Jim Henson's *Labyrinth*, Gates McFadden, was cast as Doctor Beverly Crusher.

British actress Marina Sirtis read for the role of the security chief, Macha Hernandez, and Denise Crosby, Bing Crosby's granddaughter, auditioned for the role of Troi. Berman, Justman, and Roddenberry liked both actresses, but it was Roddenberry who wanted Sirtis to be the exotic, alien counselor and Crosby to be the fiercely protective yet highly attractive security chief. Macha Hernandez was then changed to Natasha Yar and her nationality switched from Latin to Ukrainian to match Crosby's blonde hair and pale skin.<sup>140</sup>

The two most recognized names on the cast list were LeVar Burton of *Roots* and PBS's *Reading Rainbow* fame as Geordi LaForge and Wil Wheaton, fresh from his critically acclaimed role of Gordie in *Stand By Me*, as Wesley Crusher. Michael Dorn was the last actor signed on to *The Next Generation* as Worf, and originally the Klingon lieutenant would only be a recurring role, but after his appearance in "Encounter at Farpoint," his role was expanded to become a season regular.<sup>141</sup>

The final changes were made to the script, the media was flooded with advertising for *The Next Generation*, and the series debuted in the week of September 28, 1987.<sup>142</sup> It received lukewarm reviews from the critics and fans alike, many complaining that the relationship between Riker and Troi is almost exactly like Decker and Ilia's in *The Motion Picture*. Both couples had, at one time, been very close but all of them decided that their professional careers were more important. Another comparison was made between Data and Spock because of their similarities with being emotionless and driven by pure logic. Ratings, which had always haunted the original series, were not a problem for *The Next Generation*. The week pilot debuted, it had beaten its prime-time network competitors in the Nielsens.

As mentioned before, *The Next Generation* suffered its first casualty when producer Eddie Milkis bowed out of his contract. Roddenberry's heavy handed control over the developing, handling, and rewriting of the stories caused numerous original series veterans, now working on *The Next Generation*, to leave the roost during the first season. Sparks flew between Roddenberry and the original series stalwarts John D.F. Black and Fontana as well as Maurice Hurley and new comer Trace Torme. Their stories went under drastic rewrites with Roddenberry often taking off the harsh, dramatic edge and inserting a sickeningly sweet utopian vision of his 24th century.

Perhaps one of the biggest eyesores during the first season was "Justice," which was sufficiently altered enough to almost focus completely on sexuality when the original premise downplayed it. According to Altman, "Justice" had "a compelling storyline [that] is sabotaged by Roddenberry's annoying propensity to introduce God-like judgmental beings into the mix."<sup>143</sup> Gross comments that "once again, sex seems to be the overriding theme, which would not be so bad if it served some sort of purpose. It doesn't. Add to this the umpteenth God-machine that the E has come up against in space...."<sup>144</sup>

Writers were not the only people Roddenberry imported from the original series and the movies--four actors appeared in three episodes, but as different characters during the first season. Majel Barrett, who played Nurse Christine Chapel, was cast as Lwaxana Troi, a very formidable, eccentric, and fully telepathic woman who is the mother of Counselor Deanna Troi. She has been nicknamed the "Auntie Mame" of the universe and chases Picard down in an attempt to court him in "Haven." Judson Scott, who played Joachim in *The Wrath of Khan*, and Merritt Butrick, who played David Marcus in *The Wrath of Khan* and *The Search for Spock*, were again cast opposite each other as Sobi, a Brekkian trader who refuses to give up a valuable shipment of medication, and T'Jon, an Ornaran trader who is addicted (as well as the rest of his people) to the now useless medication, in "Symbiosis." DeForest Kelley made a special appearance in

"Encounter at Farpoint" as "the Admiral." His character was never given a name, but it is widely accepted that "the Admiral" is Leonard H. McCoy, now 137 years old and still has an adamant hate of transporters. Only Majel Barret would go on to reprise her role as Lwaxana Troi in subsequent seasons.

Even with all the "big names" of *Star Trek* behind *The Next Generation*, fans and critics balked at the recycling of the original series plot lines and also one character. Gross and Altman cite "The Naked Now" as a direct retread of "Naked Time," "Hide and Q" as the updated version of "Where No Man Has Gone Before," and "Home Soil" as a remake of "Devil in the Dark."<sup>145</sup> While the popularity of Worf, Picard, and Data was soaring, Wesley Crusher, the token teenager of the bridge crew, became a target of negative criticism for fans. Many strongly disliked the fifteen-year-old who had been granted an acting-ensign commission from Picard in "Where No One Has Gone Before." Their animosity towards the character grew after he had directly saved the ship in "The Naked Now," figured out the Ferengi's plan of driving Picard to madness in "The Battle," and other moments which led to one of *The Next Generation's* first plot stereotypes: Wesley saves the ship. At conventions, Anti-Wesley Crusher buttons read "Wesley Must Die!" and "Push Wesley out of the Airlock Fan Club," and at one point during the first season, fifteen-year-old Wheaton wanted to leave the show because of that negative reaction.<sup>146</sup> His character became the only regularly casted crew member of the original series and *The Next Generation* to receive such harsh criticism.

While Wheaton was contending with the Wesley bashers, Denise Crosby was unhappy that her character was not being developed and asked that she be let out of her six year contract so that she could pursue a film career. The studio agreed and "Skin of Evil" was written to kill off her character. Tasha Yar became "the first regular *Trek* character ever to be permanently killed off--the movies' resurrection of Spock notwithstanding."<sup>147</sup>

Unlike the original series, which had a very strong and focused first season, *The Next Generation* seemed to search for itself during the entire first season, trying to separate itself from the original series but keeping very close to the *Star Trek* universe. The result of that was an uneven mixture of episodes, some good, some bad, and some barely bearable.

One of the strongest episodes was "The Big Goodbye," which paid homage to 1940's detective pulp novels and also won the coveted Peabody Award for the "Best of the Best." Gross and Altman also cited "Where No One Has Gone Before" for character development; "11001001" for showcasing Riker, special effects, and the unique alien Binar; "Heart of Glory" for the first insightful look at Klingon culture; and "Conspiracy" for its special effects and also showing the "darker side of the 24th century."<sup>148</sup>

As the show developed through the first season, several of the characters underwent personality changes, especially Troi. In "Encounter at Farpoint," Troi's empathic abilities were so strong that it was almost intolerable to watch on film, but by mid-season, she could only feel emotions if she concentrated or if they were unbearably strong. Her character was so difficult to write that Troi did not appear in four episodes and was almost dropped in November of 1987.<sup>149</sup> Troi also underwent a costume and hairstyle change. In "Encounter at Farpoint," the counselor wore a "skant," a unisex, almost mini-skirt length uniform worn with knee-high black boots, and her hair was worn down. By the second episode "The Naked Now," she had been given a non-regulation, V-necked jumpsuit uniform and wore her hair up in a tight bun.<sup>150</sup>

The Ferengi, who made their debut in "The Last Outpost," were supposed to be the newest threat to the Federation, but as they developed, they became more of a comic foil than an enemy to be taken seriously. By the end of the first season, the ban against bringing back the

original series aliens had been lifted and the Romulans were reintroduced in "The Neutral Zone," which was the twenty-sixth show and season finale. It would be the Romulans who would become the greatest continuing threat during the next four seasons.

The Writer's Guide strike during the spring and summer of 1988 severely disrupted television's fall programming, and the number of episodes in *The Next Generation's* regular season dropped from 26 to 22. With the staff problems sorted out for the most part by the end of the first season, whatever momentum that *The Next Generation* had built because of the last two episodes, "Conspiracy" and "The Neutral Zone," and over the summer of 1988 because of reruns was quickly lost. Scrambles were made for scripts. In fact, the second season opener, "The Child," was a storyline leftover from the aborted *Star Trek* revival series from a decade before.<sup>151</sup>

Additions and departures from *The Next Generation* cast as well as Troi's, Wesley's, and Riker's new looks and character rank and position shuffles were key changes made during the opening to the second season. The aforementioned "The Child" introduced the new chief medical officer Dr. Katherine "Kate" Pulaski, played by original series veteran Diana Muldaur, as Beverly Crusher's replacement.

According to Rick Berman, there was a group of people who convinced Roddenberry that the character of Dr. Crusher wasn't developing in the right way, but it was not because of McFadden's acting ability.<sup>152</sup> McFadden's mysterious departure was reflected on the show since the only explanation given for Crusher's absences was that she had taken a position at Starfleet Medical. Pulaski was molded in the image of the original series's McCoy--wary of transporters and full of sharp, dry humor. While her edge was welcomed by many of the fans who were tired of the "big, happy, loving family" crew that may be seen as one of the downfalls of *The Next Generation*, Pulaski's constant derogatory comments about Data angered them. Data, after all, had become one of the most popular characters on the show, second only to Picard, and Pulaski's nips at Data's desire to be human were seen as a direct attack instead of a catalyst for Data to express himself.

Oscar winner Whoopi Goldberg had been a long time fan of the original series and credits Nichelle Nichols as being her childhood inspiration. Once she heard that Crosby was leaving during the first season, she contacted LeVar Burton and asked him to let the producers know that she wanted to join the cast. At first, they disbelieved the reports, but as second season approached, they realized that she was serious and so Guinan, the hostess of the newly designed Ten-Forward lounge set, became a recurring character.<sup>153</sup> Colm Meaney, who had been seen as a navigational officer in "Encounter at Farpoint" and a security officer in "Lonely Among Us," was stationed at the transporter in "The Child" and two other episodes before his character was officially named Chief O'Brien and appeared in seventeen of the twenty-two episodes.

Besides the new cast members and the new set, Troi was once again given a makeover both in wardrobe and in hair styles. Wesley Crusher was given a one-piece gray uniform to reflect his status as acting ensign, and Jonathan Frakes was allowed to keep the beard that he'd grown during the shows hiatus, giving Riker a more "nautical" look.<sup>154</sup>

Worf, who had been acting as Yar's replacement after her death, was officially made the chief of security and also received an updated costume change. The metallic cloth honor band that Worf wore throughout the first season paid homage to the Klingons from the original series, but was replaced with actual metal sash. Geordi LaForge was promoted from lieutenant junior grade to full lieutenant and also as chief engineer. Reasons behind LaForge's change from navigator to chief engineer were simple--Wesley would spend more time on the bridge at navigation as part of his training and they had no duty station for LaForge and, therefore, they



created one on the bridge.<sup>155</sup>

As the characters continued to evolve, Roddenberry's iron grip on the show lessened and Berman took more of an active role as co-executive producer with Maurice Hurley. Associate producer Peter Lauritson and line producer David Livingston continued in their positions from the first season. Tracy Torme relinquished his title of co-executive story editor after a dispute with Hurley over the script for "The Royale" and became the creative consultant, while Melinda Snodgrass became story editor after penning "The Measure of the Man."

Like the first season, *The Next Generation's* second season was just as rocky but delivered four strong episodes: "The Schizoid Man," "The Measure of the Man," "A Matter of Honor," and "Q Who?"<sup>156</sup> The first two were solid Data-focused shows that showcased Brent Spiner's talents and well written drama. "A Matter of Honor" gave Frakes another chance to shine as Riker, when the first officer is temporarily transferred to a Klingon ship as part of an officer exchange program. "Q Who?" marked John deLancie's third outing as the malevolent Q and is definitely deLancie's favorite episode because it was pure science fiction.<sup>157</sup> That episode is also the one that introduces the Borg, an "unstoppable, cybernetic super race" who cannot be reasoned with ("Resistance is futile").<sup>158</sup>

Perhaps one of the hardest to swallow factors about second season is the development of Pulaski. Although she is "perhaps less traditionally [sic] feminine" and "tough-minded and unsentimental," she was quickly established as the best in her field, her work being recognized in two episodes--"Samaritan Snare" and "Unnatural Selection" while Crusher had received no such vocal recognition in the first season.<sup>159</sup> Pulaski's friendship and respect of Worf came almost too quickly and unnaturally while her animosity towards Data was never fully explained beyond basic prejudice. Another problem could have been her character's personality being almost an exactly clone of McCoy's.

Muldaur only lasted one year on the show because of poor chemistry between her and the rest of the cast. Roddenberry did not want to bring in a third doctor; so, he opted to approach McFadden again about reprising her role as Beverly Crusher. After making that decision, Roddenberry almost backed away completely from the series, mostly because of his health, and he trusted Berman completely to carry on his vision. Maurice Hurley left at the end of the second season, disappointed with the lackluster, uneven episodes and the revolving door of writers. Berman blames Hurley for the huge turnover of writers during the second season and brought in Michael Wagner as coexecutive producer. Wagner then recommended Michael Piller, who co-wrote "Evolution" with Wagner, for his position. Piller took over after the third aired episode, "Who Watches the Watchers," of the third season.<sup>160</sup>

With Piller and Berman now at the helm of the show, *The Next Generation* produced some of the finest *Star Trek* episodes ever seen. The characters now had depth, quirks, and an obsession with poker (except for the captain, of course). LaForge again received a promotion between the second and third seasons, making him a lieutenant commander. Worf also was promoted, this time to a full lieutenant, between seasons as well while Wesley Crusher had to wait until the third to last episode to earn his promotion to full ensign and receive a regulation uniform.<sup>161</sup> All the crew, except for Troi and Wesley (during the first 22 episodes), received an updated wardrobe, getting rid of the one-piece spandex uniforms in favor of a two-piece wool tunic and pants. The average budget per episode was \$1.3 million, one of the highest in the industry, and seemed a far cry from the paltry \$200,000 for the original series.<sup>162</sup>

The three most popular episodes of *The Next Generation*, "Yesterday's Enterprise,"

"Sarek," and "Best of Both Worlds I," were produced during this season and all three featured returning characters and aliens. "Yesterday's Enterprise" deals with the view of the Federation if they had not made peace with the Klingons. The E was no longer an exploratory vessel but a battleship and Denise Crosby returned as Tasha Yar who had not died in this altered time line. Mark Lenard reprised his role as Sarek in the episode by the same name and marked the first time an original series character was featured in an episode.<sup>163</sup> "Best of Both Worlds I" is perhaps one of the greatest cliffhangers in television history. The indestructible Borg invade Federation space, assimilating everything in their path including Picard, and use Picard's knowledge of Starfleet operations to neutralize the E's attempt to stop the Borg ship.

The summer of 1990 was a tense one for fans. With Picard abducted and transformed by the Borg, rumors about Stewart leaving the show flew, although he had been signed on for six years. As for the production crew of *The Next Generation*, the horrors from the first and second season were all but eliminated with only minor changes and promotions from within. Despite all the problems with staffing plus the Writer's Guild strike, *The Next Generation* surpassed the original series by going on to a fourth season, breaking the original series's number of 79 episodes, and having the ratings success that the original series never had. *The Next Generation* was ranking number one in hour long, first-run syndicated series and in the top three over all syndicated series, dueling with ratings-heavies *Wheel of Fortune* and *Jeopardy!* for viewers.<sup>164</sup>

When the fourth season started up, Picard was restored to his former self, but a follow up episode entitled "Family" showed that he was not entirely healed from the experience. It would later come back to haunt him during a trail in "The Drumhead." As for the rest of the cast of *The Next Generation*, Whoopi Goldberg continued to make appearances as Guinan, and Colm Meaney continued in his role as Chief O'Brien who was given a first and middle name, Miles Edward, and married during the fourth season.<sup>165</sup> The biggest shakeup was the departure of Wil Wheaton as Wesley Crusher, coming at a time when his character had been slowly and quietly being accepted by the fans. Like Denise Crosby in the first season, he had been frustrated that his character had been severely underused and left the show on good terms both on and off film. Wesley Crusher was shipped off to Starfleet Academy, a long time goal of the character's since the middle of the first season, and would be able to return for subsequent appearances without the hoopla that surrounded Crosby's return.

*The Next Generation* had distinguished itself by not relying upon overused, inane soap opera plots, but Crosby's return as Tasha Yar's half-Romulan daughter Sela lead *The Next Generation* "through some of the most bizarre plot twists even Trek had ever come up with."<sup>166</sup> One thing that the original series did not use often but *The Next Generation* became reliant upon was continuity between the episodes and references to previous events.<sup>167</sup> The set up for the fourth season cliffhanger dealing with a Klingon civil war and Worf's part in it has its roots in first season's "Heart of Glory," second season's "The Emissary," third season's "Sins of the Father," and fourth season's "Reunion," "Data's Day," "The Drumhead," and "The Mind's Eye."

Although the cliffhanger and resolution, "Redemption I & II," lacked the nail-biting effect that "Best of Both Worlds" had obtained, the season featured another casting coup by *The Next Generation*. Leonard Nimoy expressed an interest in reprising his role as Spock for *The Next Generation* and producers quickly wrote the script. "Unification I & II" focused on Spock's desire to unite the Romulans with their ancestors, the Vulcans. Although it was one of the highest rated episodes, beating out major network series *60 Minutes*, *Roseanne*, and *Cheers*, critics and fans felt that Nimoy's on screen presence as Spock was did not leave a strong impression at all, unlike his appearances in the original series and the movies.<sup>168</sup> It was the

second half that featured Spock, and Altman remarks, "Leonard Nimoy apparently sleepwalks through the episode in what he must have considered a glorified commercial for *Star Trek VI*."<sup>169</sup>

Besides the landmark appearance by Nimoy in the episodes, "Unification I" aired in the week of November 4, 1991 was dedicated to Gene Roddenberry, who had passed away on October 24th. An interesting, yet sadly ironic scene in the first part, the tragic death of Sarek, Spock's father, paralleled the health problems and passing of the series creator.<sup>170</sup>

As if the writers suddenly remembered there were children on board the ship, the fifth season had more stories focused on children than any other season since the first. "Disaster," "New Ground," "Hero Worship," "Cost of Living," and "Imaginary Friend" reminded audiences that there were families on the E and other ships as well. Alexander, introduced as Worf's son in "Reunion," was featured in two of the five "kiddie episodes," making him the first recurring child character.<sup>171</sup> Another recurring character, Ensign Ro, was added in the episode by the same name. Her sharp edge added new life to the complacent bridge crew who got along famously with one another. Michelle Forbes, who played Dara in last season's "Half a Life," was asked to return to the series for a role originally created to fill in the gap on the bridge that Wheaton's departure made.<sup>172</sup>

By the end of the fifth season, rumors about the upcoming seasons flew. While "Unification I & II" was supposed to tie the events in *The Undiscovered Country* and *The Next Generation* together, the original series cast members began pushing for a seventh movie featuring their generation. The cast of *The Next Generation* had been signed for six seasons, but now the contracts were to be extended to seven, even eight, seasons allowing plenty of time for an original series movie to be made. While the debates on which crew was going to be starring in the next movie, *The Next Generation* scored another casting coup--Jimmy Doohan's Scotty beamed into the 24th century, literally. It was the second season in a row that an original series cast member starred in an episode, but unlike "Unification I & II" where nostalgia was shut out, "Relics" became a romp down *Star Trek* memory lane, even down to the holodeck-reproduced bridge of the original series E.

While *The Next Generation* trekked on, Berman and Piller began working on a spin-off series to *The Next Generation* before Roddenberry's death. Roddenberry approved of the idea of a run-down space station that was to be manned by Starfleet personnel. Ironically, three of *The Next Generation*'s recurring characters, O'Brien, his wife Keiko, and Ensign Ro, were slated to transfer from *The Next Generation* to the new series, *Deep Space Nine*. While Colm Meaney and Rosalind Chao accepted the contracts, Forbes held off even though her character was one of the lead roles. Eventually, she would turn down the offer and have only one appearance in the first ten episodes of *The Next Generation*'s sixth season.<sup>173</sup>

*Deep Space Nine* would have a harder edge, more unrefined than *The Next Generation*, and the characters, unlike the original series and *The Next Generation*, would not necessarily get along. It would be the first *Star Trek* series created without Roddenberry, but as mentioned before, he knew about the series before it was announced. *Deep Space Nine* would debut in January of 1993.

## Notes

1. "And the Children Shall Lead."
2. Edward Gross, *Trek Classic: 25 Years Later* (New York: Image Publishing, 1991), p. 6.
3. Gross, p. 7.
4. Gross, p. 6.
5. Gross, p. 8.
6. Stephen E. Whitfield and Gene Roddenberry, *The Making of Star Trek* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), pp. 37-8. The series that CBS referred to is *Lost in Space*.
7. Whitfield, p. 40.
8. Whitfield, pp. 22-3.
9. Whitfield, p. 28.
10. Whitfield, pp. 24-30.
11. Gross, p. 19.
12. Gross, p. 21.
13. Majel Barrett-Roddenberry, guest speaker, *Space Station Cincy Star Trek Convention*, Cincinnati, 1 Aug. 1992.
14. Whitfield, footnote p. 111. The variation in names for the captain of the *Enterprise* did not cause a stir in the fans. Those who created histories of the ship and crew merely listed April, Winter, and Pike as previous commanders of the *Enterprise* and they, with the exception of Winter, have been written about in novels and fan materials.
15. Whitfield, p. 216.
16. Whitfield, pp. 219-20.
17. Edward Gross and Mark A. Altman, *Great Birds of the Galaxy: Gene Roddenberry and the Creators of Trek* (New York: Image Publishing, 1992), p. 124.
18. Whitfield, pp. 215-6.
19. Whitfield, pp. 224-7.
20. Whitfield, p. 244.

21. Whitfield, pp. 239-40.
22. Gross, p. 29.
23. Whitfield, p. 253.
24. Gene Roddenberry, "Star Trek's Creator Recalls: My Favorite Voyages," *TV Guide*, 31 Aug 1991), p. 12.
25. Andy Harman, "Inner Light," *Spock's Adventure! BBS Spoiler! Conference* (Cincinnati: 11 June 1992), Message #28. *Spock's Adventure!* is a computer bulletin board system or BBS that allows users to send electronic mail to one another as well as participated in open discussion on various topics. This particular BBS focuses on *Star Trek*.
26. Gross, p. 123.
27. Gross, pp. 40-1.
28. Whitfield, pp. 250-1.
29. Gross, p. 71.
30. Gross, p. 71.
31. Nurse Christine Chapel (Majel Barrett) appeared in all three seasons while Yeoman Janice Rand (Grace Lee Whitley) only appeared in the first season. Both characters appeared in one or more of the ST movies.
32. Gross, pp. 80-1.
33. Gross, pg. 103.
34. Edward Gross, *The Making of the Trek Films*, (New York: Image Publishing, 1992), p. 51.
35. Gross, *Trek Classic*, p. 105.
36. Gail Sakurai and Andy Harman, "Best of TOS? She had to... 1/2," *Spock's Adventure! BBS Trek Talk Conference* (Cincinnati: 18 Oct 1992), Message # 590.
37. Sakurai, Message #590.
38. Sherry Hopper and Andy Harman, "Best TOS? 1/2," *Spock's Adventure! BBS Trek Talk Conference* (Cincinnati: 18 Oct 1992), Message #593.
39. Sakurai, Message #590.
40. Gross and Altman, *Great Birds*, p. 15.

41. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 1.
42. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 1.
43. Con is the abbreviated fan term for "convention."
44. Joan Winston, *The Making of Trek Conventions or How to Throw a Party for 12,000 of Your Most Intimate Friends* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday and Co., 1977), p. 9.
45. Gross and Altman, *Great Birds*, p. 28.
46. Gross and Altman, *Great Birds*, p. 28.
47. Paramount's fourth network plans were very similar to the Fox Network's which was started in the late 1980's.
48. Gross, *Trek Films*, pp. 14-30.
49. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 48.
50. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 51.
51. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 52.
52. Andy Harman comments that *The Motion Picture's* ending as well as a majority of the story was taken from the original series's "Metamorphosis" more than "The Changeling" in his message "Best of TOS? 1/2," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 18 Oct 1992), Message #593.
53. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 52.
54. Harman, Message #593.
55. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 55.
56. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 55.
57. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 56.
58. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 57.
59. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 47.
60. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 63.
61. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 63.
62. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 63.

63. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 83.
64. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 86.
65. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 86.
66. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 90.
67. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 91.
68. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 93.
69. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 93.
70. Kirk Houser, "TFF Was it God?" *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 23 Sept 1992), Message #545.
71. The character of Spock's mother, Amanda, was introduced in the original series episode "Journey to Babel." It was she who made sure that Spock remembered and acknowledged his human heritage as much as he did for his Vulcan heritage in both "Journey to Babel" and *The Voyage Home*.
72. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 88.
73. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 89.
74. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 104.
75. Sherry Hopper, "Favorite Roman Numeral," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 19 Oct 1992), Message #543.
76. Sherry Hopper, "TUC as the Worst?" *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 28 July 1992), Message #361.
77. Gross, *Trek Films*, pp. 105-8. Eventually, Murphy would drop out of the project to film *The Golden Child* in 1986 and his character rewritten into a part for Catherine Hicks.
78. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 105. The Starfleet Academy idea would be brought up again after the release of TFF.
79. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 112.
80. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 121.
81. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 122.
82. Gail Sakurai, "Humor in Trek Movies," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Spoiler! Conference (Cincinnati: 4 July 1992), Message #70.

83. Sakurai, Message #70. One of the "fundamental precepts" that Sakurai mentions is the Prime Directive, a hands-off policy of the Federation dealing with their involvement with other cultures. Another is that the crux of two original series episodes dealing with 20th century Earth, "Assignment: Earth" and "Tomorrow is Yesterday," is that the Enterprise crew does not tamper with history.
84. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 124.
85. Gross, *Trek Films*, pp. 124-5.
86. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 125.
87. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 125.
88. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 126. Roddenberry had been writing the novelization of *The God Thing* when he died in 1991. Since then, other veteran *Star Trek* authors such as Michael Jan Friedman have worked on the project.
89. Gross, *Trek Films*, pp. 127-8.
90. Gross, *Trek Films*, pp. 128-29.
91. Gross, *Trek Films*, pp. 141-2. Only Nichelle Nichols and DeForest Kelley had any real positive comments about Shatner's directing abilities.
92. Gross, *Trek Films*, pp. 145-6.
93. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 148. *The Motion Picture* and *The Undiscovered Country* are the only two movies of the six that Harve Bennett did not serve as producer or executive producer.
94. When a ship is "cloaked," it means that it is invisible both visually and electronically. The Federation does not employ the cloaking device, only the Klingons and the Romulans.
95. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 148.
96. Gail Sakurai, "TUC as the Worst?" *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 26 July 1992), Message #341.
97. Sakurai, Message #341.
98. Sakurai, Message #341.
99. Sakurai, Message #371.
100. Hopper, Message #361.



101. Gross and Altman, *Great Birds of the Galaxy*, p. 46.
102. Larry Nemecek, *The Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion* (New York: Pocket Books, 1992), p. 2.
103. Gross, *Trek Films*, p. 146.
104. Nemecek, p. 2.
105. Nemecek, p. 3.
106. Nemecek, pp. 3-4.
107. Nemecek, p. 4.
108. Nemecek, p. 5.
109. Nemecek, p. 4.
110. Nemecek, pp. 7-8. When *The Next Generation's* sets were being built in 1986, they used sets from *The Voyage Home* and the earlier movies. For *The Final Frontier* and *The Undiscovered Country*, production costs were saved by redressing *The Next Generation's* sets for both those movies, especially *The Undiscovered Country*.
111. TFF was filmed during TNG's first season.
112. Nemecek, p. 13.
113. Gross and Altman, *Great Birds*, p. 50.
114. Edward Gross and Mark A. Altman, *New Voyages: The Next Generation Guidebook The First 100 Episodes* (New York: Image Publishing, 1991), p. 5.
115. Although Troi is officially a lieutenant commander, her rank is rarely mentioned in the series. "Encounter at Farpoint," "Disaster," and "Conundrum" are the only episodes of the first five seasons that mention and/or use her rank. The opening credits list her as Counselor Deanna Troi and she is normally addressed as ship's counselor.
116. Nemecek, pp. 13-15.
117. Gene Roddenberry, *Star Trek: The Next Generation Writer/Director's Guide Season III* (Los Angeles: Lincoln Enterprises, 1990), p. 7.
118. David Gerrold, *Encounter at Farpoint* (New York: Pocket Books, 1987), p. 66. This is the novelization based on the screenplay written by D.C. Fontana and Gene Roddenberry. Like all novelizations of *The Next Generation* episodes and *Star Trek* movies, material that is not shown in the film are featured in the book. Roddenberry's *Writer/Director's Guide* says that Picard's romanticism comes from his beliefs "in concepts like honor and

duty" (p. 7).

119. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, pp. 5-6.
120. *The Next Generation Background Briefing* (Canada: Federation, 1988), p. 19.
121. Roddenberry, *Writer's Guide*, p. 16.
122. Nemecek, p. 13.
123. Nemecek, p. 15. In Gerrold's novelization of *Encounter at Farpoint*, Data tells Commander Riker that he was created by "an alien race of highly advance machines" to preserved the knowledge of the human colonists on Kiron III who "faced accidental extinction" (p. 130). *The Next Generation Background Briefing* confirms this version of Data's background, but in the *The Next Generation* first season episode "Datalore," gives the accepted (or canon) history of the android--he was built on Omicron Theta by Dr. Soong and rescued by officers of the *USS Tripoli*.
124. Clyde Wilcox, "To Boldly Return Where Others Have Gone Before: Cultural Change and The Old and New *Star Treks*," *Extrapolation*, Spring 1992, p. 90.
125. Roddenberry, *Writer's Guide* p. 12.
126. Roddenberry, *Writer's Guide*, p. 26.
127. Nemecek, p. 13-5.
128. Roddenberry, *Writer's Guide*, pp. 22-3. The character was named after George LaForge, a quadriplegic fan who had died in 1975 "after having endeared himself to Gene Roddenberry and much of fandom" (Nemecek, p. 15.)
129. Nemecek, p. 16.
130. Nemecek, p. 6.
131. Rick Sternbach and Michael Okuda, *Star Trek: The Next Generation Technical Manual* (New York: Pocket Books, 1991), p. 183. Okuda's work was so impressive that he would later work on *The Final Frontier* and *The Undiscovered Country's* scenic art such as control panels, computer readouts, and alien written languages.
132. "Technology Unchained" was the term Roddenberry used to describe the technological improvements from the original series and *The Next Generation* and how these improvements "moved beyond developing *things* that were smaller or faster or more powerful, in favor of concentrating on quality of life improvements" (Nemecek, p. 5.). The designers took this to heart, making coffee dispensers part of the bridge design and including a restroom that was just off of the bridge. One of the major design flaws of the original series's Enterprise was that there was no restroom anywhere near the bridge.

133. Nemecek, p. 5.
134. Nemecek, p. 5.
135. Holodiction was the subplot of third season's "Hollow Pursuits" in which Lt. Reginald Barclay recreated members of the bridge crew into various personages: Troi as the "goddess of empathy;" Beverly as a long haired, proper lady and Wesley as "a pie-eating 'Blue Boy'" in his Gainesborough-like program; Picard, LaForge, and Data as the Three Musketeers; and Riker as a short, high-strung, and high-pitched page of Barclay's in his Three Musketeer's version (Larry Nemecek, *TNG-3: A Guide to the Third Season of "Star Trek: The Next Generation"* [Oklahoma: Mystar Press, 1991], pp. 67, 69, and 109). After that, Barclay, played by Dwight Schultz, has been featured in at least one episode per season.
136. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 16.
137. Nemecek, *Companion*, pp. 17-8. Roddenberry initially wanted a French actor for the role. Stewart's British accent for a very proud French captain was explained like this: "In the 24th century ethnic accents are uncommon due to the advanced forms of language instruction" (*Background Briefing*, p. 19). Picard's speech would be flavored with bits of French and "betrays a Gallic accent only when deep emotions are triggered" (Roddenberry, *Writer's Guide*, p. 7).
138. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 18.
139. Nemecek, *Companion*, pp. 17-9.
140. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 18.
141. Nemecek, *Companion*, pp. 19-20. Ironically, Worf has become one of the most evolved characters on the show although he was a "last minute" addition to the cast list. Originally, the trio of Picard, Riker, and Data would be the focus of the fledgling series, but by the end of third season and throughout the fourth, fifth, and early part of the sixth season, Picard, Data, and Worf garnered the most storylines.
142. Because *The Next Generation* is syndicated, stations who carry the series have the option of what day of the week they will air the episode, therefore there is one date that the series is shown on.
143. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, p. 20.
144. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, p. 20.
145. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, pp. 12, 23, and 33.
146. "Wil Wheaton: The Final Words of Wesley Crusher," Interview with Wil Wheaton by Dan Madsen in *Star Trek: The Official Fan Club*, December/January 1990/91, p. 3.

147. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 54.
148. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, pp. 18, 30, 36, and 44. "Conspiracy"'s harder edged look at the Federation met with strong protests from Roddenberry, whose massive rewrites of the story caused writer Tracy Torme to have one of many fall-outs with Roddenberry. Although the ending was left open-ended, Roddenberry made it quite clear that this story line be dropped completely, although it is clearly one of the most popular first season episodes.
149. Nemecek, *Companion*, pp. 27-8.
150. One of the major reasons Troi's look was changed was because she looked like a cheerleader. The skant debuted in "Encounter at Farpoint" and was worn by both Troi and Yar (during the final scenes), but by the end of the first season, it had been completely phased out.
151. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 63. In the original script, Lieutenant Ilia was supposed to become pregnant through an "immaculate conception" and first officer Commander Will Decker would have a difficult time handling the situation. Since the introduction of Troi and Riker, comparisons have been made about their similarities to the officers featured in *The Motion Picture*. This only further reinforced them.
152. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 64.
153. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 64.
154. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 64.
155. One of the major differences between the original series and *The Next Generation* as far as positions on board the ship was *The Next Generation's* lack of a single chief engineer. During the first season, TNG featured four chief engineers: Sarah MacDougal (Brooke Bundy), Lt. Cmdr. Argyle (Biff Yeager), Lt. Logan (Vyto Ruginis), and Lt. Cmdr. Leland Lynch (Walker Boone). Only Argyle and Lynch were featured more than once.
156. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, pp. 63, 65-6, and 75-6.
157. John deLancie, question and answer session at Space Station Cincy, Cincinnati, 2 Aug. 1992.
158. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, p. 75 and "Q Who?"
159. Wilcox, p. 90.
160. Nemecek, *Companion*, pp. 97-9. Also Larry Nemecek, *TNG-3: A Guide to the Third Season of "Star Trek: The Next Generation"* (Oklahoma: Mystar Press, 1991), p. 13.
161. After Wesley sacrifices his chance of attending Starfleet Academy in order to locate kidnapped Riker, Deanna Troi, and Lwaxana Troi in "Menage a Troi," he receives the

promotion.

162. Whitfield, p. 262. Although at that time, the original series was one of the most expensive shows to produce.
163. Although DeForest Kelley appeared in "Encounter at Farpoint," he was only referred to as "the Admiral." Paramount did not confirm whether or not Kelley's character was actually Dr. McCoy, but it is generally accepted by fans that he is.
164. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 63.
165. "Family" and "Data's Day."
166. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 55.
167. As mentioned before, the original series often used long-running jokes such as Chekov's boasts about Russia and McCoy's "I'm a doctor" lines. TNG tried to recycle Chekov's love for his homeland into Picard's character, but the French jokes were quickly dropped in the middle of the first season. Worf, on the other hand, would become the character to quip understatements such as "Nice planet" in "Justice" while watching a gaggle of half-naked women cavort around playing games.
168. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 173.
169. Mark A. Altman and Edward Gross, *New Voyages II: The Next Generation 5th Season Guidebook* (New York: Image Publishing, 1992), p. 48.
170. "Hero Worship," directed by Patrick Stewart, was the episode being filmed when Roddenberry died.
171. Wesley Crusher was a series regular and also fifteen years old compared to Alexander being two years old in "Reunion." In "Reunion," Jon Steuer played Alexander but was replaced in "New Ground" by Brian Bonsall of *Family Ties* fame for the recurring role.
172. Nemecek, *Companion*, p. 177.
- 173." Rascals." Forbes stated that she wanted to go onto a movie career instead of being tied down to a series. Majel Barrett commented that Denise Crosby did the same and believed that Forbes was making a mistake (*Space Station Cincy*).

### Chapter Three: The *Star Trek* Universe

"I don't believe in little green men"-- Captain John Christopher<sup>1</sup>

Since the series began, fans have been writing historical time-lines for *Star Trek*, documenting every major event and reference to Earth's past. In the original series, Roddenberry opted to do away with conventional calendar years in favor of "stardates." Because of intergalactic space travel and different calendars used by different worlds, the Gregorian calendar would be seriously outmoded. The stardate was developed to eliminate the confusion over what day of the year it was on what planet, and therefore no exact Earth date could be assigned to the original series.<sup>2</sup> Only in *The Next Generation* are dates actually specified for the development of the United Federation of Planets.

Roddenberry's utopian 23rd century developed from the ashes of the late 20th century. The last of the Earth's "so-called world wars" was the Eugenics Wars, which lasted from 1992 to 1996. In 1993, a group of genetically superior men, the Eugenics or tyrants, seized power in over 40 nations, and had an absolute rule over Earth. The last of the "tyrants" was overthrown in 1996.<sup>3</sup> Sometime after the Eugenics War, a nuclear holocaust devastated the Earth and chaos ruled almost until the 22nd century. Twenty-first century Earth was a place of post-atomic courts where the military was controlled by drugs, people summarily executed without a trial, and was considered the second true Dark Age of human culture.<sup>4</sup> It is presumed that during the Eugenics Wars, the United Nations was dissolved since the rise and fall of the "new United Nations" was given as 2036 and 2079 respectively.<sup>5</sup>

Sometime between 2079 and 2161, a new order was established but this time under benevolent rule, and these new governments joined together to form the United Earth. Space travel and exploration once again became one of the primary goals of United Earth and their exploration led them to the discovery of new worlds and races. A series of economic and military treaties were signed between Earth and the new worlds which led to the creation of an intergalactic United Nations called the United Federation of Planets (the Federation or UFP) 2161.<sup>6</sup>

While the Federation served mostly the economic and diplomatic needs of the member planets, Starfleet was created to be the more militaristic arm of the Federation, combining both space exploration and defense together.<sup>7</sup> In the original series, there were only 13 ships in the fleet like the *Enterprise*, and almost all of them were destroyed during the series' three year run. The *Enterprise* was considered a heavy cruiser capable of scientific, diplomatic, and defensive missions. There were more specialized ships, such as scout ships and research vessels, but the heavy cruisers served as an all-in-one type ship so that multiple story lines could be written. In *The Next Generation*, the fleet has grown considerably and it is known that well over 40 ships were in service as late as the end of the third season.<sup>8</sup>

By using dates and references made throughout the original series, the movies, and *The Next Generation*, a basic timeline has been created for *Star Trek*. The first five year mission of the *Enterprise* under Kirk's command happens between 2265 and 2270. *The Wrath of Khan* happens fifteen years after Kirk's encounter with Khan and would occur somewhere around 2282. *The Search for Spock* and *The Voyage Home* happen within months of *The Wrath of Khan* and each other; therefore the dates would be 2283 to 2284. Ten years pass between *The Search for Spock* and *The Undiscovered Country*, placing the events in *The Undiscovered Country* to be around 2293. Two TNG episodes give exact years to when Captain Scott, the original *Enterprise*'s engineer, retired and what year the first season of *The Next Generation* takes place:

2294 and 2364 respectively.<sup>9</sup>

Besides warp drive and the vessel type, there are several Trek terms that are associated with the series. For instance, when the original series was being planned, the budget didn't allow for the special effects that would be needed to land a starship on a planet. Roddenberry developed the transporter, which dematerialized a person standing on the transporter platform and rematerialized him/her at a given destination and vice versa. Other items include: dilithium crystals are the energy source that powered the ship; phasers are hand held laser guns that had a full range of settings from stun to kill; tricorders are information gathering devices; communicators are hand-held devices that work much in the manner of walkie-talkies; and hyposprays replace old-fashioned needles as a way to inject drugs into a patient.<sup>10</sup>

The characters in the original series were not as detailed as the equipment that was used.

Disputes over characters' backgrounds and specialties lead to one of the most interesting facets of the *Star Trek* lore--the debate over what is canon and what is not. When Roddenberry created the *Star Trek* universe, he wrote a series "bible" which listed things that could and could not happen in the show. *Star Trek* had gained so much popularity over the years that novels were being written that gave more information about the main characters than the series ever gave. Fans wanted to make the *Star Trek* more "real" by filling in the void with their own facts and most of them were contradictory. Some had Kirk, Scott, and McCoy married and widowed between the original series and *The Motion Picture*. With each episode and movie, more details were added to the ensemble cast of the original series, including making Kirk's middle name Tiberius and Sulu's fan given first name Hikaru official in *The Undiscovered Country*.<sup>11</sup>

In an effort to streamline the confusion over what "really" happened in the *Star Trek* universe and what didn't, Paramount declared that all 79 episodes of the original series were "canon"; that is, the events actually happened. All the movies except *The Final Frontier* are considered canon as well. Neither Roddenberry nor Paramount liked the results of Shatner's screen writing and directing efforts, and have not decided whether or not to acknowledge the events in *The Final Frontier* as canon. All the episodes of *The Next Generation* and the episodes for the upcoming *The Next Generation* spinoff series *Deep Space Nine* are or will be canon. What is considered "fiction" by Paramount are the novels, comics, TAS, gaming materials, and any fan written material. In a sense, if it wasn't on the screen, then it didn't happen.

Characters used key phrases that became trademarks of the show, such as Spock's "Fascinating," McCoy's "I'm a doctor, not a...," and Scott's "The engines canna take ne more!" Interesting to note is that never once in the original series did a crew member say, "Beam me up, Scotty," which is a well known line from *Star Trek* fandom.

With technology and the regular cast in place, alien races had to be developed. As mentioned in the history of the series, Spock is from the planet Vulcan and represents the only alien in the regular crew. Vulcan was one of the five original governments that founded the Federation and its dry, hot atmosphere and desert-like surface can be seen in the original series's "Journey to Babel," *The Motion Picture*, *The Search for Spock*, *The Voyage Home*, and *The Next Generation*'s "Unification I." They are a pacifistic race who view logic as the ultimate way of living and who feel that emotion is a major character flaw. Once a violent race, a spiritual leader named Surak ushered the Vulcans away from destruction by using logical thinking and shedding emotion. The right-handed, V-shape made between the index and ring finger with the thumb extended is the Vulcan hand salute and the fore finger, index finger and thumb are used for the Vulcan neck pinch--a non-violent way to render someone unconscious. Their traditional greeting is "Peace and long life" and the response is "Live long and prosper."

An offshoot of the early Vulcans were the Romulans, believed to have left the planet shortly after Surak's teachings became a way of life. Both races share a common ancestry, but while the Vulcans are one of the most respectable and noble races of the Federation, the Romulans are one of the most deadly enemies of the UFP. Their ideologies are very similar to the Spartans of ancient Rome because they kill genetically or physically inferior infants, have strong militaristic views, and have strict codes of loyalty among them.<sup>12</sup> They are also "aggressive by nature, ruthless in warfare, and do not take captives."<sup>13</sup>

While the Romulans displayed courage and integrity, the greatest adversary of the Federation, the Klingons, are almost the complete opposite. They are guided by personal gain, whether it is achieved through assassination, deceit, or military strength. For the Klingons, "cruelty is something admirable; honor is a despicable trait."<sup>14</sup> For them, war is a way of life and they constantly try to provoke an encounter with the Federation. They have an alliance with the Romulans, and because of that, the Romulans primarily use Klingon weaponry and technology.

The Federation does have peace treaties with both races and "neutral zones" in space that are basically no-man's land on the borders of the Imperial Klingon Empire, the Romulan Star Empire, and the Federation. Intrusion on these zones is enough to provoke both races to war, and the Klingons are most likely to violate that zone.

Klingons went through radical transformations in appearance between the original series and *The Motion Picture*. During the original series, they had dark hair, heavy eyebrows, and beards and in general were sinister looking, but they still looked a lot like humans. In the opening scenes of *The Motion Picture*, we see a different type of Klingon; this time their foreheads had vertical ridges that went from their noses to the top of their scalps. Their hair was longer and more unkempt while their costumes changed from a mere metallic cloth honor band running from the left shoulder to right side of the waist to actual leather and metal armor. Several fans argue that the changes from the original series Klingons to present-day Klingons are due to the existence of two groups of Klingons: the series type and the movie type. There was a civil war between the two types and the movie type, complete with ridges and armor, won. Paramount explains it differently: the budget for makeup design was bigger for *The Motion Picture*.

Perhaps the biggest discrepancy between the original series, the movies, and *The Next Generation* is the Klingons. In the original series, they were despicable, constantly fighting among themselves, and saw honor as a "despicable trait."<sup>15</sup> The movies portrayed them being more centralized, calculating, yet still warring between themselves. By the time *The Next Generation* came along, over 80 years had passed since the original series's time. Klingons are no longer enemies of the Federation since they signed an alliance, which has been threatened on more than one occasion. This alliance happened shortly after the defense of the Klingon outpost Narendra III by the *Enterprise-C* against a Romulan sneak attack in 2344 and the Khitomer Massacre of 2346 when the Romulans completely destroyed a Klingon outpost. Negotiations had begun after the *Enterprise-C* was presumed to be destroyed and all hands dead defending the Klingons and perhaps sealed after the massacre.<sup>16</sup>

In *The Next Generation*'s time, the Klingons had taken on more Romulan traits and had completely shed their hatred of "honor." In fact, "modern" Klingon ideologies almost parallel those of pre-industrialized Japan. They have strict codes of honor and extreme loyalty to their Empire to the point of accepting public disgrace in order to maintain the peace within the Empire.<sup>17</sup>

Romulans were altered slightly from their original Vulcan-like pointed ears and slanted



bushy eyebrows. Their foreheads became heavier and more lined than in the original series. It was more because of money in the budget rather than the actual evolution of the race.

The Romulans, although changed slightly in appearance, also went under a character revision. While their belief in their own superiority was still intact, their integrity had been lessened a bit. Dealing with the Romulans is compared to "playing a game of chess...move, countermove," and while "Klingons are brutish; the Romulans are satanic."<sup>18</sup> They are still considered one of the most deadly enemies of the Federation, although there are Romulans who want to end the hostilities and return to their Vulcan ancestry.<sup>19</sup>

With the Klingons as allies and Romulans still the enemy, Roddenberry opted to create new aliens instead of using the one established in the original series. They include the Betazoids, the Ferengi, the Cardassians, the Bajorans, and the Borg. Betazoids are one of the more powerful and respected races in the Federation, but more for economics and culture than for military. They are fully telepathic with most of the major races seen in *Star Trek*, but the ability varies from person to person.

Another new race introduced were the Ferengi. At first, they were supposed to be a major enemy to the Federation, but after their first two appearances in first season's "The Battle" and "The Last Outpost," their ferociousness was seen as silliness. Their government and culture employ a caste system based on making a profit, and removal from command can be based on missing an opportunity to make a profit. They are described as "intra-galactic wheeler-dealers," and are compared to 18th and 19th century Yankee traders of Earth because "they sail the galaxy in search of mercantile and territorial opportunity."<sup>20</sup> The Ferengi women are not allowed to wear clothing and are seen as property more than actual people.<sup>21</sup> The initial characterization of the Ferengi was in fact so bad that their appearances in subsequent *The Next Generation* episodes were used as comic relief.

Cardassians made their debut in the fourth season episode "The Wounded." They and the Federation had been at war for some time, and the Cardassians used a more terroristic approach to attack. Little is known about the race except that they are every bit as ruthless as the Romulans and that they are directly responsible for the displacement of Bajorans from their home planet around 2328. The Cardassians have exploited the Bajorans, tortured them, and enslaved them to the point that the Bajorans now use terroristic attacks in an effort to exonerate themselves from Cardassian domination.<sup>22</sup>

The creation of the Ferengi, Betazoids, Cardassians, Bajorans and other races has been overshadowed by one race--the Borg. These part organic, part mechanical lifeforms are the most powerful and deadly foes that *The Next Generation* has ever created. They assimilate life and technology in order to better their collective conscience and not for political or social reasons. Their ships are able to withstand and adapt to any assaults that the *Enterprise* tries to use. The third season cliffhanger and fourth season opener, "Best of Both Worlds I & II," are one of the most popular episodes that *The Next Generation* has made. In these episodes, Captain Picard is assimilated by the Borg and used as an unwilling liaison between the Borg and the Federation. By using Picard's over thirty years experience with and knowledge of Starfleet operations, the Borg easily defeat a Starfleet defense force and go on to Earth while the *Enterprise* crew are helpless to stop them. Only after retrieving Picard from the Borg vessel and accessing the Borg collective conscience, the *Enterprise* crew are able to stop them.

With new allies and enemies, *The Next Generation* also introduced updated tricorders, phasers, and communicators. The phasers looked like mini hand-held vacuum cleaners and the tricorders folded down into a palm-sized box. Communicators replaced the sewn ship insignia

on the original series uniforms and could be activated by touch. The *Enterprise* was totally redesigned from both the original series and the movies, this time allowing for families to stay on board because of the long missions. Uniforms were altered from the original series and movies, thus the attempt to separate the original series and *The Next Generation* continued.

## Notes

1. The original series episode "Tomorrow Is Yesterday."
2. The original series did not follow any particular pattern in using stardates except for the four digit-decimal-digit format. However, *The Next Generation's* stardates can be used as an accurate timeline for the series, except for the first season, when the production, stardate, and aired order are not consistent. *The Next Generation* uses a five digit-decimal-digit such as 41823.2 where the first number indicates that it is the 24th century, the second digit what season it occurs, and the remaining numbers how early or late it is in the season.
3. The original series episode "Space Seed," which aired on February 16, 1967, gives the most information about the latter part of the 20th century. There were only 90 surviving Eugenics and they used the sleeper compartments on the hijacked ship as a way to survive from the late 20th century to the mid-23rd century. Sleeper ships allowed each crewmember to be put in stasis and revived at a later date. As mentioned in the history of *Star Trek*, these Eugenics attempted to take over the *Enterprise* in the episode and were exiled to Ceti Alpha V and became the subject of *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.
4. There is some disagreement between the original series and *The Next Generation*. According to the original series episode "The Omega Glory," Earth escaped a nuclear holocaust, but *The Next Generation's* "Encounter at Farpoint" makes it clear that there was a holocaust. Other *The Next Generation* episodes such as fifth season's "A Matter of Time" refer to Earth's nuclear winters of the late 21st century.
5. *The Next Generation's* "Encounter at Farpoint." This was the first ST episode to graphically describe and show what happened on Earth during the mid-21st century. Four crew members are placed on trial in a historically accurate post-atomic horror court mock-up.
6. *The Next Generation's* "The Outcast" made the founding date of the UFP official in the *Star Trek* universe.
7. David J. Schmidt, et al, *Starfleet Dynamics: A Starfleet Academy Reference Guide and Textbook* Created by Strategic Design (Starfleet Academy Training Command Press, 1992), p. 24.
8. *The Next Generation's* fourth season opener, "Best of Both Worlds II," confirmed that 39 ships were destroyed at Wolf 359 during an invasion by the Borg.
9. There are many time-lines and theories as to when events occurred in the original series and the movies. Only TNG has used actual Earth year dates for history hungry fans, and it is from these dates that the time-line has been created for the original series. The two TNG episodes mentioned are "Relics" and "The Neutral Zone."
10. Whenever a character explains how an instrument works or how to correct a problem using scientific descriptions such as "warp field chamber" or "lateral sensor arrays" that is

distinct to the ST universe, it is called technobabble or Trek-nobabble.

11. According to Mark Holtz's "List of Lists," Kirk was christened Tiberius in the TAS episode "Bem." Many fans believed the reason why both Tiberius and Hikaru were canonized TUC is because it is supposed to be the last ST movie featuring the the original series.
12. The original series's "Balance of Terror" gives Trek audiences the first view of Romulans. The Romulan commander (played by Mark Lenard) is so impressed by Kirk's command abilities that he remarks that in another time and place, they could have been friends. Romulans only appeared in two other original series episodes, "Journey to Babel" and "The Enterprise Incident," but have had numerous appearances during the first five seasons of TNG: "The Neutral Zone," "The Enemy," "The Defector," "Future Imperfect," "Unification I & II," and "Redemption I & II."
13. Stephen E. Whitfield and Gene Roddenberry, *The Making of Star Trek* (New York: Ballantine books, 1968), p. 256.
14. Whitfield, p. 257.
15. Whitfield, p. 257.
16. Two TNG third season episodes, "Sins of the Father" and "Yesterday's Enterprise," give the most information about the Klingon-Federation alliance, although most of it is very vague. It is known that the Federation and the Klingons were at war sometime after the events in TUC and before 2344 from references in "Hide and Q" and "Heart of Glory," both TNG first season episodes.
17. TNG's "Heart of Glory," "Sins of the Father," "The Reunion," and "Redemption I & II" show the intricacies of Klingon politics. One explanation of the differences between the original series and TNG Klingons is that they are from two separate factions, as mentioned before.
18. TNG's "Future Imperfect" and Gene Roddenberry, *Star Trek: The Next Generation Writers/Directors Guide Season III* (Los Angeles: Lincoln Enterprises, 1989), p. 56.
19. TNG's "Unification I & II" show a different side of the Romulan culture. Instead of dealing strictly with military personnel, civilians are shown in their every day life.
20. Roddenberry, pp. 52-3 and Larry Nemecek, *TNG-1: A Guide to the First Season of "Star Trek: The Next Generation" Revised 2nd Edition* (Oklahoma: Mystar Press, 1989), p. 60.
21. TNG's "Menage a Troi."
22. "The Wounded" and "Ensign Ro." The Cardassian-Bajoran political problems will be one of the focuses of the new series *Deep Space Nine*.

## Chapter Four: Myths and *Star Trek*

*"Many myths are based on truth"--Spock.<sup>1</sup>*

As explained in the introduction, myths play an important role in the concept of popular culture. To take a tour of the House of Popular Culture, the first room we enter is that of myths. It is the basement, so to speak, and the foundation upon which the rest of the house is based upon.

But what exactly is a myth? What are the truths in myths? Christopher Geist states that "they usually deal with essential beliefs about such crucial concepts of life, death, love and hate."<sup>2</sup> They are also "concepts people already accept as true," "form the basis upon which that culture acts as it does, forming its traditions, customs, and values," and "define an image of the world within and without and relate us to it emotionally."<sup>3</sup> Popular myths/mythologies show how the universe works by providing a model universe and a model for human behavior.

What we have is a story or a concept that people accept as true and it acts as a cultural guideline for them. It forms a special identity for the culture, a signature, that identifies one group from another. While several cultures may have the same myths, the combinations of these "universally accepted beliefs" are like signatures, therefore, no two sets of cultural myths are alike.<sup>4</sup>

When we study *Star Trek* and its relation to popular culture, it is important to understand one of the reasons that it is accepted by the audience. The contemporary myths allow the audience to confront issues and concerns in the present day universe and explore them. While the show may draw one conclusion, it doesn't matter if the audience accepts it or not. Instead, the audience appreciates this creative effort made by the series to explore their concerns.<sup>5</sup> *Star Trek* uses the myths that are ingrained into the viewing audience and presents them in a futuristic version that is believable. *Star Trek* is set just far enough into the future of Earth history so that what the audience sees could be attainable.

From the "Myth List" compiled by Dr. Kuwahara, *Star Trek* embodies sixteen of the thirty-two: Progress, Individual Freedom, Virgin Land, Military-Industrial Complex, Professionalism, Equality, Science, Education, Peace, Americanism, Heroes, the Future, the West, Utopia, Technology as a Savior, and Regeneration through Violence.<sup>6</sup> Most of these myths can be grouped together under two themes. Under Regeneration through Violence or Creation from Destruction myth are the myths of Peace and Military-Industrial Complex, and this myth is the foundation for the myth of the Utopia.<sup>7</sup> The myth of the Utopia draws on elements from the myth of the West, Individual Freedom, Professionalism, Equality, the West, Heroes, Americanism, and the Virgin Land.

The most important myth that *Star Trek* is based on is the myth of Technology as a Savior. The combination of the myths of Progress, Science, Education, and the Future provides the belief that *Star Trek* can exist at some point in the future, that the human race will make it past all of the trials and errors of the nuclear age and go on to something greater as well as grander.

The myth of regeneration through violence and myth of the utopia are dependant upon one another. These two combined myths and the myth of technology as a savior are the basis upon which *Star Trek* is formed. In every episode of the original series and *The Next Generation* as well as the movies, these myths play an important role, whether they be the direct subject matter of the plot or just subconscious background. They provide the basis for the program.

Richard Slotkin traces the development of the regeneration through violence myth in America back to the colonial days. The European settlers did not expect to find the land occupied by Native Americans nor did they expect their myths of the promised land to be so radically altered. The pilgrims were set on the myth of paradise: a new, untouched frontier to be tamed by them and molded into their ideals.

The hardships encountered completely dissolved any romantic notions that these settlers may have had. "Their new circumstances forced new perspectives, new self concepts, and new world concepts on the colonists," writes Slotkin.<sup>8</sup> American authors took it upon themselves to build up a mythology for the country through literature. The creation of the new European America from the savage New World resulted in the destruction of the Native American world.

A majority of science fiction stories use the same stereotypical creation myth--catastrophe leads to a new society. While the societies formed may not be for the better, the science fiction genre focuses and relies heavily upon this tenant. If the myth of creation from destruction is not mentioned, it is usually assumed.

*Star Trek* is not the only science fiction series with the message that humankind has made it past the horrors (and stupidity) of the 20th century and into an Utopian society. Neither are *Star Treks* the only series to add a new twist to the Judeo-Christian creation myth. Given the agnostic view of its creator, Gene Roddenberry, it's not surprising that the dominate creation myth in the United States (i.e. the myth of the new Eden) becomes the focus of more than 10 of the original series episodes as well as a major theme in *The Wrath of Khan* and focused on in the premiere episode of *The Next Generation*.<sup>9</sup>

Roddenberry thus joins the ranks of literary greats Melville and Faulkner because he agreed with their prophesies:

...that myths reach out of the past to cripple, incapacitate, or strike down the living. It is by now a commonplace that our adherence to the "myth of the frontier"--the conception of America as a wide-open land of unlimited opportunity for the strong, ambitious, self-reliant individual to thrust his way to the top--has blinded us to the consequences of the industrial and communal welfare.<sup>10</sup>

Roddenberry took it upon himself to show the consequences of these reforms and show it to us in the science fiction format. The examples from the original series, the movies, and *The Next Generation* all have one common element--the new, near-utopian universe presented was created from the destruction of the old, corrupted one.

As mentioned before, the regeneration through violence is a popular subject for the original series and it is most often represented by an alien culture. These societies generally have one controller (more often than not a computer that has been left on too long) that regulates the people into a mundane life.

Perhaps the episode that draws the most parallels to the myth of creation as prescribed by the Judeo-Christian sense is "The Apple." Originally aired on October 13, 1967, this second season episode features Kirk doing "the computer shuffle" and the audience is introduced to yet another society full of innocents.<sup>11</sup>

When the party first arrives on the planet, several comments are made such as "Paradise must have looked like this" (Kirk) and "[this is] More like the Garden of Eden" (McCoy), but as the group moves on, more dangers are discovered.<sup>12</sup> There are blossoms that shoot poisonous needles and exploding rocks, the last discovery prompting Kirk to comment, "The Garden of

Eden with land mines."<sup>13</sup>

Their first contact with the inhabitants is with Akuta, the Leader of the Feeders of Vaal, who had been secretly following the landing party. When Kirk and two security men flush Akuta from his hiding place, Kirk stops the native with a punch. Akuta's reaction is not to fight back, but to cry because he doesn't understand why Kirk hit him and then said, "We won't hurt you."<sup>14</sup>

After winning Akuta's confidence, the Enterprise crew learn that the people of Gamma Trianguli VI have no vices or natural enemies, and Kirk responds with "Maybe this is Paradise."<sup>15</sup> In the religious version of Paradise, the inhabitants (Adam and Eve) are pure of evil thought and live in harmony. Kirk's reference to that shows that he does recognize this particular manifestation of an utopia.

Akuta takes them to the village so that the crew can find out more about these people. The inhabitants as well as the planet they live on are controlled by Vaal (again, the stereotypical all powerful computer). According to Akuta, Vaal provides everything for them, controlling all aspects of nature. They have no concerns, no fears, no worries at all, leading McCoy to conclude that they are adults with a children's mentality and that the *Enterprise* crew should do something about it. His big contention is that, "This isn't life, this is stagnation."<sup>16</sup>

While the logical argument of keeping things the same comes from Spock, McCoy keeps pressing his argument with Kirk. When Vaal orders that the newcomers be killed, the inhabitants have no concept of what murder is. After one security guard was attacked and died, however, Spock comments to McCoy, "They've taken the first step. They learned to kill."<sup>17</sup> Their old world and their naivete has been destroyed in order that the newcomers, who are a threat to their Eden and to Vaal, cannot influence and damage the life that Vaal has created.

Unlike in the Judeo-Christian myth where ignorance is considered bliss, this *Star Trek* episode takes the stance that ignorance and naivete are evil and something that must be destroyed. These views, according to Blair, allowed *Star Trek* to "move(s) beyond cultural stereotypes to archetypes and new possibilities for the future."<sup>18</sup> "What has traditionally seemed evil in the loss of paradise suddenly in the *Star Trek* world," she adds, "has its polarity reversed."<sup>19</sup>

The moral implications of such actions is an interesting debate between the crew, McCoy insisting on the right of the people to govern themselves and Spock replying that the crew is bound by the hands-off policy of the Federation. This is not the first time that Kirk has done battle with a society-controlling computer nor that he's come across a completely naive culture.

The twist on the myth comes in the Gamma Triangulians expulsion from "Eden." The society is the same as the original Eden because everything is provided for them. Kirk sees their ignorance as horrifying because, "They don't think. They don't create. They exist to service a machine."<sup>20</sup> Instead of knowledge being undesirable, it is something that is needed, wanted, and *necessary*. The people must change their idyllic, carefree lives because it is not productive and they do not govern themselves. Blair explains the effects of the "evil":

Evil as the social counterpart of individuality has interesting implications for various characteristics of paradise. Paradise is usually a place of play, not work, where man's only activity is ritual obedience in return for which all needs will be met. After the fall, work emerges as a form of penance for the glory of God or the good of humanity, in short in expiation of one's sins. On the *Enterprise*, however, it offers the individual ways of expanding his skills and of interacting with the

world.<sup>21</sup>

The change from the literal Garden of Eden into the spiritual garden is not surprising. Obedience to Vaal in return for Paradise is what many people associate with Eden and *Star Trek* proves that it cannot exist at all. *Star Trek's* spiritual Eden is more of a state of mind rather than a state of being.

As mentioned before, Roddenberry stated that "religion was full of misstatements and reaches of logic that I just couldn't agree with."<sup>22</sup> While religious views were presented in *Star Trek*, they were not the same that were generally accepted. There was something new to them, something added to them that perhaps made the religious ideals in *Star Trek* more acceptable to the audience. Moreover, they made the old views appear not in touch with reality. The ones that *Star Trek* presented could be believable for the future. For instance, the old, original Eden cannot exist in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth centuries because we are so in touch with what we have experienced. Eden is no longer a sacred ideal that is accepted as a universal truth. *Star Trek* are their religious views thus attract us. These new frontier ideologies must have some founding in the twentieth century to have it ingrained into a show about the distant future.

Blair remarks that the literal utopian of green grass and pure blue skies has been replaced by the *Enterprise* where "work, knowledge and change contribute to the cultivation of human nature."<sup>23</sup> The quest for knowledge is good, not evil, and while there is individual freedom on board the *Enterprise*, the crew works together in harmony to create the spiritual utopia that Kirk wants the community featured in "The Apple" to obtain.

While "The Apple" focused more on a society's coming of age and the creation of the spiritual Eden, *The Wrath of Khan*, released in 1982, takes the more literal meaning of regeneration through violence. In this movie, we have the death and rebirth cycle several times with the major characters.

The story centers around Khan, a genetically altered superhuman and the product of late 20th century technology, who Kirk outwitted in "Space Seed" (originally aired on February 16, 1967). Kirk had deposited Khan on Ceti-Alpha V, a lush planet where Khan and his followers could forge a new life from the wilderness, fifteen years ago.<sup>24</sup> The planet was devastated by natural disaster leaving Khan and his people to fend for themselves on the now desolate desert planet.

This devastation can be seen as the death of Khan's spirit because his beloved wife, Marla McGivers, and over half of his people died shortly after the disaster occurred.<sup>25</sup> The Federation never returned to record the progress made by Khan and the "Eugenics" except by accident. Two Starfleet officers, Captain Terrell and Commander Chekov, believe that they are searching Ceti Alpha VI for signs of life, but Ceti Alpha VI was destroyed leaving Ceti Alpha V laid in waste. Chekov instantly recognizes the ship that they are searching, *SS Botany Bay*, and realizes that both he and the captain must leave immediately. Khan stops their retreat and learns that Captain Kirk is now an admiral, and his plan of vengeance now has a way to become real. Khan is reborn by taking over the *USS Reliant* and setting out on his quest to destroy Kirk.

Another part of the story focuses on Kirk. He faces his own spiritual death by realizing that he is old and supervising the Kobayashi Maru--a no-win scenario that every Starfleet cadet in command school must take, thus giving *The Wrath of Khan* the nickname "Kirk's Mid-Life Crisis." Although the crew dies in the mock-up and is reborn when the simulation is over, the Kobayashi Maru is the first foreshadowing of events to come.



During the birthday scene, Spock presents Kirk with a gift, *A Tale of Two Cities*, as a way of reminding the aging *Enterprise* commander of "the best of times and the worst of times." Kirk feels washed up, old and worn out like his prized antique collection, and his only rebirth comes when he assumes command of the *Enterprise* when the ship and the cadet crew are called into action.

Both Kirk and Khan are brought together by creation, creation in the ultimate sense. The Genesis Project headed by Dr. Carol Marcus, one of Kirk's former lovers, creates "life from lifelessness." Aside from all the how-it-works and whys of this project, it is humanity's attempt of playing God. A planet is created at an astounding rate from nothingness and McCoy comments several times on the relationship of the name Genesis and the biblical sense of the word.

When Khan finds out about the Genesis project, he goes after it and arrives at the space station where it is housed. The other scientists on the station sacrifice themselves so that Carol, David (Carol and Kirk's illegitimate son), and the Genesis torpedo can escape to a barren subterranean cave on the planet below the station. It is there that Kirk, McCoy, and a lieutenant named Saavik discover Carol and David and they are all left stranded by Khan.

Khan gloats about Kirk's being "buried alive for all eternity" in the same manner that Khan was on Ceti-Alpha V. The *Enterprise* was badly damaged in an attack before they reached the station and is unable to rescue Kirk.

It is there that Kirk relates his woes of life to Carol. It is Carol who says to him: "Let me show you something that'll make you feel young, as when the world was new." She leads him into another part of the cave, a lush version of the Garden of Eden. Lane Roth uses this scene to remark that "the paradisaal garden suggests that Kirk and Marcus are science fiction counterparts to the sky god and nature goddess, or of Adam and Eve."<sup>26</sup>

The parallel is made even stronger by the following dialogue between McCoy and Carol in the novelization:

McCoy: "This is like the Garden of Eden."

Carol: "Only here, every apple comes from the tree of knowledge, with all the risk that implies."<sup>27</sup>

Are the risks seen as evil? Risk is the chance the creators of Genesis take because they may not know what the project would be used for or how it would be used. The project can be used for creation of a whole new planet or the destruction of an inhabited planet. Genesis alters the planet on a molecular level, changing old, lifeless cells into new, fertile ones. It has a matrix or a pre-programmed molecular structure that takes over and is considered the most powerful device known to the Federation. It could be used for good, creating new planets from dead ones and easing a potential population problem, or for evil, destroying an already inhabited planet. McCoy and Spock even discuss the ramifications that the device would have in the movie:

He (McCoy) looked up stricken. "Are we--can we control this? Suppose it hadn't been a lifeless satellite? Suppose that thing were to be used on an inhabited world?"

...Spock regarded him quizzically, "You forget, Dr. McCoy, that sentient

beings have had, and used, weapons of complete destruction for thousands of years. Historically it has always been easier to destroy than to create."

"Not anymore!" McCoy cried. "Now you can do both at once! One of our myths said Earth was created in six days; now, watch out! Here comes Genesis! We'll do it for you in six minutes!"

(Spock) "...you cannot ban knowledge because you distrust its implications. Civilization can be considered an attempt to control new knowledge for the common good."<sup>28</sup>

The members of the Genesis Project take a risk on the use of their creation and discuss it often between themselves. It is their search for a completely lifeless planet that lead to the discovery of Khan and his followers in the first place. Now, trapped in the Genesis cave, Carol, David, Kirk, McCoy, and Saavik have time to think about the unanswered questions in their lives.

This paradise setting leads into one of the more crucial points of the movie. Although they are in a physical utopia because everything is provided for them as far as food, water, shelter, etc., they are far from the spiritual utopia that *Star Trek* is known for. Saavik, whose Kobayashi Maru test Kirk witnessed in the beginning of the film, asks him how Kirk beat the no-win scenario. Saying that he "reprogrammed the simulation so I could save the ship," Kirk went on to admit that "I don't like to lose." Saavik's pointed commentary that Kirk never really faced the no-win scenario prompts Kirk's response of "we each face death every day we're alive."

A few beats later, Kirk contacts the Enterprise. Reports of her immobility were greatly "exaggerated" for Khan's benefit, and Kirk and company are exhumed from the planet by Spock. Once all the members from the Genesis cave are safely on the Enterprise, the battle between Khan and Kirk resumes. Kirk confronts Khan with the taunt of "We tried it your way, Khan. Are you game for a rematch?" Kirk comments on Khan's consistency as they enter into the Mutara Nebula for the final confrontation. A stronger parallel can be drawn to Judeo-Christian myth: it is the battle for the control of creation. Creation is in the hands of the Satan-incarnate while the defender of good must attempt to regain control.

The *Enterprise* leads Khan's ship into the nebula where the heavily damaged Enterprise would be matched evenly with weapons and tactical abilities. Khan's followers are killed and he swears revenge for them. The only revenge he has is to detonate the Genesis device, knowing that there was no way the *Enterprise* could escape from its effects.

Spock sacrifices his life so that Kirk and the crew can escape from the destructive forces of Genesis. Khan is destroyed. Spock is destroyed. The nebula where both ships fought the final battle is destroyed. Genesis is formed.

In the final words between Kirk and Spock, "Spock translates his suffering and sacrifice into a lesson for Kirk by saying 'I never took the Kobayashi Maru test until now. What do you think of my solution?'"<sup>29</sup> The death of Spock allows for Kirk to be reborn yet again, reborn into a new spiritual understanding.

. . . Kirk confesses to his newly found son that he has never really faced death until now: "I've cheated death, tricked my way out of death, and patted myself on the back for my own ingenuity. I know nothing." He admits that his earlier lecture to Saavik--"how we deal with death is at least as important as how we deal with life"--was "just words." But Kirk's son assures him that they were

"good words," and that Kirk "should listen to them."<sup>30</sup> (Roth 165).

And at the end of the movie, McCoy asks Kirk how he feels and Kirk replies, "I feel young, Doctor, believe it or not. Reborn."

The violence of Khan and his followers allow the regeneration of Kirk. Roth connects Spock and Kirk as "two facets of one identity" and notes that each time Spock speaks of their friendship, the two are "preceded or followed by carefully composed images" to reinforce the bond between the two characters.<sup>31</sup> He also comments that "Spock, like Jesus, gave his life of his own free will to redeem his fellow man. Spock's sacrificial death allows his double (Kirk) to be reborn."<sup>32</sup>

In *The Wrath of Khan*, we have creation from destruction in the most basic of senses: the creation of a planet from the destruction of a nebula, a starship, and a beloved *Star Trek* hero. While the physical utopia has been created through the Genesis planet, Kirk's spiritual utopia, one that heavily involves Spock, is shaken and unfulfilled. Although he has attained a new plane of understanding, this paradise is not quite completed.<sup>33</sup>

While Gail Sakurai states that *The Next Generation* writers "seem to be doing a pretty good job (so far) of recycling the old [story ideas]," one of the biggest complaints about first season *The Next Generation* was that there were no original plot lines.<sup>34</sup> Edward Gross and Mark Altman are quick to point out which episodes of *The Next Generation* are remakes of the original series in their *New Voyages* book series, but the theme of regeneration through violence is presented in a different way than in the original series or in the movies.

The creation through destruction myth in *Star Trek* usually revolves around the Prime Directive. The *Star Trek: The Next Generation Writer/Director's Guide* states the Prime Directive quite clearly:

Starfleet General Order Number One says that we do not have the right to interfere with the natural process of evolution on any planet or with the culture there.<sup>35</sup>

This rule holds true for all of the *Star Trek* series and movies, but each series has its own views of how that particular rule should be handled. As mentioned before, Kirk usually broke the Prime Directive every chance he got while in *The Next Generation*, as Sherry Hopper says, "it seems they often go to great lengths not to violate the [Prime Directive] unless they have a darn good reason."<sup>36</sup>

She goes on to argue that *The Next Generation's* closest representation of the regeneration through violence myth in the manner that the original series presented it is "Who Watches the Watchers?" This third season episode, originally aired in the week of October 14, 1989, features a primitive culture being studied by Starfleet and the Enterprise away team who "inadvertently allow the atheistic race a glimpse of their futuristic technology and are mistaken for gods."<sup>37</sup>

While it is true that the resolution of this story has a peaceful people resorting to violence in order to prove that Captain Picard is a god and therefore, their society is changed, *The Next Generation* had gone a step further in their representation of creation through violence in "Encounter at Farpoint," the premiere episode for the series which aired in the week of September 26, 1987.

In route to their first mission that deals with Farpoint Station, the Enterprise encounters "the all powerful Q, who feels that mankind has ventured far enough into space and will not allow further contamination. To this end, he places Picard and his crew on trial for the crimes

against humanity."<sup>38</sup>

The courtroom that Q materializes them in is historically accurate according to Data, and Picard identifies it as being from the mid-twenty-first century and the post atomic horror. When they are called upon to answer the charges, Data states that "In 2036, the New United Nations declared that no Earth citizen could be made to answer for the crimes of his race or forbearers." Q replies that the court is actually set in 2079, when "all United Earth nonsense was abolished for more *rapid* progress."<sup>39</sup>

While Picard admits that humans labelled as a "grievously savage race" may have been true in the past, humans in the 24th century have changed and did away with such "nonsense" as the Cold War, drug controlled armies, and nuclear threats of the past. Picard confesses that humanity is guilty, but provisionally. He goes on to request that the *Enterprise* crew be tested so that he can prove humanity in his time is innocent of the charges Q has brought against them.

The main focus of Q's charges is that human progress is a direct result of violence. "Despite Gene Roddenberry's utopian future visions," Altman says of this episode, "he postulated one of the show's most horrendous images: that of the post atomic courts of the 21st century. It made the Eugenics Wars seem like a picnic by comparison."<sup>40</sup> The Federation was formed in 2161, approximately one hundred years after the post atomic courts.<sup>41</sup>

The realm that *Star Trek* is set in is a direct result of this destruction of the Earth. While it is mentioned in passing in a few episodes of the original series, *The Next Generation* gives the most graphic and horrifying look at what humans had to endure before attaining this new age of universal freedom, social justice, and equality for all. According to Corey Allen, who directed this two part episode, "'Q' is in all of us. It's a question of worth."<sup>42</sup> To him, Q represents the questioning side of humanity, the one that asks what our purpose is and what right we have to exist.

There is not just one Q though. He is a member of a continuum of entities like himself that have the same name. Fans have postulated that this particular Q is actually a radically evolved human who is looking back on his ancestors, wondering why they made all the stupid mistakes, and failing to realize that it was because of those mistakes that he came to be. Even *Star Trek* author Peter David has a scene in his *The Next Generation* novel *Q-in-Law* where two members of the Q Continuum are discussing humans. The Q that has visited the *Enterprise* numerous times comments about one woman, "She is, after all, only human." The other member of the continuum replies, "Aren't we all."<sup>43</sup>

This strongly backs up the statements made about Q by Allen. He sees Q as "the question we pose ourselves; it's the constant looking at ourselves, a questioning of ourselves and a probing."<sup>44</sup> Where the original series and *The Wrath of Khan* had the humans questioning the rights of existence and of free will, *The Next Generation* has an omnipotent being exploring those limits. Maurice Hurley, former executive producer of *The Next Generation*, says that "Encounter at Farpoint" was "having, basically, God tell man you've come far enough; that everything you've touched, you've sullied."<sup>45</sup>

In *Star Trek*, we can see the full circle effect that regeneration through violence has. While the society in "The Apple" is just taking "the first step" towards free will by committing murder, *The Wrath of Khan* shows a society who has had free will for several millennia. *The Wrath of Khan* goes on to present before and after the Eugenic Wars and the twentieth century mentality of progress through violence. *The Next Generation* has an entity look back on those advancements and say that they were not good enough, that humans are still too primitive and

that they have contaminated everything that they have touched. It is Picard's defense of humanity that shows that humans had to go through the destruction of the old society that lead to the creation of this futuristic spiritual and physical utopia.

The premise of *Star Trek* depends on the regeneration through destruction and utopia myths for the formulation of its universe. The utopian society that the audience is presented with each week will not be possible until the regeneration of the current 20th century values and ideals. In *Star Trek*, the physical utopia is already in place--there is no hunger, no materialistic desire or need for money, and technology has provided for the creature comforts. They drive to obtain the spiritual utopia is seen in "The Apple," *The Wrath of Khan*, and "Encounter at Farpoint."

## Notes

1. The original series episode "Way to Eden."
2. Christopher D. Geist, "Part One: Popular Myths Introduction," *The Popular Culture Reader* Third Edition (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1983), p. 37.
3. Geist, pp 37-8 and Wm. Blake Tyrrell, "Star Trek's Myth of Science," *Journal of American Culture*, Spring 1979, p. 288.
4. Geist, p. 37.
5. Stuart M. Kaminski with Jeffrey M. Mahan, *American Television Genres* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1985), p. 15.
6. Dr. Yasue Kuwahara, Class notes from Honors 305, Northern Kentucky University, 9 Sept 1991, p. 3.
7. Richard Slotkin, *Regeneration Through Violence: The Mythology of the American Frontier, 1600-1860* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1973), pp. 21-3.
8. Slotkin, p. 15.
9. Karin Blair, "Sex and *Star Trek*," *Science Fiction Studies*, Nov 1983, p. 319.
10. Slotkin, p. 5.
11. Edward Gross, *Trek Classic: 25 Years Later* (New York: Image Publishing, 1991), p.87.
12. Max Ehrlich and Gene L. Coon, "The Apple," *Star Trek*, NBC, 13 October 1967. All quotations are taken from the televised version of the script.
13. "The Apple."
14. "The Apple."
15. "The Apple."
16. "The Apple."
17. "The Apple."
18. Blair, p. 312.
19. Blair, p. 313.
20. "The Apple."

21. Blair, p. 313.
22. David Alexander, "Gene Roddenberry: Writer, Producer, Philosopher, Humanist," *The Humanist*, March/April 1991, p. 7.
23. Blair, p. 315.
24. At the end of "Space Seed," Spock remarks that it would be interesting to return to Ceti-Alpha 5 in the future to see what has become of Khan and his followers.
25. Although she was never named in the movie, Lt. Marla McGivers was the historian who helped Khan take over the *Enterprise* in "Space Seed." She chose to be exiled with Khan rather than face a court-martial.
26. Lane Roth, "Death and Rebirth in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*," *Extrapolation*, Summer 1987, p. 165.
27. Vonda McIntyre, *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* novelization (New York: Pocket Books, 1982), pp. 178-9.
28. McIntyre, pp. 104-5.
29. Roth, p. 164.
30. Roth, p. 165.
31. Roth, p. 160.
32. Roth, pp. 162-3.
33. In *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*, Spock is physically resurrected and in *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, spiritually resurrected.
34. Gail Sakurai, "Time's Arrow," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 25 June 1992), Message #278.
35. Gene Roddenberry, *Star Trek: The Next Generation Writer/Director's Guide* Third Season (Los Angeles: Lincoln Enterprises, 1989), p. 55.
36. Sherry Hopper, "TNG, Myths, and Episodes," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 2 Oct 1992), Message #463.
37. Edward Gross and Mark A. Altman, *New Voyages: The Next Generation Guidebook* The First 100 Episodes (New York: Image Publishing, 1991), p. 92.
38. Gross and Altman, p. 9.
39. Both quotes are from David Gerrold, *Encounter at Farpoint* novelization (New York:

Pocket Books, 1987), p. 52.

40. Gross and Altman, p. 11. Khan and his followers were products of the Eugenics Wars.
41. The exact date of the Federation's formation was given in the TNG fifth season episode "The Outcast."
42. Gross and Altman, p. 10.
43. Peter David, *Q-in-Law* (New York: Pocket Books, 1991), p. 248.
44. Gross and Altman, p. 10.
45. Gross and Altman, p. 10.



## **Chapter Five: Icons and the Myth of Technology as a Savior**

*"Fate protects fools, little children, and ships named Enterprise"--Riker.*

From the first room or basement of the House of Popular Culture, we move upstairs to the first floor, which has three sections: icons, stereotypes, and heroes. These three are the "images of objects and people" which are based on cultural mythologies.<sup>1</sup> The first section on this floor deals with icons. While they do not have warning signs stating, "Warning! Cultural signpost ahead!" in front of them, icons are important, emotional objects in people's lives that they identify and surround themselves with. There are different levels of icons, ie regional, national, international icons as well as personal icons, but all of them invoke emotional responses from people. Icons also change with the times. Pinball machines were popular back in the 1950's and 60's and have been replaced by video games in the 1980's and 90's.

An icon "tie[s] in with myth, legend, values, idols, [and] aspirations" to provide cultural significance, but has altered its meaning from traditional connotations of "fixity and permanence" to the electronic age connotation of "coherence."<sup>2</sup> Traditional icons include the American flag which symbolizes the unity of the fifty states in America and it has not changed its meaning of freedom, liberty, and justice despite flag burning demonstrations. The flag is there to represent the United States of America along with the values the country stands for. In the electronic age where updates and changes are made much more rapidly than ever before, icons allow for a connection between the old and the new. Modern day icons include shopping malls, Barbie dolls, and the Marlboro man.

Cars became an icon of mobility, both social and financial, and they were possible because of the boom in technology. Icons are heavily dependant on the mythology of the times and in this case, icons are dependant on the myth of technology as a savior.

In *Star Trek*, the most prominent icon is needless to say the *Enterprise* which reflects the myth of technology as a savior. "Technology is by definition beneficial," writes Jack Nachbar.<sup>3</sup> The industrial revolution completely changed the face of the Earth forever. Suddenly, there was a huge influx of people from the rural areas into the cities to work at factories so that they can earn a better salary. New products were out on the market at an alarming rate.<sup>4</sup> According to James Burke, the Industrial Revolution:

...[came with] the modern expectation of progress and a better standard of living made possible by men's skills and the machines they invented... brought science and industry together in a new and dynamic relationship... [and] made modern urban society dependant on mass-production techniques without which we cannot now survive.<sup>5</sup>

That revolution gave birth to the modern concept of technology as a savior.

The "expectation of progress" and better "standards of living" that Burke mention brought about an even greater need for efficiency. Man had always tried to improve himself by creating something that would make a job done easier and quicker, and with the advent of so much new technology, the twentieth century value of efficiency became even more a focus. With electricity and steam engines, the domino effect of bigger and better machines was created and new inventions flowed into the American market place. Americans went gadget crazy.

While gadgets were nice to use and/or play with, the technology that created those inventions was now in the factories. In the beginning, it was accepted because better machines meant a decrease in the dangers of operating them. As time went on and improvements caused even greater efficiency, anxieties of losing jobs began to grow among industrial workers. William Blake Tyrrell comments:

Fear of being outmoded or replaced by a machine has accompanied the rise of automation. Although machines have improved the general welfare and led to the so-called "leisure age," for many it has been at the price of the dignity of work.<sup>6</sup>

The fears may have eased during the 1940's because of World War II and the need for mass production to aid the troops to win the war, but afterwards, the improvements made to increase output for the war effort plus the men returning back to their jobs brought the anxiety back into the work force.

During the turbulent 1960s, changes in lifestyles were abundant as products were marketed to help make things more convenient. These small things introduced into the private home, such as improved car radios and cars themselves, color televisions, and better air conditioning units, were accepted because they made life easier and more entertaining. On the other hand, the introduction of the computer and computerized automation in the industry made workers even more skeptical of changes because they could lose their jobs to a machine. They were not computer literate therefore did not understand that there was a need for people to run these machines.

Tyrrell states that:

Innovations in technology are welcomed because they improve the quality of life and because of the national passion for gadgets...*Star Trek* reflects and confronts these anxieties by telling a story of man's superiority. It explains why

machines can never replace men or research alter his condition.<sup>7</sup>

As mentioned before, icons are used for continuity and to tie together various elements of popular culture. While the *Enterprise* is the physical embodiment of technology as a savior, it links together the legend of the ship, because according to the *Star Trek* history, the *Enterprise* was the only ship that lasted her entire five year mission without being lost or destroyed; the values of machines not being able to replace humans but only make their lives easier; the idols in the form of Kirk, Spock, and McCoy; and the aspirations that man can achieve something on that grand of a scale.

"The operative word for icon is still *magic*," writes Fishwick, and that is what the *Enterprise* used: science fiction and television magic allowed a self-contained starship to roam the galaxy in search of intergalactic adventure.<sup>8</sup> Given America's love-obsession with cars, it isn't hard to miss the appeal of the *Enterprise*. Scotty was the fretful mechanic who treated the engines like they were his children, always protesting when Kirk would order more power and it threatened to overload them.

Fishwick details the cycle of how something becomes an icon: "history becomes mythology, mythology begets ritual, ritual demands icon."<sup>9</sup> The dynamic and emotional history of how *Star Trek* came into being and how it was killed off turned into the myth of the how a "religion" was started. The first convention in 1972 lit the flame for fandom on a national level and conventions became a ritual where fans would go and "worship" their sacrificed series. Those rituals reinforced the *Enterprise* as an icon.

In the original series, the *United StarShip Enterprise* is one of thirteen Constitution class starships in service to the Federation.<sup>10</sup> In true naval tradition, the *Enterprise* is referred to as a "she" and Captain Kirk feels as if he were married to her. "I give, she takes," Kirk laments during one episode, but he never gives up his duty to her until *The Search for Spock*.<sup>11</sup> Kirk Houser comments that the *Enterprise* was "the only woman that Kirk hadn't forsaken at some point. Not counting his period of paper pushing semi-retirement."<sup>12</sup> According to fan lore, the *Enterprise* is the only ship out of the thirteen to survive her original five year mission.<sup>13</sup> All others were either lost, destroyed, or assumed destroyed.<sup>14</sup>

The *Enterprise* was a culmination of man's achievements in the 23rd century. Space travel was not as dangerous or mysterious as it was in the 1960's and it was also more convenient: bulky space suits were eliminated, the zero gravity because of travelling in space was eliminated, and the ship was much more spacious than its namesake. Each crew person had his/her own living quarters or shared it with one other person. Besides all the comforts of living, the *Enterprise* was efficient.

Travelling at speeds faster than light, the length of time spent getting from one destination to another was shortened considerably. The *Enterprise* housed all the latest technological advances--warp drive, transporters, phasers, and photon torpedoes. The ship could sustain more structural damage caused by enemy fire than previous ships. She was the best ship in the fleet and loved by the best captain of the fleet.

The *Enterprise* did not receive an overhaul until 1979 when *The Motion Picture* was being produced. The ship's exterior remained the same, with the exception of an improved sensor dish on the lower half of the ship. In interior, however, was updated to meet the vast visual improvements so that *Star Trek* would meet the standard of technology that made *Star Wars* more appealing. The bridge became slightly less sterile looking and was a bit bigger than

the previous bridge.<sup>15</sup> Although the *Enterprise* looked a bit different, it still held the same mystique and hope for the future than its 1966 version did.

Perhaps the biggest shock to *Star Trek* fans came in *The Search for Spock* when Kirk opts to destroy the *Enterprise* instead of allowing the Klingons to capture her. Kirk Houser states:

I can say that I was more moved by the flaming of the [*Enterprise*] more than I was by Spock's death [in *The Wrath of Khan*]. I guess that somehow I knew that they'd bring him back, but the original *Enterprise* seemed irreplaceable... Maybe I am just closer to the ship than to Spock.<sup>16</sup>

But he also goes on to argue that while the *Enterprise* is an important part of the *Star Trek* lore, he believes "that the concept of the `ship' should transcend the actual hardware, and represent something more."<sup>17</sup> Gail Sakurai agrees with his last statement:

The ship is just a shell. It serves as an identity (or icon...) to bind the crew together. The crew has to be able to function as a unit. They feel loyalty to their ship, which includes the crew that serves her. When someone says that the *Enterprise* is the best ship in the fleet, they are hardly talking about the collection of hardware! That can be duplicated--the crew can not.<sup>18</sup>

Sakurai stresses the importance of the crew functioning on board the *Enterprise* and how it is they who make the ship what it is. In Roddenberry's continual search for emphasizing the importance of man's free will and man himself, he often pitted Kirk against a mechanized foe who had either lost or never had humanity. These episodes cannot be seen as going against Roddenberry's use of the myth of technology as a savior, but stress the importance of humanity in the icon itself. Without humans, the *Enterprise* could not function properly.

Kirk came up against computerized foes, pointing out their lack of humanity and causing their self-destruction, eight times in the seventy-nine episodes of the original series.<sup>19</sup> Gross even labels Kirk as a "licensed machine killer" because of number of times that the captain deals with those circumstances.<sup>20</sup> Kirk became a champion for dignity of work since each time he destroyed the all-powerful computer, the humanoids were able to live a "normal" life and create "gadgets" of their own.

Perhaps the biggest parallel between man's fear of being replaced by machine is in "The Ultimate Computer." Dr. Richard Daystrom creates the M-5, a computer that is programmed to assume all functions of the *Enterprise* crew. Kirk's argument against it is that the computer has no intuition, no gut feelings, to tell it when it should fire and when it should not. The M-5's programming for self-preservation is so strong, that the computer malfunctions and begins to attack other Federation ships while Kirk and Daystrom are helpless to stop it. Instead of taking on the risks that humans face in space exploration, the M-5 becomes one of those risks. As always, Kirk conquers the M-5 and Daystrom realizes that Kirk was right--there really are "certain things men must do to remain men."<sup>21</sup>

But while Kirk is winning the battles against machines, having an officer, Spock, whose abilities reflect those of a computer seems somewhat of a paradox in *Star Trek*. Computers are based on and operated by the use of logic. They travel from point A to point B without wondering where the rest of the alphabet is. They are devoid of emotion; therefore emotion cannot inhibit their functions. Vulcans are completely devoted to logic and are known for their vast intellects. They continually suppress their emotions because emotions cloud their thinking,

and for a Vulcan to lose his/her emotional control is considered a condition worse than death.<sup>22</sup> The similarities between computers and Vulcans are obvious, but what makes them different is mechanized logic versus humanized logic.

Perhaps Spock's half-human heritage compensates for his computerized Vulcan half. The first officer has many speeches about the importance of logic and the hindrances of emotions. This characterization "seduces us into overlooking how often he suspends the laws of logic and reason."<sup>23</sup> In "The Menagerie," the distinct characteristics of Vulcan logic are combined into Spock's loyalty to his former captain, Christopher Pike, who commanded the *Enterprise* before Kirk. Edward Gross provides a quick synopsis:

When a crippled and paralyzed Christopher Pike is beamed aboard the *Enterprise*, Spock commandeers the vessel to Talos IV, a world deemed off-limits by the Federation. As a result, the Vulcan is placed on court martial for mutiny, and during the trial the ship's viewscreen flashes back to footage from "The Cage," which details Pike's connection with the Talosians. It is Spock's hope that Pike will find some happiness amongst the illusionary abilities of that alien race.<sup>24</sup> Spock uses his logic to take over the *Enterprise*, and claims that it is logical for him to deliver Pike to Talos IV. The "logic" behind his reasoning happens to be his emotions that deal with loyalty and sense of duty. Any comparisons of Spock to a mainframe computer are blown away by this episode because Spock did something that was very *human*.

The original series sends a mixed message: technology is alright as long as it stays in its place. It cannot replace man because it has no emotions and no intuition. The myth of technology as a savior now has qualifications to it: the saving technology has to be used by a human and cannot act on its own such as the *Enterprise*.

## Notes

1. Christopher Geist and Jack Nachbar, "Introduction: What is Popular Culture?" *The Popular Culture Reader* Third Edition (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), pp. 5-6.
2. Marshall Fishwick, "Entrance," *Icons of Popular Culture*, Marshall Fishwick and Ray B. Browne ed. (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1970), pp. 2-3.
3. Jack Nachbar, "Culture and Continuity: Three Myths in the Prints of Currier & Ives," *The Popular Culture Reader* (Bowling Green: Bowling Green State University Popular Press, 1983), p. 60.
4. Nachbar, p. 62.
5. James Burke, *The Day the Universe Changed* (Boston: Little, Brown, & Co., 1985), p. 193.
6. Wm. Blake Tyrrell, "Star Trek's Myth of Science," *Journal of American Culture*, Spring 1979, p. 289.
7. Tyrrell, p. 288.
8. Fishwick, p. 5.
9. Fishwick, p. 3.
10. The original series's first season episode, "Charlie X."
11. The original series's first season episode, "The Naked Time."
12. Kirk Houser, "TFF Was it God?" *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference, (Cincinnati: 23 Sept. 1992), Message #545. The period of semi-retirement that Houser refers to relates to the two and one-half years that Kirk spent as an admiral with a desk job in *The Motion Picture*.
13. Greg Turner, "A History of Starfleet and Ships Named *Enterprise*," *Talon's Edge*, Terrie Holahan ed., May 1992, p. 7.
14. Stephen Whitfield and Gene Roddenberry, *The Making of Star Trek* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), p. 165. Whitfield's book only chronicles the first two years of the original series. During the first two seasons, four of the twelve ships were lost or destroyed.
15. The increase in budget for sets and the need to compete with the standards set by George Lucas's *Star Wars* brought about many of the changes in design.
16. Kirk Houser, "Blowing up the E," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 29 Sep 92), Message #604.

17. Houser, #604.
18. Gail Sakurai, "Blowing up the E," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (30 Sept 1992), Message #631.
19. Those episodes are "What Are Little Girls Made Of?," "The Return of the Archons," "A Taste of Armageddon," "The Changeling," "The Apple," "I, Mudd," "The Ultimate Computer," and "For the World is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky."
20. Gross, *Trek Classic*, p. 90.
21. "The Ultimate Computer," *Star Trek*, NBC, 8 March 1968.
22. *The Next Generation* third season episode, "Sarek."
23. Tyrrell, p. 294.
24. Gross, p. 53. "The Cage" was the rejected, original pilot for *Star Trek*.

## Chapter Six: Stereotypes in *Star Trek*

*"The prejudices people feel about each other disappear when they get to know each other"--Kirk.<sup>1</sup>*

The second part of the first floor of the House of Popular Culture moves into stereotypes. A stereotype is "a generalized idea about a group of individual items" that is shared by the members of culture.<sup>2</sup> Such a generalization is something that the human mind does naturally in order to organize a massive amount of information it is fed daily. Therefore, unlike popular conception, stereotyping itself is not necessarily negative and a stereotype can have a positive function. For instance, the naive image of freshman encourages "professors to construct introductory courses for those with no experience in the subject matter."<sup>3</sup> According to Geist and Nachbar, the function of stereotype can be determined by "a) whether or not there is any accuracy in the stereotype; b) the positive or negative emotions aroused by the stereotype; and c) the positive or negative actions caused by the stereotype."<sup>4</sup>

Mass media floods audiences with hundreds of negative and positive images of stereotypes each day. Pepsi's advertising catch-phrase is that it is the "Choice of the New Generation" and commercials emphasize how drinking Pepsi can change senior citizens from being boring and behind the times into party animals dancing to the latest hits by Bon Jovi or Madonna. That generalization that senior citizens are out of touch with current society is a negative stereotype that is used by Pepsi to appeal to the audience. On the other hand, positive stereotypes of the portrayal of "dynamic, ambitious, and talented" African-American men in movies such as *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and *Shaft* as well as on television shows like *Roots* and *The Cosby Show* reversed the image of being lazy, superstitious, and cowardly. Moreover, conventional characters are part of popular formulas and heroes and allow writers to leapfrog the long dramatic descriptions of why the bad guy is a bad guy, much like why a tyrant wants to take over the world.<sup>5</sup>

During the 1960's, *Star Trek* tackled the issues of race, sex, and vocation, the three areas where stereotyping is common. *Star Trek* broke some stereotypes in these areas but reinforced others. In the original series, which was set in the 23rd century, prejudice and discrimination between human races were non-existent, but human prejudices against alien races and racism among other aliens were brought into the forefront in episodes such as "Balance of Terror" and "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield."

"Balance of Terror" provided audiences (and the Federation) a first look at a long-time, faceless enemy of the Federation, the Romulans. Previous wars were fought between the two sides, but they had never made visual contact. It had been seventy-five years since the Federation's last military conflict with the Romulans.<sup>6</sup> Lieutenant Andrew Stiles shows that humans still had the twentieth century "faults" of making rash accusations based on prejudice. Members of his family were killed during the last confrontation with the Romulans and this encounter sets the officer on edge. One of the few things known about the Romulans was that they were an off-shoot of the Vulcan race. In his paranoia, Stiles accuses Spock of being a spy because Spock was a Vulcan.<sup>7</sup>

While the "failings" of humans were shown, third season's "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield" showed "the stupidity of prejudice."<sup>8</sup> An entire race of people with half-black, half-



white faces killed each other because "the colors [were] on the wrong side."<sup>9</sup> The allegory was obvious to viewers during a time of racial tensions and riots.

Between other races, it was all right to show prejudices, but among the crew, the thought of racism was intolerable. Roddenberry's strive to have a multi-ethnic crew reinforced his idea that racism between humans had diminished in the 23rd century, and he was quite "pleased in those days not only to have a black woman, but a black officer" on the bridge of the *Enterprise*.<sup>10</sup> As mentioned before, Nichelle Nichols was one of the first African-American women to have a regular role on a television series.

There was a time when Nichols wanted to leave because her character had been regulated to only saying "Hailing frequencies open..." and "Captain, I'm scared" lines, but she opted to stay on. She credits her decision to Dr. Martin Luther King telling her that she was needed on the show as a positive sign to all African-Americans.<sup>11</sup> Actress Whoopi Goldberg says that Nichols was her childhood inspiration because Nichols held her own on the show.<sup>12</sup> Nichols's Uhura and Shatner's Kirk even kissed, albeit against their characters' wills, in "Plato's Stepchildren," marking television's first interracial kiss.<sup>13</sup> Another taunt at racism came in "The Savage Curtain" when Abraham Lincoln remarked about Uhura, "What a charming negress." Uhura's fiery response, "We've learned not to fear words," and Kirk's subsequent speeches reminded viewers "how 'perfect' [the original series] society was."<sup>14</sup>

While Kirk argued for racial tolerances in "The Savage Curtain" and "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield," *The Undiscovered Country* portrayed him as being a very prejudiced man and afraid of change which all revolve around the death of his son, David, in *The Search for Spock*. When David was killed by Klingons in *The Search for Spock*, Kirk's stunned reaction was "You Klingon bastard. You killed my son," but the events that took place in *The Final Frontier* showed a completely recovered Kirk.

In *Star Trek V: [The Final Frontier]*, which took place less than a year after David's death, he displayed no such prejudice [against Klingons]. He interacted with those Klingons just fine. He even invited them to a party aboard his ship (at the end of the film), and made no mention at all of any distaste at having to be in such close quarters with them.<sup>15</sup>

Ten years later, however, he is still bitter about David's death and admits that "I still haven't forgiven them for the death of my boy."<sup>16</sup>

Kirk has never had a prejudiced bone in his body. On the contrary, in [the original series] he was always rushing to the rescue of the downtrodden and oppressed. He was always making eloquent speeches about high principles such as equality and justice and tolerance. And what's more, he believed in what he said.<sup>17</sup>

In the novelization of the film, Jeanne Dillard gives reasons why Kirk's hatred comes to the forefront in the film. A raid on an outpost leaves Carol Marcus, Kirk's former flame from *The Wrath of Khan* and David's mother, dying in a starbase hospital. Starfleet has reason to believe the Klingons were behind the raid. Kirk is reliving his dealings with the Klingons and at exactly the worst moment he is presented with the news that he has to have them on his ship. None of these explanations are given in the film, however, and audiences are left to believe that Kirk's hatred has been burning for ten years.

In *The Next Generation*, like the original series, racism exists again between alien races,

but not between humans. Worf is the only character to have shown strong racial prejudices, but it is seen as reflecting both current Klingon political views and his personal views. Worf's natural parents were killed in a Romulan sneak attack on the Khitomer Outpost.<sup>18</sup> In "The Neutral Zone," Worf states that Romulans have no honor, something prized highly to the Klingons, and that the feeling is mutual between the two races.

This is further emphasized in "The Enemy" when a Romulan would die without Worf's blood. Worf debates on whether or not to give the needed transfusion, and both Crusher and Picard make arguments for saving the Romulan's life. In the end, however, Worf refuses because it does not conform to his sense of ethics. His prejudice has its foundations in the death of his natural parents, but Riker quietly points out that at one time, humans and Klingons hated each other as much as the Romulans and Klingons do now. There is a plea for tolerance, but Worf is never ordered to compromise his values.

Chief O'Brien is the only other recurring character to show any kind of racism, although it is not to the extreme that Worf's is. In "The Wounded," renegade Starfleet captain Ben Maxwell hunts down and destroys Cardassian ships. O'Brien had served with Maxwell during the time that the Cardassians and the Federation were at war, and Maxwell's wife and children were killed by Cardassians. When a Cardassian delegation is brought on board the *Enterprise*, O'Brien's hostility towards them comes forth. During his service with Maxwell, he was forced to kill a Cardassian in self-defense and O'Brien had never killed anyone before. O'Brien's hostility towards the Cardassians is only a fraction of what Maxwell's is, but O'Brien explains his feelings quite clearly: "It's not you I hate, Cardassian. I hate what I've become because of you."<sup>19</sup>

The evolved humans do recognize and do exhibit prejudice against alien races in both the original series and *The Next Generation*. Like in "The Savage Curtain" where Uhura retaliates against Lincoln's racist remark, *The Next Generation's* "The Masterpiece Society" features moments of racial tension between Geordi LaForge and the members of the human colony on Moab IV. This society "has been genetically planned and engineered to be the perfect society" with perfect members.<sup>20</sup> LaForge's blindness, which is a genetic defeat, would never have occurred on Moab IV. To their prejudice against his handicap LaForge testily replies, "I can see you just fine."

On a more subtle note, "Time's Arrow II" has LaForge at the end of another racial slur. When the crew are thrown back in time to late 19th century San Francisco, there is a confrontation between a Caucasian man and Geordi. The man snatches the walking stick LaForge is using to guide himself (he could not wear his VISOR because it would draw attention to him) and asks what LaForge is doing with a "gentleman's cane." Andy Harman applauds the lack of reaction LaForge has to this statement:

Having Geordi ignore (if not completely \*miss\* the remark altogether) was much more of a sign of ultimate color blindness. Geordi did not recognize the racial remark as such because he grew up in a society where such attitudes don't exist. That is the optimistic future of the Trek universe, not the defensive, explanatory, gotta-git-em-back-for-this-one righteousness that permeates today's television.<sup>21</sup>

The subtle comment, which would have undoubtedly caused Uhura to expound upon human virtues and equality, was left alone in *The Next Generation*.

Not so subtle are discriminations based on sex and vocation. John Condry's study of "distortions and exaggerations on television" uses gender and job to classify the stereotypical roles of men and women on television.<sup>22</sup> The images that television uses are "quite outmoded"

because they reinforce the "idea of males and females as opposites."<sup>23</sup> Men are traditionally aggressive and violent, going into action without worrying about the consequences, while women are passive and gentle. Condry goes on to note that "women are also depicted on television as being altruistic--caring about others--and socially conforming."<sup>24</sup>

When NBC rejected Roddenberry's female first officer in "The Cage," it was the opinion of the network that audiences would not accept a woman in such high command of a traditionally male field.<sup>25</sup> The "test reports," or a selected audience viewing of the episode, of the pilot revealed that other women did not like the idea of "Number One." Roddenberry agreed with NBC officials to remove the character and the role was rewritten. Stephen Whitfield comments, "Although *Star Trek* was a show about the 23rd century, it was being viewed by a 20th century audience--who resented the idea of a tough, strong-willed woman ('too domineering') as second-in-command."<sup>26</sup>

As a result, the women took more subordinate roles in the original series. Clyde Wilcox comments that Lieutenant Uhura, the communications officer, was "reminiscent of [a] telephone operator[s]" while Nurse Christine Chapel only "took temperatures and administered medication."<sup>27</sup> Yeoman Janice Rand, who only appeared during the first season as a recurring character, served as Kirk's secretary. They were an active part of the crew, but were never actually part of the decision making process, although Uhura was occasionally present at staff meetings.<sup>28</sup>

Aside from not being part of the command crew, these women were also subordinated by their romantic pinings for members of the crew. Chapel's yearning for Spock is touched on in several episodes such as "The Naked Time" and "Journey to Babel." She wants to touch the human side of Spock that he always hid and explore it with him. When both of their inhibitions are suppressed in "The Naked Time," Chapel openly proclaims her love for Spock, pleading with him to reconsider. Both know that there could never be a relationship between them, but while Spock accepts it, Chapel still longs for one.

Although she wants a relationship with Spock, Chapel already has a fiancé, Dr. Roger Korby, who appears in "What Are Little Girls Made Of?" Korby discovers ancient alien technology that allows him to duplicate humans into androids and wants to use the Enterprise as a means to spread his new android race across the galaxy. While Chapel wars within herself about her relationship with Korby, Kirk battles against an android of himself and tries to convince Korby that mechanized humans are wrong. At the end of the episode, it is revealed that Korby himself is an android and he is destroyed. "The Naked Time" aired before "What Are Little Girls Made Of?", possibly showing that Chapel was having second thoughts about her relationship with Korby.

Rand's interest in Kirk is seen throughout the first season and highlighted in "The Enemy Within." When Kirk is split into two beings, one passive and the other aggressive, his aggressive side attacks Rand in her quarters and attempts to rape her. She fends him off and then tells McCoy and Spock about the incident. Shown in tears relating the events to the two men, her disbelief that Kirk would do such a thing is clear because he had always treated her with indifferent respect.

While Chapel and Rand were longing for the two leading men, Uhura never actually had a romantic relationship in the series. Unlike Rand, who was written to lust after Kirk, Uhura only showed mild interest in Kirk because "interracial romance was a bit too risqué for the times."<sup>29</sup> Like almost every woman featured in the original series, she showed an admiration for him and loyalty to him, but she never actually took any action. It was only in *The Final Frontier*

that any hint of romance between her and Scotty was mentioned, albeit rather briefly.

These women accepted their subordinate roles throughout the original series and also their failed romances with Kirk until the last episode of the series. In "Turnabout Intruder," Dr. Janice Lester uses an alien device to swap her mind into Kirk's body and vice versa. Her failed romance with Kirk, coupled with the fact that Starfleet did not allow women to be captains or command a ship, turned into hatred for Kirk and envy for his position as captain of the Enterprise. Ranting and raving that she was the captain and that the crew must follow her orders, Lester displays that she cannot, in fact, handle the position of a starship commander. Returned to her own body, Lester is punished for crime.

Twenty years later, the roles of women changed in the 20th century and in the *Star Trek* universe, the rules had substantially changed as well. Gone was the "disposable female" who usually fell victim to Kirk's "shameless bagging of alien babes in tinfoil bikinis."<sup>30</sup> Women held higher vocational positions than ever before, ranging from cooperation presidents to presidential advisors to state governors.

Tasha Yar reflected the cultural changes in a larger society from the time of the original series to that of *The Next Generation* by being the chief of security, always having her opinions heard by Picard and Riker as viable plans of action. She was tough, independent, and aggressive, yet attractive at the same time. To acknowledge those traits being desirable, "Code of Honor" has Lutan, the chief of Ligon II, kidnapping Yar because he is impressed with her strength and beauty and Lutan's wife, Yareena, challenges Yar to a duel to the death because she feels her honor is threatened. She shows her sexual freedom in "The Naked Now" by seducing Data, but later regrets that action and tells Data to forget the event. Her physical prowess for a precis squares tournament is recognized in "11001001" and for an on-ship martial arts tournament in "Skin of Evil."<sup>31</sup>

*The Next Generation* has two other women on the bridge, Dr. Beverly Crusher and Counselor Deanna Troi, and they, like Yar, participate actively in the decision making process. As chief medical officer, Crusher speaks from the humanistic point of view while Troi gives "important advice to the captain before contact with other ships and cultures."<sup>32</sup> While they are not subservient like Chapel, Uhura, and Rand, Wilcox states that:

...these two women represent an extension of traditional feminine values of nurturance and empathy. They thus represent social feminism, which holds that women differ from men, but that these differences can be a source of strength.<sup>33</sup>

While all three participated actively in ship's operations and command, Yar was the only departure from traditional women's roles. Yar's death in "Skin of Evil" marked the end of the recurring dominant female in the first season. At the beginning of the second season, Crusher had accepted a position at Starfleet Medical and a new doctor, Katherine Pulaski, came on board as chief medical officer. The change between doctors can be seen as another experiment with a dominate female character. Wilcox comments that "Dr. [Pulaski] was perhaps less traditionally [sic] feminine, for while Dr. Crusher was often seen as a worrying mother, Dr. [Pulaski] has been portrayed as tough-minded and unsentimental."<sup>34</sup> Pulaski's departure at the end of the second season, however, gave way to the return of Crusher in the third season.

Another change from the original series to *The Next Generation* was romantic involvements with the female crew members. As mentioned before, Yar seduced Data in "The

Naked Now" but it did not diminish her characterization. She was still tough and dominant although her inhibitions were suppressed. Troi's romance with Riker cooled down after "The Naked Now" because producers wanted both characters to have the ability to be romantically involved with the guest of the week. Troi went on to have several affairs, but not as many as Riker. In "The Price," Troi blew the whistle on a fellow empath who was using his powers to gain a better bargaining angle at a trade meeting. Her duty to the ship and Captain Picard outweighed her need for romantic involvement, much like the original series's Lieutenant Marla McGivers in "Space Seed," in which she saved Kirk's life when Khan, the man she was strongly attracted to, tried to kill Kirk and take over the ship.

Crusher's on-again, off-again relationship with Picard teased audiences for several seasons. In "The Naked Now," Crusher confesses her attraction to the captain, and it is subsequently touched on in "The Big Goodbye," "The Arsenal of Freedom," and "The Last Outpost" during the first season. With her return in the third season, Crusher distanced herself from Picard and their relationship became much more platonic.

Unlike Janice Lester, who, because she was female, could not command a ship, women are shown in very powerful positions within Starfleet. In *The Next Generation* episode "Conspiracy," Captain Tryla Scott, an African-American female, was the youngest in the history of Starfleet to achieve that rank, beating Kirk's record of 34 years old. Captain Phillipa Louvois, one of Picard's former flames, decided whether or not Data had legal rights because he is an android in "The Measure of the Man" and it is revealed that Dr. Leah Brahms designed the *Enterprise's* engines in "Booby Trap." Sparks flew between Lieutenant Commander Shelby, perhaps one of the most aggressive female Starfleet officer, and Commander Riker when she made no bones about wanting Riker's position as first officer in "The Best of Both Worlds." She served as Riker's first officer after Picard was kidnapped by the Borg and Riker was promoted to captain, and then later Shelby was put in charge of rebuilding the fleet after the Borg were defeated. When Ensign Ro came on board the *Enterprise* as a semi-regular cast member, her aggressiveness almost matched Shelby's, but while there was great animosity between her and the rest of the crew in "Ensign Ro," she lost most of her edge by her third appearance, although it was never explained.

The cultural differences between the time of the original series and that of *The Next Generation* are very marked in the portrayal of women, but by the same token, the regular characters of Crusher and Troi in *The Next Generation* still conform to traditional female roles. Crusher simply represents a promoted version of Christine Chapel and her opinions are now considered by the captain. Troi, like Uhura, serves in the communications field, but instead of repeating messages, Troi uses her empathic ability to advise the captain. Every non-traditional *The Next Generation* woman has either be killed, transferred off the show, or lost their hard, dominant edge. Even Shelby softened up to Riker by the end of "Best of Both Worlds II."

While some cultural stereotypes have been broken by *Star Trek*, others remain as a reminder of when the original series and *The Next Generation* were produced. Racism still exists, but it has been transferred to aliens instead of humans. Stereotypes of sex and vocation were also altered to fit the 23rd and 24th century, but some reflect those of the 1960's and 1990's. Those stereotypes can be seen as positive, though, because they are something that the audience can recognize and relate to.

## Notes

1. The original series episode "Elaan of Troyius."
2. Christopher Geist and Jack Nachbar, "Part Three: Stereotypes and Popular Culture Introduction," *The Popular Culture Reader* Third ed. (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 153.
3. Geist and Nachbar, p. 153.
4. Geist and Nachbar, p. 154.
5. All quotes are from Geist and Nachbar, pp. 153-5.
6. Edward Gross, *Trek Classic* (New York: Image Publishing, 1991), p. 54.
7. "Balance of Terror" is a first season episode.
8. Fred Freiburger interview, *Trek Classic*, p. 115.
9. Gross, p. 115.
10. Gene Roddenberry, *Star Trek 25th Anniversary Special*, syndicated two hour television special, September 1991.
11. Nichelle Nichols interview, *25th Anniversary Special*.
12. Larry Nemecek, *The Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion* (New York: Pocket, 1992), p. 64.
13. Clyde Wilcox, "To Boldly Return Where Others Have Gone Before: Cultural Change and The Old and New *Star Treks*," *Extrapolation*, Spring 1992, p. 89.
14. Andy Harman, "Times Arrow II," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Spoiler! Conference (Cincinnati: 7 Oct 1992), Message #113.
15. Gail Sakurai, "TUC as the Worst?" *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 26 July 92), Message #341.
16. *The Undiscovered Country*.
17. Sakurai, Message #341.
18. Ironically, the Federation-Klingon peace conference was held on Camp Khitomer in TUC.
19. *The Next Generation* episode "The Wounded."

20. Larry Nemecek, *The Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion* (New York: Pocket, 1992), p. 190.
21. Andy Harman, "Times Arrow II," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Spoiler! Conference (7 Oct 92), Message #113.
22. John Condry, *The Psychology of Television* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 1989), p. 68.
23. Condry, p. 68.
24. Condry, p. 69.
25. Majel Barrett-Roddenberry, Question and Answer session, *Space Station Cincy* (Cincinnati: 1 Aug 1992).
26. Stephen E. Whitfield and Gene Roddenberry, *The Making of Star Trek* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1968), p. 128.
27. Wilcox, p. 89.
28. Wilcox, p. 89.
29. Wilcox, p. 89.
30. Karin Blair, "Sex and *Star Trek*," *Science Fiction Studies*, Nov 1983, p. 292 and Rick Marin, "Kisses Great!/Less Killing! Comparing the Captains: Kirk vs. Picard," *TV Guide*, 31 Aug 1991, p. 6.
31. The rules to precis squares have never been explained nor the game actually seen in the series. It is known that it can be dangerous, leading to broken bones as seen in fourth season's "Future Imperfect."
32. Wilcox, p. 90.
33. Wilcox, p. 90.
34. Wilcox, p. 90.

## Chapter Seven

### Popular Heroes in *Star Trek*

*"Heroes have an infinite capacity for stupidity. Thus legends are born."--Michael Smith<sup>1</sup>*

The third section of the first floor of the House of Popular Culture focuses on heroes which are human icons reflecting popular mythologies. While "stereotypes often reveal the historic fears of American culture," heroes usually reflect the ideals and highest virtues of culture.<sup>2</sup>

Heroes provide popular culture with two things, "concrete images that we can all strive to become" and "a source of pride to that culture" because that culture has produced "a perfected member of [their] culture."<sup>3</sup> They also must gain their status under three conditions: they "must be exceptionally gifted in some way," "possess qualities the culture highly values," and defend their culture "so the culture is preserved and made prosperous."<sup>4</sup> This description fits what is called the traditional hero. However, there are two other types, rebels and celebrities, and these alternative heroes have different conditions that they must meet before being considered a hero.

The rebel hero is recognized because of his "vitality for life" and his representation of a sub-culture that goes against the dominant culture but he isn't necessarily gifted.<sup>5</sup> Unlike the traditional hero, the rebel hero is intent upon pointing out the defects of the dominant culture. Celebrities, on the other hand, depend heavily on the media to make them popular and their gift is generally "being well known."<sup>6</sup> Their cultural values are those of the immediate, daily culture and celebrities try to change when the culture changes or they will lose their cultural status. They do not conform to or rebel against the dominant culture, either, and because of their dependence on the mass media, they may only be a hero for a day.<sup>7</sup>

Of the three categories of heroes, Roger Rollin cites five different types of heroes that can be seen in modern culture: the super hero, the supreme hero, the leader-hero, the everyman-hero, and the subordinate hero. The super hero, while possessing human characteristics, is set apart because he/she is either alien and/or part human and because he/she possesses superior, mythic abilities such as Superman's heat vision and Wonder Woman's ability to fly.<sup>8</sup> The superhero also possesses incredibly enhanced talents such as X-ray vision. While Superman is considered a true super hero, Batman is seen as a supreme hero. This type of hero is human, and therefore vulnerable to attacks and mortal although escaping near-death situations gives the air of being immortal.<sup>9</sup> Batman possesses superior intelligence and intuition while being a master at several different forms of martial arts and gymnastics. He can do it all although he is limited to his human body.

The Leader-hero is marked by his/her "physical attractiveness and physical prowess, intelligence, knowledge, personality and skills to which ordinary mortals can only aspire."<sup>10</sup> The difference between a supreme hero and a leader-hero is that the leader-hero is bound by his/her environment. Batman is more often than not seen as tragic loner although his sidekick Robin and his butler Alfred do provide some sort of companionship and rarely involves himself in romance. On the other hand, the satiric leader-hero Hawkeye Pierce has had two best friends on *M\*A\*S\*H\**, "Trapper" John McIntyre and B.J. Hunnicutt, and has been involved in countless romances. As the title implies, a leader-hero is known for his/her leadership abilities and charisma.

"Ordinary mortals [who are] thrust[ed] by chance into extraordinary circumstances" are



the Everyman-Heroes.<sup>11</sup> The Everyman-hero has no special powers, talents, or desire to become a hero, but when faced with a challenge, he/she does not back down. Instead, he/she meets the challenge head on and use his/her common, ordinary talents. While the Everyman-Hero is a person that we can be, the Subordinate Hero is a person we sympathize with. Only when he/she struggles through his/her ordinary life and achieves a small goal is he/she seen as heroes. This type of hero is usually marked by age, economic situation, or social status and considered subordinate because of their lower social class, origin, or background. He/She may be a hero to people within their own class, but the subordinate hero is often presented in a satirical (Archie Bunker) or comical (Charlie Chaplin) form.<sup>12</sup>

When it comes to science fiction, the traditional, Leader-Hero is the most common portrayal of the hero. James Hodge comments:

The heroic figures of today's fantasy and science fiction are merely the latest in a long line of culture heroes who purport to be models of all that is best in our society, and thus offer a comforting example of how truth and goodness--not to mention The American Way--prevail against evil and lies.<sup>13</sup>

When the original series debuted in 1966, the United States had fought in the Korean War and fighting the VietNam War. Unlike previous wars, Americans did not have clear-cut reasons for participating in these wars. They did not feel that The American Way was being threatened and "the military connection with preservation of prosperity was hazy. The resultant mixed feelings about these wars created a national mood unreceptive to soldier heroes."<sup>14</sup> In an era seemingly without heroes, *Star Trek* introduced three--Kirk, Spock, and McCoy.

*Star Trek* presented a group of heroes and a hope for the future in the late 1960's. *Star Trek's* viewing audience was young: high schoolers, college-aged people, and young married couples. They saw a modern ship full of galactic cowboys willing to take on whatever challenged them, never backing down, and usually winning. Sure, a token red-shirted security guard was sometimes sacrificed for the good of the many, but it always prompted Kirk and his crew into action, spouting words of tolerance and throwing fists when necessary to prove a point.

Kirk's actions are mainly guided by his intuition and his reliance on Spock and McCoy's input. He is a man of actions and ideals with a firm sense of duty, and while he acknowledges the need of the Prime Directive, he wastes no time at all in rejecting it in order to right wrongs. As a true hero, Kirk has a firm sense of himself and is able to accept the need for the undesirable parts of his personality: aggression, deception, and ruthlessness.<sup>15</sup> In the original series's "The Enemy Within," a transporter accident splits Kirk into two people, "a ruthless, aggressive coward and a meek and somewhat indecisive pacifist."<sup>16</sup> Kirk realizes that he must possess both the "good" qualities--peaceful, sensitive, and emotional--and the bad qualities--brutal, savage, and ruthless-- of his personality in order to become the charismatic, decisive person that he strives to be.

The second episode that showcases a dual personality of Kirk is "Mirror, Mirror." This time, the transporter malfunction sends Kirk, McCoy, Uhura, and Scotty to a parallel universe where ruthlessness reigns. In their place on the *Enterprise*, Spock encounters their parallel universe counterparts including a very vicious and "barbaric" version of Kirk. Although all is returned to normal at the end, Spock comments how watching the parallel universe form of Kirk rant and rave about being released was an interesting study for him. Kirk again realizes that those barbaric sides are part of his emotional make-up that are usually repressed.

Ironically, it is his barbaric side that makes Kirk so appealing to the audiences. He is a

"roguish, mercurial, finger-on-the-phaser space cowboy who takes charge...and has a taste for leggy yeomen," states Rick Marin.<sup>17</sup> He'd rather fight than talk and wastes no time in getting into the middle of conflicts. His defeat of the superhuman Khan came by physically attacking Khan and knocking him unconscious.<sup>18</sup> Kirk evens the score between two rival factions by supplying the one faction with arms against the other one receiving rifles and gunpowder from the Klingons.<sup>19</sup> Throughout all these episodes where Kirk takes charge through violence, he mainly goes with his intuition and wins.

"Without facts, the decision cannot be made logically," Spock informs the captain in "Assignment: Earth." "You must depend on your human intuition." Even the coldly rational Spock acknowledges Kirk's superior intuition, yet he does not try to incorporate that personality trait because it is not logical. As Jane Elizabeth Ellington and Joseph Critelli point out, Spock's Vulcan ancestry leads him to "highly differentiated and one-sided thinking" which causes him to "reject intuition and feeling as determinants in his decisions."<sup>20</sup> Spock is the ultimate source of rationality.

While Spock's logic aids Kirk in the facts, it is McCoy who counsels Kirk on the emotional side. McCoy is very quick to point out the needs of the people and wants to "save the people without worry[ing] about the consequences."<sup>21</sup> Although he uses technology to save patients' lives, he is not entirely dependent upon it and regards machines with wariness. His verbal battles that pit his emotionalism and humanity against Spock's Vulcan logic gives Kirk time to think and reflect on his next actions, but Kirk is the one who ultimately makes the decisions in every situation that he can.

Kirk was the true American hero of the 1960's, "a galactic Marlboro man, Paladin, or Man from U.N.C.L.E. He was brash and macho, frequently taking risks, engaging in physical combat, and loving and leaving women everywhere."<sup>22</sup> He had a soul mate--John F. Kennedy--and together they safeguarded their respective new frontiers.<sup>23</sup> Slowly, over the years, Kirk's brashness was honed down as he grew older in command. A different Kirk appeared in each of the movies, slightly changed and more mature each time, until in *The Undiscovered Country*. Suddenly, in this movie Kirk was altered into a captain that "wasn't James Tiberius Kirk," Gail Sakurai explains, "at least not any Kirk we [had] ever seen before, nor any Kirk that I felt could be believably extrapolated from known events."<sup>24</sup>

Similarly, the death and resurrection of Spock in *The Wrath of Khan* and *The Search for Spock* paved the way to his actions and altered characterization in *The Voyage Home*, *The Final Frontier*, *The Undiscovered Country*, and *The Next Generation's* "Unification I & II." No longer at war with his human side, Spock accepted that half of him as Kirk accepted his in "The Enemy Within." In the events following his resurrection in *The Search for Spock*, Spock is more disciplined in his logic, but allows for his human intuition to assist him in his decisions, advice given to him by Kirk in "The Tholian Web."

The least changed of all three heroes is McCoy. He is still the acerbic, country doctor who hates transporters but has an overwhelming passion for medicine and compassion for the rights of sentient beings. Although we see a more mature, aging doctor in the movies, especially *The Undiscovered Country*, he has not been altered as radically as Kirk nor as dramatically as Spock.

While Kirk and crew reflected the Kennedy Era, Picard and his officers reflect the changes in political climates in the twenty years that had passed. Picard's soul mate in the late 1980's and early 1990's can be seen as George Bush, both using diplomacy to achieve their goals

and focusing more on foreign policy than domestic issues.<sup>25</sup> The late 1980's in the United States were in the wake of the peace and prosperity of the Reagan Era and there was a wider acceptance of technology in every day life.

Unlike the original series whose focus was mainly on Kirk, Spock, and McCoy throughout its three years, *The Next Generation* has emphasized all nine characters who had at least one episode per season that showcased their abilities. The series nevertheless paid particular attention to the Picard-Data-Riker trio during the first season and it was then switched to the Picard-Data-Worf trio in the late second and early third seasons after the Klingon's popularity soared with the fans.

Picard is the seasoned starship captain, comfortable with his command (except when dealing with children) and a diplomat.<sup>26</sup> He has negotiated countless treaties, twenty-nine of them featured as major or minor plots in *The Next Generation* episodes. His experience in shuttle craft piloting saved a teenager's life in "Coming of Age" and Wesley's and a pilot's lives as well as his own in "The Final Mission."

He only resorts to violence when it's absolutely necessary, usually defending himself from a hostile attack. In "Allegiance," Picard is trapped in a maze with four other alien beings, one being a Starfleet cadet, so that an advance race can study their reactions to stimulation. Picard negotiates peace between the three belligerent aliens and encourages the young cadet to do her best. Although challenged, he does not resort to physical retaliation. On the other hand, when Picard was attacked in "Sins of the Father," Picard readily defended himself against Klingon assassins. Similarly, he out-dueled the best swordsman in Nottingham, Sir Guy, in "Q-pid," *The Next Generation*'s 4th season send up of the classic Robin Hood tale.

Picard's dedication to his duties in Starfleet shows that rules and regulations do work and that there are consequences if they are broken without substantial reasons for doing so. In "Justice," he battled to save Wesley's life because the Edo god at first refused to see that "when laws are absolute there can be no real justice."<sup>27</sup> He broke the Prime Directive, one of Kirk's habits, but justified them with an eloquent speech about there being no absolutes.

Governed by consensus, Picard listens and respects the opinions of his crew members and often delegates the tasks to them.<sup>28</sup> Rick Marin comments, "He doesn't beam down to every Planet of Death the Enterprise swings into orbit around--he sends 'away teams' led by his game, youthful first officer, Will Riker."<sup>29</sup> As mentioned before, Riker was at first seen as a Kirk-in-training because of his readiness to go into action and his active libido. Riker often employs unconventional strategies in order to get the job done, and there are rarely any negative consequences.<sup>30</sup> He does not have the tight control on his emotions as Picard does. For instance, he first sided with Dr. Kila Marr's desire to destroy an alien being that had annihilated several planets in "Silicon Avatar." The alien, the Crystalline Entity first seen in "Datalore," wiped out a colony that Riker and his away team were helping to establish and killed Riker's love interest Carmen Davila. Riker also risks his career in trying to free Soren, an androgynous alien who has "female" feelings in a race where sexual preferences are forbidden, from brainwashing therapy that would remove all such tendencies.<sup>31</sup>

It can be said that Riker is motivated by his libido in both of those episodes, but *The Next Generation*'s third season episode titled "The Vengeance Factor" showed Riker in a moral dilemma. His love interest, Yuta, attempts to assassinate the leader of rival faction. Racial wars tore apart Acamar III for over a century and Yuta's cell structure within her body was altered so that she may carry on the vengeance against the Lornack clan, who all but massacred her Tralesta clan. Unlike in "The Outcast," Riker is forced to choose between Yuta and the leader of

the faction attempting to make peace. Being a true hero, he sacrifices Yuta for the greater good.

Another instance of Riker holding his own against temptation comes when Q bestows the power of the Continuum on Riker, enabling the first officer to fulfill any desire that he may have. Suddenly god-like, Riker must choose how he is going to use the powers of Q and whether or not he is going to keep them. When he realizes how badly so much power corrupts, Riker turns down the gift and is content with being the first officer of the *Enterprise*.<sup>32</sup>

Although Picard and Riker are departures from the traditional, shoot-from-the-hip *Star Trek* hero, perhaps the greatest indicator of the cultural change in heroes is seen in the character of Lieutenant Commander Data, the second officer of the *Enterprise*. Data is the only android currently serving in Starfleet and his lack of emotions further separate him from the rest of the crew. What is most intriguing about the character of Data, though, is the fact that he embodies the myth of technology as a savior as well as being a popular hero. The myth is not new to *Star Trek*, but it is the first time that this myth and a hero are combined into one. Back in the 1960's, the thought of having a sentient android working in harmony for humans was unheard of. By the 1990's, it was accepted.

Androids were no longer mindless replicants of humans, but they had developed into characters and had somehow gained a sympathetic crowd. Films like 1982's *BladeRunner* portrayed artificial lifeforms seeking out their creator in order to live longer than their four year, preprogrammed lifespan. *Alien*, made in 1980, features an android who is responsible for deaths of all the crew except for the heroine Ripley. Subsequently, Ripley hates androids and doesn't want them to be around, but in the 1986 sequel *Aliens*, the android Bishop is an unlikely hero. At the end of the movie, he saves the life of a little girl at the expense of his body being ripped apart by the enemy. Ripley's big battle with the mother alien has ended and she walks over to where Bishop and the girl are. He comments about Ripley's performance: "Not bad for a human."

Would a scene like the one in *Aliens* ever occur in the original series? The only way it would happen is if Kirk reprograms the androids from self-preservation to the preservation of human life. the original series's androids and computers embody "the myth of the computer [which] deals with anthropomorphization, replacement, machine intelligence, and free will."<sup>33</sup> While they may have "superior" intelligence with the ability to store vast amounts of information, they are not able to go beyond their programming. The machines may look and act human, but they cannot replace humans.

By 1987, man's view of technology had changed radically. While there was still the threat of the machine taking over a person's job, computers and the like had become commonplace and a part of the "leisure era." They went from impersonal, industrialized machines to everyday *gadgets* that made life a bit more comfortable. Compact disc players, laser disc players, video cassette recorders, camcorders, answering machines, cellular phones, and computers became a necessary part of day to day life in the fast paced world with the obsession with efficiency.

With the creation of Lieutenant Commander Data, Roddenberry introduced the artificial lifeform searching for a soul. Data's constant search to learn what it is to be human, everything from sneezing to humor to love, is featured in many *The Next Generation* episodes. "The Naked Now," "Datalore," "Elementary, Dear Data," "The Measure of the Man," "The Ensigns of Command," "The Offspring," "The Most Toys," "Brothers," "Legacy," "Data's Day," "In Theory," "Silicon Avatar," "Hero Worship," and "The Quality of Life" focus on some aspect of Data's coming of age. While androids were looked down upon in the original series, Data is the

most written about character in *The Next Generation*. Already he's had an intimate encounter with Tasha Yar, fought for his rights as a sentient being, dealt with his second and third romances on board the *Enterprise*, served the father of the bride, been both a father and a hero/role model, and defended new life forms similar to himself.<sup>34</sup>

As Data continued to develop extensively over the seasons, the emphasis on Riker steadily declined in favor of Worf. The character that was added at the last minute had gained a strong following and several hard-hitting story lines.

Worf's proud Klingon heritage, sense of duty and honor, and intense loyalty give audiences a look at the ultimate alien hero, willing to accept discommendation from the Klingon Empire to avoid a civil war.<sup>35</sup> He is almost the complete opposite of Picard, wanting to fight first and talk later. His convictions are strong, so strong in fact that he rarely compromises them unless given a direct order not to do so. In "The Enemy," Beverly Crusher treats a badly wounded Romulan who needs Worf's blood to survive. Worf, whose Klingon parents were killed by Romulans, refuses and although both Beverly and Picard make impassioned pleas to change Worf's mind, he doesn't. In a stunning scene, Worf allows the Romulan to die rather than break his own moral codes.

With *Star Trek*, we see the evolution of heroes in both the original series and *The Next Generation*. In the original series, we have the trio of Kirk, Spock, and McCoy who represent intuition, logic, and humanity respectively. They are heroes of the 1960's, full of action and convictions and ready to meddle in the affairs of those who are oppressed. In *The Next Generation*, Picard, rather than beaming down onto the planet to destroy the leader or provide weapons to even up the odds in a civil war, gives a moralizing speech about humanity and its eventual triumph over the tyranny. Also, he chooses to make sure no one else interferes with the civil war and to let the two warring sides fight it out amongst themselves unless he and his crew are specifically called into action. Perhaps Worf and Data reflect the action and logic of McCoy and Spock, but Worf can be seen as the harsher, more violent hero while Data can be seen as near pacifistic, only going into "battle" if it is absolutely necessary.

## Notes

1. Michael Smith, "Button," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 27 Sept 1992), Message #553.
2. Christopher Geist and Jack Nachbar, "Introduction: What is Popular Culture?" *The Popular Culture Reader* Third Edition (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 7.
3. Christopher Geist and Jack Nachbar, "Part Four: Popular Heroes Introduction," *The Popular Culture Reader* Third Edition (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 206.
4. Geist and Nachbar, pp. 206-7.
5. Geist and Nachbar, "Hero," p. 210.
6. Geist and Nachbar, "Hero," p. 210.
7. Geist and Nachbar, "Hero," p. 209.
8. Roger R. Rollin, "The Lone Ranger and Lenny Skutnik: The Hero as Popular Culture," *The Hero in Transition*, ed. Ray B. Brown and Marshall W. Fishwick (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 27. Wonder Woman's super hero abilities have changed throughout the years. Currently, DC Comics, which publishes the monthly comic book, has given her the power of flight.
9. Rollin, p. 27.
10. Rollin, p. 28.
11. Rollin, p. 29.
12. Rollin, p. 29.
13. James L. Hodge, "New Bottles--Old Wine: The Persistence of the Heroic Figure in the Mythology of Television Science Fiction and Fantasy," *Journal of Popular Culture*
14. Geist and Nachbar, "Hero," p. 207.
15. Stuart M. Kaminsky with Jeffrey H. Mahan, *American Television Genres* (Chicago: Nelson Hall, 1985), p. 119.
16. Kaminsky, p. 118.
17. Rick Marin, "Kisses Great!/Less Killing! Comparing the Captains: Kirk vs. Picard," *TV Guide* (31 Aug 1991), p. 5.

18. The original series episode "Space Seed."
19. The original series episode "A Private Little War."
20. Ellington and Critelli, p. 245.
21. Kaminsky, p. 126.
22. April Selley, "Transcendentalism in *Star Trek: The Next Generation*," *Journal of American Culture*.
23. Edward Gross and Mark A. Altman, *New Voyages: The Next Generation Guidebook* (New York: Image Publishing, 1991), p. 5.
24. Gail Sakurai, "TUC as the Worst?" *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (26 July 1992), Message #341.
25. Gross and Altman, p. 5. Of course, due to Roddenberry's edict that the regular crew members shared a feeling of brother and sisterhood, there was little to worry about as far as domestic issues on the *Enterprise-D*.
26. Rick Marin, p. 5. Picard's comments about not being good with children is from *The Next Generation* episode "Encounter at Farpoint."
27. Larry Nemecek, *The Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion* (New York: Pocket, 1992), p. 40.
28. Gross and Altman, p. 5.
29. Marin, pp. 5-6.
30. "Peak Performance" and "Best of Both Worlds I & II" showcase Riker's talents for unconventional battle strategies.
31. "The Outcast."
32. *The Next Generation* episode, "Hide and Q."
33. Tyrrell, p. 289.
34. The episodes mentioned are: "The Naked Now," "The Measure of the Man," "The Ensigns of Command," "In Theory," "Data's Day," "The Offspring," "Hero Worship," "The Quality of Life," and "Evolution."
35. *The Next Generation* episode "Sins of the Father."

## Chapter Eight: Popular Formulas

*"It is written. Good shall always destroy evil"--Sirah the Yang<sup>1</sup>*

After exploring myths, icons, stereotypes, and heroes, we ascend to the second, most visible floor of popular culture, and it is divided into two parts, popular formulas and popular rituals. It is important to understand how each room of the House of Popular Culture builds upon the other and no room can stand without the assistance of the other. Popular formulas combine the four previous rooms into a recognizable format for the audience to see. Formulas reaffirm cultural values established by the myths, icons, stereotypes, and heroes by "providing a means to demonstrate their important and utility within a fictional (or even non-fictional) framework."<sup>2</sup> By using conventions, which are the basic ingredients of the formula, and inventions, which are considered the "spices" that make the formula different and more appealing to the audiences, the popular formula can be seen as a recipe that combines history with legend.<sup>3</sup>

According to John Cawilti, the four functions of the formula are: 1) to provide a safe ground for the other parts of culture to flourish, 2) to help resolve tension, to provide an experience in the prohibited situation, and 3) to provide a comfortable way to dealing with ideological issues in society.<sup>4</sup> All popular television shows rely heavily on the concept of formula because there is that need to appeal to the mass audiences with values, heroes, and themes that the audience will recognize. Through the use of the formula's setting, cast of characters, and the action that takes place, television shows try to ensure that their stories fulfill the functions.

During the 1960's, Roddenberry wanted to break out of the conventional molds of the Western television series and give audiences a show to think about, not just to watch. "We have a perfect vehicle for adventure, satire, and social comment," Roddenberry said of the series.<sup>5</sup> He used a formula, plugged characters into it, gave it a setting, and set down rules for the action.

The formula of good versus evil was the main thrust of all the original series plots, from the over-the-top comedy of "The Trouble With Tribbles" to the excruciatingly painful silliness of "Spock's Brain." The underlying theme of good versus evil was mostly seen through two formulas, the testing of humanity and worlds that parallel Earth's history, and there was the need to assert the ideals of the New Frontier at almost every turn, rallying against the forces of the evil empires, and showing loyalty to the Federation.<sup>6</sup>

To separate how far man had come from the 1960's to Kirk's era, stories often dealt with putting Kirk on trial and having him fight his way to freedom. In "Arena," Kirk is pitted against a Gorn, a lizard-like alien, in a fight to the death. Instigating and observing the duel between the two are the Metrons, who wish to learn more about humans and the Gorn. This trial of physical superiority and battle tactics ends with Kirk putting together a make-shift gun and defeating the Gorn. When Kirk refuses to kill the Gorn, the Metrons are confused at first and then commend Kirk for his humanity, saying that there is hope for humans after all. "The Squire of Gothos" features Trelene, an alien being "who is equipped with a wide variety of powers that enable him to manipulate the world around him," and "he puts humanity on trial" when "Kirk disrupts his plans" of having the *Enterprise* crew as his entertainment.<sup>7</sup>



The parallel world plot line became a familiar way for *Star Trek* to exercise social commentary within the guidelines of the 23rd century. In "The Return of the Archons," the planet inhabitants live in mock up of the late-19th century western United States, "A Piece of the Action" is set during the 1920's, "Patterns of Force" features Nazis, and "The Omega Glory" features a parallel between the United States, seen here as the Yongs, and the Soviet Union, the Kongs. Two episodes, "Bread and Circuses" and "Plato's Stepchildren," show worlds that reflect ancient Rome, and the ancient Greek god Apollo makes an appearance in "Who Mourns For Adonis?"

In most of these episodes a second formula employed to support the humanity on trial or parallel world story line. Kirk Houser sums up the character/setting/action plot in the original series:

While in [the original series] the big 5 [Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Chekov, and Scotty] plus a red shirt [security guard] would beam down, get captured, fight, plot, and Kirk-bargain their way out of trouble, sometime after the obligatory Captain Kirk emotional plea/monolog [sic] that showed that the native culture or its twisted leader was in basic contradiction to the laws of the civilized parts of the Galaxy and then the crew would beam back up to the *Enterprise*, smug with the knowledge that they did not have to nuke the planet from orbit because the seeds of rebellion that Kirk and Co. had planted undoubtably [sic] would do the trick; throw on a couple of mental jabs between Spock and McCoy and BINGO! another [episode] in the can!<sup>8</sup>

If there were not 5 members to the landing party, Kirk was always there and usually accompanied by Spock and/or McCoy. Episodes that use this formula include "What Are Little Girls Made Of?," "Miri," "Dagger of the Mind," "Shore Leave," "Arena" (although Kirk is the only one down on the planet), "The Return of the Archons," and "The Devil in the Dark," and all these episodes are from the first season alone. In many of these, Kirk rights the wrongs of an oppressed people and *Enterprise*. Catherine Moroney comments that "our contemporary knowledge of good and evil has indeed robbed us of our remaining innocence with a vengeance, imitating the biblical creation story on a cosmic scale."<sup>9</sup>

Standard in the original series fare are the beautiful women of the week, ones that Rick Marin stereotypes as taking part in Kirk's "shameless bagging of alien babes in tinfoil bikinis."<sup>10</sup> Karin Blair labels these women, whether they are love interests of the captain or not, the "disposable female" who either dies (as in the case of Miramanee), disappears (Yeoman Janice Rand), or "remains on the planet of the week" (Shana).<sup>11</sup> It is important to remember, however, that not all the female guest stars fell victim to Kirk's libido.

The original series, the movies, and *The Next Generation* rely heavily on the good versus evil, although *The Next Generation* has broken away from the more traditional views of that formula. Their treatment of it is less obvious than in the original series and is not to the extremes that the original series played it up for.

By the time *The Next Generation* came about, Roddenberry had abandoned the themes of the 1960's and *The Next Generation* showed "little New Frontier-style meddling with cultures that worship computers" that the original series was famous for.<sup>12</sup> The new show focused on "an 80's sobriety and an ambivalence about the use of power."<sup>13</sup> Instead of the "Planet of Death" being encountered every week, the crew of *The Next Generation* encounter the glowing ball of the week, which usually attempts to take over the Enterprise.<sup>14</sup>

*The Next Generation* has a few plot staples which deal with an alien being: taking over the ship, putting the crew on trial or performing experiments upon them, and possessing or kidnapping one or more crew member(s). The first formula has created a popular misconception that the *Enterprise* is taken over every week by a glowing ball of light. During the first five seasons, however, the *Enterprise* was only confiscated 7 times out of 126 episodes: "Encounter at Farpoint" by Q, "Where No One Has Gone Before" by the Traveller, "11001001" by the Binaris, "Home Soil" by microbrains, "Evolution" by the Nanites, "Brothers" by a reprogrammed Data, and "Conundrum" by "Keiran MacDuff" who poses as an officer but is really a Sartaaran. In "Where No One Has Gone Before," the Traveller's take over of the ship was accidental.

Putting the crew on trial and/or performing experiments on them is nothing new in the *Star Trek* universe. It was seen in the original series first pilot "The Cage" and its subsequent remake into "The Menagerie," and "The Empath" among others.<sup>15</sup> Experiments by curious but malignant aliens are seen in "Where Silence Has Lease" and "Allegiance," second and third season episodes respectively. These two episodes are not the most well-received story lines because of the recycling of the basic plot.

In *The Next Generation*, it is an omnipotent being who usually puts the crew on trial as seen in "Encounter at Farpoint" and "The Last Outpost," both first season episodes. It is interesting to note that Picard wins the first case and Riker wins in the second episode, although Riker's victory can be seen as more triumphant. The Tkon "portal" accepts Riker's eloquent speech about the philosophies of the Federation and has not returned. On the other hand, Picard's defense of humanity only piqued Q's interest in "Encounter at Farpoint" and Q has made an appearance in every season except for the fourth.<sup>16</sup>

Another set of "trial episodes" deal more within the Federation. In "The Measure of the Man," Data fights for his rights as a sentient being and in "The Drumhead," Picard argues that his encounter with the Borg has not lessened his ability to command a starship nor has it destroyed his loyalties to the Federation. In these second and fourth season episodes, the judges are Starfleet officers.

Possessing and/or kidnapping the main characters garnered over 22 story lines. Crew possession became most popular at the end of the first season and again at the end of the fourth season, and many of the stories were considered mediocre by Edward Gross and Mark Altman.<sup>17</sup> The most chilling possession story is during the first season with "Conspiracy." An alien race inhabits the bodies of key Starfleet officers in an attempt to rule the galaxy and attempt to take over Riker and Picard. Although the ending was very reminiscent of *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*, it is the most graphically violent episode, complete with exploding heads and melting bodies, that *The Next Generation* has done in the past five seasons.<sup>18</sup>

On the other end of the spectrum, fifth season's "The Inner Light" provided the most beneficial (if possession can be considered beneficial) and touching encounters that Picard has ever had. Unlike the graphic violation of Picard in "Best of Both Worlds I & II" by the Borg, the Kataan probe that attaches itself to Picard's psyche is not there to force him to destroy the Federation but to educate him about the people of Kataan, who had died out over one thousand years ago because their sun supernovaed. During "The Inner Light," Picard learns how to play the flute, a hobby that is brought back in sixth season's "A Fistful of Datas."

Both the original series and *The Next Generation* use the formula of putting humanity on trial, and it is usually the captains who make the eloquent speeches to prove that the trial is wrong. While the action/adventure plot line that Kirk Houser outlines is overly used in the original series with only Kirk, Spock and McCoy, *The Next Generation* allows for the other

characters besides the captain, first officer, and chief medical officer to participate in a variation of the formula where the security guard does not die. Again, the formulas are used to show allegories in contemporary society and also allow the audience to relate to the planet or alien of the week that is featured in each episode.

## Notes

1. The original series episode "The Omega Glory."
2. Christopher Geist and Jack Nachbar, "Part Six: Popular Formulas," *The Popular Culture Reader* Third Ed. (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 300.
3. Dr. Yasue Kuwahara, Class notes from Honors 305, Northern Kentucky University, Fall 1991.
4. Kuwahara.
5. Edward Gross and Mark Altman, *Great Birds of the Galaxy* (New York: Image Publishing, 1992), p. 18.
6. Paul Morley, "Working Out in Space," *New Statesman and Society*, 28 Sept 1990, p. 30.
7. Edward Gross, *Trek Classic* (New York: Image Publishing, 1991), p. 57.
8. Kirk Houser, "TNG, Myths, and Episodes," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 10 Oct 1992), Message #562.
9. E. Catherine Moroney, "Themes of Hope in Popular Entertainment," *America*, 31 Dec 1983, p. 433.
10. Rick Marin, "Kisses Great!/Less Killing! Comparing the captains: Kirk vs. Picard," *TV Guide*, 31 Aug 1991, p. 6.
11. Karin Blair, "Sex and *Star Trek*," *Science Fiction Studies*, Nov 1983, p. 293. Miramanee appeared in the episode "The Paradise Syndrome," where Kirk loses his memory and is proclaimed as a god. Kirk marries her, but both she and their unborn child are killed at the end of the episode. Yeoman Rand disappeared after the first season with no explanation of her whereabouts and Shana from "The Gamesters of Triskelion" opted to remain on the planet where Kirk, Chekov, and Uhura were sent to after being "spacenapped" (Edward Gross, *Trek Films* [New York: Image Publishing, 1991], p. 94.).
12. Bill Turque with Lynda Wright, "Still Klingon to a Dream," *Newsweek*, 22 Oct 1990, p. 82.
13. Turque, p. 82.
14. Marin, p. 5.
15. Larry Nemecek, *The Star Trek: The Next Generation Companion* (New York: Pocket Books, 1992), pp. 120-1.

16. Q's resemblance to the Trelene of "The Squire of Gothos" has been commented upon several times. In fact, at one time it was theorized that Q was another squire, and it has never been established whether or not the Q Continuum and Trelene's race are related.
17. Edward Gross and Mark A. Altman, *New Voyages: The Next Generation Guidebook* (New York: Image Publishing, 1991) and *New Voyages II: The Next Generation 5th Season Guidebook* (1992).
18. Gross and Altman, *New Voyages*, p. 44.

## Chapter Nine: Popular Rituals

*"Thousands upon thousands of fans discovered a most marvelous fact: they were not alone."*<sup>1</sup>

The last room of the House of Popular Culture we enter into focuses on popular rituals and it is one of the most visible and recognizable part of popular culture. Popular rituals take in the established myths, icons, stereotypes, and heroes that are combined into a popular formula and become a "celebration of highly valued ideals and myths. They are regularly repeated, patterned, social events which help us to shape our relationship with other people and to our culture as a whole."<sup>2</sup> What makes rituals so important is that they are a gathering of people who share cultural values and beliefs. They serve a number of functions including reminding participants of the past and reaffirming a sense of togetherness.

There are three types of rituals: rite of passage, rite of season, and rite of unity. A rite of passage is "designed to publicly mark a transition in the social status of a person or group" such as a wedding, or a confirmation of faith.<sup>3</sup> Christmas and Oktoberfests are rites of season which have their roots in prehistory and pagan cultures and also reflect the life and death cycle of the Earth. Unity rites are often associated with parties and conventions where "the individual's feeling of alienation or loneliness" is eliminated by "[celebrating] the togetherness of [a] social group."<sup>4</sup> Some of the more recognizable rites of unity are Super Bowl parties and family reunions.

It is the rite of unity that has perhaps made *Star Trek* the popular culture phenomenon that it is. The fandom kept *Star Trek* alive for over 25 years and it relied heavily on the conventions. The first convention was held in 1972 and for the first time, *Star Trek* fans had a place to meet others like them instead of underground clubs and basements of their homes. They could be out in the open, recognized, proud of what they enjoyed, and converse with other *Star Trek* literate fans who saw the *Star Trek* universe as the ultimate final frontier. Fans came out in costumes, ranging from Vulcan high priestesses to admirals in Starfleet to some of the more unique alien races featured in the series, and no one ridiculed them. They were among friends.

From 1972 to 1975, there were only two or three *Star Trek* conventions each year and they were held in New York and Los Angeles. Twenty-one conventions were listed in the April 1991 issue *Star Trek: The Next Generation The Official Magazine* for the months of February to June of that year, and that was only by one national promoter.<sup>5</sup> Annual fan run *Star Trek* conventions such as LaGrange Con in LaGrange, Ohio, and Starbase Indy in Indianapolis, IN number over 400 and grow every year.<sup>6</sup>

Conventions vary from promoter to promoter, and fans prefer conventions, or cons as they are more often referred to, run by local chapters of fan clubs than by the larger promoters such as Creation and Trekfest. Creation cons, for example, have a set formula that they use for almost every convention which are generally on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. Videos feature the original series and *The Next Generation* episode clips set to popular music play throughout the day. Some of the more popular are "You're a Friend of Mine" by Jackson Brown and Clarence Clemmons which focuses on scenes between Kirk and Spock, "Mr. Roboto" by Styx which focuses on Data, and "Sisters" by Aretha Franklin which focuses on the women in *Star Trek*--Uhura, Christine Chapel, Beverly Crusher, Deanna Troi, Tasha Yar, and other dominant female characters.

Besides the music clips, behind-the-scenes footage and previews from soon to be released science fiction/fantasy/animation films are shown. The *Star Trek* blooper reels are shown, although it is only the out-takes from the original series not *The Next Generation*. Sometimes behind-the-scenes workers/technicians such as Guy Vardaman from *The Next Generation* give out information on upcoming *The Next Generation* and *Deep Space 9* episodes and *Star Trek* movies, often called spoilers, and have a slide show.<sup>7</sup> Also standard fare are costume contests where the audience members dress up like their favorite characters and sound-alike contests where members of the audience go on stage and do their best imitations of *Star Trek* characters and technology, from Kirk to tribbles to the warp engines.

Fan run conventions are usually three day events starting with a welcoming dance or an evening social on Friday night. Saturdays start off early in the morning with breakfast/brunch and then workshops on editing newsletters, makeup and costume design, and acting are sometimes featured. Trivia contests as well as panel discussions on episodes or movies are popular. Masquerade dances and costume contests finish the evening and sometimes the dancing does not stop until early into Sunday morning. Sundays feature more workshops, previews of upcoming events/movies/episodes, and usually an ending ceremony. The vendors selling *Star Trek* merchandise are open on Saturdays and Sundays only.

The biggest draw of both types of cons is the question and answer sessions with the *Star Trek* actors. The stars appear on both Saturday and Sunday usually for an one-hour appearance, but autograph sessions are solely dependant on the guest star. For instance, the original series's James Doohan (Scotty) does sign autographs but Leonard Nimoy (Spock) and William Shatner (Kirk) do not. *The Next Generation*'s Marina Sirtis (Deanna Troi), Michael Dorn (Worf), and John deLancie (Q) sign but Gates McFadden (Dr. Crusher) and Jonathan Frakes (Riker) sometimes do and other times do not. A general observation made about McFadden and Frakes is that they only sign autographs at fan run conventions.

The fan run cons, such as LaGrange Con and Space Station Cincy, are sponsored by local *Star Trek* fan clubs, Starfleet International's USS LaGrange chapter and Starfleet Command's USS Yorktown.<sup>8</sup> It is the fan clubs that are the biggest part of the *Star Trek* phenomenon, going beyond the media blitz of merchandise and spinoffs. The fan clubs bring *Star Trek* into everyday life of the members as they work on projects to raise money for charities or scholarship foundations which are sponsored by the stars of the series (such as the Patrick Stewart [Captain Picard] Scholarship and the James Doohan [Scotty] Scholarship).

These people have taken Roddenberry's dream of peace and harmony between humans as well as his view of science and technology and put it to use in the 20th century. The USS Aquila, a chapter of Starfleet International based in Northern Kentucky, donates canned goods and clothing to the church where their monthly meetings are held. They have also been involved in the MDA telethon and in the 1992 Florida Hurricane Relief effort.

## Notes

1. Joan Winston, *The Making of Trek Conventions or How to Throw a Party for 12,000 of Your Most Intimate Friends* (Garden City, NJ: Doubleday and Co., 1977), p. 9.
2. Christopher Geist and Jack Nachbar, "Part Five: Popular Rituals," *The Popular Culture Reader* Third Edition (Bowling Green: Bowling Green University Popular Press, 1983), p. 263.
3. Geist and Nachbar, "Rituals," p. 265.
4. Geist and Nachbar, "Rituals," p. 266.
5. Advertisement for Creation conventions, *Star Trek: The Next Generation The Official Magazine*, April 1991, p. 23. Creation, based out of Mineola, New York, hosts the largest number of conventions per year in cities across the United States and in Canada.
6. Michael Logan, "Star Trek XXV," *TV Guide*, 31 Aug 1991, p. 12.
7. Vardaman has made several Creation con appearances. He stands in for the actors when the director is setting up a scene or a shot when the actor is not available on *The Next Generation*.
8. There are over one hundred ST fan clubs in existence today, ranging from the highly organized Starfleet International with chapters spread out in the United States, Canada, Japan, England, Germany, Australia, and other countries and Starfleet Command whose membership in the United States and Canada alone is over 1,500 people. Space Station Cincy was a joint effort of the USS Yorktown and the Andromeda Group, a local group of science fiction fans affiliated with other science fiction clubs.



## Chapter Ten: A Conclusion

A show that could not win in the ratings wars in 1967, 1968 and 1969 sparked a cultural phenomena in the late 20th century. It is a cliched "beating the unthinkable odds" story that launched *Star Trek* into the homes of millions of viewers, which spawned conventions, movies, and three spin-off series. In becoming part of a cultural phenomena, certain steps have to be taken, and Geist and Nachbar's House of Popular Culture illustrates the elements of popular culture. *Star Trek* has become one of the most recognized part of popular culture in the late 20th century.

The myths of regeneration through violence which leads ultimately to the myth of utopia and the myth of technology as a savior provide the base for the first floor of the house to be built. Without those cultural myths, as seen in "The Apple," *The Wrath of Khan*, and "Encounter at Farpoint," icons, heroes, stereotypes, and formulas could not be made.

The *Enterprise* as an icon depends heavily on technology as a savior as does *The Next Generation's* Data as a hero. The *Enterprise* represents a culmination of man's achievements in space, showing that it was convenient and comfortable to travel. It houses the latest gadgets in the 23rd and 24th century which take care of the menial chores such as cleaning the house or cooking food so that the crew can spend their time elsewhere besides the drudgery of housework. The *Enterprise* also binds the crew together and makes them into one cohesive unit that must work together in order to survive. *Star Trek* even acknowledges the fear of machines taking over precious jobs and man losing his dignity because of it, since Kirk uses the *Enterprise* and her gadgets to free oppressed societies on a regular basis.

Kirk's heroism does not go unnoticed. He is an action oriented hero, preferring to swing fists than to debate. His physical and mental prowess are top notch, but he keeps bettering himself and learning from his experiences. Spock and McCoy serve as his conscience, always giving advice from their respective stands of logic and emotion. Those three are the perfect heroes for the 1960's. With *The Next Generation*, Picard's smooth diplomacy reflects the cultural changes and the desire for a more thoughtful captain. Data and Worf are like Spock and McCoy, but unlike Kirk, Picard does not counsel them for every decision. The heroes of the 23rd and 24th century are similar to the heroes of today, but are more humanistic, showing the regeneration of the human spirit after the near-annihilation of Earth in the late 20th century.

Reflecting cultural changes, stereotypes are both positive and negative. The push for the multi-ethnic crew in the original series set *Star Trek* apart from other series, but the subordinate female roles dated reflected the views of the 1950's and 1960's. *The Next Generation's* showed the changes in the views of men and women and their roles in society, but while the two regular female characters held higher and more important positions, they did not break from the traditional view of women being in caring professions.

The original series broke ground with the positive role of Uhura, the self-sufficient, African-American female bridge officer. Nichelle Nichols, who portrayed her, became a role model for many young women, including Oscar-nominee Whoopi Goldberg. The multi-ethnic crew worked in harmony together on the bridge on the original series, and that stereotype followed through to *The Next Generation*.

The elements that make fiction acceptable and recognizable to the audience are combined into a formula. The theme of good versus evil can be found in almost every *Star Trek* story, but the formula of action varies between the original series and *The Next Generation*. While Kirk's

no-nonsense, action oriented attitude reflected the political climate of the 1960's, Picard's diplomatic and tempered steps reflected the changing attitudes in the late 1980's and 1990's. While Kirk's love interest of the week, Kirk's breaking a society free from oppression, Picard battles with crew possession, his ship taken over, and being put on trial by omnipotent alien beings who wish to find out how far humans have evolved.

*Star Trek* has been recognized by the Smithsonian Institute, where a replica of the Enterprise hangs along side Lindbergh's Spirit of St. Louis, and by the Oxford Dictionary, where the term "Trekkie" is officially recognized as a word, although Trekker is the more preferred name for loyal *Star Trek* fans. Michael Logan comments that *Star Trek*, "along with Spock's Vulcan mind meld and Vulcan nerve pinch--has carved a permanent niche in pop culture."<sup>1</sup>

While reruns of "I Love Lucy," "Gilligan's Isle," and "Bonanza" have been syndicated, only *Star Trek* has achieved the status of being continually shown in syndication since 1970.<sup>2</sup> Andy Harman reflects on the appeal of the original series:

Despite [the original series's] occasional 60's political statement and the hairdos and miniskirts... there is very little in its content that dates it. Probably what harmed its initial run to some extent was its lack of trendiness, in terms of direct ties to current events... Do people watch reruns of [the original series] out of nostalgia for the 60's? Maybe just a weeee little bit. But the original series ran strong in the 70's and early 80's, when NOBODY wanted to think of the 60's.<sup>3</sup>

## Notes

1. Michael Logan, "ST XXV," *TV Guide*, 31 Aug 1992, p. 12.
2. Andy Harman, "TNG, TOS, and TV," *Spock's Adventure!* BBS Trek Talk Conference (Cincinnati: 1 Oct 1992), Message #636.
3. Harman, Message #636.

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