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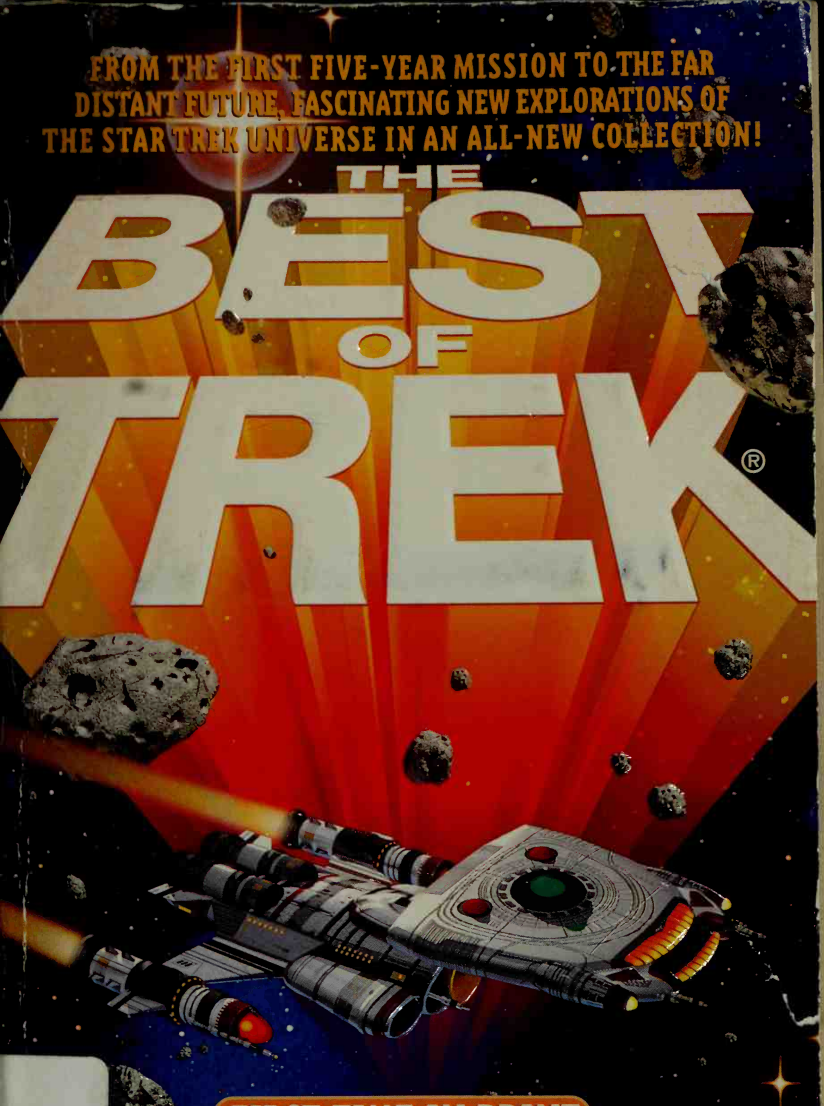

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M THE MAGAZINE FOR STAR TREK FANS

ed by WALTER IRWIN & G. B. LOVE

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These are just a few of the topics explored in this seventeenth collection of articles by, for, and about Star Trek fans. As their fellow enthusiasts have come to expect over the years, Walter Irwin and G. B. Love have once again gathered together a magnificent collection of Trek lore to stimulate the imagination and bring to life the science fiction universe of the day after tomorrow. From favorite characters to the diverse cultures that have carved a place for themselves on the starships and populated worlds, here is the best of speculative discussion about this ever-expanding star culture.

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WALTER IRWIN & G. B. LOVE

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INTRODUCTION

We're back! After over twenty years of involvement with Star Trek—organizing conventions, publishing magazines and books, operating mail-order companies, attending conventions, traveling constantly, writing always, and watching, *watching,* WATCHING *Star Trek* episodes and films—we needed a break. We didn't quite plan for our break to last more than three years, but it did. To all of you who kept in touch during our hiatus and expressed your desire that we get off our duffs and back to business, our thanks. Your pleas have been answered. This volume will be followed in quick succession by two more, and others are in the planning stages.

Even though *we* have been idle, Star Trek has not. In fact, there has been more activity in the universe of Star Trek during the past few months than at any time in the last twenty years. Just look at a few of the things going on right now: the planning and birth of the fourth Star Trek television series, *Star Trek: Voyager;* the filming of the first *Next Generation* film, with more to follow; the ongoing but not surprising success of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine;* the continuing expansion of the Star Trek publishing line; the increased presence of Star Trek toys, games, models, and so on in stores; and the continuing proliferation of Star Trek fan clubs, "ships," conventions and fan gatherings, cruises, fanzines, letterzines, computer bulletin boards, and more.

Truly, now more than ever, Star Trek Lives!

And we here at *Trek* magazine are more proud than ever to be a small part of it. When we started *Trek,* oh so many years ago, we had no idea that we would still be around well into the 1990s. We knew Star Trek would still be around, of course, and even predicted its rebirth in motion pictures and a second television series. (We're even still sticking to our prediction that we will one day see a new version of the *original* series, with new actors as Kirk, Spock, McCoy, and the others—just a few years later than our original guess.) Never in our wildest dreams, however, did we think that Star Trek would continue to evolve, grow and gain in popularity to the extent that it has. It's kind of nice to be both right and wrong at the same time!

So we're back, revitalized and ready to go. As always, we cannot perform our little publishing miracle without your help; we constantly need new and exciting articles and features. If you've been thinking about writing an article, please do so and send it along to us. If we like it, we'll include it in a forthcoming *Best of Trek* collection. Or if you have an idea for an article, we'd like to see that too. If we assign one of our regular contributors to develop it, we'll credit you with the idea when it's published. Or if you would just like to drop us a line to say hello or comment on one of our books, please write us in care of "Trek Roundtable." We value everyone's comments and viewpoints. Address all articles and correspondence to: *Trek,* P.O. Box 385, San Felipe, Texas 77473.

Thanks for purchasing this volume; we hope you will enjoy reading it. We also hope that you will gain from it a little more insight into and enjoyment from our favorite television shows. After all, sharing your and our love and respect for Gene Roddenberry's Human Adventure is what these collections are all about

Walter Irwin
G. B. Love

THE STAR TREK MOVIES: A LITERARY PERSPECTIVE

by Rosa M. Mizerski

In many ways, Star Trek is like Shakespeare. It's a mirror: You look at it and see yourself. Like many Star Trek fans, I can sometimes see something new that had previously escaped my notice. After reading James Devon's "Beneath the Surface: The Surrealistic Star Trek" (*The Best of Trek* #8), I was motivated to see *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* again. This was a movie that I did not particularly like when it was first released, but much to my surprise I really enjoyed it after reading Mr. Devon's article. I watched the movie patiently and saw that it had a characteristic found in the literary epic.

With this in mind, I viewed all of the Star Trek movies and found that each has a distinct literary bent; that is, each movie imitates and borrows from certain traditions and conventions found in literature.

STTMP as Epic

Star Trek—The Motion Picture, I think, works as a visual epic. By epic, I do not mean the "Hollywood epic," which usually connotes an expensive, overwrought production of some silly and pretentious adventure. I'm alluding to the classic epic poems such

as the *Iliad* and *The Song of Roland.* Poems? What does poetry have to do with movies? Think about this: Poetry recounts its story or message primarily through image; movies are juxtaposed images functioning as a story. When we look at the various characteristics of the epic, we see that *STTMP* itself comes very close to being a genuine epic.

Before I compare *STTMP* to the epic, I would like to review the main features of that art form. The epic is a long narrative poem about the events that are important to the history of a nation, or about *the birth of a race.* The epic hero is a man of elevated, even legendary status. The setting of an epic is vast in scope, covering even the expanses of the universe. The action is grandiose, and the hero displays unusual courage. And even supernatural forces may involve themselves in the action. Epics were usually composed when a legend had become a fixture in the cultural consciousness of a people, and that people had the need to glorify their past, thereby legitimizing their existence as a civilization. *The Song of Roland,* for example, was composed for the French aristocracy of the Middle Ages some centuries after the death of the actual Roland.

Star Trek, too, has become a fixture in our cultural consciousness. It is a supreme case where life imitates art; where a fictional situation takes on a significance of reality; where fictional characters are a composite of all the things we are and aspire to be. *STTMP* doesn't recount the past deeds of dead heroes; it recounts the deeds of heroes who exist in a mythical future. It is a celebration of our potential as a species rather than a celebration of our past.

STTMP, like the literary epic, tells its story in an elevated, grandiose style, with our galaxy as its setting. The musical score is elegant and classical, telling a story in itself, like an epic simile. *STTMP* emphasizes the events at the expense of the characters. The characters in *STTMP* seem two-dimensional and flat, just as, say, Roland appears two-dimensional and flat in *The Song of Roland. STTMP,* like an epic, doesn't provide in-depth characterization because the main

event, the birth of a new race, is primary. The subplots in an epic parallel and explicate the main event. For example, Spock's search for his identity is a metaphor for Vejur's search for its creator. Ultimately, questions of universal importance (to us) are asked in *STTMP:* Who am I? Where do I come from? Is this all I am and can be?

Kirk functions as a near perfect epic hero. He is, at the time of Vejur's quest, an important man, whose exploits on his five-year mission are legendary in the Federation. The movie itself does not tell us this. The viewer, rather, must know *beforehand* of Kirk's reputation, just as the listener of an epic had to be familiar with the legend of the hero before he heard the story.

This leads to another point: The epic was originally designed for a specific and informed audience. Likewise, *STTMP,* I think, is a movie made especially for Star Trek and science fiction fans. To understand the depth of the story, a viewer must be familiar with the Star Trek myth, with Kirk's reputation, and with Spock's inner demons, because *STTMP* begins its tale in the middle (*in medias res*) of Vejur's search, as well as in the middle of Spock's and Kirk's lives. If the audience is a selective and patient one, it cannot help but see the sophisticated science fiction theme of *STTMP.* And this film is science fiction at its best, presenting a fascinating yet plausible story about a machine that acquired consciousness. However, the film's slow, grandiose style and cerebral theme may have limited its popularity with the general audience at large.

Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan as Visual Novel

The popularity of *Wrath of Khan* may, unconsciously, have something to do with form, how it tells its story. This movie contains many of the characteristics that shape a literary novel, and contemporary au-

diences are more familiar with the novel than the epic poem.

I'd like to digress a bit and briefly qualify my definition of a literary novel. Although many kinds of novels exist (western, historical romance, detective, for example), the truly great novels are difficult to categorize. For example, *The Scarlet Letter* and *Moby-Dick* are classics because they transcend the basic, formularized, two-dimensional quality of the "genre" novels. Great novels provide a realistic narrative in which an in-depth representation of the characters results directly from the action. The action is there to tell us something about the characters as human beings, rather than have the characters act out the action for the sake of moving along the plot. A good novel need not even have action as we are accustomed to seeing in movies or reading in popular novels. For example, in *Heart of Darkness,* the action is excruciatingly slow, emphasizing the state of mind of the narrator and foreshadowing the blackness of its theme.

Wrath of Khan is like a good novel in that it is difficult to label. It has good action, but it is hardly a space action film like *Star Wars. Wrath of Khan* is not about action; it is about people and their very real emotions and problems. We can all identify, if we are not recluses, with Kirk's problems. Many of us have accepted promotions that have ruined us emotionally or spiritually. For every yes in our lives, there is a no. When Kirk chose his career, he said no to his potential life with Carol Marcus and his son. And there comes a time for everyone when he must face death, his own or that of a loved one.

I would like to add my own definition of a good novel. A well-written novel should render the effect similar to overhearing a conversation. When we overhear a conversation—and we all do this, regardless of the ethical implications—we don't have to know all the facts of the conversation in a chronological or linear order. If the conversation is a good one, we learn a great deal about the people being talked about and the people doing the talking.

Wrath of Khan is full of revealing conversations. In the first conversation between Spock and Kirk we learn that for all his facetiousness toward Lieutenant Saavik's concerns over the *Kobayashi Maru,* Kirk himself never cared much for the test, and that his solution was "unique." This scene is a metaphor for Admiral Kirk: a unique man who doesn't necessarily go "by the book." The warm and humorous exchange between Kirk and Spock ("Aren't you dead?") immediately establishes the deep friendship between the two men. If a viewer had never before seen or heard of Star Trek, he would still know that these two men are close friends because the movie takes the time to show us their friendship.

From other conversations we learn bits of information that add to the realistic quality of the story and humanize the characters. For example, in the conversations between Kirk and his other close friend (and doctor), we learn that Kirk made a disastrous move when he accepted promotion; we learn that the admiral is allergic to Retinox-5. And McCoy's reference to Lieutenant Saavik as "wonderful stuff, that Romulan ale" not only reveals that the doctor has a good eye for women, but it is the sole reference to Saavik's mixed heritage found in the movie.

Wrath of Khan is truly a wonderful film in that even the minor characters emerge as well-rounded and realistic (with the possible exception of the whining David Marcus). Carol Marcus could easily have been stereotyped as a femme fatale who was jilted by Kirk. Instead, she emerges as an intelligent and confident scientist who made the only sensible decision a woman could make with Kirk's type: She gave him up. It is not she who wonders about her "life that never was." Khan, as in "Space Seed," is still a powerful and magnetic personality. He is a futuristic Ahab and Lucifer, heroic in a context of evil. And Saavik nearly steals the show with a splendid display of ambiguities: temperamental and logical; rigid and sensual; intelligent and naive.

The plot of *Wrath of Khan* revolves around a series

of "no-win" scenarios, which demonstrate the true mettle of the characters as people. Saavik's test of character in the opening scene foreshadows the events that will follow. Kirk is involved in a "no-win" situation when his ship is crippled by Khan. But, as he had done so many times before, Kirk escapes the "no-win" scenario through a brilliant display of cunning. Khan, too, is caught in a "no-win" situation. Even if he had not chosen to confront Kirk, even if he had beaten Kirk, Starfleet would have never rested until it apprehended the *Reliant* and its pirates. Instead of running far away from Starfleet, and possibly gathering strength and allies (Klingons?), Khan chose to act as a Spanish revolutionary, who said, "It is better to die on your feet than live on your knees."

Khan's solution to the "no-win scenario" is consistent with his personality, as is Spock's solution. Spock makes a logical and humane decision. It is better to sacrifice his own life for the lives of his friends. Spock knows that his decision will hit Kirk the hardest, but he knows that Kirk will *learn* and *grow* from this experience. And Kirk is changed by the experience, no longer feeling "old and worn-out." He learns that for there to be new life, there must be death. He accepts Spock's sacrifice.

The use of a conventional plot along with believable dialogue and characterization contribute more to the movie's success than do the shoot-'em-up scenes, which were kept to a minimum. The movie involves us in the lives of people we can like and believe in. The emotions of love and friendship are genuine and subtle. In all of these aspects, *The Wrath of Khan* functions as visual novel.

STAR TREK III: The Search for Spock as Science Fantasy

While reading one of the *Best of Trek* books, I came across a remark that I think accurately describes *The Search for Spock.* A fan described this movie as a "good fanzine." The pacing of the story, its improbable plot, and the pseudo-mystical resurrection of Spock make this film good science fantasy and nothing more. (Sorry, Kyle Holland, but resurrection is *still* in divine quarters, making this film a caricature.)

The Search for Spock lacks the subtle blend of characterization and story-telling found in *Wrath of Khan.* In *The Search for Spock,* the action and pacing of the story take priority over characterization. The story itself is superficial, and the viewer's suspension of disbelief is taken for granted. Not much time is taken to convince us not only of Spock's resurrection, but of Kirk's and company's decision to betray their country and essentially their way of life. I have been watching Star Trek continuously since 1966, and I find the actions in this film inconsistent with the characters' personalities. These are career officers. They have sacrificed for Starfleet, given up lovers and friendships and a different way of life. Perhaps it is conceivable that they mutinied, but only with much inner conflict and doubt. Why aren't we shown these very real and painful emotions? This is the stuff tragedies are made of. But the exploration of human emotions, the very thing that gives depth to characters, is left out of this film (as in other science fantasies) because it interrupts the pacing that is natural to the genre.

It seems Paramount thinks we will accept anything it puts before us just because it is Star Trek. Yes, it is Star Trek, but the reason many of us got hooked on Star Trek was because the stories were plausible, containing real human feelings. Star Trek was truly art imitating life.

The first two movies did take time to convince the

viewer that the Star Trek world was plausible. For example, in *STTMP,* we are given an explanation of the *Voyager*'s metamorphosis to Vejur. And it is an explanation we can live with, based on our knowledge of history and science. Black holes exist; there was an exploration craft named *Voyager;* logic and knowledge are not everything and do not make a being complete.

The Search for Spock also resembles science fantasy in its mechanical handling of Spock's resurrection. Aristotle called it *deus ex machina.* To simply say that the Genesis Effect "regenerated" Spock is just a ploy to move things along and undo his very real and painful death. Spock's death was orchestrated to show us the depths of his "most human" soul. His resurrection is supposed to show us the love that his friends have for him. But again, to show us this friendship, we are hit with the line: "The needs of the one outweigh the needs of the many." Again, this is pure *deus ex machina.* The friendship portrayed in this movie is superficial and unrealistic; it is a mechanical device employed to move the action along.

I beg to differ with my fellow fans who were so moved by this film. This movie is simply more interested in bringing back a character than it is in exploring human emotions. As an example, take the quasi-incestuous relationship between Spock and Saavik. There is no reason, logical or otherwise, given for Saavik's behavior. The film, the story, must give some indication why people act as they do. It can't be left to sheer speculation. If Spock had no consciousness and was linked to the aging of the planet, the best thing Saavik could have done was to end his suffering. Remember, as far as Saavik knows, *Grissom* has been destroyed and there is no help on the way. But that point is almost completely unimportant when we consider Spock's sacrifice. He gave his life in a logical and altruistic manner so that his friends, including Saavik, would not have to die. He would never have expected Saavik, of all people, who comes very close to being his daughter, to commit an act that would be painful and embarrassing to her. Spock has tried to spare her

pain as much as possible. So then there can only be two reasons for Saavik's behavior. She could very possibly have incestuous feelings for Spock, and, if this is the case, this storyline should have been pursued because it is the stuff of great tragedies. The possibility remains that it is another case of *deus ex machina.* Irwin and Love put it more bluntly in their review of the film (*The Best of Trek* #8) when they said this whole episode smacked of script manipulation.

I think a much better film could have been made if Spock (who is my favorite Star Trek character) had stayed dead, and his friends had to deal with his loss. Like many Star Trek fans, I would have greatly enjoyed a movie told in flashbacks about his earlier relationship with Saavik. It would have made me miss Spock and appreciate his humanity a lot more. But instead, *The Search for Spock* emerged as well-made science fantasy, a step above *Star Wars,* but not by much.

STAR TREK IV: The Voyage Home and the Comic Theory

The Voyage Home is a comedy, and not only because it makes us laugh. Along with humor, comedy also deals with rebirth and the establishment of order in a sterile and disordered universe. In the theory of comedy proposed by Northrop Frye, a comedy opens in a state where there is no life, where things are not in their rightful place. For example, a rightful king is temporarily denied his throne; twins are separated by some misfortune or act of nature; or lovers are kept apart by circumstance. The story, which works by means of wit and humor, ends with the restoration of order and with a marriage or marriages. Marriage means children, and children mean the continuation of life.

Although *The Voyage Home* does not have a literal

marriage, there is a symbolic restoration of life on three interconnecting levels. Earth is saved from the probe when the whales are brought to the future and life continues on a planetary scale. The humpback whales are preserved as a species (thanks to Gracie's pregnancy) and are restored to their rightful habitat. Finally, Kirk and his crew are vindicated and restored to their rightful place on the new baby, the *Enterprise,* version "A." Kirk again is the captain, utilizing his best talent—commanding a starship. No longer considered traitors or outcasts, Kirk and his crew begin a new life.

CONCLUSION: The Future

Now that we have our captain and ship back, I look forward to new episodes that have the same science fiction and humanistic elements found in the better television episodes and in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan.* One hopes future Star Trek writers will stay away from the contrived fantasy/adventure stories that inundate Star Trek in print. We also need to see more interaction with aliens and their cultures. My own preference is to see an entire movie devoted to the Romulans. These people are one of the most fascinating and enigmatic in the Star Trek universe. And like every Star Trek fan I know, I prefer to see Kirstie Alley come back as Lt. Saavik or even as a Romulan subcommander. (Poor Robin Curtis was booed at the opening of *The Voyage Home* in San Jose, California.) In either case, I look forward to the next adventure of my favorite heroes.

PENDA? UHURA

by Mark Golding

I would be glad if the question of Uhura's first name would finally be settled. According to Leslie Thompson's "More Star Trek Mysteries Solved" (*The Best of Trek* #3, p. 10), fandom generally accepts that Uhura's first name is Penda, saying it means "love" in Swahili, so Penda Uhura translates as "Love Freedom." Thompson, in "Star Trek Mysteries Solved ... Again!" (*The Best of Trek* #8, p. 116), continues to say, "And Uhura's name is inarguably Penda. No compromises there."

Naturally, in the vexingly inconsistent world of Star Trek scholarship, there are other opinions.

Although Nicky Jill Nicholson, in "The Naming Game" (*The Best of Trek* #10, p. 43), says she couldn't find a single reference to "Penda" Uhura except in Thompson's article that she was refuting, several Star Trek novelists, including Diane Duane and Janet Kagan, say Uhura's first name is Nyota, Swahili for "of or belonging to the stars." "Thus," says Nicholson, "Uhura's first name is indisputably Nyota. And I won't compromise, either."

The source of the name Nyota seems to be William Rotsler's *Star Trek II Biographies,* according to his article "More Than You Ever Wanted to Know About Star Trek Books, Or What Uhura's First Name Really Is" (*The Best of Trek* #13). Rotsler (p. 101) says he couldn't find any first name for Uhura, so he chose Nyota, checking with Gene Roddenberry and Nichelle Nichols.

Unlike Thompson, Nicholson, or Rotsler, I'd be willing to compromise and say Uhura is Penda Nyota Uhura or Nyota Penda Uhura, or accept either name, or any third name, officially decreed by Paramount and Gene Roddenberry. I don't care what she's named as long as everybody agrees on it. Uhura's parents could have chosen an English first name for her, or a Chinese, or an Arabic, or a Klingon, but *probably* chose one from Swahili or some other African language. And my familiarity with such names is so small I couldn't tell if a suggested name was genuine or fake, nor notice any connotations it might have.

Nor, having had a half great great granduncle named Gottfrid Ottfrid Obadja Eckert Demuth, would I care to object to any suggested first name for Sulu or Uhura on the grounds that it sounded funny.

When I first read of Nyota Uhura, I wondered why someone would ignore the "established" name, but since Nyota was chosen in ignorance of the previous suggestion of Penda, Rotsler and his followers can't be accursed of deliberately adding to Star Trek's confusion.

Anyone wishing to choose between Penda and Nyota should know that Penda is a word or name in more languages than Swahili. With six thousand or so languages on Earth, I'm sure Nyota, too, turns up in many others besides Swahili, but Penda should be (though isn't) familiar to many English-speaking persons.

Few readers are interested in the less popular historical eras, so I am probably the only Star Trek fan who reacted to the name of "Penda" Uhura by trying to picture a cross between our familiar lieutenant and an Anglo-Saxon king! Let me explain this weird image:

During the fall of the (Western) Roman Empire in the fifth century, Britain became undefended and was invaded and partially settled and/or conquered by Germanic tribes from the Continent.

The British still had dozens of kingdoms in Cornwall, Wales, and the North, with a hierarchy of greater

kings over lesser. The kings of Fwynedd (Northwest Wales) supposedly claimed to be high kings of All Britain and the heirs of Vortigern, Arthur, and Maelgwyn Gwynedd.

The Angles, Saxons, and Jutes had not merely a "Heptarchy" (Seven Kingdoms), but at least twelve kingdoms, some of which had subkingdoms (five subkings of Wessex were killed in one battle). Often, all the "English" kingdoms were under a supreme king.

So there were about fifty kingdoms in Britain in the Dark Ages. (Ireland had ninety, so it is no wonder why Kevin Riley claimed to be descended from Irish kings.)

About A.D. 605, Aethelfrith the Destroyer (English), king of Bernicia, united Bernicia and Deira to form Northumberland. He defeated King Aiden of Dalriada (Scottish) in 603 and won a great victory of the Britons or Welsh at Chester in 614 and became the high king of the English. Edwin of Deira, exiled by Aethelfrith, allied with Raedwald of East Anglia, who killed Aethelfrith at the River Idle in 617 and became top king of the English. Edwin ruled all Northumberland and eventually became overking of the English. Edwin and many Northumbrians converted to Christianity.

Edwin conquered the British kingdom of Elmet, invaded Gwynedd, and drove Cadwallon, king of Gwynedd and of All Britain, from the islands of Anglesey and Holyhead to exile in Ireland. It looked like the final victory of the invading Saxons over the rightful rulers of Britain.

But Cadwallon the Christian Briton returned from Ireland, recaptured Gwynedd, and allied with a pagan English noble, Penda, son of Pybba, whom he helped become king of Mercia. Together they invaded Northumberland. Cadwallon killed Edwin and his son at Hatfield Chase in 632 or 633. Aethelfrith's son Eanfrith, exiled by Edwin, returned but was killed by Cadwallon, who seemed about to crush the Saxon invaders.

Unfortunately, Cadwallon was killed by Eanfrith's

brother Oswald at "Hefenfelth" in 634. Oswald restored the evil Northumbrian kingdom and became high king of the English. Fortunately, Penda killed Oswald at Masenfeld in 642. Penda became the high king of the English. In his reign some of the Mercians became Christians. He drove King Cenwalh of Wessex from his throne and killed King Anna of East Anglia in 654. Unfortunately, Oswald's brother Oswio killed Penda at the River "Winwaed" in 654 or 655. Penda's son Wulfhere (ruled 658–675) became the overlord of the English kingdoms. And so on and so on.

So we see the name "Penda" has at least one other meaning besides the Swahili translation. Perhaps Nyota will reveal another meaning, as well. But until then, those who choose to call Uhura "Penda" will conjure up not only a woman who loves freedom, but one who is royalty, as well.

SPOCK: A NEW LIGHT

by Steve Waller

The characteristics and life of Spock strike a strangely familiar chord. For here is one who was born of a human mother and unearthly father, espouses a philosophy of peace and truth, possesses superhuman powers, sacrificed his life, and then was resurrected. These events, and the many others detailed below, are strikingly parallel to the historical accounts of the life of Jesus of Nazareth. Thus, Spock could be considered as representative, or a literary type, of Christ.

Seen in this perspective, the reappearance of Spock in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* and phenomena like the novel (title) *Spock, Messiah!* become clearly understood rather than difficult to swallow or merely offensive. It would be pointless to speculate whether there has been conscious effort on the part of the many Star Trek writers to purposely create this parallelism. The tremendous popularity of Star Trek is perhaps partially accounted for in that it follows the pattern of Christianity by offering a vision of a higher plane of existence and hope for the future. In particular, it is Spock who, like Jesus, has generated a large and devoted following by being a tangible person whom we can relate to in the struggle between pure unearthly aspirations versus primitive human ways.

Numerous concrete analogies of Spock to Christ may be drawn from the very inception of Star Trek through the fourth movie. Spock's character has been present since the very first pilot episode of *Star Trek,* as Christ existed "in the beginning" as the "Word"

that later became flesh and dwelt among men. Spock is the second person in the Kirk/Spock/McCoy triad, as Jesus is the second person in the eternal Father/Son/Holy Spirit trinity. The extremely close relationship between Kirk and Spock, rather than being interpreted through sexual innuendo as it has been in "K/S" speculation, is perhaps instead representative of the loving relationship between the Father and the Son. Christ sits at the right hand of God in heaven, and Spock's science station is to Kirk's right on the bridge of the *Enterprise* as they patrol the "heavens."

The comparison of Kirk, as the one in power, to God Almighty is sometimes painfully obvious. McCoy is known for his fiery, emotional spirit, and as the ship's physician, is the "giver of life," a description used for the Holy Spirit. Our Star Trek characters are representative of ultimate good in battles against evil, as God defines what is good. Kirk and Spock are frequently playing chess, which is symbolic of God controlling the world and human destiny.

Many of the *Star Trek* episodes emphasize that Spock is a human/Vulcan hybrid, born of a human mother and an alien father. The Gospel tells us that Jesus was both human and divine, born of Mary and conceived supernaturally by God. The birth of Christ forever altered the course of human history. It is noteworthy how often Spock changes and controls history by traveling through time portals or providing equations that allow the ship to go back in time.

Christ's heritage was Hebrew, as it is for Leonard Nimoy, who introduced into Spock's behavior the Jewish split-fingered hand sign as the Vulcan salute. We are told that Jesus as a child wandered off from His parents, and that before the beginning of His public ministry He went into the desert wilderness to be tested. In "Yesteryear," young Spock secretly leaves home and travels into the desert in preparation for the *Khas-wan* ordeal: the Vulcan test.

Jesus Christ, the "Light of the World," taught peace, truth, and love. Jesus was called Rabbi, meaning teacher, and we see Spock as an instructor in *Star*

Trek II: The Wrath of Khan. Although Spock, and the Vulcan race in general, has been accused of being cold-blooded and unemotional, we Trekkers know better (as Christine Chapel did in "The Naked Time"). Vulcans, in fact, are renowned for their philosophy of peace. This is the Vulcans' "better way," reached through self-control. Spock lives this philosophy in a simple life, and is often seen meditating. Spock's pure logic is a way of arriving at Truth. It is said that Vulcans are incapable of lying, and "Vulcans never bluff."

The vegetarian diet of Vulcans, beyond mere kindness to animals, is a holistic discipline symbolic of spiritual and bodily purity. Spock's loyalty, deep friendship, and yes, love, are demonstrated time and time again, even to the extent of risking his life. The Vulcan philosophy of IDIC—Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations—is the very essence of Christian acceptance and love of one's neighbor. Spock demonstrates this principle in the unpopular episode, "The Way to Eden," when he "reaches" Adam and fellow nonconformists with the philosophy of "One," just as Jesus was criticized for ministering to social outcasts and preaching to them the religion of one God.

In addition to philosophic similarities, what parallels can be drawn between deeds that Christ performed on this earth and the actions of the *Enterprise*'s first officer? The most obvious acts of Jesus were the miracles He performed: walking on water, feeding thousands of people, calming a storm, healing the lame and blind, and raising the dead, among many other examples.

While Spock's feats certainly can't compare with those, he does perform many actions of which mere men are incapable and which therefore can be classified as superhuman. Spock is much stronger than any Terran, and his hearing is extraordinarily sensitive. He has been able not only to endure, but even to function under a level of pain that went off the scale of human equipment. Spock's superior intelligence and complex calculations have resulted in his miraculously saving

the ship and his captain multiple times. Spock has even been able to resist the Klingon mind-sifter, which can turn any human into a mental vegetable.

The Vulcan neck pinch, a superbly nonviolent technique, is too difficult for a human to learn. The Vulcan mind meld that Spock has employed on many occasions seems downright supernatural. This ability to "read minds" was one that Christ displayed also; for instance, he knew the history of the woman at the well, and was aware of the plotting of Judas and the Pharisees. Furthermore, Christ prophesied about His Passion and other future events; similarly Spock could predict odds to a tenth of a decimal place. Spock even accomplishes the healing of the lame by taking Captain Pike to Talos IV.

Aside from blatant miracles, Jesus Christ's life was marked by many other unusual characteristics, just as Spock's has been. Christ was famous for his method of speaking in parables. Spock is well-known for his dry, circuitous mode of speech and his tendency toward occasional loquaciousness. Christ often quoted and interpreted the scriptures; Spock quotes Matthew 6:28 in "The Trouble with Tribbles," when he compares the cute furballs with "the lilies of the field." Spock discovers a Bible-like book in "A Piece of the Action," and interprets the *Holy Book of the People* in "For the World Is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky," thus saving the entire world of Yonada. Spock's seven-year Vulcan mating cycle could at the very least be argued to signify that most of the time his sexual urges are under control, thus representing the celibate life led by Jesus.

Spock's outward appearance, especially his "devil ears and devil eyes" that Uhura sang of in "Charlie X," not to mention his home world Vulcan being "hot as Hell," may be cause for not recognizing him as a representation of Christ. Indeed, Jesus Himself was not recognized as the Messiah during his ministry, and was falsely accused by some as a demon doing the work of Satan. Too, there has been suspicion of Spock being an enemy spy.

Like Christ, who received no honor in his hometown, Spock was taunted by his classmates and not approved of by either his father or his betrothed, T'Pring. Although the crowds that Jesus preached to attempted to make Him king by force, He resisted; Spock consistently states that he has no wish to command the *Enterprise*.

At the Last Supper Jesus instituted the sacrament of communion, bestowing holy significance to the elements of bread and wine as representing His special body and blood. In Star Trek, a great deal of emphasis is placed on the alienness of Vulcan anatomy and physiology, and how different Spock's body and blood are from those of human beings. His brain was selected from countless other "candidates" to become the Controller (i.e., "Lord") of an entire planet. In "The Infinite Vulcan," Spock alone was chosen, as a perfect specimen, to clone for the purpose of maintaining peace throughout the galaxy. Spock's heart is in a different place (very symbolic and a lesson to all of us; see Matthew 6:21), and he has a different body temperature from humans. Spock's extra eyelids, resistance to viruses, and incredible strength make his body seem invincible. His pulse rate and blood pressure would be lethal in a human. The copper-based blood of Vulcans is green, with different minerals in place of common salt—facts that have made Spock impervious to the attack of man-killing monsters. In "Journey to Babel," only Spock's precious and extremely rare T-negative blood was able to save his father's life. The very long life span that Spock, as a Vulcan, can expect is symbolic of the everlasting life of Christ.

Details of Christ's passion have also been experienced by Spock. He was betrayed ("Amok Time"), arrested and whipped ("Patterns of Force"), put on trial ("The Menagerie"), and sentenced to death ("The Enterprise Incident"). He was pierced and suffered unimaginable agony ("Operation: Annihilate!"). Repeatedly, he knowingly and willingly offered to sacrifice his life and finally did so in order to save the lives of a large number of people in *Star Trek II: The*

Wrath of Khan. The mode of Spock's death, radiation, is probably the most horrible fear in this Atomic Age, as crucifixion was in Roman days. Like Jesus, who felt separated from the Father on the cross, Spock was separated in his last moments from Kirk by an impermeable partition. Spock gave his *katra* to McCoy, just as Jesus gave up his spirit. Just as Christ was buried in a freshly hewn tomb, Spock was interred on a newly made planet.

When Spock's body was later sought, his coffin was found empty except for his shroudlike burial cloak, a scene that is very like the discovery of Christ's empty tomb on the first Easter morning. The miraculous resurrection of Spock, although made believable by the (apparently) scientific explanation of protomatter, plus Vulcan psychic abilities, was met with disbelief, ridicule, and controversy, as well as rejoicing, just as was Christ's Resurrection. Thereafter, the reborn Spock is seen garbed in a pure white robe (even in the following movie, *The Voyage Home*), which is how the risen Christ has usually been represented artistically.

There is a plethora of other comparisons that can be drawn between Spock and Christ, as well as between Star Trek and the Bible in general. Searching for these similarities can enhance the enjoyment and deepen the understanding of both genres. It is fitting, therefore, to close with Spock's Vulcan farewell, which, amazingly, is a literal translation of Jesus Christ's invitation to receive eternal life and the kingdom of heaven:

"Live long and prosper."

THE STAR TREK NOVELS: ARE THEY GOOD ENOUGH?

by Deborah Bucci

I first began reading the Star Trek novels only a few months ago and have, so far, limited myself to *The Next Generation* series. As I hope to finish a *Next Generation* novel myself in a month or two, I wanted to immerse myself in that particular genre in order to determine established precedents and to keep myself swimming, as it were, in the characters. I wanted to induce in myself an almost total preoccupation with them. This intense exposure to the writings of other Star Trek novelists—most of whom have written stories for both the original characters as well as for those of the *Next Generation*—has given me pause for thought.

Although I have, like most fans of Star Trek, followed the television series since its inception, I would not describe myself as a "Trekkie." At one time I would have done so, but not any longer. Since deciding to attempt a Star Trek novel, I have made it a point to delve into all aspects of the Star Trek world, and I find that, quite simply, I don't qualify as a real, dyed-in-the-wool Trekkie. When Data tells Picard that it is thirty-seven light-years to their next destination and that it will take seven days, six hours, and fifty-seven minutes to compute that voyage, I don't immediately run to my calculator and apply the warp speed formula to discover if somebody is trying to pull a fast one on me.

To my way of thinking, these elements of the mythology are not terribly important. Yes, we want to be able to believe, but it seems to me that is only possible when we are willing to let go of the tendency to question minutiae. Suspension of disbelief is a partnership between the writer and her audience. The writer, for her part, does her best to make the atmosphere authentic, but the reader has to be willing, to some degree and on some level, to drop the obsession with precise detail.

Having said that, I will go on to seemingly contradict myself by saying that, in my reading not only of Star Trek novels but of the science fiction genre in general, writers will too often rely more heavily than warranted on their audience's willingness to suspend disbelief and will put their characters into situations that strain even the most devoted fan's sensibilities. The writer often assumes that a particular character, because he's an alien, can behave in just any old manner that fits the writer's contrivances, and that the reader will accept this because, after all, the character is an *alien*. I don't agree with that, but neither do I agree with the school of thought, prevalent among Trekkies, that it is in any way a valid and productive pastime to nitpick every story line to death.

I have seen the opinion that the Star Trek novels are somehow less than valid because they are not official in the eyes of some (whatever that means). My problem with the novels is different, but not unrelated. Time and again, I have been impressed with the fans' concern that the characters, both in the TV *Next Generation* (especially in the beginning, when that series was an unknown quantity) and in the books, retain their integrity. By this I mean that the writers, above all, remain true to who the *people* are.

I couldn't agree more. Here, as Frank Zappa says, is the "crux of the biscuit." And here, I think, is where so many of the novels fall short. Once again, however, my problem with characterization in the novels is not so much that I frequently see the old favorites doing things we would not expect them to do, but that they

are too damned predictable. The novels seem to be written as if the authors are afraid to delve below the surface of a character for fear that this will be rejected by the fan club "out there" somewhere. I'm sorry, but it is impossible to write and write well if you are going to have to worry about dashing someone's cherished illusions about who a character is. The very nature of people is that they seem to grow as we get to know them. This usually isn't because they have really changed (because, let's face it, people just don't change all that often), but because the *relationship* has changed. Very simply, we get to know them better, and as we do, they reveal themselves to us.

I repeat, I am not advocating that Star Trek characterizations be radically altered. What I *am* advocating is that they be deepened. Analyze your own character. Do you always behave according to the expectations of those who know you—even those who know you best? If you are a born leader, do you never falter? If you are a born follower, do you never take the reins? If you are the kind of person people confide in, do you never get sick and tired of it and wish to God somebody would listen to you for a change? If you are basically even-tempered, is that to say you never blow up? I find that this particular failing in the novels often makes them very difficult to plow through.

Picard is an extremely attractive man, precisely because his stern exterior masks a vulnerable and lonely soul. I find Data one of the most endearing characters in television because he is more human than the humans he works with and *doesn't realize it.* Will Riker is ambitious and horny and full of other less-than-noble instincts, which still make him thoroughly likable. Deanna, despite her empathic nature and great beauty, is not a terribly warm character. She can be irritating, nosy, and intrusive, and, to be perfectly honest, is probably the last person on the *Enterprise* in whom I would want to confide. Beverly Crusher, for all her reserve and professional demeanor, is full of whimsy and is the woman on the *Enterprise* whom I

would feel most disposed to have as my girlfriend. I could go on, but perhaps you get the picture.

I haven't seen a Star Trek novel, among the ones I've read, which explores these and other underlying truths that make the characters who they are. In astrology there is a neat division between one's Sun Sign, one's Moon Sign, and one's Ascendant or Rising Sign. To put it simplistically (and with apologies to my astrologer friends), the Sun Sign represents the true nature of an individual—the things about him that are at the core of who he is—the things he strives toward, often without any conscious realization of what his essence is—the masculine principle in each of us. The Moon Sign governs the unconscious, which includes the realm of dreams, sexual drive, the feminine element in us all, and any other aspects of human nature that might be tossed into the bag we call our "dark side." The Ascendant determines how a person is seen by others. This may have little relation to who he really is.

I find astrology's "top three" indicators of personality to be extremely valuable in developing character. The fatal flaw in the Star Trek novel characterizations is that they rely almost exclusively on the Ascendant to determine their characterizations and give, at best, short shrift to the Sun and Moon aspects.

Probably because of the evident fear of really diving into a character and getting wet, the Star Trek novelists often rely on especially convoluted plot devices (such as alien takeovers of someone's body, being taken prisoner on a planet where all memory of one's former life is erased, and the ever-popular "evil twin" scenario). These devices allow the writer to assign virtually any characterization he wants to one of our favorites and then to zap our guy back to "normal" by the end of the story. I find myself skipping through large portions of these stories to get to the few tidbits of real characterization they may offer—if I'm lucky. The writers and editors of these novels have forgotten, if they ever knew it in the first place, that the *Enterprise*'s exploration of uncharted space is parallel to the

exploration of one's own uncharted inner spaces. When you lose sight of that fact, you lose the humanity that has endeared Star Trek to its audience for such a long time.

If characterization is the soul of any good story (a well-developed character will often go a long way toward moving the plot along, too), then well-crafted language is its heart. I have been disappointed in the quality of writing I've found in the Star Trek novels. A cardinal rule of writing, for instance, is always to use the best word. A merely adequate word is not where it's at. You shoot for the best. I find that this is not done in most Star Trek novels.

Here's an example from a Star Trek novel: "There were boots on his feet constructed of something sturdier—animal skin, he decided, and not without a slight feeling of revulsion." This sentence is flawed in a couple of ways. First, if we're talking about boots, we needn't be told they are on his feet. If he was wearing them on his *head,* that would be worth mentioning.

Second, I have to wonder to what extent it is possible to feel a "slight" revulsion. The word "revulsion" is a powerful one. Calling it a "slight" feeling makes me wonder why that particular word ("revulsion") was chosen in the first place. Why not "queasy," for instance? Or "squeamish"? I am not ashamed to say that I always keep a thesaurus next to me when I write, and I use it.

Last, the entire sentence is just plain awkward.

There is also a lot of extraneous word usage in Star Trek novels. For instance, is it necessary to say, "Riker's eyes took on a noticeably harder cast"? If his eyes take on a hard cast and no other character is aware of it (and nobody is, in this case), then in what way is it "noticeable"? Is it because our omnipotent narrator sees it? These kinds of things are best seen through the eyes of other characters. In that way you are not only saying something about Riker, but you are saying something about the person who observes him. Also, Star Trek novelists need to be more careful to avoid the pitfall of being "too much overly redun-

dant," as it is referred to in the Department of Redundancy Department. For instance, "Thousands circled around the bier . . ." Delete the word "around"; we already know they were circling.

My last points may seem picky to some, but any writer worth his or her salt will admit that these kinds of flaws shouldn't occur in good prose. The thrust of my diatribe is this: The standards for Star Trek novels are lower than that wonderful mythology deserves. I search in vain for hints of poetry in the Star Trek prose or for any real consideration of our place in the cosmos. What I get instead are flat characters moving through flat landscapes toward some end, the cosmic or even personal significance of which is never touched upon. In the end everybody remains the same, and we detect little if any change or growth in the major characters as a result. The television show has done a far better job of making us identify with the characters. Ironically, this is why fans read the novels—they want more of the same. I don't think they're getting it in the standard Star Trek novel.

THOUGHTS ON VULCANS

by Tom Lalli

Although it was only mentioned in one episode ("Is There in Truth No Beauty?", IDIC (Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations) comes close to being the "official" Star Trek philosophy. (The related Vulcan concept, "Nome," meaning All, was mentioned in "The Savage Curtain.") Trekkers have embraced the idea that beauty and meaning come through infinite differences combining in an infinite number of ways. Humans are still struggling to ignore others' differences of color, religion, ethnicity, and so on. Star Trek has the vision to say that we should respect and love others, not despite our differences, but because of them. As Surak said in "The Savage Curtain," "I am pleased to see we have differences." This is a profound sentiment, especially for television to convey.

But this can be understood more clearly when we look at the context of *Star Trek*'s production. *Star Trek* was very much a "child of the sixties." It was only allowed on television because it *was* the 1960s (and even then it barely got on and stayed on). So it is not too surprising that Star Trek would include a philosophy such as IDIC. This is not to belittle the achievement of Gene Roddenberry and his crew in expressing this philosophy so beautifully in episodes such as "The Devil in the Dark," and, indeed, throughout the series. I merely point out that IDIC was much less radical in the hippie era. Consider the fact that the Vulcan salute is similar to the peace sign, or that Kirk's farewell to Miranda Jones is "Peace."

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While it is possible that people in Star Trek's world might wish each other peace, the line sounds a bit dated. It is useful to keep this context in mind when considering the merits of IDIC and Vulcan philosophy.

IDIC is believable as the philosophy of Vulcans. Vulcan logic would tend to see the universe as interconnected, with opposites complementing opposites; this, like much of Vulcan philosophy and life, is essentially Oriental. The younger generation of the sixties embraced Oriental philosophies, and Spock's Vulcan philosophy was similarly attractive (we could even compare Miranda Jones to the person who, in the 1960s, traveled to India and the Far East to seek spiritual enlightenment).

Even Spock, though, would agree that not all differences combine for meaning and beauty. When a sane man like Kirk meets up with an insane killer like Khan, their differences will create death and sorrow more often than meaning or beauty. If everyone were as logical and peace-loving as Vulcans, IDIC might be a totally logical and practical philosophy. But humans are not totally logical. (Indeed, Spock says we are "essentially irrational"!) Use of IDIC where illogic exists can be dangerous; it can blind us to the reality of destructive or evil elements in life. The problem of saying, "I will tolerate everything but intolerance" is, of course, that "intolerance" is open to subjective definition. Also, to apply IDIC to what seems truly wrong or evil is to engage in a kind of dialectic fatalism; in other words, it is to believe that everything will work itself out in the end. Star Trek is anything but fatalistic. IDIC *is* a valuable and productive insight, useful in showing the goodness of diversity. However, we cannot take it literally; like the Vulcan practice of nonemotion, IDIC is an interesting approach that does not really work for humans.

In *Star Trek Poster Book* #4, Allan Asherman wrote the following:

> The most blatant failures in evolution are the Vulcans. Instead of taming their aggressive in-

stincts as the Organians undoubtedly did, the Vulcans chose to hide their instinctively violent natures behind a cloak of imposed non-emotion. They have not solved their problems; they live in their illusions of themselves, much like the Talosians. Perhaps, when Surak began his drive to eliminate open emotion from the Vulcan way of life, the Preservers saw what was coming. Maybe at that time they rescued a handful of Vulcans from future centuries of self-imposed play-acting, and transplanted them across the galaxy to live out their lives free from such impositions under the new name of "Romulans."

This is by far the harshest critique of the Vulcan race I have ever read. It is an interesting viewpoint, but I don't think it's as simple as all that. The Vulcans have taken a path we can respect, even though it's obviously not right for us—physiological differences forbid it, for one thing. It's easy to fall into the trap of perceiving Vulcans as simply humans who have repressed their emotions (in which case they *would* be a race of basket cases). Doctor McCoy does this by constantly accusing Spock of coveting Kirk's command. Even Spock's mother, Amanda, after having married a Vulcan and living on that planet for years, cannot conceive of a life dedicated to rigid logic. Vulcans are not humans, and to understand them we must refrain from judging them by human standards.

Even the Vulcans will admit they *do* have emotions; their *Kolinahr* training is proof of this. To achieve *Kolinahr* is to rid oneself of all emotion, so even by their own standards most Vulcans have emotions. And can we really say that Vulcans do not have needs? Perhaps their primary needs are for peace and quietude, in which case their way of life *is* quite logical. Furthermore, it is absurd to call the Romulans "free from such impositions"; as we have seen, the Romulans are as bound by duty as the Vulcans are bound by logic and emotion (perhaps all Vulcanoid races are similarly bound by some code?).

Great care is necessary when making generalizations about the Vulcan race. Most of our information (and, until "Amok Time," all our information) comes from Spock, who is hardly representative. He is a Vulcan-Human hybrid, an extremely odd mixture. He considers himself Vulcan and tries to make up for his "bad blood" by being overly logical and completely unemotional. But he has emotions, and they continually rise to the surface, despite his best efforts to keep them submerged. He is also a great scientist and scholar, a legend among his people (and probably throughout the Federation). All this results in behavior patterns that are probably quite different from those of an average Vulcan. That Spock now realizes that strict adherence to the Vulcan way was wrong for him is no reason to condemn the entire race.

Our secondary sources of information on Vulcans are almost as atypical as Spock. Sarek has married a human and worked extensively with them; this unusual exposure has surely resulted in a "certain degree of contamination." T'Pring and Stonn may also have been acting abnormally because of their connection with Spock. And Sybok is hardly a typical Vulcan, but even his actions were probably affected by exposure to Spock, if not Spock's mere existence. Spock's uniqueness disrupts the entire Vulcan routine, even T'Pau's.

Vulcans *are* an enigmatic people; though logical, they have a penchant for mysterious ritual and ceremony—the question of whether their society is matriarchal, patriarchal, or neither remains unanswered—and the specifics of *pon farr* are still vague and open to interpretation. The point is, we simply do not know enough about Vulcans to judge whether their ways are productive or destructive. We are repulsed by the idea of repressing all emotion, but we cannot comprehend what the Vulcans have gained by doing so. Whether the Vulcans are a superior, more advanced race than humans, or whether they are mired in some hopeless backwater of evolution, is unclear. So although it is natural for humans to believe our ways are better, and to feel satisfaction when a Vulcan is caught showing

emotion, the spirit of IDIC should prevail when we consider their differences.

The Preservers may have had something to do with certain Vulcan offshoots who, like them, use musical notes for words. The Arretians of "Return to Tomorrow" also "help explain certain elements of Vulcan pre-history." Apparently, the Vulcans had quite a bit of help as a young, evolving race. This could also explain how the Romulans left the Vulcan system before the rise of Surak and, presumably, before Vulcan had achieved space flight. Spock theorizes that the Romulans are an offshoot of Vulcans and does not seem surprised, so Vulcan offshoots (or Vulcanoid races) must be fairly common.

With regard to Vulcans on the TV series, bits and pieces of various Earth cultures were attributed to them to make things more exotic and alien. Most of these characteristics were Oriental, particularly the philosophy, appearance, and demeanor of Vulcans. There were other influences; Vulcan himself was the Roman god of fire and craftmanship. Correspondingly, Vulcan is a very hot planet. Vulcans, like Earth's Australian aborigines, developed the boomerang. These and other foreign traits help give Vulcans their aura of mystery and otherness (for American audiences, at least).

Consider the following: "While humans are only beginning to unlock the many secrets in the vast expanse of the universe, the Vulcans long ago elected to turn their probing inward and thus more fully understand their intimate selves" (*Poster Book* #5). In the above sentence let's substitute "Europeans" for "humans," and replace "Vulcans" with "Orientals." The parallel is striking; more often than not this comparison will hold. Vulcans, like the Orientals and South Asians of Earth, are an insular people who have chosen not to explore and colonize new frontiers. They choose instead to explore their inner selves, valuing spiritual insight over scientific knowledge or material gain. Don't feel too bad if you never noticed this before; it's natural that a Western television show should portray

Eastern traits as, quite literally, alien. Our fascination with and fear of Oriental cultures parallels our feelings toward the Vulcans.

Spock, like all Vulcans, has an Oriental quality about him. *He* is the inscrutable one, not Sulu. Spock is similar in many ways to Caine the Chinaman of *Kung Fu* (particularly at the beginning of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture,* when Spock has long hair). Both characters are calm, innocent, moral to a fault, devoted to a philosophy, and physically stronger than the average human. Both are also running away from something—Caine from a murder he committed in China, and Spock from his two home planets, neither of which is a true home for him. Both characters believe that everything is part of a harmonious whole, which Spock calls "Nome" and Caine calls "Tao."

In Gene Roddenberry's novelization of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture,* we can see the Oriental nature of Vulcan philosophy:

> In searching for his consciousness this morning, Spock had been especially alert for any trace of pride in his accomplishments. *Kaiidth. What was, was!* He had done only what he had been meant to do and had the good fortune to be able to do. [pp. 21–22]
>
> It helped to look out at the stars. It was satisfying to feel the vastness out there and to know that he was only a small part of that, but the All of it, too.... [T]his relationship of consciousness and universe was the only reality which actually existed. The Masters of Gol, of course, spent much of their lives seeking to unravel the puzzle of how a living consciousness could at every moment be *part* and *All.* Spock tried to imagine some form of mathematics which might express this—and as hopeless as he knew it was to apply finite symbols to infinite puzzles, the exercise slowly cleared his mind, and his meditation state deepened.... Spock did not achieve the *Kolinahr* level of meditation which he had sought. He sus-

> pected that it was never to be his again. Had he achieved *Kolinahr,* all remembrance of this life and these people would have become patterned logic without overtones of either pain or pleasure. Even having failed in Gol, he had hoped that the long study and disciplines would at least extirpate the emotions this vessel and its humans had once evoked in him. It was not to be—on arriving here, the mere sight of the *Enterprise* had increased his heart rhythms noticeably. [pp. 126–127]

Like Buddhist monks and Hindu yogis, the goal of those striving for *Kolinahr* is a complete abandonment of all desire, all sense of pain or pleasure (both apply themselves to impossible riddles as a spiritual exercise). It is the pursuit of a transcendent reality from which one can perceive clearly the futility of emotional cares, and the oneness of all reality. For Vulcans this transcendence is achieved through total logic. Ultimately (in *Star Trek—The Motion Picture*), Spock decides that logic is meaningless unless it serves emotional needs.

Are Vulcans illogical? Should they admit to their emotions and use them? Is that the message of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture,* in which Spock learns that emotions and needs are vital for a meaningful existence? Spock's experience would tend to fulfill our hopes that the Earth/Western way of thinking is the "right" way, especially since Vejur is shown to be empty without feeling. If Vejur is the Vulcan ideal of total knowledge and logic, then it would appear that the Vulcans are indeed an empty and pathetic race. However, a contradiction arises because Vejur obviously *does* have feelings; it *desires* a merging with the creator, it *needs* to have meaning. This would suggest that Vejur is simply a child in need of guidance. Thus, if Spock is correct in equating Vejur with the Vulcan ideal, then the Vulcans are, rather, a childish race who have exaggerated the importance of logic and knowledge at the expense of emotions. If this is so, then the Vulcans, like Vejur, are seemingly in need of guid-

ance. If Spock is misinterpreting the Vulcan philosophy (because of interference from his human half), of course, then it may still be a sound one.

Spock's transformation still leaves the possibility that what the Vulcans (and Orientals) are doing is right for *them*. Spock's unique nature forbids hasty generalizations. However, the transformation of Vejur comes close to a direct refutation of the Vulcan way of thinking. Unfortunately, subsequent *Star Trek* films have not been much concerned with philosophy, and we are left to interpret these events for ourselves.

SPOCK AND UHURA

by Ruth Barker

In *The Best of Trek* #10, "The Neglected Whole" by Elizabeth Rigel discusses Christine Chapel, suggesting that she is the logical woman for Spock. Certainly, she is one of the first persons one thinks of as "pursuing" him.

Just as certainly, Christine loves Spock, but in an overt manner. However, Spock never seems comfortable with her. He expects her to pounce on him, and it makes him nervous.

The other women Rigel mentions, Leila Kalomi, Zarabeth, Droxine, T'Pring, and the Romulan Commander also love Spock, for different reasons and to differing degrees. Each has a motive, usually selfish, as Rigel states.

Rigel suggests that Christine is selfless in her love for Spock. Somehow, that doesn't quite ring totally true. Christine's motives are, at least partially, selfish. She wants Spock because it would bring her pleasure, regardless of what he wants. Spock is a substitute for Roger Korby, the man she joined Starfleet to search for. When she loses Korby, she transfers her idolization to Spock.

Christine entertains fantasies of Spock; she covets him. Her wish would undoubtedly be for Spock to sweep her off her feet or carry her away. Unfortunately for her, Spock isn't the type. I'm not sure that Christine even likes Spock, and liking, rather than wanting, is the basis of a relationship that can move on to love, either platonic or sexual.

Even so, according to Rigel, Christine becomes the logical one for Spock. I don't subscribe to that belief; there is another, more logical choice: Nyota Uhura.

Here is a woman Spock is comfortable with, a woman whose intelligence he respects. Here, also, is a woman who loves Spock just as much as Chapel does, but who doesn't smother him. Uhura works with Spock nearly all of the time, so she is used to his ways. She knows he has emotions, but that he denies them. She's subtle. She's understanding of him, and so manages to get under his skin.

Ruth Berman, in her "Notes on Uhura" (*T-Negative* #19), says that it is "tempting to suppose that Spock may be interested in Uhura" because he always seems to be there for her when ship conditions become rough. In her article Ms. Berman says, "it is easier to imagine Uhura and Spock happily married than to imagine Christine and Spock happily married." [p. 4] She bases this on a common interest (music) and rapport (performing together).

Logically, Uhura and Spock should be more compatible than Christine and Spock; common interests generally lead to more fulfilling relationships. The rapport between Uhura and Spock is easily seen in various episodes. Just as easily seen is the lack of rapport between Christine and Spock; he is uneasy around her.

Uhura's love for Spock, unlike Chapel's, is based first on respect. She respects him, loves him, and carries on with life while Chapel yearns for the type of attention from Spock that Uhura gets without asking. Uhura genuinely likes Spock and it shows.

Most people, however, tend to dismiss Uhura from the running or they pair her with Kirk. However, I don't think Uhura would tolerate Kirk's tomcatting around. She respects Kirk and is loyal to him, but she always seems to have a certain tenderness for Spock. Spock, in turn, has a soft spot for her, which seems natural. Uhura doesn't slobber all over him, pry into his business or, in general, pester him. She, like his mother, Amanda, is human, but can be as stolid as a Vulcan. Certainly, some things frighten Uhura, but

youth is often unsure and frightened of the unknown. I'm sure that even Amanda felt insecure once in a while when she was a young woman, and probably still does occasionally.

Uhura probably wouldn't mind being swept off her feet and carried away, but it isn't necessary. She would prefer to walk beside rather than be carried; ornamental but not an ornament; helping rather than helpless. She is stronger than some people think she is.

In "The Man Trap," Uhura gets away with her small talk to Spock, even though the behavior is not necessarily appropriate to the bridge. Spock accepts it without really raising an eyebrow, although he is a bit wary of her meaning. Nor does he reprimand her for her scolding outburst. If there is no deeper relationship, why would she care enough to berate Spock? This was the only time she really expected something from him. Spock, as her superior, does not have to tolerate such behavior, yet he does. Why? Maybe because he knows she really cares about him. Perhaps later, after thinking over her outburst, she apologized to Spock.

In "Charlie X," Uhura's interruption of Spock's playing on his Vulcan harp wasn't the first such instance, but Spock smiles at her (after an almost exaggerated, but affectionate sigh), and proceeds to play while she sings. Her teasing song obviously embarrasses him just a little, yet he continues to play. (Although his look seems to say "later for you.") Uhura's facial expression, her eyes, and the very real affection in her voice speak volumes about her feelings for Spock. And his smile speaks for him, as he seldom smiles. Spock could have ended the display at any time by simply stopping and leaving the room. Instead, he continued playing, allowing the teasing to go on.

Spock says he doesn't understand humor, but having been raised by Amanda, he certainly must understand more than he lets on. He knows Uhura is joshing him and lets her do so, making humor one of her greatest assets with him. It is difficult to imagine Christine at-

tempting that same sort of teasing and getting away with it.

In "The Immunity Syndrome," Uhura lingers next to Spock for some considerable time when the "zone of darkness" is discovered. At one point she stands so close to him their arms touch. She seems to draw comfort from his calm presence. Later, when she nearly faints, it is Spock who, with evident concern, supports her and helps her back to her chair. Then, when the *Enterprise* tries its massive forward thrust, it is again Spock who scoops up Uhura and puts her back in her chair.

This is not a task one would normally associate with the Vulcan first officer. However, it doesn't seem to bother him, since this isn't the only instance. In "Tomorrow is Yesterday," Spock scoops up Uhura, puts her back in her chair, and asks if she is all right. Kirk, on the other hand, helps up a male crew member even though he had been closer to Uhura than Spock was.

Some people theorize that Spock takes care of Uhura because Kirk can't—the Uhura/Kirk love affair. Again, I don't think so. Spock enjoys helping her too much to simply be a substitute, and Uhura seems to enjoy his attentions and his presence too much to think of him as a substitute for Kirk.

In "Mirror, Mirror," Uhura seems uncomfortable hurting the "mirror" Spock; she does so only to help stop the brawl in progress. Also, the look of sheer and utter relief she gives Spock when the landing party returns to their proper universe speaks volumes of her feelings for him. She's never been so glad to see anyone. From this scene it is easy to postulate Uhura's telling Spock of the alternate universe and her impressions of the "mirror" Spock. She, perhaps, prefers the beardless variety?

In "Return to Tomorrow," Henoch, in Spock's body, tortures Uhura on the bridge. Why pick on Uhura? Perhaps because he knows how Spock feels about her? Henoch and Spock did share consciousness when they "passed." Henoch may have thought it amusing to pick on Uhura simply because he knew of

an existing relationship between the two, or, perhaps, the subconscious desire for a relationship.

In some episodes Uhura may give Spock only a worried glance, as in "Amok Time," when Kirk asks Spock to come with him. Or, as in "Who Mourns for Adonais?", she may look surprised at a compliment, i.e., Spock's telling her he can think of no one better suited to handle the delicate work on the communications panel. Maybe her surprise was that he said it on the bridge in front of witnesses.

Perhaps one of the most telling episodes is "The Changeling." When Nomad "zaps" Uhura and drains her memory, Scotty tries to stop it. He, in turn, gets zapped. While almost everyone else on the bridge is watching or is clustered around the fallen Scotsman, Spock watches the stricken form of Uhura. Scott is presumably badly injured or even dead, but Spock watches Uhura.

When Nomad says that this unit (Uhura) is defective, Spock informs it that the unit is a woman. His tone is, for Spock, rather upset and his manner curt.

After Nomad repairs Scotty, Kirk asks it to fix Uhura, but Nomad says it can't fix her. In the background Spock looks somewhat disappointed. Kirk then suggests that Scotty had been dead, implying that it shouldn't have been that easy to repair him. Nomad tells Kirk that fixing the Scott unit was simply a matter of structural repair, but that the "knowledge banks" of this unit (Uhura) have been erased. Spock then quickly suggests that Uhura could be re-educated if that is the case and there has been no brain damage. Spock's manner does not suggest only concern for the even-temporary loss of a crew member; Uhura means something to the half-Vulcan, something more than a subordinate and crewmate.

In "Space Seed," as Spock and McCoy discuss the Eugenics War, Uhura watches Spock with a smile as McCoy attacks. Later, when the bridge crew is held in a briefing room by Khan and his people, Uhura is forced to go to the viewscreen. When she refuses to activate it, she is struck across the face. Spock has to

be reminded that they are prisoners, as his first impulse is to go to her rescue.

As Spock is told that he is next to die in the decompression chamber, he glances at Uhura. When he gets up and starts to accompany the guard, he again glances at her. Regret, perhaps, for what might have been, or for what was and must now end?

In "The Menagerie," Uhura can't believe Spock is placing himself under arrest. She is so shocked she follows him and the security guards across the room. Later, when Uhura reads the communication from Commodore Mendez, clearing Spock of all charges, relief is quite evident in her voice. Uhura definitely doesn't think of Spock as only a superior officer.

In "Arena," Uhura cries out when Kirk disappears from the bridge. Spock moves over to her, then steps down to the center seat. His first impulse is to go to Uhura and jolt her back to awareness. He needs her help in order to efficiently run the bridge and try to locate Kirk. It takes only a second or two of light (one presumes) pressure from Spock's hand on her arm to bring her back to the here-and-now of the bridge.

Later, Uhura moves from her station to be next to Spock as he sits in the center seat. She leans on the arm of the chair, torn between watching Spock or the viewscreen, but she moves as he does in order to be close to him. She draws strength and comfort from his nearness, but doesn't encroach on his space to the point of making him uneasy.

Kirk is Uhura's captain, the one she follows out of loyalty; McCoy and the others are her friends; but Spock is special to her. She cares enough about him to berate him, to make up songs about him, and to try and emulate him to some degree.

Could an honest, sincere woman like Nyota Uhura penetrate Spock's Vulcan barriers—a woman who wants nothing from him that he isn't ready to give? He certainly smiles and shows concern for her well-being quite readily. Why not that one step further? Can anyone who sees and hears the interaction of the

two in the rec room scene in "Charlie X" deny the easy relationship and honest affection between them?

Yes, some people will find it hard to put the two together, perhaps even as close friends, but is it really that difficult to do?

In *Starlog* #116, March 1987, Nichelle Nichols intimates to interviewer Brian Lowry that Spock was Uhura's mentor. If this is so, it could explain a lot; the ease of their relationship suggests a mentor-protégée scenario. This would explain why Uhura seems to gravitate toward Spock, why she watches him. She's learning from him almost constantly. It would also explain why Spock shows concern for Uhura's welfare, why he seems to think of her first where there is trouble.

But can their relationship be dismissed as simply one of mentor-protégée? I don't think so. There is something deeper between them. A mentor-protégée relationship could easily develop into something deeper.

Perhaps the two were never physically intimate. It may be there was a willingness if given the right circumstances, but the opportunity never presented itself. However, they may have been lovers for some time. We may never know; both of them are certainly discreet.

Why then were Uhura and Spock not together at the beginning of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture*? Perhaps they parted by mutual agreement to pursue private needs. And, considering the two characters, an amicable parting would have been likely. Or, they could have been reassigned to different ships at the end of the five-year mission.

Such a relationship, either mentor/protégée or intimates, would explain why Uhura was willing to sacrifice her career in *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*. She did it for Kirk, yes, but mostly for Spock—what he meant to her before, as well as then. It would also explain why Sarek was willing to take Uhura to Vulcan with him and give her asylum. He knew about the relationship, or at least knew of her true feelings for his son. Sarek has learned through experience that not

all humans are superficial. Uhura's genuine caring and willingness to put her own life and career on the line would certainly impress the elder Vulcan.

Yes, Uhura was and is loyal to Kirk, but I'm not sure such loyalty in itself would be the sole motivating factor in her decision to sacrifice everything she'd worked so hard to achieve. Concern, love, and perhaps a sense of personal obligation to her former lover (or mentor) would seem to be a better motivation. After all, the "guys" got to go off Earth while Uhura stayed where the real heat was. She would have been captured first. And if she had been caught, knowing that she had given the others the chance to retrieve Spock's body and return it to Vulcan would have eased her distress.

One can only imagine the aftermath of *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*. There is a new *Enterprise* and Spock is, if not totally normal, at least more the old Spock than he was before. He might still be trying to sort out his past relationships and might seek out Uhura to ask her why she did what she did to help him. Her admitting to him the feelings they shared would, I think, go a long way toward awakening the way the old Spock felt about her.

Spock is a complex character, one that constantly surprises, yet we know there is great feeling within the half-Vulcan. Perhaps Uhura's concern and unquestioning love and devotion can reawaken some of those feelings so vehemently denied.

Perhaps she already awakened those feelings once before. A mind meld between them could remove any lingering doubts Spock would have concerning Uhura.

Spock could do much worse than Uhura when forming an intimate relationship with a woman. He needs a strong woman, an intelligent woman, not some starry-eyed, love-besotted doll.

Leila Kalomi and Christine Chapel were both too involved with "capturing" Spock. Neither could take "no" for an answer; they were in love with the idea of being in love with Spock. They wanted him only because they found him desirable. What was it Spock

said to Stonn in "Amok Time"? "Having is not so satisfying a thing as wanting." Probably, neither Leila or Christine could handle being married to Spock.

Zarabeth was a liar who only wanted company at any cost. She loved Spock only as a companion, someone to ease her loneliness. She didn't care how he felt or what might happen to McCoy. How could she love Spock as an individual? She hardly knew him.

Droxine needed to grow up and face the reality of her world. Her head was further up in the clouds than her city was. Yes, she was the one to whom Spock made small talk, but until she was able to come to grips with her own planet and her place in the scheme of things, she would be of no value to a person like Spock.

The Romulan Commander wanted a sort of semidomesticated lap dog: Spock by her side, but under her rule, chained for life. Had he given in and stayed with her on her terms, her infatuation would undoubtedly have turned first to contempt, then to open hatred. Only as a free agent could Spock have her respect; but as a free agent, he would be inaccessible to her.

T'Pring wanted Spock's name and his property, not him. She was a more mercenary, but more honest version of the Romulan Commander—mercenary in that she actively wanted him dead; more honest in that when questioned about her actions, she told the truth.

Rigel is right when she says Christine Chapel would do anything for Spock, but I don't think that's what he needs or wants. On the other hand, Uhura would probably be more like Amanda and do anything within reason. She would, however, insist upon retaining her individuality and humanity, which would make her a much more interesting companion than Christine. Uhura would grow intellectually because she joined Starfleet to learn, to satisfy her thirst for knowledge. Christine would be too busy clinging because she joined Starfleet to find a man.

Spock, I think, would respect Uhura much more than he could ever respect Christine. Granted, Chris-

tine is intelligent or she wouldn't have made it into Starfleet, but she has a tendency to submerge herself when around men. She would be more of a burden than a help to someone like Spock, who has had many bad experiences with women.

Christine Chapel seems to have accepted that Spock is not within her reach romantically. With this acceptance, she could conceivably move on to other things, maybe even a relationship with someone more compatible. She might even be able to become friends with Spock.

Saavik, on the other hand, is yet a troubled being. She needs to come to terms with her Romulan/Vulcan heritage and the anger she still feels toward her early treatment and her unresolved feelings for her unknown parents.

Spock's life experience can't really help Saavik because of the differences in their perspectives: Spock had two parents to raise him, Saavik was a child of the streets; Spock had the benefit of the best education available, Saavik was illiterate; Spock had the love and support of friends of long intimacy, Saavik was friendless until Spock found her.

Saavik has a long road ahead of her if she is to reach the point where she is comfortable with herself. Spock, with all that he has been through—death, resurrection, and refusion—does not need the added turmoil. He has enough to do to center himself and regain his footing. His grip on who he is and what he is about may still be a bit tentative. He needs to concentrate on filling in any gaps that remain and make himself truly whole once more. Worrying about Saavik's problems could harm Spock's progress at this time. Time on Vulcan in Amanda's capable hands could give Saavik the boost she needs to become whole herself.

Uhura alone seems to care about Spock the individual, the person. He couldn't ask for a better woman with whom to spend his life.

Uhura is not a selfish woman; neither is she selfless to the point of becoming a doormat. Having Spock as

a lover would be nice, but she is more interested in first having his respect and friendship. She has regard for him, genuine deep feelings, and I believe Spock is—despite what some may think—sensitive enough to realize the truth. For her honest acceptance Uhura is rewarded with Spock's trust and friendship, which is no small reward.

Spock needs a sensitive woman to show him that women can be trusted, that not all of them are deceitful, selfish, or clinging. As Rigel pointed out in the first part of her article, Uhura is no longer the vain creature she sometimes was in the series. She has come to terms with aging, so her major shortcoming, her "beast," if you will, has been vanquished. She is at ease with herself, perhaps for the first time. A woman at ease with herself is exactly what Spock needs now.

These two Star Trek veterans deserve their day. They have been through so much together through the years, their ties remain and grow stronger. Let them be at ease together.

A SAMPLING OF "TREK ROUNDTABLE"—LETTERS FROM OUR READERS

Charlene Ahn
Kinston, NC

Hello! I am thirteen years old and something like the twenty-sixth generation of Trekkie (Trekker, whatever, I'm still wet behind the ears), and I got here when some friends persuaded me to watch *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* with them. I immediately fell in love. I discovered *The Best of Trek* series a while ago, at my library, but I've just now gotten up the nerve to write y'all.

Well, let's get down to business. I absolutely love Star Trek and *The Best of Trek,* not least because they are (most of the time) good science fiction, and they make me think.

But about *The Best of Trek* #15—obviously, the article about Star Trek books was written by someone who doesn't like to think. The article keeps going on about books that are "too cerebral." Well, I always thought that science fiction was generally for cerebral people—I am, and I enjoyed the criticized books (*The Final Reflection, The Wounded Sky,* etc.) immensely.

And about *Star Trek* vs. *The Next Generation*—the latter is better in many ways, one being simply that it looks more realistic, less like a low-budget TV show, due to better special effects and technology and things.

If I had been introduced to it before the original, I might have liked it better. But what I can't stand is that there are no Vulcans! C'mon, Gene, I understand why there can't be a Vulcan first officer/science officer, but I would like to see just one crummy Vulcan as part of the crew. (Mr. Spock happens to be my favorite, as I guess you might be able to tell.)

One thing that really bugs me about *The Next Generation* is that a male and female always seem to be thrown together in close proximity and then they always have sex. I mean, that is flatly unrealistic. Surely the crew of a starship have better things on their minds than rutting! This gets me about both the series: their casual attitudes toward sex and alcohol and swearing. This is setting a bad example. I heard my little sister using the word "damn." I asked her why, and she said, "Well, Doctor McCoy does it, so why can't I?" This really worries me. What if she develops the same attitude toward sex and alcohol?

All right, I didn't mean to go on like that, but when something is nearly perfect, it is hard not to point out its flaws. And one more thing—on "Sarek," Picard said something about Sarek's "son's wedding." Hmmm. Hey, Christine (who is another of my favorites), maybe there is hope! I think Spock is a fool for not noticing her.

Thanks for listening to me rant.

Erik Rhodes
Long Beach, CA

I have finished off *The Best of Trek* #14 and, as always, it's absolutely fabulous! The earlier *Best of Trek* volumes were an integral part of Star Trek becoming a very active component in my continuously growing philosophy and life; the volumes were a healthy influence upon me in elementary and junior high school, providing a very much needed example of views that were well thought out in a rational manner. I learned more about grammar and composition

from my Star Trek readings than I ever did in my grammar and composition classes at school; indeed, I failed in my seventh grade English class because I was busy reading the James Blish Star Trek adaptations, and *The Best of Trek* books, instead of listening to the boorish teacher. Eventually I learned from Star Trek how to bring my own meaning to the classes at school, how to make the connection that turns the material of a class not only into something interesting but also something necessary to help bring together that complete understanding of the universe that I seek always.

It was early in high school that I discovered a certain knack for writing and, thanks to the encouragement of my eleventh-grade teacher, I ended up with a story published in the school literary magazine. The next year found another of my stories published, an essay, and several poems. Now in college, I've had one essay published in the literary magazine here, and another is yet under consideration. I believe that I owe much of my growing writing ability to *The Best of Trek* books; they provided me, long ago when I was perhaps most impressionable to it, with the different writing styles of people writing about something I found interesting and exciting, Star Trek, at a time when school failed to provide such. At the same time it reinforced and clarified the values presented in Star Trek. This is a highly important function in itself in the face of what seems to be a value-vacuum existing for modern youth in this society. It is for these reasons that my personal gratitude goes out to all those who have contributed to *The Best of Trek* and *Trek, The Magazine for Star Trek Fans.*

Renee Hanins
Trotwood, OH

I am *not* interested in Star Trek, nor the pursuit of its myriad analyses. I am obsessed with the encounter!

While I was in elementary school, I could tell you

the hour, day of the week, and month by the broadcasts of TV shows. Somehow I lost orbital control of my environment and recollect ne'er the faintest *Star Trek* episode when it first hit the airwaves.

To my dismay (which, I can only presume, was because it was then I began to pay attention to the show), I was "told" that there were only some thirty-nine shows made and in one month you could see them all. Why keep watching the same things over again?

Where has the belated interest come from? My answer to this query lies with the one character who displays the personality of Dr. McCoy: DeForest Kelley.

I knew of Mr. Kelley from his earlier westerns. I recollected his antagonistic character portrayal as mean and scuzzy, low-down. What a surprise to see him appearing on *Star Trek*. He didn't quite seem to fit the nickname of "Bones." I suppose it could suffice. It couldn't possibly have been associated with his "medical" profession. Why, hell, he was an ex-Earth gunslinger!

Suffice it to say, I gave little credence to "learning" more about Star Trek other than knowing at least this much.

I don't stay alive at the theaters; I am usually two years behind. But when *The Wrath of Khan* hit the screens, I actually saw it before it came out at the video stores. My first response: *My God, Jim! He's aged!* All the characters, without fail, grew up and were now no mere kids. What have *I* lost here? On TV they were so young, or looked like the "kids" I was then also.

It was a line from Rudyard Kipling's *The Elephant's Child* that took hold in effecting a change in my lifestyle: *insatiable curiosity*. Who is Kelley/McCoy and how does he fit in with the rest of the Star Trek crew?

Actions do speak louder than words. I have a strong desire to keep my precious niece entrenched in reading and being read to. What a delight and joy she is! The library swells with books for "inquiring minds."

After vigorous trips and mountains of books, I somehow caught my eyes dangerously looking at science fiction paperbacks, Star Trek books in particular. I dared to take out four books. Within the week I was back for more. *I'm on a roll now!* I happened on a *The Best of Trek* #10. *Hey, this is something different!* Directly behind #10 was a #11 and a #12. *Head 'em up and move 'em out, Linda!*

(Ironically, I detested reading while in school. I could not get my older sister to put her books down long enough to come out and play. Books were a definite detriment to playing badminton!)

While I couldn't wait to read the next adventure, *The Best of Trek* was different. *Are these people serious? God, Star Trek is just another entertaining show, isn't it? What is this Triumvirate stuff? Is McCoy really an Epicurean?* I thought old "home boy" had something that was attractive about his personality, but was this his practicing philosophy?

It would be less than honest if I'd say I wanted this to be an exacting piece of fluent prose. Alas, Star Trek is above me in that forte. I believe that I may be rendering words countless Trekkers have uttered, mulled over, or jabbered about in passing. I have enjoyed reading the ideas of others that *The Best of Trek* has offered. Let us all Live Long and Prosper where no man has done so before.

Melissa Steidman
Brantford, ON

I feel compelled to write in response to "Wrathfully Searching for Home," by Walter Irwin and G. B. Love (*The Best of Trek* #14). I think this article presented an extremely important, incisive, and perceptive overview of the "Genesis Saga," but I take exception to this statement: "When in the turbolift with Saavik in *Wrath of Khan,* Kirk is stiff, self-conscious, and flirts clumsily. We wince at this middle-aged goat making humorless jokes while leering at Saavik's bosom."

I sense a condescending and snide attitude toward Kirk and all people generally of his age category—are all people over fifty middle-aged goats?

Furthermore, Kirk may have been middle-aged in *Wrath of Khan,* but he was far from a humorless "old goat"—some clarifications need to be made with regard to Kirk's age and attitude in the movie.

During his conversation in Kirk's apartment, McCoy clearly states, "This is not about age and you know it. This is about you hiding behind a goddamned computer console when you want to be out there hopping galaxies."

The insinuation is clear: Kirk feels old and stagnant because of his "paper-pusher" job and command rank, but he is far from old. McCoy goes on to say, "Get back your command, get it back before you turn into part of this collection. Before you really do grow old."

So, if Kirk is stagnating, it is for several verifiable reasons—the rank of admiral just didn't suit him, and the attendant paper-pushing is making him feel old before his time. Indeed, during a later conversation with Carol Marcus, he tells her, "I feel old. Worn out." He does not say, "I am old. Worn out."

Therein lies the difference—as there is a difference between Kirk's flirtations with Saavik and Gillian in *The Voyage Home.* Mr. Irwin and Mr. Love go on to add, "In *The Voyage Home,* however, Kirk is totally at ease with Gillian Taylor, turning on just enough charm to divert her questions, eliciting enough affection and trust to gain her help."

Perhaps they should look at the very nature of this statement—Kirk feels "at ease" with Gillian because of her personality. She is an easygoing, smooth, relaxed, and intelligent woman. Perhaps the most liberated example of a career-oriented, compassionate and intelligent woman seen in Star Trek (with the exception of Carol Marcus).

Kirk finally finds his match in *The Voyage Home:* a woman who is just as obsessed with getting her own way as he is. And like him, she is fiercely stubborn, independent, unyielding, unbending, and deliberately

dogmatic. Once she wants something (or wants to achieve something), she sticks to it until she gets her own way. But she is casual and disarming about it, and she knows exactly how to get what she wants. Sound familiar?

Although she's not a mirror image of James T. Kirk, I found them to be two different sides of the same stubborn coin. Not only does Kirk turn on the charm and seem totally at ease with her, I suspect the same is true of her approach to him. She laughs at his sense of "humor," she ripostes his untoward and callous remarks with an equally stinging response ("How did a nice girl like you get to be a cetacean biologist?" "Just lucky, I guess."), and she enjoys fencing, as well as flirting, with him.

There is also something of a physical resemblance between them—enough to suspect they are brother and sister. And they share a "brotherly-sisterly" relationship, as well as including romantic flirtations on the sideline. Neither one takes the other seriously, and thus their relationship jells.

What of Kirk and Saavik, then? Just why did Irwin and Love think he seemed stiff, self-conscious, and uncomfortable on the elevator with Saavik, when he was totally at ease with Gillian Taylor? Perhaps because in *The Voyage Home,* he wasn't taking himself all that seriously anymore. Why? Because his obsession with middle age and his dissatisfaction over his admiralty had evaporated with the realization that his temporary command of the *Enterprise* (and then the Bird of Prey) was just the tonic he needed, and thus he "feels young again."

But Kirk does achieve a very good middle ground between good humor and seriousness in *The Voyage Home;* especially when it comes to women, he creates a delightful balance between mock authority, even while putting off the impression he's an ordinary fellow from the "twenty-third" century.

Kirk is basically the same Kirk in *Wrath of Khan* as in *The Voyage Home;* the circumstances are just different. Indeed, during *Wrath of Khan,* we get to see

Kirk during "the best of times and the worst of times." But the old glints of humor still remain. In the shuttle scene with Sulu, Bones, and Uhura, he tells them, with deliberate prudishness, "I don't think these kids can steer," and we know he's only half serious. When Scott tells him (after he boards the *Enterprise*), "I believe you'll find everything in order, Admiral," Kirk replies with his usual good humor, "That'll be a pleasant surprise, Mister Scott." Then he jokes with Peter Preston.

This is the same Kirk of *The Voyage Home*—these are the times we see him show his humor despite his depressing circumstances and situations that accompany them (he hates being an admiral and no one will let him forget he shouldn't have accepted promotion), but to quote, "These are the times that try men's souls."

They surely are—and Kirk's optimism and humor shine through. In fact, it might be argued that Kirk shows the most good humor in *Wrath of Khan.* In the first confrontation with Khan, we see a Kirk we've always known—a more mature Kirk who admits to weaknesses and flaws and is strangely vulnerable and introspective. He tells McCoy, "We're alive only because I knew something about these ships he didn't." He does not say, "We won because I knew everything."

He even admits to making mistakes about his personal life. He regrets leaving Carol Marcus ("My life that could have been and wasn't"), and has regrets about the career-oriented life he's led.

No longer is Kirk of the movies a cocky and self-assured fellow—especially not in *Wrath of Khan*—and that brings us back to his alleged attitude problem when dealing with young women in that film.

I don't believe Kirk was stiff and self-conscious with Saavik; he showed a sense of humor and his little jokes were not "unfunny," vain attempts at flirting. Kirk was simply trying to break the ice with this very serious young woman. If anyone was self-conscious and stiff in *Wrath of Khan,* it was Saavik. She took

Kirk too seriously in the turbolift scene, and the fact that his teasing didn't work speaks volumes not about his "clumsy flirting," but about Saavik's very calculating and serious mind. She tells him, "Humor. It is a difficult concept. It is not logical."

Gillian Taylor, on the other hand, was not intimidated by Kirk. She treats him in a casual and disarming manner, and he reciprocates in kind.

Thus, Mr. Irwin and Mr. Love, don't judge by appearances alone. One must evaluate Kirk's reactions to the women in his life by looking at them, as well as analyzing him.

On another subject: I wonder how some Star Trek novels get published at all. Case in point: Howard Weinstein's *Covenant of the Crown.* This surely must be the most boring Star Trek novel I have ever tried to read. (I only got about halfway through it before putting it down.)

What really irk me about the book (and perhaps prejudiced me from the start) are the author's notes and David Gerrold's introduction. Weinstein (in his introduction) states that, when his "Pirates of Orion" was on the animated *Star Trek* in 1975, it was a "great way to impress chicks" by saying, "How would you like to come over and watch my show?" He goes on to say, "That really happened."

Gerrold, in his introduction, then points out that, "Howard and I are the only two Star Trek authors to have both scripts and novels published."

Do I smell egotism here or sarcasm or mockery or what? Whatever it was about this introduction I didn't like, it only solidified with the actual reading of the book. It was, put simply, boring.

Then what was the justification for this man's "ego trip"? In the December 1982 issue of *Starlog,* wherein he talks about "Spock's transformation" in the "Communications" section of that magazine, he brings in his own novel and states that "Spock was different in *Wrath of Khan,* and in both *Covenant* and *Wrath of Khan,* he exhibits a dry sense of humor and a lowering

of mental barriers (like allowing himself to be hugged in *Covenant*)."

Weinstein goes on to say, "Thank heavens I'd managed to guess correctly!" (about Spock's transformation from *STTMP* to *Wrath of Khan*).

In his introduction to A. C. Crispin's *Yesterday's Son,* he mentions his book yet again and call himself "semiegotistical." In his introduction to *Covenant* he is quick to point out that 1975 was the year that the animated *Star Trek* won its Emmy (naturally the year that "Pirates" was televised).

Correction, Howie (as Gerrold and his friends call him), you are not egotistical. You are not even semi-egotistical. You are the biggest bloated ego in Star Trek publishing history.

That said, let me go on to another big and bloated ego—Ann Crispin, author of *Yesterday's Son.* Of course, I'm sure nobody can forget that, since she keeps reminding the science fiction world of her great success time and again. Remember her column in *Starlog* that described the genesis of that book? ("Writing Novelizations and Tie-Ins," June, 1984.) She reminds us repeatedly that she got her start doing a Star Trek novel, yet doesn't encourage would-be authors to try their hand at it. (She doesn't even encourage them to try their hand at creating their own universes, even though she proudly states she has done both.)

She proclaims, "Eat your heart out, Cinderella! I was now a full-time author dreaming up universes of my own!" Sure, we know she got *Yesterday's Son* published by incredible luck, but does she have to keep it up so that everyone else in the universe knows what a great author she is?

What did I think of *Yesterday's Son*—the novel that everyone, and I mean everyone, including *The Best of Trek* #10, calls "great and wonderful"? This is my humble opinion, of course, but this is a free country and I am entitled to my opinion.

I didn't like it. I know it captured the number one slot in your 1985 Reader's Poll, even while some truly excellent Star Trek novels were overlooked, such as

the *Wrath of Khan* and *The Search for Spock* novelizations and *The Entropy Effect,* all by Vonda McIntyre, who surprisingly finished at the bottom of your list in the poll in *The Best of Trek* #10.

I was shocked and surprised by this—*The Entropy Effect* was far superior to *Yesterday's Son* in every respect. *Son* was Crispin's first try at professional fiction, and it shows.

Enterprise: The First Adventure was another interesting book that didn't even make the list, yet *The Entropy Effect* was an excellent book that was beaten out by far inferior novels like *Black Fire* and *Yesterday's Son.*

I think this hysteria over the book has gone far enough.

I was also surprised at your top ten favorite episode list. "The City on the Edge of Forever" finished number one and "All Our Yesterdays" finished at number four.

The question that comes to mind is: Why?

"The City on the Edge of Forever" was only adequate, and at the same time illogical. The United States did not beat the Nazis single-handedly (if so, who were the Allies?), and one woman could not delay the United States entry into the Second World War (ever hear of the draft?). Furthermore, the atomic bomb was secretly being developed at Los Alamos by the group of scientists under Oppenheimer in the Manhattan Project. This had nothing to do with the United States entering the Second World War.

Also, Peter Wyden's book *Day One—Before Hiroshima and After* clearly states just how badly the Nazis failed at developing the atomic bomb and wedding it to their V-2 rockets.

If we are to accept that Edith Keeler would change the course of history had she lived, then why didn't Kirk and company take her into the future, as they did Gillian Taylor in *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*? Surely if Keeler had not been present in the past to start the pacifist movement, then Nazi Germany would not rule and "all would be as it was before."

Hadn't anyone thought of this before? And how did McCoy, Kirk, and Spock get through the Guardian of Forever at the end of the episode, back in their original uniforms, as well? This is just not explained—and if all of history had been changed as they know it by McCoy's intervention, how does one explain the continued existence of their phasers and tricorders when clearly the *Enterprise* had disappeared?

"The City on the Edge of Forever" gets my nomination as the most overrated episode ever—it is soapy and maudlin and manipulative. (If Spock had his tricorder, why did he need "stone knives and bearskin" equipment to accentuate the use of his tricorder in determining what effect McCoy had on the past?)

"All Our Yesterdays" is another grossly overrated episode. Mariette Hartley won your Reader's Poll for the favorite female guest star. This is laughable in the extreme! Trailing behind this inept actress were capable performers such as the excellent Joanne Linville and Bibi Besch.

As for the other favorite episodes, I also disagree with your readers' choices of "Shore Leave," "The Enemy Within," "The Menagerie," "The Trouble with Tribbles," etc. In fact, the only choices I agree with are "Space Seed" and "Balance of Terror."

My personal choices would be: "Where No Man Has Gone Before" (a grossly underrated episode), "The Enterprise Incident" (which made a lowly showing in your poll, not even making the top ten), "The Tholian Web," "The Day of the Dove," "The Squire of Gothos" (which is largely ignored), "The Conscience of the King" (which would make my list at number three), "Balance of Terror," "Mirror, Mirror" (which didn't even make your top ten), "The Doomsday Machine" (again, not mentioned), and "Errand of Mercy."

Those are some of my choices for the best episodes of the series. Again, I am disappointed by the choices your readers made for the worst episodes.

"The Savage Curtain" surely wasn't the worst, even if it wasn't the best. It is ridiculous to include this episode on the worst list when some of these losers weren't even mentioned. Here is my top ten worst: "The Alternative Factor" (this didn't even make your list), "Wink of an Eye," "Mudd's Women," "I, Mudd," "The Mark of Gideon," "By Any Other Name," "Whom Gods Destroy," "Miri" (which was mentioned), "Plato's Stepchildren" (again, mentioned), and "Charlie X" (also mentioned).

I can't fathom the choice of "The Savage Curtain" and "Who Mourns for Adonais" (still bad, but not as bad as some). While I do agree with your choices for "The Way to Eden," "Spock's Brain," and "Spectre of the Gun," some afterthought should be given to mentioning these episodes as well: "Elaan of Troyius," "A Private Little War," "Catspaw," "Metamorphosis," "What Are Little Girls Made Of?", and "The Trouble With Tribbles."

This last episode is grossly overrated, and David Gerrold's contribution to Star Trek is the most overrated in history. The man has made a career out of proclaiming he wrote "The Trouble with Tribbles." Big deal.

Some other good episodes not mentioned were "Friday's Child" (which didn't make the top ten), "Turnabout Intruder" (even though William Shatner did get the most votes for his performance in it), "The Cloud Minders," "The Immunity Syndrome," "Space Seed" (which did appear in your top ten), "The Naked Time," and "Journey to Babel."

I was also flabbergasted that *The Search for Spock* got 45 percent of the votes in the favorite movie category, while the excellent *Wrath of Khan* got only 43 percent of the votes. What is the logic in these choices?

William Shatner's excellent performance (not to mention his best) in *Wrath of Khan* also wasn't mentioned, even though his stale, boring performance in *The Search for Spock* got a percentage of the vote.

Kevin Wallace
Huntsville, AL

I am glad *The Best of Trek* has taken *Star Trek: The Next Generation* within its scope. I am glad because *The Next Generation* is a festering sore that threatens to destroy all credibility of the original Star Trek. If people like the readers of *The Best of Trek* do not begin to voice their disappointment, Paramount will never improve the horrible quality of the product they are turning out. As it stands, I wish they would just cancel it.

Things start well enough. The voice-over is great, and the Courage/Goldsmith musical merger is terrific. However, from this point, quality deteriorates quickly. I am not overly fond of the shape of the new *Enterprise;* it looks like something you would see in a funhouse mirror.

I think the biggest problem is that everything is overdone. This is well symbolized by the rolling of the credits. It takes absolutely eons for the names of all the writers, co-writers, co-producers, etc. to be given. I will not bother you with the obvious cliché. The only part not overdone is the selection of the titles. *Star Trek* gave us wonderfully meaningful and metaphorical titles like "Dagger of the Mind," "The Conscience of the King," and "The Enemy Within." Now we get old retreads like "Where No One Has Gone Before," "The Naked Now," and meaningless trivia like "Haven," "Angel One," and "The Child."

The cast also reveal several problems. Wesley Crusher is by far the most pointless character. Despite my fondness for Dr. Crusher and her interesting mutual attraction with Captain Picard, my first reaction upon hearing Gates McFadden would not be returning for the second season is joy over the fact that Wesley might be going with her. Unfortunately, he stayed, and any reasonable justification for his presence was gone. He is obnoxious and childish and his "boy genius"

is one of the biggest [examples of] *deus ex machina* in existence.

When he utters lines like, "You would listen to me if I were an adult," it is obvious to whom the show is pandering. Denise Crosby was smart to leave when she did. I liked her and Tasha, but it was quite obvious that there just was not enough story to go around. It was a smart move to not replace her, and to keep Dr. Pulaski well in the background. Diana Muldaur gave two fine performances in *Star Trek,* but not even she can do anything with this shallow character.

Troi, Worf, and Data are all retreads of different aspects of Mr. Spock: she the half-alien from a telepathic culture that bonds children into marriage; he the superstrong alien from a potentially savage race; it the computer superbrain (literally, in this case). The only difference is that each, unlike Spock, is trying to express emotions. This results in Troi going around "feeling" people—how she can do it over communications channels is beyond me—and some extremely hokey play-acting by Data. Troi and her "past" with Riker seems a lot like Ilia/Decker. (I do, however, like Lwaxana Troi!)

I could have liked Picard and Riker. They have a good working relationship that is highly believable, and a nice change from Kirk's boy-wonder approach. But Picard has some of the corniest dialogue in existence; every time I hear "Make it so," I nearly grit the enamel off my teeth. And someone needs to tell Patrick Stewart to stop inflecting his voice and delivering half his dialogue as if it were a Shakespearean soliloquy; it just does not fit.

As to Geordi? Sorry, a lowly lieutenant does not just "become" chief engineer of what, supposedly, is the finest ship in the Federation. Not that I am not glad they abandoned the first year's game of musical engineers.

However, it is when we come to the actual plots that I find *The Next Generation* such a failure. Some have accused that the plots are stolen from the origi-

nal series. Actually, this is not true; they are also stolen from *Alien* and *Rosemary's Baby*. It seems whenever they need a detail, they find it somewhere else, like the aliens with the electric field on their bodies—straight out of "Let This Be Your Last Battlefield," and an episode that would better be called "The Data Within." Add on top of this the way the new season has been running guest stars by us (sort of like *Batman*), and the tacky scenes in the lounge—I wonder if a better name would not be *Love Boat: The Next Generation*. And despite the claim to "seek out new life . . ." they do very little. Mainly, they play in the holodeck and wait around for some pushy, omnipotent alien being to come and force them to perform. That gets old very quickly.

The series has also done a very quick job of insulting just about everyone and everything. The Ferengi, and associated comments, are what I would expect if Karl Marx were on staff. In one dull episode they make fun of a woman because she was a "housewife." We are told our version of morality is archaic, and that the struggle for survival has been completely eliminated. The "Q" episodes also spell out a pretty bleak picture of our future. And the only reference, past the first episodes, to *Star Trek* is a comment about the "youngest person to make Captain." They could have made it "second-youngest," allowing us to smile knowingly and remember the wonder-boy, but, oh no, even Kirk is not good enough anymore. Although he could be alive (he should be, actually), I hope James T. Kirk is dead. He spent his life fighting to prevent human/humanoid civilizations from stagnation. The knowledge that his own had fallen victim would be too cruel. Perhaps that is why families risk their lives on spaceships: anything to escape the dullness of life. Perhaps that even justifies the holodeck (a technology that makes Genesis look like a popgun, and one I will never accept as realistic) and its frequent use. *Brave New World* had soma; *The Next Generation* has the holodeck. Anything to escape.

Kimberly Wallace
Two Rivers, WI

Yes, Wallace finally found the gumption to make contact. Nice to meet ya!

I'm a sixteen-year-old "second generation" Star Trek fan; i.e., I've grown up with it. I used to watch *Star Trek* on Sundays, right before *The Lone Ranger* in the '70s. When I was seven, my parents took me to Green Bay to see the first movie (and I had the Klingon Happy Meal afterward). Seven years later, I became a Trekkie . . . but I've calmed down a lot since then.

Star Trek has had its effects on me in other ways than just taking up some of my spare time and giving me something to write during trigonometry lectures. From way back when (say 1977), I've been interested in space. Now I'm kind of planning to be a physicist. (Yeah, I'm that smart; hard to tell from the writing style, huh?) I have a much better attitude about that world than I might otherwise; Gorbachev's a cool guy, we're back in space, they just invented cold fusion, I know there are problems in the world, and I'll do all I can to help.

Billions are homeless and/or starving, folks are killing each other over how to worship whom, AIDS is getting really scary, the ozone layer is disappearing . . . but that's not in Two Rivers, so get out of my face. Two Rivers is small and mostly white, and although racism is pretty common, I like to think I'm not affected. (I'd better not be, because I'll be spending a year in Japan—not a good place for a white supremacist.).

I understand I'm somewhat unusual in that I like both the original series and *The Next Generation,* but I am not particularly fond of the movies.

The original is of course the beginning of everything. I love the crew (this includes the *Enterprise*). I love the way it makes one think, although I don't notice every detail. What I don't love is the '60s atmo-

sphere. Nostalgia's great, but I'd rather look *ahead.* I like most of the books about this dear universe, too.

The Next Generation is much easier to reach. I love this new crew, too (even the bartender), and the "D" does her great-etc.-grandmother proud. The beginning says "no one" (very important to this daughter of an ERA marcher). I love the potential to discuss issues important to those of us who will inherit the Earth—peace, tolerance, hunger, AIDS, integrity, and taking care of this dear old planet. The special effects and scenery are cool. Okay, some of the episodes are pretty doggy, but "Spock's Brain" still takes the cake.

As for the movies . . . It's hard to see those dear friends getting older. I'm not fixated on youth; I know we all age . . . but even though mid-fifties isn't that old, it's a forty-year age difference. It makes it hard to relate. I didn't like some of the stereotypes. I dislike intensely the idea of Spock and the *Enterprise* being killed and resurrected; in my opinion, the only people with the right to be resurrected are Christ and Sherlock Holmes. The special circumstances of the movies' action don't seem as real as a five-year mission.

I've been watching and reading all I can for a long as I could; I have innumerable opinions and questions. Unfortunately, time and space are limited, so I must go.

Lynda Phillips
Independence, MO

I have just finished reading *The Best of Trek* #14 and have enjoyed it. When I first started reading it, I thought I would have nothing to comment on, or in other words, inspire me to write. I was wrong.

I must disagree with the article "You Can Go Home Again—Some Early Thoughts on *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home,*" by Debbie Gilbert. Don't get me wrong. It was a good article, and I enjoyed reading it. It is just that I don't agree with part of what she said

in the second half of her article, "Home Ain't What It Used to Be: Second Thoughts on *The Voyage Home*."

She states that she doesn't know any fan who has written a poem or short story connected to *The Voyage Home*. I do. I don't mean personally. Not having the fanzine at my fingertips, there are quite a few in *Mind Meld IV*. One poem that does come to mind is "Gracie at the Bat." It's a poem about the whales. We must remember, Gracie *was* pregnant. That fact didn't change when they reached the twenty-third century.

I do not think *The Voyage Home* is only half Star Trek. It's all Star Trek. They just took another look at it.

The reason the people applauded when Spock gave the punk a neck pinch on the bus was because he stopped the music. The music wasn't bothering only Kirk, but everybody. They would have applauded if he had broken the tape deck or hit him and shut it off. You must also remember that most of the people were facing the front of the bus when Spock did it and didn't turn until they heard the music shut off. Most of them didn't see what Spock did.

About Kirk's knowing about the novels of Jacqueline Susann and Harold Robbins: One must remember that Kirk collects antique books. It is quite possible Kirk has a copy of one of their books. It is obvious he hasn't read them recently since he had to search his memory.

The comment about money: Sure, Kirk and Spock know what money is—in the twenty-third century. But this is the twentieth century. Not once have we seen what a "credit" looks like. We haven't even been told how much a credit is. It is very doubtful that they even know what a twentieth-century coin looks like or even what paper money is. And it is clear in the series that none of them carried money. Yet how did they pay for everything? By using credit or credits.

And Spock not knowing what exact change is doesn't surprise me. He knows what a quarter is (I must assume there are pictures of our coins in their

history books), but let's face facts—he will now not know that a quarter and a dime is thirty-five cents (unless he is told), and there is no reason why he should know that the bus driver doesn't have change and the machine can't give it. You must remember that most of the gadgets of the twentieth century they had only seen in history books.

My last comment on the article concerns the transporter and altering history or the future. Debbie must have forgotten that traveling backward in time drained the crystals. To make matters worse, the crystals were Klingon. They were decrystallizing, which meant the ship was losing power. In order to hide the ship, they had to keep the cloaking device on. And we know how much power that device uses. Kirk was not about to waste power by unnecessary transporter use when they had the twentieth-century mode of transportation to get where they wanted. The reason Kirk, McCoy, Chekov, and Gillian were plucked from the elevator so quickly was because the ship was finally at full power and able to handle the stress.

I don't agree with her complaint about time travel. If you remember, when they went back in time, they went through what I will call "time waves." If you paid attention (I admit I missed it the first time), you would have heard McCoy say, "My God, Jim, where are we?" and Kirk's answer, "Helpless and blind as a bat," and a few other comments. When you hear them the *first time,* those events haven't happened yet. But they do happen at the end. In my opinion they did not change history. They went back in time because it was meant for them to. And as I have said before, the future of the world depends on what the present does. It is the present that needs to be careful when dealing with the past.

On the article, "Even More Star Trek Mysteries Solved" by Leslie Thompson, I do not agree with her solution about Arden Lowe's question about the shuttlecraft *Galileo.* It's true that the original shuttle was destroyed and they built another, the *Galileo II,* to replace it. But we know for a fact that the *Enterprise*

has at least four shuttles. Why? They had two in the episode "The Galileo Seven." The unfortunate one, the *Galileo,* and the shuttlecraft *Columbus*. Both had the number NCC-1701/7 on their hulls, even though they were two different shuttles. Unlike some fans I consider the animated series as "real" *Star Trek,* and we saw two shuttles featured. In "Slaver Weapon" we saw the shuttle *Copernicus,* and in "The Ambergris Element" we saw the aquashuttle (which they unfortunately didn't name). So they had at least four shuttles, all with different names. Also it would be redundant to name all seven *Galileo*. How would you tell them apart?

I did not agree with the comment made about the Klingon ambassador in "Wrathfully Searching for Home: The Star Trek Trilogy," by Walter Irwin and G. B. Love. The Klingon was necessary because Starfleet was court-martialing Kirk and company.

Without the Klingon making the charge of "treason" against Kirk, there would not be a court-martial. If you noticed, Starfleet did not charge them for that, but for stealing the *Enterprise*. They dropped the charges except for the one directed only at Kirk, disobeying orders from a superior officer. And they busted him back down to captain. If that was all that was going to happen, they could have done it without the court-martial.

This brings me to the section concerning *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. Let me say that I like the series very, very much. It is my second favorite show only because the original series holds the number one spot. My favorite character is Data, and I hope to find out more about him in the coming seasons. Reading the articles, I was surprised to find that Tasha Yar was well liked. I'm not saying I really disliked her, but she was not one of my favorites. I for one was not sorry to see her go.

In "First Impressions" by S. Hamilton-Nelson, I do not agree with her impression of Data's character. He is not having trouble deciding if he wants to be a machine or a man. He wants to be human. It's evident

as he tries to be human. So what you have is Data trying to be human with the machine part of him getting in the way.

I agree totally with the part about Wesley in "Review and Commentary" by Walter Irwin. I don't mind the fact that he is a genius who seems to know everything. But I have come close, on several occasions, to resenting his presence—especially when he is the one who keeps saving the *Enterprise.* He's only a teenager; I find it hard to believe he knows more about running the *Enterprise* than the captain does. Isn't that why Captain Picard is the captain and Riker is Number One? I cannot stand it when a kid constantly makes an adult look stupid. I don't care how brilliant he is.

To wind up my comments on *The Best of Trek* #14, I would like to take a crack at answering Mark Meville's question about the *Enterprise* (in his letter in "Trek Roundtable": "Kirk and company certainly would have known if there was a spanking new Constitution-class cruiser waiting to be christened the U.S.S. *Enterprise*-A, so where did it come from?"

Starting with the events of *Wrath of Khan,* we know the *Enterprise* was relegated to a training ship. It was no longer a frontline ship. Spock was her captain, as he was the instructor of the training vessel. His boss was Admiral Kirk.

Anyone familiar with a teacher's duties knows that there are papers to grade, evaluations to make, and lectures to give. This would keep Kirk and Spock busy enough so that they would not think about a new ship being built. And since the *Enterprise* was still an active ship, they would not build a new ship to be named *Enterprise.* So Kirk and the others thought nothing of it.

During the events of *Wrath of Khan,* Kirk was kept busy by keeping the *Enterprise* from being blown up. Having won the battle with Khan, Kirk then had to deal with Spock's death. Death is not easy to handle in any situation. To add insult to injury, the *Enterprise* had to limp home.

In *The Search for Spock,* it never states how long

it took to get back. We can safely assume it took longer than normal, since the ship is severely damaged. At this point it is not spaceworthy and hardly has any crew.

Upon arrival, they see the new ship, the *Excelsior.* It's supposed to have transwarp speed. They are given an indefinite shore leave, and it is here that they find out the *Enterprise* is to be decommissioned. It comes as a surprise, since there had been no talk of it. We can safely assume that the new ship is being constructed on schedule. It is obvious Starfleet is up to something when they do not reassign them a new ship.

Kirk still has no time to really think as McCoy seems to go off the deep end. In his concern about McCoy and the fact that Starfleet won't give him a straight answer, the new ship momentarily slips his mind.

As the events unfold, Sarek's unexpected visit, stealing the *Enterprise,* rescuing Spock and Saavik, and dealing with David's death, Kirk is so concerned about his friends that nothing else matters. He is also concerned about the fact he now faces court-martial.

Which brings us to *The Voyage Home.* We know it has been three months since the events of *The Search for Spock.* It is safe to assume that the new ship is completed except for the name.

Starfleet is having its problems with the Klingon ambassador. They are also trying to get Kirk and the others back to Earth to answer the charges against them. They are aware that Spock is alive.

Then the Probe makes its appearance. It starts to destroy the Earth. As it turns out, Kirk and his crew are the only ones who can save Earth. They go back in time, get the humpback whales, and return in time. But Kirk still has to face the court-martial. This doesn't leave much time to think about a ship.

As it turns out, Kirk gets busted only down to captain and gets a new ship. It is only as the shuttle carries them past the *Excelsior* that Kirk realizes the new ship they were building will be his. His face lights

up as he reads on the hull: U.S.S. *Enterprise,* NCC-1701-A.

There is my solution to his question and I hope it's to his satisfaction.

I would like to say again I enjoyed this collection of articles. I hope I didn't step on anyone's toes too severely. So keep up the good work and keep on trekkin'.

Christel Parisse
Paris, France

I have just found in an American bookshop in Paris *The Best of Trek* (numbers 2, 3, 7–11). I have never heard of *Trek* before, and it was a wonderful find. I discovered many things about my favorite series (from "Characterization Rape" to "A Lexicon of Vulcan" via "Star Trek Jokes"). Since I know that you are on the same planet as me and that you won't laugh at me, I want to tell you how I became a Trekker (original, isn't it?).

When I was a little girl, I had the right to watch TV after 9:00 P.M. only on Tuesday and Saturday. (My family wasn't fond of TV, and my parents thought it was bad for me to stay awake late in the evening.) I remember some films with John Wayne, some episodes of *The Avengers, Happy Days,* and *Mission: Impossible,* but that's all. When I entered high school, I had too much homework and stayed with my grandmother after school. From 4:00 to 7:00 P.M., I was alone at home and my mother permitted me to watch TV. Since this time I have watched many films and series.

I was really fond of *Starsky and Hutch;* every week I waited for them. One week, instead of seeing them, I discovered another series that was unknown to me: *Star Trek.* My first reaction was to say, "Hey! What's that? Who are these guys?" This episode was broadcast in 1981. I was so angry that I didn't watch it for some weeks—I wanted Starsky and Hutch, nobody

else—but "The Doomsday Machine," "Wink of an Eye," and "The City on the Edge of Forever" made me change my mind. The *Enterprise* and her crew had something "magical": Spock and McCoy who were always "arguing"; Kirk, a captain of genius who was also "a kind of Casanova always on duty"; Uhura, an efficient officer and a wonderful woman; Scotty the magician; Sulu, Janice, Chekov, and all the others. This "family" interested me very much. Only thirteen episodes were broadcast and, one week, *Starsky and Hutch* were back. But I was sad. The crew of the *Enterprise* had become my friends, and I missed them. I thought, "Well, if I'm lucky they will be back in two years." And I was lucky.

One day in 1985 I saw a strange poster on a wall: *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock*. I wasn't yet a real Trekker (to tell the truth, I didn't know what a Trekker was; I enjoyed the thirteen episodes I had already seen, and I was always happy to see *Star Trek* again, but I didn't look for other things about it), but after this film I wanted some answers to my questions. Why did Spock die? Who were David Marcus and Saavik? and so on. I began to look for articles, photographs, and (eventually) magazines about *Star Trek*. Three months after, the series was broadcast again, and I believed it would be a chance to find more things about it (after the film I had found only four small articles!), but I was wrong.

One day a new TV channel was created, and in 1986 it broadcast *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* (it's too bad to say that no French critic liked this film) and *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*. This channel broadcast too many films; after some months it had the right to broadcast only series. The series (like *Chips, Airwolf, Streethawk,* and *Knight Rider*) that had been broadcast weekly took the place of the films and were now broadcast daily. Their place had to be filled by another series. In July *Star Trek* became that series, and this time the seventy-five episodes were broadcast.

I realized that being a French Trekker was something hard. There were no magazines about Star Trek;

small articles were scarce; and *Star Trek* and *Star Trek II* were the only books available (in French). My friends gave me everything they had about Star Trek; they were nice to me even if they didn't understand me. I wanted to share my love for it with everybody (this time, I was really contaminated!), but I only found many non-Trekkers. They weren't tolerant, and they made jokes or puns like "Hey Schpock! Do you hear me?" every day. They thought Star Trek was stupid. Each day they became more difficult to support.

However, some of them told me one day, "You know, we have watched *Star Trek* and it isn't so stupid. We don't like it like you do, but we understand you." The others stayed in their position.

In September another life began for me. I was in another class with other pupils. The non-Trekkers were worse, but I found some real friends and two Trekkers like me! Together we talked about our beloved series. One day my mother (who isn't a Trekker and who is the first to say that I'm crazy) discovered a shop (now she regrets to have discovered it!) where I bought the posters of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* and *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock,* some photos of the films, and two magazines. One was German and the other was an old *Starlog* about *Star Trek—The Motion Picture.* This was not too bad, but that wasn't enough.

In May I went to England for a week; that was a journey to paradise. I have found books, records, magazines, postcards, and I have seen *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home.* That was the first American film I have seen without captions. It was in all the cinemas in all the towns that I visited. I was really surprised by the voices of the actors. Before I had thought that French voices suited them well, but now I disagree. The voice of Mr. Doohan surprised me very much, certainly because of the Scottish accent, which is nonexistent in the French version.

All in all the film surprised me. The music, the story, particularly the whales that I love so much, and,

in the end, the return of the *Enterprise* (I was so happy to see her again!). All these magic things took my heart.

When I came back, I decided to join the official fan club and to buy more books in English. To understand the articles that I have found these last months, I progressed in English. Now I would have the latest news.

I can't help being a little jealous of the American Trekkers, especially because of the conventions (there are none in France, but I hope that in some years I will be present at one of them in the U.S.A.) and because of the people who have seen the first episode in 1966 and who are Trekkers since that time (but that's really stupid because even if my country was the U.S.A., I wasn't yet born!).

Star Trek has taught me many things. I always try to understand the others and to be tolerant (even if it's often difficult with a group of stupid human people that acts like a gang of Klingons!). It makes me affirm myself, and when I'm sad, I think about it and it gives me some humor (I remember the tribbles or the problems of Captain Kirk to drive the car in "A Piece of the Action").

I hope that *Star Trek: The Next Generation* will be as interesting as its "ancestor." I'm sure that Mr. Roddenberry and all the people who will contribute to the series will find other things to tell us; it will be a new message. However, *Star Trek* will have the best place in my heart, though I can't imagine *Star Trek* with other actors; another generation is one thing, but Spock, Kirk, McCoy, and the others played by other actors—I can't support that idea!. Maybe I will also like the actors on *The Next Generation* as much as those on the original *Star Trek,* but I will have to wait to know if that's possible.

Star Trek and *The Next Generation* will have friends all over the world. To you, my friends: "Longue vie et prosperité."

THE GATES OF DEATH

by Katherine Wolterink

For one brief transcendent moment in *The Wrath of Khan* (before the walk through the giant ferns in the new Eden on Genesis), Star Trek achieved a level of cathartic pathos. Spock's death on the deck of the radiation containment chamber in the Engineering section of the *Enterprise* was the stuff of classical tragedy. Unfortunately, Star Trek was unwilling or unable to maintain its heroic stance.

When it became clear—as it did almost immediately—that Spock was not long for the netherworld, I think many fans felt emotionally cheated. We did not want, as David Gerrold so eloquently put it, "to have our grief yanked out from under us."

In their decision to resurrect Spock, Harve Bennett and Leonard Nimoy overlooked a profound truth. About the time *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* was released, Nimoy made the now famous remark, "in science fiction, no one ever dies."

Those of us who read science fiction know that this is not so. The best literature in all times and in all cultures reflects our experience of life, and death is inevitably a part of that experience. To be human or Vulcan is to acknowledge our own mortality, to know suffering and loss and death. In this life the reality of death is inescapable. Whether there is life beyond the veil is another question.

At the summit of Mt. Seleya T'Lar successfully completed *fal tor pan,* but Spock's refusion created a curious situation. The physical shell of his body was

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At the summit of Mt. Seleya T'Lar successfully completed *fal tor pan,* but Spock's refusion created a curious situation. The physical shell of his body was

reanimated by the infusion of his *katra,* and Spock became once again a living, conscious being. However, he seemed to lose something in the transition. Yanked back into life, he misplaced his sense of self.

In the final scene of *The Search for Spock,* he is surrounded by his friends. Spock examines the face of each in turn, but it is clear that he has only the vaguest recollection of these people—the very individuals who had the most profound influence on his former life. Their motives and concerns are a mystery to him. Spock understands what Kirk has done—Sarek explained it to him—but the reason escapes him. "Why would you do this?" he asks.

"Because the needs of the one outweigh the needs of the many," Kirk says, and the events that led to the circumstances in which Spock now finds himself begin to come back to him.

After an intense and painful struggle with his memory, Spock is able to say, "Jim. Your name is Jim." It is the last time we hear Spock call him by that name without being prompted. Whether it is the last time Jim Kirk ever hears it, only he knows.

Perhaps Spock's inability to recognize his friends and his loss of memory are simply a result of his death experience. The devotees at the religious sanctuary at Seleya make an attempt to remedy that, and there appears to be hope. As Sarek says when Kirk asks him about Spock's condition, "Only time will answer."

When *The Voyage Home* opens, we see Spock standing at a computer terminal, where he is flawlessly answering a series of disparate questions. They cover a wide range of subjects, from molecular chemistry to Vulcan metaphysics. Many of them appear simultaneously. Spock's answers, which he pronounces without hesitation, are consistently logical and correct—until the computer asks, "How do you feel?"

"I don't understand the question," Spock responds. When Amanda explains that the computer asks this question because it knows Spock is half human, he declares, "The question is irrelevant."

Spock's memory has been retrained, and it seems

clear that he is capable of fulfilling his Starfleet duties. The computer program has provided Spock with a rigorous review of navigation, strategy, tactics, engineering, the theoretical sciences, and the geography, topography, economy, philosophy, and cultural history of a vast number of worlds—all the skills he needs to function as a starship captain ... but something is missing.

McCoy remarks on it when Spock takes his station on the bridge of the rechristened *Bounty,* bound for Earth. He takes Kirk aside and asks, "Are you sure this is such a bright idea ... him back at his post like nothing happened? I don't know if you've got the whole picture or not, but he's not exactly workin' on all thrusters." McCoy is not talking about Spock's mental abilities. There's nothing wrong with his intellect. The trouble lies elsewhere, although McCoy can't quite put his finger on it.

Spock has resumed his place among the bridge crew under Kirk's command, but his lack of an integral sense of self prevents his character from fulfilling its traditional function. He has undergone a subtle but profound change. That change is evident in the scene in which McCoy tries to get Spock to talk about his experience. Spock responds as if he's still standing at the computer terminal on Seleya. He tells McCoy he has insufficient data for a discussion of the subject the doctor proposes: "I did not have time on Vulcan to review the philosophic disciplines." He objects to the lack of a common frame of reference—McCoy has yet to experience death—and when McCoy says he must be joking, Spock responds by defining the word "joke."

A little later, Spock recites for Kirk the variables he has correlated from memory in preparing his time warp equation. However, he is oblivious to the emotional weight of the risk they are about to take. When McCoy prays, "Angels and Ministers of Grace defend us," Spock identifies the quote: "*Hamlet,* act one, scene four," as if he were responding to a cue from a computer testing program. Kirk remarks, "No doubt

about your memory, Spock." The flaw lies elsewhere. The facts are all there, and Spock's intellect is intact, but he fails to make the connection between what the people closest to him are saying and what they mean. No genuine communication can take place because Spock is dealing in denotation. He hears the words; he classifies, defines, correlates, equates; and he responds with the correct answer. It is as if language has become a flat surface, without depth or resonance. He exhibits no awareness of connotation or of emotional texture. The subtleties of irony, sarcasm, and pun escape him.

Both Kirk and McCoy are aware of a certain disability in Spock. They sense that he is impaired in some way, and react by becoming protective. Bones hovers over Spock like a mother hen. While they are speculating on the message of the alien probe, Spock says he is going to do some research. Kirk tells McCoy to stay on the bridge, but Bones refuses. "Somebody's got to keep an eye on him," he says of Spock.

When they leave the safety of the cloaked ship for the dangers of twentieth-century San Francisco, Kirk keeps a close watch on Spock. He shepherds him about, frequently taking him by the arm. He repeatedly attempts to invent cover stories for Spock's behavior, which Spock just as consistently demolishes. He tries to get Spock to modify his language and to stop calling him "Admiral." At one point he pleads with Spock: "Don't call me that. You used to call me Jim. Don't you remember?" To which Spock responds with a look of confusion and pain. He is aware of some profound lack in himself, but he is unable to identify what it is. There is something about his relationship with this man, Jim Kirk, that escapes him. He is not able to respond to Kirk because he has lost that part of himself on which their relationship depends.

Back on the ship the ever-watchful McCoy discerns that something is troubling Spock. Spock confesses that he has a problem. The added weight of the whales and the water in the hold of the ship have changed their acceleration curve, so that he now has insufficient

data for his time warp equation for the return trip. When McCoy tells him he'll have to take his best shot, Spock is decidedly unhappy about the prospect. This confused, uncertain Spock has lost the forceful initiative so characteristic of his former self. The old Spock would have made his best estimate without hesitation. When Kirk asks him if his time warp calculations are ready, with great reluctance Spock apologetically tells him, "I will have to guess."

Before his passage through the gates of death and his return to life, much of the pathos of Spock's character came from the tension between his human emotions and the restraint demanded by his cultural heritage. His commanding presence and the force of his character were, in large part, a result of the intense self-mastery he practiced. All this has disappeared because Spock has lost his awareness of those aspects of his personality. As a result, he is frequently confused and uncertain. Spock's loss of the ability to act forcefully with confidence makes him pathetic. He has become a mere specter, a shadow of his former self. While McCoy hovers around Spock, Kirk keeps an eye on him from a distance—waiting to see if "it'll come back to him," as he remarked to Bones when they began their journey.

At the end of *The Voyage Home,* Sarek takes leave of his son by asking him if he has a message for his mother. Spock replies, "Tell her, 'I feel fine.' " It is the response to the question posed by the computer in the opening scene. It suggests that Spock has found himself, and is once again a whole integrated being; however, the burden of proof lies with *Star Trek: The Final Frontier.*

A few moments into *The Final Frontier,* we see Kirk, Spock, and McCoy on leave in Yosemite National Park, where they are camping. Kirk is climbing the sheer face of El Capitan. Spock, hovering beside him in thruster boots, advises caution. When Kirk falls, Spock instinctively dives after his captain and catches him only centimeters above the rocks below.

After Spock's dramatic rescue, they settle down to

a camp supper of bourbon and beans. Spock's approach to this venture follows a pattern: it is the approach he has taken since his resurrection to all of life. He has thoroughly researched the cultural tradition of the campout. He is familiar with the required forms and rituals. He has even provided himself with the traditional accouterment, "marsh melons," and he knows that they are to be toasted and then consumed.

On the surface this approach seems very like the approach the old Spock would have taken. It is logical, systematic, scientific—in short, Vulcan. However, his attitude is more characteristic of the unbending young Vulcan Kirk first encountered when he took command of the *Enterprise* than it is of the flexible, mature Spock we have come to value.

Something is still amiss. We see these three friends together in a personal rather than a professional context—one might even say an intimate context—but they are not in concert with one another. There is some flaw, some missing quality in the texture of their friendship. The flaw is in Spock. What has been called the "carrier hum" of his presence is missing. McCoy puts it succinctly when he tells Kirk, "I liked him better before he died."

It is even clearer in the painful exchange that follows. The three have decided to turn in, and as they compose themselves for sleep, Spock says, "Good night, Captain." Like a man who has a wound he cannot leave alone, Kirk says, "Spock, we're on leave. You can call me Jim." Spock obediently responds, "Good night . . . Jim," and Kirk is forced to recognize once again that the ability to call him by his name—which has always been the touchstone of their relationship—is still beyond Spock.

At the same time, in some respects, Spock has continued to recover. He no longer seems uncertain or confused. In the primitive wilderness they have chosen for their campout, it is Kirk who needs looking after, not Spock. Spock himself—if he is not commanding the forceful—has at least become quietly capable. Although he is aware of the loss of some vital part of

himself, he seems to have come to terms with it. In the Vulcan tradition he has schooled himself to accept what he cannot change . . . until the random operation of chance brings him face-to-face with his past in the person of Sybok.

When the message sent to the *Enterprise* by Starfleet, garbled though it is, includes a picture of the leader of the terrorists on Nimbus III, it gives Spock pause. Kirk asks him about it, and Spock says the picture reminds him of a student ". . . I knew in my youth . . . ," a brilliant student who revolted against his Vulcan heritage. Something about this man resonates in Spock's psyche.

Their meeting in Paradise City jars Spock deeply. Sybok recognizes Spock instantly and tells him that fate has given him a second chance. Sybok is offering Spock another opportunity to join him, as apparently he did when they were students together on Vulcan, but his words take on a prophetic meaning. Their confrontation will result in the awakening of the part of himself that Spock has lost, giving him a second chance to complete what T'Lar began on Mt. Seleya.

In the Officers' Lounge on the *Enterprise,* Spock tells Sybok, "I hide no pain." He is able to say it truthfully because in the transition from death to life, he has lost his awareness of the part of himself that caused him so much emotional trauma—the dark emotional self that Spock had always identified as human. But Sybok says, "I know you better than you know yourself." When he offers to show Spock his pain, Kirk says, "Spock, don't," but Spock persists. Why does he allow Sybok to have his way? Perhaps because he suspects that Sybok knows what he himself does not know—the lost part of himself that will make him whole. What Sybok shows Spock is his own birth, and Sarek's fateful remark when the child is placed in his arms: "So human."

Those two words awaken in Spock all the lost submerged essence of himself: his long struggle to become Vulcan, the bitter years during which he wrestled with his human heritage, his hard-won ability to accept

himself. It is as if his sleeping *katra* awoke, and he suddenly found himself whole again.

Kirk's response to Sybok, when the Vulcan offers to take away his pain, confirms Spock's experience. Kirk tells Sybok that our guilt and pain make us who we are. "If we lose them, we lose ourselves." Spock has regained his consciousness of all that he had suffered and of what he had made of himself before his death. Rather than taking away Spock's pain, Sybok has given it back to him, and in the process, given Spock back himself. As a result, Spock is able to say, "I have found myself and my place. I know who I am."

I can't help thinking of Irwin and Love's remark in their article, "Wrathfully Searching for Home," that "we do not need to see the process ... of Spock's recovery." If we accept the fact that it was inevitable, it might have been better not to have seen it. Psychiatry claims that reexperiencing one's birth can have a profound effect on one's mental and emotional health. However, Spock's abrupt enlightenment in the Officers' Lounge is such a cut-and-paste affair it hardly seems credible. Unfortunately, as unbelievable as it may be, when Spock says, "I have found myself," there is nothing we can do but accept it.

If any further proof were needed, we see that he is his old self when he takes charge of the *Enterprise* after the true nature of the "god" of Shakari is exposed. When he walks onto the bridge and sits in the command chair, order is restored. The Klingon commander dictates his terms, which include Captain Kirk's coordinates on the surface of Shakari, so that he can destroy him. Spock turns to General Korrd and asks him to discipline the commander. When Korrd protests that he is only a foolish old man, Spock says in his most commanding tone, "Damn you, sir, you will try." It is the first decisive forceful action we have seen him take since T'Lar achieved *fal tor pan*. General Korrd takes command of the bird of prey, and Spock, who has joined him, destroys the malevolent alien and rescues Kirk. He is able to act with confi-

dence and efficacy because he is once again a whole, integrated being.

Spock has passed through the gates of death and returned to life. He has been restored to his place and has come into full possession of himself. He has, in short, cheated death.

One of the things that makes life sweet is our recognition of our own mortality. Whatever we may believe about an afterlife, in our heart of hearts, we know we cannot cheat death. The strength of tragedy is that it accepts death and rises above it to affirm that life has purpose and meaning in spite of our mortality.

Star Trek makes no pretensions to being great drama, but it has its moments. Spock's death is one of them. In yanking Spock back to life, Star Trek demonstrates its refusal to accept the reality of death, and thereby diminish itself. The Spock we know and love has at last been returned to us, but I think we have all lost in the bargain.

VULCAN—PHILOSOPHIES IN CONFLICT

by Patty Paludan

As I read and watch more and more Star Trek, I am increasingly interested in two conflicting philosophies—interestingly enough both of them said to be part of the Vulcan viewpoint—IDIC (Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations) and that which is embodied by the phrase, "The good of the many outweighs the good of the few, or the one."

Of course, any philosophy or concept, if carried to its logical (I use the word advisedly) extreme, becomes ridiculous. And every concept or philosophy has a reverse side—not wrong, no, but different, opposite. I tend to think of it more as the other side of a circle rather than the far other end of a spectrum, and I think of the quote from Sir Niels Bohr, who pointed out, "The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. But the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth." As I find profound truths to be profoundly fascinating, I've been giving this a lot of thought.

In my mind the two philosophies seem to be opposed to each other in some very important ways. Of course, we've seen Spock wear his IDIC award, and we know, from his behavior, that he honors diversity in a very real, everyday, constant way. So I, too, was surprised (as was Philip Carpenter in his "Approaching Evil" and "Love in Star Trek—A Rebuttal") to hear Spock utter the most illogical statement

that "The good of the many outweighs the good of the few, or the one."

Mr. Carpenter seems to me to be quite correct in his analysis of this statement, as far as he goes. I don't know what Spock could have been thinking of when he answered his mother's question about this phrase (early in *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*) by saying, "I would take that as an axiom." Because he does nothing of the gosh-darned sort! Spock, the inveterate people-watcher, knows perfectly well that "ones" are far more complex, more interesting, and in an odd, paradoxical way, more valuable than "manys." I can be a friend, a lover, an enemy to a one. But if I try to extend that, willy-nilly, to a many—well, it simply doesn't work. Any leader knows that loyalty is only given to a one.

"Humans," Spock remarks, "make illogical decisions." Amanda agrees, sadly, "They do, indeed." And they are both correct; humans do indeed make decisions that defy logic. But I would like to quarrel with them and carry this analysis a step further: In my opinion, the "good of the many" philosophy is not only immoral, it is illogical. And the philosophy of IDIC is not only logical, it is, in the long run, the only way of living that works.

Carpenter is absolutely right when he implies that while Spock gave his life for the crew and officers of his ship, he gave it not for *all* of them, but for *each* of them. This is a vitally important difference, and it is what holds up the Federation for us as a vision of hope—proof, if you like, that humanity really is better than we have often feared.

And in fact, by using the phrase about the good of the many, Spock displays the very strength of emotion he believes he is suppressing: He displays fear and a most uncharacteristic cowardice as he denies himself the opportunity to say, "I do this in love [*not* out of love], because I care, because you're important to me—so important that I truly cannot do anything else but this and remain who I am."

Heavy stuff. No wonder he didn't want to say it,

even to Jim. Greater love hath no man . . . , the saying goes. And truly, he is far more honest when after the refusion, he says, even though it puzzles him greatly, "I have been and always shall be your friend." He knows, on a gut level, that without this concept nothing he does is worth the energy it takes to do it. Behavior is rational, is logical, only if it is founded in love.

And it is that phrase, "I have been and always shall be your friend," with all the freight it carries, that is the meaning of IDIC. (If you enjoy classical references, think of the commitment to friendship among the Greeks of the Golden Age—and note that those were also friendships of men with men, as are our beloved Three.) IDIC is the ongoing commitment of an individual (male or female) to the good of other individuals. IDIC is the respect for—no, more than that, the veneration of—diversity, uniqueness, and the irreplaceable value of individual contributions to the universe.

To those of us who have done some reading in Eastern philosophies, this sounds quite a lot like Zen Buddhism, or perhaps the Tao. I haven't yet found a novel, story, or episode where IDIC is laid out in axioms, and perhaps it can't be. I suspect it's the sort of philosophy that you don't learn, you live—the axioms are universal, yes, but they are so deeply personal that no words can express them.

And if this is true, McCoy—the good doctor, who is torn up inside at the idea of losing any sentient life, ever, under any conditions—is the strongest example of IDIC on the *Enterprise,* not Spock. McCoy's crusty, sharp-edged response to life is intended, though he's probably not conscious of it, to do what *Kolinahr* (complete and final separation from emotion) is intended to do for Vulcans—to put a shield between the all-too-vulnerable individual and the realities of a difficult universe.

Need I point out that it doesn't work any too well in either case? I can think of a hundred examples for McCoy, and I'm sure you can, too, but the case against

Kolinahr? Well, take a good look at T'Pau's expression when, against all reason, all logic, Spock does not wish to battle against Jim, even in the throes of *pon farr*. And remember the incredibly loving response of Sarek to T'Lar when he, still aching from the long years when his son was lost from his life, says quietly but definitely, "My logic falters ... where my son is concerned." *Kolinahr,* or for that matter, any Vulcan (or human) discipline, is simply irrelevant here.

But back to McCoy: I used to wonder, when I first began getting into Star Trek stories, why McCoy stayed with the *Enterprise*. Well, I told myself, Jim is his old friend, and Scotty and Uhura and Chekov and Sulu and the others are his friends, and Spock—well, if nothing else, Spock is his entertainment. And it's a good job, and there's nowhere else he particularly wants to be, and it's a place where he's boss.... As you can see, none of these answered the question. McCoy is on the *Enterprise,* on a ship that goes into battle regularly, and he's in a position where he will be hurt, emotionally, again and again and again, for the same reason Spock enters the antimatter chamber: For the sort of person McCoy is, there is nothing else he can do and remain who he is. A sentient being who believes so completely and entirely in what is "fair" can do no other than to be on the front line, trying to reverse entropy, working against, and when there's no other way, fighting against a universe that is not unfair, but seems so because it is so indifferent.

Again and again I can hear McCoy mutter under his breath, " 'What is man that Thou are mindful of him?' But, by heaven, I'm going to insist that Thou *be* mindful, and that Thou pay attention to this one little life, unimportant as it may be in the big picture, but if this one isn't worth Thy time, You up there, who the hell is?" Which the Vulcan elders might not recognize as a rendering of the philosophy of IDIC, but it is—a heartfelt, loving, get-out-there-and-*do*-something rendering that is far more true to the spirit of the concept than any sterile discipline or logic. The

heart, we are told, has its reasons, that reason does not know.

And it's not just McCoy, of course. I was particularly struck by the idea when recently watching the flawed but absorbing "Where No Man Has Gone Before." McCoy was nowhere to be found, and Dr. Piper was unfortunately "Dr. Cypher." But there was Dr. Dehner, the psychiatrist, who was also subject to the alteration by the energies that did such sad damage to Gary Mitchell. As I watched, I tried to figure out why she was affected so much more slowly, and with much less terrible results. And the only thing I could come up with is that Elizabeth Dehner is also an example of IDIC in action, and that it was probably no accident that she, too, was trained in medicine. Not only her training, but the whole tenor of her lifetime of choices led her to choose in favor of life and health. It led her to choose a career in a health field, and it led her, finally, to make her ultimate choice in favor of life, though it cost her and Gary lives as gods, or, for that matter, as humans. She literally could not live with herself if she did not make that effort. "Values," Mr. Carpenter says, "are what drive men [and presumably women]. What a person loves is a dead giveaway to what he values."

And, as an interesting contrast, look at Captain (Admiral) Kirk. I'm not implying that he doesn't live his life by the concept of IDIC, but I am saying that because he is a very different person, it shows in his life in other ways. Again and again he makes command decisions in favor of life, even during battle.

Remember the showdown between him and Kor on Organia in "Errand of Mercy"? (And the more you think about it, the more startling that title becomes, by the way.)

"You can't stop our fleet," Kirk tells Kor. "You've got no right . . ."

Ayelborne says, "Let me ask you, Captain, what it is that you are defending? Is it the right to wage war? To kill millions of innocent people? To destroy life on a planetary scale? Is that the right you refer to?"

"Of course, nobody wants war," answers Kirk, "but sometimes you have to fight. Eventually, I suppose, we . . ."

"Yes, eventually you would make peace," says Ayelborne, "but only after millions had died."

When you watch the episode, note the look of horror on Kirk's face when he realizes that he and the Klingons (and Spock, the committed pacifist, backing his captain) are on the same side. He has been quite easily cornered into endorsing war and conflict.

The scene lives in my mind. I wonder how many times that shock returned to Kirk as he relived the scene in his mind, and how many times his choice was different than it would have otherwise been if he hadn't had that experience color his thoughts. The subtle and not-so-subtle comparison of the Federation and the Klingon Empire must have left a sensitive scar on Kirk's day-to-day ethics. (How I wish some of our own leaders could have a similar experience!)

However, it's also true that while McCoy will drop to his knees beside an "enemy" soldier and pull out his medical kit to help, Kirk is taking in the bigger picture. He is not insensitive to the individual need, but his character and training have led him to be the one who not only doesn't stop, or at least rarely stops, but who might even step over the body of that "enemy"—a habit that has backfired on him once or twice.

I don't mean this to be judgmental, and if anything, I hope it will show the infinite diversity even in individual ways of living IDIC. Because Kirk is far from being insensitive to the inhuman—I use the word intentionally—behavior inherent in putting the good of the many ahead of the good of the few or the one, and while it often may look as if that's what he is doing, he never is.

In fact, I am heartened to realize that for a set of characters whose writers have ranged as far as Greg Bear on the one hand and Marshak and Culbreath on the other, the philosophy is remarkably consistent. IDIC is a deeply human philosophy (though Star Trek

calls it Vulcan), and it reaches us and carries us along with it on a level that is most deeply and meaningfully human, superficially different as our lives and goals and personalities may be. It is, truly, a melding of spirit and courage that has nothing at all to do with logic as we usually define it, and very little, actually, to do with discipline.

To take the other side of the issue, though, we must deal with something as deeply but not as admirably human, something we joyously dump onto the Klingon, and somewhat less obviously the Romulan, which is simply the idea that the good of the many outweighs the good of the few.

Taken at its face value, this is a horribly frightening philosophy. If you've read about Nazi propaganda, you know why you heard echoes when Kamarag, in the council chamber as the possible court-martial of the *Enterprise* officers was debated, thundered, "We have the right to preserve our species!" What better example of the contrast, the opposition, of the "good of the many" and the IDIC philosophies than when Sarek inquires about the real issue: "Do you have the right to commit murder?" Murder is by definition the destruction of an individual, is it not?

This question is of life-threatening importance to us right now on this planet. And when societies—our own, for instance—put "defense" on the bottom line (or should I say "at ground zero"?) as more basic than the normal hierarchy of needs in those lives (food, shelter, medical care, education), which philosophy have we chosen? "The good of the many" lumps everyone into one huge aggregate, with no recognition of, let alone respect for, individual differences and unique needs. Our own insistence that "all men are created equal," confused and confusing as it is, is an attempt to make this point, and I fear that as a society we sometimes lose our way. Of course we must be committed to the good of the many on the deeper level, but without the reverence for the one, there is no good. I believe "the good of the many" is a deeply

immoral philosophy, as it denies not only the worth of, but even the existence of personal value systems.

It is this polarization that makes Star Trek a modern morality play, with the good (Federation citizens in clean, white ships) versus the bad (Klingon and Romulan in dirty, dingy, darker colored ships). But there are indications, if you watch closely in the films and read closely in the novels, that there's an uneasiness underlying the Federation's confidence that right is on their side.

Several of the novels in particular have pointed this out, most notably Diane Carey's *Dreadnought* and *Battlestations*. Some of the Federation people are displaying characteristics we had hoped were found only in the enemy, and in fact, they actually become the enemy inside the lines. And in *Tears of the Singers* by Melinda Snodgrass and *Dwellers in the Crucible* by Margaret Wander Bonnano, not to mention John M. Ford's *The Final Reflection,* the enemy . . . well . . . "I have seen the enemy, and they are us." In more ways than one. This is not wishy-washiness; this is the frightening, objective, encouraging, altogether puzzling truth.

As an aside, is it any coincidence that about the time Star Trek began to lose its morality play innocence and gain a sophisticated and painful understanding, the uniforms for the men changed from a sort of T-shirt and sensible pants to something very much more of a military stereotype, and the uniforms for the women changed from cute little dresses and panties to something they could actively fight in? I much prefer the newer wine red and black uniforms, but they were evidence of a major change in focus, weren't they?

I know relatively little about military training, but I know looking into the eyes of an enemy and seeing, not ourselves reflected, but simply ourselves—living, breathing, struggling, wanting, needing—entirely undermines war. Joyce Tullock's remarks in "Approaching Evil" are entirely apropos here: McCoy asks, "Why is any object that we don't understand called a 'thing'? Inhuman, less than human—why are

these such terrible accusations to make against an enemy?"

The whole intent of military training is indeed exemplified by Carpenter (to my surprise, as I don't think he agrees with it) when he comments that Klingons "... act as animals and may be treated as animals." Once soldiers convince themselves that the sentient being opposite them is an animal, they can kill it without a pang of conscience. As Kirk necessarily killed Gary Mitchell, for instance. But at what cost! Truly, as Irwin says, the death of innocence. Childhood's end.

Not that a human can't still kill, with an understanding of the "enemy" as all too much like oneself. (I've often wondered if it wasn't a desperate attempt to kill the "enemy within.") But killing on an individual, one-to-one basis keeps looking an awful lot like murder, unless one can convince oneself that it was self-defense. Over and over in Star Trek the point is made that it is *because* the *Enterprise*/Federation/individual has such power that it/he must have love and commitment, and must be committed to peace.

Even so, the apparent conflict between the needs or rights or good of the many with those of the few or the one is, as Philip Carpenter points out, "irrational ... illogical, nonsensical." "After all," he asks, "what are 'the many' besides a group of 'ones'?"

Any attempt to make a decision on the basis of the good of the many is not only immoral, it founders on the decision of *which* many, as epitomized by which individuals. The problem, as socialism has found to its cost, is that human beings aren't interchangeable parts, and no society that has tried to implement such a philosophy has been able to do so without someone or some group in charge—some citizens who are, as Orwell taught us decades ago, "more equal than others."

Those decisions that fall into the category of command decisions (those that result in orders that must be obeyed without question, at least until the crisis has passed) are the very devil to make, as Kirk could

assent. They often appear, on their face, to be "good of the many" decisions, but again, the apparent conflict isn't really there. Philip Carpenter wrote a little about this when he described the difficulties of real, live people dealing with real, live values without, on a dependable basis, absolute moral certainty. Again, this is where the "good of the many" founders and the IDIC philosophy becomes, if anything, stronger than ever.

Not all of the decisions I make, whether as a commander or a doctor or science officer or legal secretary (the job that pays my bills) will be right. In fact, some of them will be downright disasters! But the only thing that saves something of value from the disasters is the knowledge that the decision was made on the basis of the one thing that is logical in those situations: personal values. Friendship and sharing and working toward a world, a galaxy—heck, an office!—where things are a little better overall today than they were yesterday or the day before.

IDIC—four letters that describe an alien philosophy, in typical intellectual, "logical" Vulcan terminology. It celebrates the good of the one. Each one. Every one. There's another four-letter word for it that explains why we understand the concept so well. It isn't logical, as we usually define the word, no. It has its own logic, its own survival value, its own universe. We've known it by another name for a long, long time. We call it love.

WHAT IS AN ALIEN?

by Miriam Ruff

There have been many articles, conversations, and speculations about the aliens in Star Trek. What were they? What made them alien? Were they too different to be able to comprehend, or too much like us to consider them alien? But even with all the discussions I have encountered, I found myself contemplating a new twist to the alien after watching the episode "The Emissary" on *Star Trek: The Next Generation.*

Before I can elaborate on this, though, I need to determine what is meant by "alien." Webster's *New World Dictionary* describes an alien as "belonging to another country or people," or "an outsider." The aliens in *Star Trek* were certainly that: the Klingons, Balok, the Horta, the Guardian of Forever, and the Harada, just to name a few, all display characteristics—though different from one another—that make them alien to us, the viewers.

The Klingons were among the earliest aliens introduced in the original series. In some ways, however, they are among the most human. Physically, they resembled humans very closely, so closely that when Arn Darvin ("The Trouble With Tribbles") shaved his eyebrows, he could pass for a human with no difficulty. They came from a very aggressive, warlike, and brutal society, and unlike the Federation, they thrived on the interference in and domination of other worlds. But as Kirk said in "A Private Little War" and "The Omega Glory," The Federation and the Klingons were much like the major powers of twentieth-century

Earth. Though brutal, they resembled Earth's warlike races. Though supposedly without honor or conscience (a concept that was redefined for *The Next Generation*), they successfully mirrored the more savage human characteristic of the conquerors and marauders that shaped much of this planet's early and even modern history. This made them perhaps the least different from us of any of the aliens introduced in the original series.

Balok, the representative of the First Federation in "The Corbomite Maneuver," was alien to us mostly in a physical sense. He was short, bald, his voice seemingly too deep and mature to fit the stature of the person it came from. His race possessed technology both different from and more advanced than ours, giving him the upper hand in a strictly military confrontation. But he understood humans well: His use of the "Mr. Hyde" puppet and the faked distress call were both tactics that Kirk or one of the other crew members would have used if they were in his position. In that sense, he, like the Klingons, was no more than a human put in another setting.

The Horta were much more alien than Balok could ever be. Part of this, to be certain, was due to the communication barrier between the species; it was not until Spock mind melded with the mother Horta that the motive behind the murder of the Janus VI miners—the perhaps universal idea of maternal love and protection among sentient species—could be understood. This was the first time that anyone in the Federation had encountered a creature made of silicon. Even McCoy declared that such a creature would be "physiologically impossible, especially in an oxygen atmosphere," until it became obvious that such a creature did exist. This difference made it impossible for the two species to coexist, except by chance encounter as one of the Horta emerged from a newly constructed tunnel. Without the ability to live together, and to communicate in a more than rudimentary sense (except through telepathy), the Horta of necessity remain

true aliens, forever isolated from the Federation and other carbon-based civilizations.

The Guardian of Forever is another example of an alien that remains truly isolated from the rest of the Federation. When asked in "The City on the Edge of Forever" whether it was machine or being, the Guardian replied, "I am both, and neither. I am my own beginning, my own ending," and when questioned further, said only, "I answer as simply as your level of understanding permits." It was eons ahead of us in technology and experience, an entity that we could not begin to understand or define. The doughnut-shaped object of unknown materials did not look like anything that the *Enterprise* crew or we could identify as a living being, but it was undeniably aware and sentient. It could not move or leave the planet, yet it was able to manipulate time and transport Kirk, Spock, and McCoy to and back from Earth in the 1930s. It was so different, so alien, we could only marvel at its existence and hope that someday we would be able to comprehend its mysteries.

The Harada, of "The Big Goodbye," were almost completely alien to us, as well. An insectlike race that we had never met face-to-face and whose language and social code were so structured that a word mispronounced by a human was enough to start a war that lasted decades, they were difficult to understand or to handle. But unlike the Guardian, they were not beyond our comprehension. Although both sides of the human/Harada conflict remained wary of each other, it was established at the end of the episode that there would be a new era of communication between them, although there was no indication that either side would give up any of its uniqueness. Perhaps a true expression of IDIC will be the result.

It is clear in each of these cases that the characters and races presented contain qualities that make them different from us, either by choice or physical reality. For us, the perception of identity in these cases is always an either/or scenario—the character is either alien *or* human. And while some of those mentioned

here may contain traits similar to humans, it is also clear that to all of them the choice is equally as delineated, and they consider themselves what we denote as the "alien."

But then, how can we classify the hybrids, those beings who come from more than one background and who may display physical or behavioral characteristics from each? And unlike all the other cases mentioned, does the classification of identity here come from without, either from the Federation or from us, the viewers, or can it come from within the character, as well?

The most famous example of such a hybrid is undeniably Spock. Physically and behaviorally he appears to be a Vulcan, and anyone who did not know him would assume this to be the case. There were indications, though, in many of the episodes, that Spock did have a human side. In "The Enemy Within," he openly admits to McCoy, "I have a human half as well as an alien half." In "Operation: Annihilate," when attacked by one of the flying parasites, he tells Kirk that Vulcans are able to shut out pain and he, therefore, is able to return to duty despite his current situation. When questioned on the effect on his human half, he is forced to admit to its existence and replies candidly that "It is proving to be an inconvenience." "Journey to Babel" sees Sarek in need of a critical blood transfusion for a malfunctioning heart value, but his blood type, T-negative, is extremely rare. Spock volunteers to provide his blood since he is also T-negative, but Nurse Chapel is forced to point out, "It's not true Vulcan blood; it has human blood elements in it."

Despite all this evidence of his duality, we learn that Spock considers himself to be Vulcan, not Vulcan/human. In "Amok Time," when he is describing the precedents in nature for the *pon farr,* Kirk says to him, "But you're not a fish, Mister Spock." Spock responds unhesitatingly, "No, nor am I a man. I am a Vulcan."

Later in the episode T'Pau confronts Spock with his dual heritage at the *kun-ut-kalifee* ceremony, and

again asks him to define what he is. Deep in the *plak tow,* Spock still pleads with her for Kirk's life, knowing that his friend and commander does not understand the nature of the challenge. T'Pau, seeing this as a sign of weakness, says, "It has been said thy Vulcan blood is thin. Art thee Vulcan or art thee human?", to which Spock once again replies unhesitatingly, "My blood burns, T'Pau. My eyes are flame. My heart is flame." It is the response of a Vulcan.

And we see in *Wrath of Khan,* Spock responds to McCoy's protests that "No human can tolerate the radiation in there" by stating, "As you are so fond of observing, Doctor, I am not human."

Spock's classification as Vulcan, then, comes both from without and within. Outsiders relate to him as they would to any other Vulcan, and despite being aware of his dual heritage, Spock chooses to consider himself what is, to us, the "alien."

Deanna Troi, ship's counselor aboard the *Enterprise* in *The Next Generation,* is half human and half Betazoid. Her mother, Lwaxana Troi, is a full Betazoid, and her father was human, presumably from Earth. Physically Betazoids do not differ from humans, and so we cannot classify them as alien or human based only on appearance.

We do know, however, that Betazoids are telepathic. Deanna, though, being only half Betazoid, does not share her mother's formidable telepathic abilities, instead she is only able to sense strong emotions. She makes no attempt to conceal her abilities, and indeed they play an important role in her function as ship's counselor. The captain and other officers clearly think of her as Betazoid, relying on her "alien" abilities in difficult situations, constantly seeking her impressions of the emotional state of the other ships and individuals they encounter, as well as situations aboard their own ship. She reinforces their impressions by volunteering such information and confronting each of them when she senses internal conflict or feelings they refuse to confront.

To other telepathic or empathic races, Troi is also

clearly Betazoid. Having grown up in a society that admires honesty and forthrightness, and used to being around telepathic or empathic people while aboard the *Enterprise,* she makes little attempt to hide her emotional state and may even project it to nontelepathic individuals. In "Encounter at Farpoint," when the landing party entered Groppler Zorn's office, without apparent cause Zorn said to her, "You are a Betazoid?", the implication being someone able to tell that he was lying to Starfleet shook him badly. Devanani Ral in "The Price" could sense the moment he walked into the observation lounge that Troi was Betazoid, and used his own abilities to form a relationship with her. And she made no attempt to shield her thoughts from Tam Elbrun in "Tin Man," simply accepting their telepathic and empathic conversations as normal and acceptable, despite the fact that the rest of the crew found their own conversations with Tam unsettling, at the least.

Because of the less rigid structure of Betazoid life, Troi's situation is much more complicated than Spock's, and we see that despite the dominance of her Betazoid half, she is not entirely sure how to view herself. In "Manhunt" we learn of something called The Phase, a period that all Betazoid women must go through during midlife, which can quadruple (or more) their sex drive. While explaining this to the captain to help him fend off Lwaxana Troi's advances, Riker mentions that Deanna warned him about this when they first started seeing each other. Unlike Spock, who hoped his dual heritage might spare him the ordeal of *pon farr,* Troi expects that although she is half human, she will have to endure The Phase, a purely Betazoid phenomenon.

In "The Price" we see another affirmation of the dominance of her Betazoid half in her relationship with the Cyrsalian negotiator, Devanani Ral. In bed with Ral, she tries to discover more about him—when he asks her what her Betazoid senses tell her, she replies, "Not much. My human physical responses must be getting in the way.... It's never happened

before." She depends on her Betazoid half to tell her about people and situations all the time; having grown up with such powers, it is difficult for her to make a judgment by relying only on the incomplete information available to mere humans.

Despite this acknowledgment, she makes it a point in "Encounter on Farpoint" to indicate to Groppler Zorn that she is half human. She tells Kalar in "The Emissary" that she tried to experience the richness of both her heritages, and it is clear in "The Price" that she acknowledges her human side does play a part in her life.

Troi's classification, then, cannot be based on physical criteria since she does not appear sufficiently different from humans to distinguish between the two, but it can and is determined by outsiders who invariably classify her as Betazoid. And while Troi herself is sometimes unclear about which side she embraces, she most often favors her Betazoid half, making the classification of "alien" come from within, as well.

Devanani Ral is also a hybrid. As he tells Troi, "I am also part Betazoid. My mother was one half. I am one quarter." He, like Troi, is physically indistinguishable from a human, so we cannot classify him by this means. Outsiders invariably view him as human; he was born on Earth, and he gives no indication to anyone that he has any unusual powers. In fact, Deanna was the first person he told about his background, and that only after she promised not to reveal it to anybody else.

But it is clear that Ral thinks of himself as Betazoid, not human. At the age of nineteen, he left Earth because, as the only one of five children with empathic powers, he grew up in an environment where both he and others regarded him as "different," even if the others did not know or understand why. This made him uncomfortable. In conversation he continually refers to himself, Deanna, and other empaths as "we," and everyone else as "them." Physiologically less alien than any of the other hybrids we have seen, he classifies himself as Betazoid, and therefore as an alien.

This brings me to the interesting twist effected by *The Next Generation.* All of the hybrids previously introduced, regardless of how others have classified them, thought of themselves as being the race we would consider alien. But now we are introduced to Kalar, the half Klingon half human special emissary in "The Emissary." Upon viewing this episode, I realized that she was different from any other alien—and especially hybrid—we have seen in either the original series or *The Next Generation.* This is one of the things that make her such an interesting character.

We first find out about her when the *Enterprise* beams aboard a Class 8 probe carrying a special emissary with a high-priority mission. As Riker and O'Brien open the probe's casing, Dr. Pulaski takes medical readings of the probe's occupant, who unquestionably appears to be Klingon. Pulaski, though, is puzzled by the readings. She admits to Kalar that they are atypical for a Klingon, to which Kalar simply smiles, stating, "No doubt because I am only half Klingon. My father was Klingon. My mother was human."

There is very little interaction between Kalar and other members of the crew aside from Worf, so it is difficult to further assess how others responded to her "alienness." It is clear, however, that one of the reasons Starfleet chose her to head the mission—which involved a pretreaty, warlike Klingon crew just coming out of suspended animation—was that she physically appeared to be a Klingon and the *Tong*'s crew would not question or challenge her on that basis. In addition, she would have firsthand knowledge of Klingon behavior, which could only help her if the crew of the *Tong* had already revived.

There are other indications of her Klingon nature as well: her attire, her choice of calisthenics, her interactions with Worf, especially in their lovemaking. In short, in almost every external respect she appears to be a Klingon.

Kalar, though, despite what we would consider overwhelming evidence to the contrary, does *not* consider herself to be a Klingon. While acknowledging

aspects of her dual heritage, she is the only hybrid or alien we have seen who considers herself to be human. She tells Troi that she grew up feeling trapped between worlds and indicates that she seems to have gotten the worst traits of both, the wicked sense of humor from her mother and the terrible Klingon temper from her father. But while she acknowledges and uses that sense of humor to interact with the people around her, including Worf, she refuses to allow the Klingon side to emerge, saying, "That I keep under tight control. It's like a terrible temper. It's not something I want people to see ... My Klingon side can be terrifying, even to me."

It is also interesting to note that in all her discussions with the *Enterprise* crew—a predominantly human group—she continually refers to herself in the same grouping as them and not with the rest of the Klingons. Her statement to Riker in the conference room—"The point is, this is beside the point. These are *Klingons,* at war with *us* [italics mine]."—give reinforcement to the fact that she does not consider herself to belong with the aliens.

The strongest indication of her feelings, though, comes after she and Worf make love. This action is a marital mating between a Klingon man and woman, and Worf, who does consider Kalar to be Klingon, prepares to take the oath that will seal their bond. She refuses, declaring, "It was what it was, glorious and wonderful and all that, but it doesn't mean anything." Worf: "That is a human attitude." Kalar: "I *am* human!"

Nothing we have seen before has prepared us for this. Physically, like Balok or the Harada, Kalar appears to be the alien, and she reinforces our perception with her behavior. But unlike the others, she considers herself human. One would think that any time she looked in the mirror she would see that she was not human. One would think that when she felt the stirrings of her Klingon blood in battle and with Worf that she would again realize she was not human. Spock, despite his knowledge of his human half, was

still physically and mentally predominantly Vulcan, and so it is understandable that he should consider himself such. Kalar can make no such claim for her human side.

We can only speculate why she should feel this way. It is likely that she was raised in the Federation, as even Klingons of the twenty-fourth century are not likely to look favorably on hybrid children, considering them to be weak. It is also possible that her human mother took care of her much more than her Klingon father under the circumstances. We are given, however, insufficient information to speculate much further. She does not speak in any depth about her parents or how she was treated as a child by others, or anything much at all about her background beyond the fact that she is a hybrid. The only thing we do know is that she was in the Federation at least six years before, as she was then involved with Worf—who most likely was finishing up at Academy—but that is not enough in itself to explain her situation. This lack of information makes her all the more fascinating as a character, and that much more complex.

This ambiguity also opens the door for speculation as to how nonhuman hybrids are to be viewed and how they view themselves. Saavik, Spock's protégée introduced in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*, is half Vulcan and half Romulan. Considered to be Vulcan by others since the Romulan Empire is a sworn enemy of the Federation and she is currently not only living in the Federation, but serving as a member of Starfleet, she is torn inside between her different halves. We know that she was raised on Hellguard, an abandoned colony of the Romulans where half-breed children were left to die, until she was rescued by Spock. She desperately wants to be Vulcan for him, but is constantly fighting her emotional, aggressive, Romulan half. No matter which side she chooses, though, she will still be the alien to us. For her, the decision is between which of her alien heritages to embrace; which, for her, is the more dominant.

One also has to wonder at the Borg, first introduced

in "Q Who?" They are a mixture of natural and artificial life, far more advanced than we. We would probably consider them more machine than man, based on their appearance and ability to interact with and through their ship, even though they start off as a natural life form and have to tie their implants directly into the humanoid brain. No one, as far as we know (until Picard became the Borg spokesman), has ever spoken with one of them to get their opinions on anything, and so we can once again only speculate as to how they must view themselves.

What, then, makes an alien? If we accept Webster's criteria, that anybody originating in another place or another planet would be considered one, we only scratch the surface. Kalar's choice reminds us that the way we view others, and especially ourselves, is a complicated thing. Though both physically and behaviorally different from humans and considered alien by them, she considers herself to be human. Who are we to say that her choice is any less justified than Spock's or Troi's?

Perhaps that is the message of this character. "Alien" is a term most often applied externally, but it is also one that must come from the inside. We select and choose who we want to be, based on how we view our own reality. It is not a "right" or a "wrong" decision, merely different for each of us, and as long as we are comfortable with the decision made, it is of little consequence what labels or constraints others would wish to place on us.

MY BROTHER-IN-LAW WAS A STAR TREK ALIEN

by Stephen Barrington

As a Star Trek fan of the 1960s in the small town of Chickasaw, Alabama, I never realized I would one day have a connection to this legendary program. But there amid the seventy-nine episodes filmed between 1966 and 1969 was my brother-in-law.

In the episode "Journey to Babel," stood Jerry Marenghi, my oldest sister's husband. My brother-in-law was a Star Trek alien.

Jerry started his career in 1938 at the age of eighteen with the filming of the movie classic *The Wizard of Oz*. The film was released in 1939.

"I played the middle lollipop guy in *The Wizard of Oz,* and we sang the song for Judy Garland to welcome her to Munchkinland," recalled the veteran actor, who stands four foot four and three-quarters inches.

This classic movie launched his career. "I was in high school at the time and did a dancing act with my three dancing teachers. We did an act called 'Three Steps and One Hop,' during the summer vacation. This fella saw me in this place in Hartford, Connecticut, and said, 'Say, I've seen your act and we're going to need about six little guys that can really sing and dance. If you're interested, leave me your phone number and we'll get in touch with you.' Believe it or not, three months later I got a telegram from Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer to appear in *The Wizard of Oz,* all expenses paid."

Jerry was residing in Boston, Massachusetts, at the time. Jerry, who was born and raised in Boston, is the youngest of twelve children, while his wife, Elizabeth Barrington, a native of Mobile, Alabama, is the oldest of twelve children. Elizabeth is four feet, four inches tall.

Jerry's parents came from Naples, Italy, to Boston on their honeymoon, where they settled.

Some of Jerry's other television credits include *Bewitched, Sonny and Cher, the Odd Couple, The Andy Williams Show, The Gong Show* (remember the little person in the top hat and tails tossing confetti?), and *The Lucy Show* (Lucy meets Ma Barker). On *The Andy Williams Show,* Jerry played the little German general for two years. His last television series was the syndicated version of *Truth or Consequences* two years ago. Jerry played "Truth," while another little person played "Consequences."

Jerry has also appeared on CBS network news, Geraldo Rivera, Marsha Warfield, *A Current Affair,* and *To Tell the Truth.*

Another memorable role for Jerry was as one of the mysterious Mole Men in the Superman film (later two-part TV episode) starring George Reeves, *Superman and the Mole Men.*

During his career Jerry was the spokesman for Buster Brown shoes and Oscar Meyer meats. He worked for Buster Brown for five years on radio and television in the 1950s, and his picture was in every store in the United States that sold Buster Brown shoes. If you pick up a Buster Brown comic book from that period, you'll see Jerry and his dog, Tige. Jerry worked for the Oscar Meyer meat packing company for twelve years, playing "Little Oscar, the World's Smallest Chef."

By the time his opportunity to do a Star Trek episode came in 1967, it was just another job for him. Jerry was not overly familiar with the show. "I had heard of Star Trek; I knew it was a space show and they wanted me and my partner Billy Curtis to appear in one of the episodes, the one that was titled 'Journey

to Babel.' The part wasn't much; it was a little thing," he said, intending no pun. "It was a big intergalactic convention, and we were guests from one of the planets. We got the parts through a normal casting call. They looked at us and they said we'd be fine."

This particular episode (written by D. C. Fontana) features the first appearance of Spock's parents, Sarek and Amanda. The *Enterprise* is en route to an important Federation conference on a planet code-named Babel. Traveling aboard are delegates from a multitude of planets. Jerry, as he said, is one of the delegates.

Jerry didn't really have the opportunity to talk with any of the show's stars. Most of his involvement was with the director.

"I never got to meet any of them. In those days everyone was fast, fast, fast ... 'Do it now ... Do it now,' " Jerry said, citing budgetary and time restraints on the producers.

"The sets were terrific. They were very imaginative and well done," Jerry remembers about his first impressions of the Star Trek sound stage. "It was a big scene; lots of people were in it."

Years ago, when *Star Trek* episodes were first being released on videocassettes, two at a time, Jerry's scene at the buffet table with Billy Curtis was featured on the picture sleeve.

The food on the table was actually real. Jerry kept admonishing his partner, Billy Curtis, not to eat it. "Billy kept eating it. I said, 'Don't eat it,' because it's got to match the next scene. If you take something from the plate it would look different. Billy was nibbling at the food, but he was a rabble-rouser anyway," Jerry said affectionately.

(Billy Curtis was Jerry's partner for more than twenty years. They traveled the United States together; among their travels, visiting hospital units during World War II on a USO tour. Billy Curtis passed away in 1989.).

The director gave them specific instructions for their scene. According to Jerry, "The director, Joseph Pev-

ney, said, 'You're from another planet, so this food is a little different than what you have on your own planet. Be suspicious of what you eat or look at it; think, what's that?' "

The scene was a brief one on the television screen, lasting only about thirty seconds.

"We were dressed up like Turks, actually," Jerry remembered. Jerry and Billy were made up in heavy gold makeup. "It wasn't very difficult to put on, because there were no whiskers or beards to worry about. It took about half an hour to put on.

"The makeup is always hard to get off because after you're through with a picture, they don't care. There's no concern, you're off the payroll. They say, 'Here's the makeup room, here's some stuff, get it off.' "

Shooting the big scene required specialized shots for the tall people, medium people and, of course, the small people. Close-ups also had to be factored in.

"They knew what they were doing. They had to work fast and they were used to it. We just happened to be with a company that knew what they were doing all the time. They had to be fast because it was an expensive episode to film."

Jerry's pay was $110 per day. "We could have insisted on more money, but it was a quickie and we were both working on other jobs, so we took it because the most it would be was two days."

Since then, Jerry hasn't met any of the Star Trek celebrities. "I've never had an opportunity to work with them again." When asked if he would do another Star Trek today, Jerry didn't hesitate to say, "Absolutely. Because it's fun and different."

After filming the episode, Jerry developed a liking for the show. "I think the show is still popular because it is fascinating and it is different. You never knew what was going to happen and the suspense was wonderful. The people loved the different characters.

"Never in a million years," was Jerry's response when asked if he thought *Star Trek* would achieve the fame that it has. "It was the same thing with *The Wizard of Oz*. It was a typical Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer

musical and that was a typical *Star Trek* episode. But since then they've become classics—classics of motion pictures and classics of television."

Since his retirement, Jerry has spent the past few years touring the country with his wife, commemorating *The Wizard of Oz* at conventions.

Jerry's other credits include *The Marx Brothers at the Circus* (as Professor Atom), *Little Cigars, Under the Rainbow, The Great John L, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear* (with Mickey Rooney), *Johnny Doesn't Live Here Anymore* (with Robert Mitchum; Jerry plays a good gremlin), and an *Our Gang* comedy, "Tiny Troubles," as the little gangster, Light-Fingered Lester.

For twelve years Jerry worked for McDonald's, playing Mayor McCheese, Big Mac, and the Hamburglar.

His wife, Elizabeth, who mainly does stunts, has worked on a number of Disney films, including *The Apple Dumpling Gang, No Deposit, No Return*, and *Freaky Friday*. Her other movies include *Under the Rainbow, The Incredible Shrinking Woman, Evil House, The Great Outdoors,* and *The Golden Child,* with Eddie Murphy.

Jerry and Elizabeth, happily married for sixteen years, live in Hollywood Hills in the Los Angeles area in their custom-built home. "She's the greatest thing that has happened to me," Jerry says about his wife.

And to my sister, I don't think she's too bad myself.

CHART TREK: STAR TREK'S TV AND FILM SOUNDTRACKS

by Mark Alfred

This article is a survey of, as my subtitle suggests, the soundtrack albums of the Star Trek universe. We all know there have been at least dozens of cover versions of various Star Trek themes, mostly of Alexander Courage's television theme for the original series. I'm going to ignore all those here, with two exceptions that I'll explain when we come to them.

Similarly, I'm excluding such works as Leonard Nimoy's "Mr. Spock's Music from Outer Space," William Shatner's "The Transformed Man," and Brent Spiner's "Ol' Yellow Eyes Is Back." While these albums, like the various Star Trek theme cover versions mentioned above, are interesting—especially to Star Trek completists—they are part of the sidestream, examples of what I call "peripheral Star Trek." Read my article "Stalking the Wild Star Trek Collectible" in *The Best of Trek* #13 if you're interested in learning more about "peripheral Star Trek."

Star Trek

1. "Inside Star Trek" (1976) Columbia 34279

This is exception number one. This album is an audio documentary, hosted by Star Trek creator, Gene

Roddenberry. Its subject, to paraphrase DC Comics' old phrase, is "Star Trek—Who It Is and How It Came to Be." William Shatner, DeForest Kelley, Mark Lenard, and Isaac Asimov talk about various aspects of the Star Trek mythos. The album was released in the midst of the vast famine between the ending of the original series on NBC and the animated series in 1973–4, and the grand appearance of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* at the end of 1979. It warrants mention here because it opens with two fine, upbeat performances of the TV theme—the first with an extended middle section, the second a fairly straight-off-the-TV arrangement, both "arranged and conducted by Charles Calello." To give an aura of otherworldliness, before the music, we hear a snatch of the "Alien Planet Surface" sound effect first heard in "The Cage" on Talos IV.

2. "The Cage" and "Where No Man Has Gone Before" (1985) GNP Crescendo GNPS 8006

As David Gerrold says in the liner notes, "This album is only twenty years overdue." Album producer Neil Norman excavated the original music tracks written by Alexander Courage and recorded for Star Trek's two pilots, then transferred them using digital technology. The snippets of music range from twelve seconds ("Torch Girl" from "The Cage") to complete pieces, such as the themes and "Vina's Dance" from "The Cage." The music was recorded on January 22 and November 29, 1965, and the tapes show their age in spots with occasional shrillness and a lack of stereo presence, due no doubt to the fact that "they have endured fire and flood at Paramount," according to the liner notes. But, nevertheless, this music provides a thrill of nostalgia, and is also the foundation, the cornerstone where the music of Star Trek all began.

3. "The Doomsday Machine" and "Amok Time" (1991) GNP Crescendo GNP5 8025

Only recently released, this is GNP Crescendo's second album of actual episode soundtracks, as heard on TV. Evidently Paramount's fires and floods didn't get to these tapes, for they present a crisp, clear, you-are-there listening experience.

The album opens with the second season's opening theme (that gal going "ohh-ahh" along with the melody), sans voice-over.

In the late Sol Kaplan's music for "The Doomsday Machine," you can hear forebodings of the tragedy to unfold as the *Enterprise* approaches the *Constellation.* Commodore Decker's sorrow and mania are depicted, as well as the horror of his death and the inescapable pursuit of the planet killer. As I heard the ominous two-note motif composed by Kaplan to signify the Doomsday Machine, my estimation of composer John Williams's creativity went down another notch. The Oscar-winning "shark" theme for *Jaws* is blueprinted right here: the two-note ascending motif played separately, then repeated with increasing tempo against a rising background of strings and percussion. Once again, Star Trek was there first!

The immensely talented Gerald Fried's classic score for the first episode of season two, "Amok Time," completes this album. From the opening "Vulcan Fanfare" to the lengthy musical depiction of the *Koon-ut Kal-if-fee,* Fried performs a masterful job of creating an otherworldly aura of mystery and danger, the perfect backdrop for the strangeness of the storyline. Mr. Spock's theme, played first by jazz great Barney Kessel on electric bass and then in the orchestra by the cello, changes from a strange, nightmarish string of notes to a heartfelt, sorrowful ode to a lifetime of emotion denied. The music heard during the Vulcan planetside sequences throbs with repressed primal energy, reminding me of the insistent beats of African tribal rhythms. And, finally, we're

humorously brought home by the music accompanying McCoy's sarcastic "In a pig's eye," followed by the second-season end title music.

4. "The Corbomite Maneuver," "Charlie X," "The Doomsday Machine," and "Mudd's Women" (1985) Varese Sarabande 704.270

This album contains "newly recorded music from selected episodes," and therefore, like the rest of the original series albums I'll review, is not strictly a soundtrack. Conducted by veteran Star Trek composer Fred Steiner, the only person to write scores for both the original series and *The Next Generation* ("Code of Honor"), the album opens with a thrilling performance of the first-season theme.

Next are suites from Steiner's music for "The Corbomite Maneuver" and "Charlie X." Both are evocative renderings of motives and themes created by Steiner to symbolize the unknown dangers of space, from "Fesarius Approaches" to the various "Zap" cues from "Charlie X," used repeatedly in subsequent shows.

Sol Kaplan's music for "The Doomsday Machine," heard in toto in the GNP Crescendo album mentioned above, is here represented by a brief suite. Listen to the selections from both albums, and you'll detect differences in sound and coloration, due no doubt to the larger resources and stereo recording on this disc.

Steiner's music for "Mudd's Women" concludes the album. It's a fine example of the composer's variety of styles, from the ethereal strains heard when we meet "Three Venuses" to the bawdy laughter of Harry Mudd to the waltz "Space Radio," heard on Rigel XII as the girls dance with the miners.

5. "Mirror, Mirror," "The Trouble with Tribbles," "By Any Other Name," and "The Empath" (1986) Varese Sarabande 704.300

The second (and so far last) in Varese Sarabande's series of suites rearranged from episode scores, this album also opens with a stirring rendition of the *Star Trek* TV theme.

Steiner's "Mirror, Mirror" suite once more uses his earlier themes for the *Enterprise* and her crew, but also uses changes in tempo and reversal of these themes to show the serious predicament our heroes find themselves in.

The music for "The Trouble with Tribbles" was composed by the late Jerry Fielding, and is represented briefly here by Mr. Scott's Gaelic-sounding "A Matter of Pride," and "The Big Fight" in the bar.

Steiner's "By Any Other Name" score completes side one of the album and represents the threats of the Kelvans, as well as Kelinda's theme, used later for other lovely ladies encountered by Kirk.

Side two of the album is filled with George Duning's "The Empath" suite, telling a weird tale of mysterious disappearances of Federation scientists, the strange beauty of the silent Gem, and the unknown terrors of unexplained torture by the Vians. As Steiner explains in the liner notes, Duning's use of the Yamaha organ was "the first time that the electronic instrument, at that time newly arrived from Japan, was featured in a Hollywood dramatic film score." And to fine effect.

6. "Is There in Truth No Beauty?" and "The Paradise Syndrome" (1985) Label X LXDR 703

This album, and #7 following, are performed by Tony Brenmer conducting the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra.

Side one is George Duning's music for "Is There in Truth No Beauty?", arranged in a flowing suite that tells the tragic tale of Miranda Jones, the crazed Marvick, and the madness of Mr. Spock upon his exposure to the Medusan Kollos. You can hear resonances of style and melody between this music and Duning's music for "The Empath," but you don't feel that Duning is rehashing previously covered ground. The tragedy of Miranda Jones and the mystery of Gem evoke similar musical thoughts of regret and loss.

Gerald Fried, last heard from in his enthralling music for "Amok Time," here weighs in with my single favorite selection of all the music covered in this article, his suite for "Paradise Syndrome." It opens with a plaintive flute solo that leads into Fried's musical motif for the Amerind inhabitants of this strange, doomed world. Then we meet Miramanee, depicted in sweetness and beauty by a simple, almost Oriental melody. The tale continues through Kirok's challenge and fight with Salish, life with the Amerinds, and the sorrow evoked at the death of Miramanee and her unborn child. Once more, Gerald Fried has composed music that surpasses the popular concept of TV as disposable entertainment.

7. "Conscience of the King," "Spectre of the Gun," "The Enemy Within," and "I, Mudd" (1985) Label X LXDR 704

The album opens with a short suite from Joseph Mullendore's "Conscience of the King," dominated by his lovely theme for the mad Lenore. Strange, you couldn't tell she was crazy from the lilting melodies heard here.

Each time I hear the next selection, Jerry Fielding's music for "Spectre of the Gun," I'm amazed anew. I've always been less than thrilled by the episode; the story seems lame, the characters "off" somehow—I mean, Chekov dying to save the life of a floozy he

just met? I suppose I was so busy cringing while watching that I wasn't listening to the music. Because, friends, this music is good. As a piece of musical Americana, I think it is as valid, and fun, as Aaron Copland's "Billy the Kid" and "Rodeo" music. From the harmonica's wailing to the busted piano playing fragments of "Buffalo Gals," Fielding's music evokes scenes appropriate to Kirk's nostalgic half-memories of what he once read about the Old West.

Side two opens with a thrilling suite from Sol Kaplan's score for "The Enemy Within." The composer's instantly recognizable "Enterprise Flyby" arrangement quickly descends into a tragic tale of identity lost and megalomania ascendant. This suite expresses all the suspense, mystery, and adventure you could wish for in a Star Trek tale.

The final cut of the album is Samuel Matlovsky's devilish music for "I, Mudd," in which he gleefully depicts Harry Mudd's chaotic influence, while amplifying the farcical nature of the story. The last cut of the suite, "Stella 5000," will leave you smiling as you remember the scene of Mudd's just deserts: hundreds of replicas of his—er, loving—wife, Stella.

8. "Star Trek: Sound Effects from the Original TV Soundtrack" GNP Crescendo GNPS-8010

Ripoff or thrill? That's the burning question, children—and it's all a matter of your opinion. This library of Star Trek sounds ranges from "Phasers Striking Deflector Shields" and "Tribble Violent Reaction" to "Stratos Torture Ray Bombardment" and "Shuttlecraft Interior." If you can find a use for this stuff, gobble it up. Frankly, I plan to use it one day to make the granddaddy of all answering machine announcements. But, after all, it *is* an original television soundtrack album.

The Star Trek Films

9. "Star Trek—The Motion Picture" by Jerry Goldsmith (1979) Columbia JS 36334

Star Trek—The Motion Picture was Jerry Goldsmith's eighty-fourth film score, following such work in TV as the themes for *The Waltons* and *The Man from U.N.C.L.E.*, and films like *Alien, Chinatown, The Omen,* and *Twilight Zone—The Movie.* His rousing opening march, blending into the klick-klacking Klingon music, raises our expectations beyond the film's ability to deliver. The same main theme is used for the *Enterprise* and Kirk, too, and transformed into a beautiful serenade—yes, a love song—for our tour around the gleaming, refitted *Enterprise.* I for one feel that this scene, perhaps because of the romantic yearning quality of Goldsmith's music, is not a whit too long.

Goldsmith's theme for Ilia, also carrying a searching quality due to its ascending melody, ending on the augmentation of its major chord, expresses the tragedy of Ilia's death and also Vejur's quest for completion. How many of you remember that when the film was first released, the last half of "Ilia's Theme" was played as an overture in the darkened theater before the curtain rose?

The weird, twanging music for Vejur and its energy cloud is logical and descriptive. The sustained chords in the lower registers remind us of the immensity of the energy field we traverse, with the rising and descending scales mirroring *Enterprise*'s journey (some would say seemingly endless journey) to the heart of the cloud. The scales lead only to a different chord, to repeat again, illustrating the anticipation of Kirk and crew as they wonder when they're going to reach the source of the field, and what they may find there.

Well, we know that they find, and the music accompanying the merging of Decker-Ilia-Vejur shimmers

like the hundreds of thousands of watts of lights used on the Vejur set.

The screen went black, we were told "The Human Adventure Is Just Beginning," and Goldsmith's rousing end credits made us think the film was better than we remembered!

10. "Main Theme from *Star Trek—The Motion Picture*" (1980) Synthetic Plastics 6001

This is my second exception. Get that record company name ... What other kind of plastic is there but synthetic, i.e., fabricated? I quote the liner notes: "They are all played by the fabulous 29-piece 'Now Sound Orchestra.' ... Included is the beautiful 'Ilia's Theme,' the love theme from Star Trek played first instrumentally, then *sung* using its brand-new title—'A Star Beyond Time.' "

When you hear them you will understand why I include this bit of fluff here. Shakespeare it ain't, as they say. But hey, check out the doggo lyrics to the original TV theme written by the Great Bird himself, as printed in *The Making of Star Trek*. What was that about glass houses, Gene?

Incidentally, no credits are given for the author of "A Star Beyond Time." Just as well.

11. "Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan" by James Horner (1982) Atlantic 8D 19363

This music is as thrilling as the visual images it accompanies. Horner provides us with themes for the *Enterprise,* Spock, Kirk, Khan, and other more descriptive pieces, such as the exciting pair "Surprise Attack" and "Kirk's Explosive Reply." Listen to those one after another with your eyes closed. They stand alone as music, but, boy, can't you just see in your imagination the film's action, down to where the various lines are spoken?

Horner writes very passionate, evocative, descriptive music, especially noticeable on the whole of side two: "Battle in the Mutara Nebula," "Genesis Countdown," and "Epilogue/End Title." These long pieces run the gamut of emotions from suspense and uncertainty in battle to sacrifice, loss, and acceptance. You can't help but be affected by the strains of the Genesis theme that accompanies our first sight of the newborn planet, its lush growth, and—Spock's coffin! Maybe I'm a sucker for a good story, but I can believe Horner's remembrance that the Genesis Planet music "led at least one of the film's production people to weep from the sheer beauty of the sequence," as told on page 212 of Allan Asherman's *The Making of "Star Trek II."*

12. "Star Trek III: The Search for Spock" by James Horner (1984) Capitol SKBK-12360

The film opens in a flash of light, accompanied by Horner's crash of sound that dies away to a slow dirge as we witness again, in flashback, the last moments of Captain Spock. In the next track, "Klingons," Horner takes the rhythms and klick-klacks pioneered by Jerry Goldsmith in *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* and creates his own mosaic of menace.

Don't ask me why, but the track called "Klingons" also contains the lovely music we hear as *Enterprise* limps home to Earth, and enters Spacedock. The lovely *Enterprise* theme, Courage's trumpet fanfare, and the rolling chords assisted by downward scales on the organ and chimes really get me—right here—as they say.

Next comes "Stealing the Enterprise," another humorous yet suspenseful romp, culminating in the sustained notes of the strings as *Excelsior* poops out.

The album climaxes with the sequences involving the return to Vulcan and the ensuing reunion of Spock and his better half. "The Katra Ritual" is a rising

cacophony of ascending scales, bells, and stretched-out chords, a fine accompaniment to the Ritual. And, of course, the "End Titles," opening with the screen image of Spock's cocked eyebrow, make us feel everything is going to be all right, after all.

If you only bought the cassette release of this album and not the LP, you missed a bemusing bonus. The final track on the cassette is Horner's try at a disco version of his theme called "The Search for Spock." This was probably influenced by the success of Meco's electronic version of John Williams's *Star Wars* theme that was such a big hit a few years earlier. But it came in the LP as a separate 12-inch single, as they now call them. And the really wild thing is that side two of "Record Two" was blank, complete with a blank Capitol Records label. Who says those record execs don't have a sense of humor? I crack up every time I hear this piece of drivel. And the advantage of owning the LP is, since it's on a separate record, I don't have to listen to it at all! Ever!

(If you, like me, really thrill to James Horner's music for *The Wrath of Khan* and *The Search for Spock,* by all means buy his soundtrack for *Aliens* [Varese Sarabande VSC-8123]. Because there you'll find, note for note, his "Klingon" music from *The Search for Spock* and his "Enterprise Battles Reliant" music from *The Wrath of Khan.* This just about spoiled my enjoyment of *Aliens,* because I kept expecting Spock to beam in and pinch one of the aliens, or Kirk to stun one with his phaser.)

13. "Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home" by Leonard Rosenman (1986) MCA MCA-6195

I must say that, for me, the soundtrack—not just the album, but all the music we hear throughout the whole movie—for this film is the thinnest and least satisfying of all the Star Trek film scores. Rosenman's music for an early *Twilight Zone* episode ("When the

Sky Was Opened") is available on Varese Sarabande STV 81185, volume three of the *Twilight Zone* soundtracks. Maybe Rosenman's style worked then, but twenty-five years later, it's the same thing, and it's pretty thin gruel: broken arpeggios leading to dissonant chords that are repeatedly drummed into your ears; fragments of near melodies; a "fugue" that isn't; I'm not very impressed.

" 'Chekov's Run' was original, wasn't it?" you may ask. Sorry, friend. All Rosenman did was slightly alter the melody of the stirring "Russian Sailors' Dance" from Gliere's opera *The Red Poppy,* retaining its pattern of theme and increasingly frenzied variations.

On this album, too, we're given a contemporary piece based on material from the movie. It's called "Ballad of the Whale," and for me it's a whale of a bore.

On the other hand, the music is far less obnoxious when accompanied by the fun visual images of the movie, so just be prepared to be disappointed when listening to the album alone.

14. "Star Trek V: The Final Frontier" by Jerry Goldsmith (1989) Epic SE 45267

From the ridiculous to the sublime—and I'm talking about the music, not the storyline, so put down that tar and feathers.

As befits his talent, Goldsmith provides a memorable, moving score. From the music depicting "The Mountain" in Yosemite to the music accompanying passing "The Barrier" and the obscenity inhabiting its core, we experience awe, majesty, and menace. Goldsmith reuses his famous Klingon music from *STTMP* as a springboard for thrills in "Without Help," the sequence accompanying the shuttle's dash to safety aboard the *Enterprise.*

And for you soundtrack purists like me who appreciate such minutiae, the end credits music, entitled

"Life is a Dream," is substantially shorter on the album than in the film itself. In the movie the music is composed of the main theme (same as it is in *STTMP*); the lovely "Quest" themes heard during the search for *Sha Ka Ree;* and the Klingon theme, which leads into a recapitulation of the main theme and conclusion. The soundtrack album version—I suppose to shorten the length of the selection—omits the *Sha Ka Ree* music, segueing directly from main theme to Klingon theme.

While I see faults and problems with *The Final Frontier,* I for one don't hate it as much as some other Star Trek fans I know, and a big part of my warm regard for the film, I must admit, springs from this wonderful score by Jerry Goldsmith.

15. "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" by James Horner (1991)

You, dear reader, have it all over me on this one. By the time this article reaches print, we will all have seen *Star Trek VI* firsthand. But now, as I write this, it's August, 1991, and all we know is that Horner's back and STVI's got 'im. However, I'll warrant he uses his own Star Trek theme, recaps his version of Klingon music as necessary, and otherwise concocts another wondrous romp through space with our old friends of the *Enterprise.*

Star Trek: The Next Generation

I have a gripe with these two albums of music from *The Next Generation.* I suppose you might say I'm spoiled, having grown up watching TV in the sixties, when composers like Jerry Goldsmith, Gerald Fried, Bernard Herrmann, Franz Waxman, and Fred Steiner wrote *music* music, using melodies, motifs, theme and

variation, and other devices to create a product that, when at its best, in shows like *Star Trek* or *The Twilight Zone,* resulted in music that stands on its own—music that deserves preservation, as *Star Trek* on GNP Crescendo and *The Twilight Zone* on Varese Sarabande.

By contrast, *The Next Generation* is, sadly, also a product of its musical "time." The late eighties initiated the domination of the synthesized soundtrack, music "composed" at a keyboard, consisting mainly of mood fragments, sustained chords with percussive effects to generate "suspense" or "drama," yet sadly lacking in the creative input necessary to create music that can stand on its own.

In this man's opinion, both *The Next Generation* soundtracks, while desirable as a part of Star Trek, are ultimately disappointing for the reasons I tried, however clumsily, to explain above. Both albums reflect their time, and are both examples of ornamentation in search of a melody—without finding one.

16. "Encounter at Farpoint" by Dennis McCarthy (1988) GNP Crescendo GNPS 8012

There are a few enjoyable parts to this album. We hear the first-season opening and closing credits, different from succeeding seasons' versions.

But, otherwise . . . sigh . . .

At times, a melody almost happens, but McCarthy quickly breaks things off as if embarrassed by its occurrence, as in "Old Lovers," when Riker meets Troi, and "Revealed/Reaching Out," heard at the end when the two energy beings are reunited. This second piece is pretty, even moving when heard while watching the show, but is it "certainly one of the most beautiful pieces ever written for television," as the liner notes assert? Hardly, folks.

McCarthy makes frequent use of Alexander Courage's rousing trumpet fanfare, heard in the opening

title music for both series. In fact, in the thirty-one minutes (excluding title themes) of music on this album, Courage's fanfare is partially quoted many times, and repeated—all eight notes, in toto—at least eleven times! McCarthy's constant use of this once-inspiring little strain has done the impossible: made me sick of hearing it.

But I do like listening to the album once in a while; I really enjoy parts of it. My favorite piece is something we never hear onscreen at all: McCarthy's proposed (and rejected) "Main Title" theme for *The Next Generation*. It starts with the familiar Courage fanfare, but, in place of Goldsmith's *STTMP* theme, uses an original melody, resulting in a piece every bit as stirring and driving in intensity. Better, it doesn't sound at all chopped up, as Goldsmith's seems, having been hacked down to satisfy TV's timing requirements.

17. "The Best of Both Worlds, Parts 1 and 2" by Ron Jones (1991) GNP Crescendo GNP 8026

This album ends with the third/fourth seasons' "Main Title" and "End Credit," which are arranged differently from the first-season version found in the previous album.

Then the episode opens with a dark, moody sounding piece and, really, doesn't go anywhere. Like the "Farpoint" soundtrack, this one is very effective as accompaniment to *The Next Generation* episode whose title it bears, but is not particularly distinguished or memorable when listened to by itself. That's one man's opinion; buy the album and decide for yourself.

Summary

To wrap up this overview briefly, I do recommend every album mentioned here as a worthwhile compan-

ion to your memories of Star Trek excitement. However, they are of varying worth as independent musical entities. I hope my description of the varying styles used will allow you to select which albums might match your own musical taste. However, I say again, get them all and choose your own favorites. Select your own program, relax and listen with closed eyes, and relive the Star Trek adventure . . . yours to command.

A WORLD OF TIME

by Kenneth Reeler

"All I ask is a tall ship and a star and the mathematics to steer her by." I know that isn't *quite* how John Masefield said it, but, then again, he wasn't trying to steer his way to the star of Vulcan.

There has probably been more speculation about the planet Vulcan than any other aspect of Star Trek. Except for the *Enterprise,* it is the most fully realized environment, and a constant reminder of it is Mister Spock, invariably at his science station on the bridge of that very ship. And yet, the series only rarely took us to that world and showed us precious little of it when it did, and Vulcans rarely felt inclined to disclose any of the mysteries of their home. Familiar *and* mysterious; no wonder we are intrigued. Unfortunately, the amount of speculation does not necessarily ensure consensus. After all, what alternative is there to fanciful invention when given such tantalizingly sparse information?

Well, a very good one, as it happens. If considered carefully, a little knowledge can take us a long way; all the way to Vulcan, at least in our minds. Using only the actual episodes, Gene Roddenberry's novelization of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture,* and some reasoning, algebra, and astronomy, it is possible to discover many things. Why Vulcans have more-than-human abilities. How *pon farr* might have begun. Why Vulcans differ from Romulans. The precise length of the Vulcan year, month, and day. The distance be-

tween Vulcan and its star. The size, mass and general location of Vulcan's star. And more.

But, to be absolutely honest, we will need two other things: conclusions I reached in my articles "Time in Star Trek" and "Spacetime in Star Trek." Using similar reasoning, I concluded Spock was born in Winter, 2208–9, Kirk first took command in August 2243, and Warp Factor *N* (WF *N*) is *N* cubed times *c* (the speed of light) times the constant 1292.404165, except at sublight speeds, when it's simply *N* cubed. (I concluded several other things as well, but only these are needed here.)

As in my earlier articles, understanding *time* is important. But we must first dispose of two common misconceptions.

In "The Man Trap" Spock tells Uhura, "Vulcan has no moon." But in *Star Trek—The Motion Picture,* Spock gazes toward the Vulcan horizon and sees a huge, barren, cratered world with a smaller such world swiftly crossing the larger. This can only be a large moon of Vulcan (not even a Jupiter-sized neighboring planet could appear much larger than a star), with a small moonlet, or "moon's moon," in orbit around the first; call them V-1 and V-2. This image cannot simply be dismissed as an error. In the animated episode "Yesteryear" Spock looks toward his home city of ShiKahr. Just beyond it, on the horizon, is the upper hemisphere of a similarly large moon—V-1, with V-2 presumably behind it that time. Two pieces of direct evidence must surely outweigh even Spock's heresy; so Vulcan has a moon. Indeed, it has a moon with a moon of its own. Was Spock mistaken or untruthful in "The Man Trap" then? Not necessarily.

The context of his remark is significant. Kirk is on M-113, and Spock is in command. Uhura is aimlessly chatting, even mildly flirting, with him—it's an early episode, she's not yet used to his Vulcanness—and she suggests he tell her she's beautiful or describe what Vulcan is like on a moonlit night. Spock is not yet used to her humanness either, and, what's more, he *is* sitting in the command chair, so he disassociates him-

self from his unseemly mawkishness with a sharply deflating "Vulcan has no moon." But when retreating into his Vulcan shell, Spock is often overliteral. Aside from being a useful defense, he knows it also annoys humans. In an overliteral mood one could justifiably assert *Earth* has no moon. Strictly speaking, a moon or satellite must be much smaller than its planet, or primary. In our Terra-Luna system, however, Terra is only four times larger in diameter than Luna, making ours more properly a binary planet system. The size of V-1 suggests a similar case with Vulcan, leaving it with no true moons. V-1 is a sister planet, and the satellite V-2 belongs to V-1, not to Vulcan. (There is another, stronger reason for Spock's denial, but it must wait until later.)

The other incorrect idea is that Vulcan has tremendous gravity, explaining Vulcans' great strength. Even Gene Roddenberry admits this was only an (unstated) afterthought to account for Spock's strength [*The Making of Star Trek,* by Stephen E. Whitfield and Gene Roddenberry, pp. 223–224]. But at no point in "Amok Time," *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock,* or *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* does anyone, not even a chronic complainer like McCoy, mention noticeably heavier gravity. And Spock's human mother, Amanda, has lived on Vulcan for decades, exhibiting neither the ill health nor the discernible premature aging that would certainly result from living in a high-g environment.

Besides, Vulcans are at least twice as strong as Terrans. For gravitation to be the reason, either Vulcan's gravity would have to be twice Earth-normal or Vulcans would have to have very dense tissue, making them much heavier than they appear (say by 74 percent; then even a modest gravity of 1.15g would force their muscles to carry twice the weight of a human of similar size—1.74 times 1.15 is 2.) But the first alternative would render impossible Kirk's strenuous combat with Spock in "Amok Time," as well as any prolonged stay by humans. And the second can also be quickly discarded: Kirk has carried Spock several times and

he once went so far as to let Spock kneel on his recently flogged back ("Patterns of Force"). Granted, Kirk is strong, but supporting someone who would weigh at least 131 kilograms (1.74 times 75 kg, or 287 pounds) strains credulity. And would Spock be so selfish as to describe 500 pounds as "the weight of three men" in "The Galileo Seven" if he represented at least 57 percent of the burden? No, Vulcan's gravity, and the weight of its inhabitants, must be almost identical to Earth's.

But there is a better explanation. In "Return to Tomorrow," Sargon suggests humans or Vulcans might be his people's "children." Doctor Ann Mulhall rightly bristles at the notion: Both humanity and Vulcanity first emerged millions of years ago, long before any Arretan Ancient Astronauts of 600,000 years past. Yet Spock finds the idea intriguing, saying it would tend to explain "certain elements of Vulcan prehistory." What Sargon and Spock must mean, then, is not literal descent from the Arretans, but rather the sudden infusion of Arretanlike traits into the proto-Vulcans of half a million years earlier, as though space travelers elected to help compatible species evolve more dramatically by using gene-splicing techniques to graft some of their abilities onto the primitive hominids. Unlike the gradualism of random mutations and natural selection, this would produce an almost instantaneous transformation that would puzzle Vulcan anthropologists. While there is no evidence of such chromosomal tinkering on Earth (beyond legend of Adam and Eve, who, as Sargon implied, are said to have instantly gained the gift of intelligence), there is ample evidence on Vulcan: Its natives aren't simply humanoid, they are superhumanoid.

Vulcans are telepathic, as are Arretans. They have a high metabolic rate, as do Arretans. They have a long lifespan (especially odd given a rapid metabolism), as do Arretans. They are roughly twice as strong as humans, as are Arretans (the androids intended to duplicate their original bodies will have "twice the strength and agility of" human bodies). And Vulcan

males, though probably always fertile, nevertheless have a compulsive seven-year mating cycle—odd in the male of a species and oddly infrequent given that Vulcans live only two or three times longer than Terrans. But a seven-year mating cycle would not be unusual in the very long-lived Arretan female; it may be that the gene-splicing sex-linked the females' reproductive cycle to Vulcan males (much as with human color blindness). Remember, too, that Henoch easily adapted to Spock's body. And in recognition of Messrs. Roddenberry and Coon, I can't think of a more apt origin for Vulcans than Gene-splicing.

This hypothesis would also account for the many physical differences between Vulcans and Romulans, both native to Vulcan. The Arretans genetically altered the proto-Vulcans 600,000 years ago, but left the proto-Romulans untouched, leaving them to evolve into normal humanoids. The physically and intellectually inferior Romulans would thus be no match for the warlike early Vulcans, and were probably on the verge of extinction when someone, probably the Preservers of "The Paradise Syndrome," transplanted the Romulans to another star system, leaving the two races with only the dimmest memories of each other.

Fan fiction notwithstanding, Romulans are *not* telepathic. The female commander of "The Enterprise Incident" would surely have used telepathy to discover the plot against her and not wasted time threatening Kirk with torture. Her male predecessor in "Balance of Terror" declared, after Kirk outwitted him, "He's a sorcerer, that one! He reads the thoughts in my mind!" A telepathic species would not ascribe thought-reading to sorcery. Romulans are *not* superstrong. Kirk knocks out *two* Romulan guards with almost ridiculous ease in "The Enterprise Incident"—a man who barely survived fighting an enraged Spock in "This Side of Paradise" and "Amok Time." Most telling of all, Romulans appear to have their hearts in the right place—literally. The Romulan salute is made with a fist-to-left-center-chest gesture and seems to mean, "I pledge my heart." If the Romulan heart isn't

roughly where ours is (rather than low in the torso, "where the liver should be," like Vulcans), what could the salute signify? "I pledge my last breath"? It seems halfhearted, or, at least, half-lunged. Of course, having a remote common primate ancestor, Vulcans and Romulans would look much alike, would have sufficiently similar sensor readings through a bulkhead or two and across the gulf of space to frustrate Chekov's attempts to isolate Spock quickly in "The Enterprise Incident," and would be compatible enough to make a hybrid like Saavik possible.

Now we can reconstruct Vulcan time. In Roddenberry's novelization of *STTMP,* nine Vulcan seasons are said to last 2.8 years. No matter what the variations in weather, there must be four seasons in a Vulcan year, for seasons are astronomical, not meteorological, events—the periods between the two equinoxes and the two solstices. So we divide 2.8 by 9 and multiply by 4 to obtain a Vulcan year of 56/45, or 1.244, Earth years.

This can be checked against "Yesteryear." It occurs early in Year Four of Kirk's first five-year mission, so Spock would be 37. The time when he was seven is first said to be "20 to 30 Vulcan years ago," although Spock later asks the Guardian to send him back "30 Vulcan years." But the latter is clearly an error occasioned by the writer's intending "30 (Earth) years into *Vulcan's* past." Otherwise, the two planets' years would be virtually identical, a coincidence made inadmissible by Sarek's emphasis on "your years" in "Journey to Babel." So only 20–29 are acceptable as possible meanings of "20 to 30." Setting each in turn equal to 30 Earth-years gives an average for the Vulcan year of 1.24, certainly consistent with 1.244. With a year of this length, we can be sure the 38 years Sarek and Amanda were married as of "Journey to Babel" (mentioned in the notes to the episode in Allan Asherman's *The Star Trek Compendium*) must be Earth-years, because 38 Vulcan years are more than 47 Earth years, and the then-58-year-old Amanda certainly didn't marry at the age of 11.

The appearance of the planet as the *Enterprise* orbits it in "Amok Time," and "Journey to Babel," and the apparent distance to the horizon in "Yesteryear," *STTMP* and *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home* both point to Vulcan being similar to Earth in size. Its gravity is little different, so its mass and density must be similar, as well. So Earthlike a world might be expected to have a similar period of rotation, or day, and we can draw a supporting inference. Spock's circadian rhythms are such that he could readily adapt to a 24-hour-day starship; Amanda's human circadian rhythms are such that she could readily adapt to life on Vulcan. A great difference in the two planets' days would find both repeatedly plagued by insomnia or sleepiness, so it must be that a Vulcan day is roughly equal to ours. However, daytime Vulcan is very hot, and the nighttime is very cold ("Yesteryear"), so, even allowing for the desertlike conditions, the night must be long enough to permit cooling from the higher temperature; that is, a little longer than ours. The Vulcan years of 56/45 Earth-years, or 454.5 Earth days, should then contain just somewhat more than 400 Vulcan days.

Vulcan "months" are unrelated to the orbital periods of V-1 and V-2 (as we shall see), but are instead the more logical division of the year into roughly equal parts. Since the month of *Tasmeen*—the time of Spock's *kahs-wan* maturity test in "Yesteryear"—has at least 20 days, there certainly should be no more than 22 months: dividing 454.5 by 20 gives 22.7, and their day is longer. Spock anglicizes it as "month," not "season," so there must be more than four months. Given the Vulcans' logical ways and a base-ten number system (they, too, have ten fingers), if there were 10 months, they wouldn't persist in naming them, preferring the form "8877.4" to "*Tasmeen* (or whatever), the fifth month of 8877." (The first month would have to be 8877.0, of course.) For the same reason, 5 and 20 may be rejected. Indeed, as they would approach the length of seasons, divisions of fewer than 10 are unlikely, so the probability is that there are 11 to 19 months in the Vulcan calendar.

Further, in "Journey to Babel," Sarek corrects McCoy, who had said the ambassador was 102, by saying he is "101.437 precisely, measured in your years." Why did he use three decimal places when being precise? If he were being Vulcanly exact, he could have gone to four or more decimal places; if he were being diplomatically casual with the human McCoy, why didn't he leave it as 102, or 102.4, or 102.44? It must be that 102.437 is precise enough, but that 102.44 is a significant error. So 0.003 Earth-years is a meaningful interval to a Vulcan. This would equal 0.002411 Vulcan years (0.003 divided by 56/45), so there would be 414.8 such intervals in their year. The logical conclusion: There are 414.8 Vulcan days in their year.

And also, Sarek would think of his age in Vulcan terms first, so there must be a reason 82.315446, the Vulcan equivalent of 102.437, came quickly to mind. Examining fractions with denominators of no more than 22 (the maximum number of Vulcan months) shows the closest approximation of 0.315446 is 4.1/13 (which equals 0.315385). Therefore, Sarek found it natural to think in thirteenths of a year. The logical conclusion: Vulcans divide their year into 13 months.

Both conclusions are consistent with the earlier analysis, so I think it safe to say the Vulcan day is 26 hours, 17 minutes, 51 seconds long. The 13 months each have 31.909 such days, or, in practice, 32, with a single 31-day month—once every five years it would be a 30-day month—to produce a 415-day calendar (just as our change from a 28-day to a 29-day February once every four years keeps our 365-day calendar in agreement with our 365.25-day year.) If Vulcans use "weeks," there would be four 8-day weeks per month. And, since Sarek knew he was 4.1 months past his 82nd birthday, it follows they divide their day into 10 or 20 "hours," allowing him to know it was 4 months and 3.2 days (0.1 months) later. Using my earlier chronology, Sarek was then born in 2142, and the Vulcan year 8877—when Spock took his *kahs-wan*—would be Earth's 2216, so their current calendar began in 8831

B.C. (8877 times 56/45 subtracted from 2216). So Vulcan civilization began around the time of Earth's agrarian revolution, probably following a similar discovery of agriculture.

To confirm these conclusions, we reason backward. To appear so huge, V-1 (with VB-2 orbiting it) must be fairly close to Vulcan. Vulcan's and V-1's gravity would then create powerful tidal forces in one another, stopping their relative rotations. The two worlds thus revolve in lockstep, as though they were opposite ends of a dumbbell. Earth has affected our moon this way (although Luna is too far away to affect Earth in return). That is why, despite the moon's rotation, it shows only one side to us: A lunar day is exactly as long as a month. With Vulcan and V-1 the situation would be more extreme: not only a Vulcan month equal to V-1's day, but also a Vulcan day equal to V-1's month (which proves Vulcan "months" have nothing to do with the moons). In other words, in the 26.3 hours needed for Vulcan to turn once on its axis, V-1 completes one orbit of Vulcan.

In astronomy, Kepler's Third Law relates the square of the orbital period to the cube of the distance between the orbiting bodies. If V-1's mass and size is as similar to Luna's as Vulcan's are to Earth (were V-1 much larger, it would have an atmosphere, and not its many unweathered craters), with a month of 26.3 hours, Kepler's law gives a distance between Vulcan and V-1 of about 43,000 kilometers. At that distance V-1 would appear, from the surface of Vulcan, just under nine times larger than Earth's moon appears in our sky—exactly the size it seems in *STTMP* and "Yesteryear." True, this arrangement would cause tides in Vulcan's smaller oceans some 700 times higher than ours, but, because V-1 is effectively unmoving with respect to Vulcan's surface, these tides would be virtually stationary, causing only deeper centers of the ocean floors, not crashing tidal waves at the shores. More backward reasoning: since V-1 does in fact look nine times larger than our moon, a reasonable conclusion is that it is nine times closer to Vulcan. Using

Kepler's Law, the cube of 9 is 729, and the square root of 729 is 27, so the Vulcan month, which must equal the Vulcan day, should be 1/27 as long as our 27.3-day month, or just a little longer than one Earth day, just as we originally assumed.

Being in synchronous orbit, V-1 would lie in the plane of Vulcan's equator. The moon never leaves Vulcan's sky, so for half of it to be visible, one would have to be near the North or South Pole. Though no ice caps are visible—Vulcan must have a smaller axial tilt than Earth and hence less severe seasonal changes—it would still be appreciably cooler near a pole. Shikahr, then, is a logical place for the Earthborn Amanda to make her permanent home on otherwise oppressively hot Vulcan. The desert of Gol must be nearer the equator in the hemisphere that always faces V-1, for all of the moon is above the horizon in *STTMP*.

With small, unconnected oceans that cannot share their water supply, with much stronger tides, and with a thinner atmosphere, Vulcan probably experiences less evaporation of its limited waters in the hemisphere that never faces V-1. So the majority of the population would live on the "far side" of the planet, leaving any sighting of V-1 and V-2 only to those unconventional minorities, like the *Kolinahr* sect, who live in the opposite hemisphere, or the odd polar dweller. So when Sulu approached the more densely populated part of the planet at the end of *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* (for he intended to land the ship), the moons were snugly hidden behind Vulcan.

It also follows that on the "far side" of Vulcan there can be no eclipses; while on the "near side" a lunar eclipse would be the nightly norm and an invariably total solar eclipse of a half-hour's duration midday a daily event, with the imposing form of V-1 overwhelming Vulcan's sun. Despite its regularity, this miniature "night" was probably disturbing to the ancient, superstitious Vulcans, providing a further motive for most to gradually move into the hemisphere where day is never interrupted in this manner. In any case, the mere sight of a huge moon hanging motionless in the

sky, with a smaller one scurrying around it, was no doubt alarming in itself. Even after Surak's reforms, there would be little reason to return. But a few extremists, wishing not merely to control, but to eliminate, their emotions, may have chosen to make the journey back. Perhaps the *Kolinahr* sect thought it symbolically important to live under constant reminders of life's harsher realities.

Given that the moons are permanently invisible for most Vulcans, and given that even for those who can see them, the moons' proximity to the planet leaves them enshrouded nightly by Vulcan's shadow, illuminated only dimly by the weak, diffuse, reddish twilight of Vulcan's dawn or dusk (again, just as they appear in *STTMP*), how *could* one have more honestly answered Uhura's question? What does Vulcan look like under moonlight? *What* moonlight? In the visual, romantic sense she intended, it is quite true that Vulcan has no moon. So Spock didn't misinform, he merely misled. Might he have given Uhura a more comprehensive answer? Yes, had she been willing to listen to several minutes of astronomical explanations, and I think even a Vulcan could have discerned she was not.

Now that we have a clearer vision of the planet, we can go in search of the star of Vulcan. Most sources claim Vulcan orbits the star 40 Eridani [*Star Trek 1* and *2* by James Blish, *Star Trek Maps* by Jeff Maynard, et al., *U.S.S. Enterprise Officer's Manual* by Geoffrey Mandel, "The Search for Vulcan" by D. Jarvis Smith, *The Best of Trek* #11, etc.], and one offers Epsilon Eridani [*Star Trek Spaceflight Chronology* by Stan Goldstein and Fred Goldstein]. Aside from the problem that either star being correct would have surely led to Spock's people being called Eridanians, neither star meets the astrophysical requirements of Vulcan. Star systems aren't arbitrarily collections of bodies; they must obey the laws of nature. There are complex, though not insoluble, relationships between the mass of a star, its intrinsic brightness, the amount of energy it radiates, and its planets' distances from the star, the planets' periods of revolution, the amount of stellar

energy they reflect back into space, and their temperatures. A college-level astronomy text can provide the interested reader with the derivations of the equations that follow, but, for our purposes, only the equations themselves are needed: Kepler's Third Law, the definition of absolute magnitude, the mass-luminosity relation, and the definition of effective temperature. To those who dislike mathematics, my condolences, but I wouldn't want to pull results from nowhere. Besides, Star Trek fans should recall the motto *ad astra per aspera:* to the stars through adversities.

Let M represent the mass of a star in ratio to our sun (so that for a star twice as heavy as ours, M would be 23). Let P be a planet's period of revolution in Earth-years. Let R be the average distance of a planet from its star in astronomical units (AU). Let B be the absolute magnitude of a star, that is, its intrinsic brightness. Let L be the luminosity, or energy output, of a star in ratio to that of our sun. Let "log" be the base-ten logarithm (whereby log 100 = 2, because $10^2 = 100$ and log 0.001 = –3, because $10^{-3} = 0.001$). Let T be a planet's effective temperature on the Kelvin scale (the one in which absolute zero is 0°, and water freezes at 273.16°). And let A be the planet's albedo, that is, the fraction of energy it reflects back into space. Then, we have four equations:

$$M \times P = R \quad (1)$$
$$4.7 - B = 2.512 \times \log L \quad (2)$$
$$\log L = 3.3 \times \log M \quad (3)$$
$$T = (1-A) \times (6.05 \times 10^9) \times L/R \quad (4)$$

For 40 Eridani, $B = 6.0$. According to *Officer's Manual* (no other source gives specifics), for Vulcan, $R = 0.493$ and $P = 0.3368$. So, by equation (1), $M = 1.056$. However, by (2) and (3): $4.7 - 6.0 = -1.3 = 2.512 \times \log L$, so $\log L = -0.518$, which equals $3.3 \times \log M$; so $\log M = -0.157$ and $M = 0.697$. It is true that (3) is an approximation, but the resulting mass one way being one-and-one-half times the other seems excessive, so these figures must be rejected.

For Epsilon Eridani, $B = 6.2$. *Spaceflight* gives R as 0.936 and P as 1.065, so M equals 0.723 one way and 0.659 the other. Close enough, but equation (4) remains. In this case, log $L = -0.598$, so L = 0.253. Inserting that into (4) gives Vulcan a T of, at most, 204.4°K, which is some 43 degrees colder than Earth's. Granted effective temperature is always less than the actual average temperature, but Vulcan is much warmer than Earth, so its effective temperature should be higher than ours, also. (Vulcan is not a gas giant, so it cannot have enough internally produced heat to compensate, and if it has a Venus-like greenhouse effect, the air would be unbreathable.) So these figures must be rejected, too.

Besides, in "Operation: Annihilate!" Spock revealed the existence of an "inner eyelid" that evolved in response to the "brightness of the Vulcan sun." This implies a star intrinsically brighter than our Sol, or else he would have said the *nearness* of the star. That means Vulcan's star should be higher on the spectral sequence than G2. Yet both 40 Eridani and Epsilon Eridani are K-class stars, *lower* on the spectral sequence. Since it isn't so energetic as to bathe Vulcan in radiation harmful to humans, the star should not be very much higher on the spectral sequence, either. Fomalhaut, for example (offered by Anne B. Collins as "A Star for Vulcan" in *The Best of Trek* #11), is an A-class star, too energetic to be amicable to visiting humans unless Vulcan is so far from the star there would be no strong daylight, and *The Voyage Home* shows otherwise. No, Vulcan should have an F-class star, not very much hotter than ours. And, again recalling Spock's words in "Operation: Annihilate!" Vulcan's orbital distance should be at least as great as Earth's, or no less than 1 AU. The figures given for 40 and Epsilon Eridani both had R less than 1, another weakness.

If we are to have any hope of finding Vulcan's star, we should first determine its characteristics, and equations (1) through (4) make it possible to do so. We already have determined P, the Vulcan year, to be

56/45. Despite being Earth-sized, Vulcan strongly resembles Mars (in fact, Roddenberry first conceived Spock as a half-Martian): a similarly-colored surface and sky and an atmosphere thinner than would be expected. So its albedo, A, should be only slightly higher, allowing for the added reflectivity of small oceans and clouds. Say, then, that $A = 0.2$ (as opposed to 0.152 for Mars).

In "The Deadly Years," a weakened Spock says he finds no temperature less than 125°F, or 324.83°K, tolerable. A Terran in Spock's condition might find no temperature below 66°F, or 292°K, "at least tolerable." Earth's average temperature is 287°K, five degrees cooler. We might then estimate Vulcan's average temperature to be about 319°K. Earth's effective temperature, T, is 247°K, 40 degrees below its average. Vulcan is Earth-like enough to be similarly warmer, perhaps slightly less so (it retains less heat because of its thinner atmosphere, but it loses less because of its lower albedo). Estimate T for Vulcan to be 284°K, then.

Knowing P, A, and T allows us to solve equations (1) through (4) to determine L, M, B, and R. So, Vulcan's star has a luminosity 2.1 times that of our sun, a mass 1.25 times greater, and a magnitude of 3.9. And Vulcan orbits it at a distance of 1.25 AU. These results are consistent with an F7 white-yellow main sequence star that would appear, from the surface of Vulcan, 6 percent smaller in diameter but 35 percent brighter than does Sol from Earth. This is consistent with "Operation: Annihilate!" and it avoids making the star so bright that visiting humans would be burned or blinded by it. Vulcan senses are more acute than ours, so their more sensitive eyes would need the "inner-eyelid" safeguard.

And where is this star? In *Star Trek: The Motion Picture,* as the *Enterprise* is about to leave Earth for "a proper shakedown," Scott tells Spock they can have him back on Vulcan in four days. The just-upgraded ship can cruise up to Warp Factor 8, so a shakedown would probably average WF 6, or nearly

280,000*c*. I assume the seemingly immediate jump to warp speed at the end was mere dramatic license (after all, even in his hardly leisurely pursuit of Vejur, Kirk waited until the ship passed Jupiter before engaging warp drive; in a shakedown they would wait until Neptune was cleared). In setting out after Vejur, the ship took 1.8 hours to reach Jupiter. Neptune is about 6.9 times farther from Earth than is Jupiter, so nearly twelve-and-one-half hours would be spent at sublight. Assuming similar caution in approaching Vulcan once in its star system, the entire trip would contain 25 hours of sublight flight. "Four days" could be as few as 84 hours or as many as 107, so 59 to 82 hours were spent at WF 6. Therefore, Vulcan would be 1880 to 2612 light-years from Earth.

In "Amok Time," Spock says the *Enterprise* can divert from its course to Altair VI with a loss of but 2.8 solar days. Actually, he says "light-days," but *pon farr* must be confusing him. A light-day is a unit of distance, not time, equal to 173 AU. Were we to take him literally, the diversion would add only 500 AU to their original route, a distance the warp-speed ship can cross in a second or so. When the Altair ceremonies are advanced one week, the ship must speed there at WF 6, so its original speed must have been that or less. And if the ceremonies were originally D days away, D obviously must be no less than 7.

When they are advanced, and Kirk wishes to go to Altair via Vulcan at WF 8, he tells Komack the delay would be at most a day—he is pleading his best case, so it's safe to assume the time needed is the original D days, minus 7, plus 1 for lateness, or $D - 6$. Call the distance between the ship and Vulcan X, between Vulcan and Altair Y, and between the ship and Altair Z. Then the indirect trip, $X + Y$, takes 2.8 days longer, at whatever speed Spock had in mind, than the direct trip, Z. And if the time to cross $X + Y$ at the speed Spock had in mind is called N, N must be less than or equal to D. So crossing $X + Y$ at WF 8 must take a time greater than or equal to $D - 6$. These two inequalities can be solved for the various speeds from

WF 1 to WF 6. For example, by the cube formula, WF 8 is 512 times faster than WF 1, so a trip at the higher speed takes only 1/512 as much time. So if the ship were originally flying at WF 1, $N/512$ would be the time needed to cross $X + Y$ at WF 8, so $N/512$ would be greater than or equal to $D - 6$. Thus N is greater than or equal to $512D - 3072$. Multiplying by -1 reverses the inequality to $-N \leq 3072 - 512D$. Adding that to the inequality $N \leq D$ means $0 \leq 3072 - 511D$, so $511D \leq 3072$, and thus D can be no more than 3072/511, or 6.01. This is clearly wrong, since D has to be more than 7. A similar process with WF 2 through WF 6 proves only WF 5 and WF 6 are admissible, with D being 7.94 and 10.38 days, respectively.

At WF 5, the extra 2.8 days come to 1238.5 LY; at WF 6, 2140 LY, so either $X + Y = Z + 1238.5$ or $X + Y = Z + 2140$. When 7 days are taken from their travel time, they still can reach Altair in time if they go there directly at WF 6, but they'll be late if they divert to Vulcan, even at WF 8. Since they at first had between 7.94 and 10.38 days, they now have 0.94 to 3.38. At WF 6, up to 717 LY can be covered in 0.94 days, up to 2582 in 3.38 days. Thus, if the original speed was WF 5, $X + Y$ must be less than or equal to 1955.5 LY, if WF 6, 4722 LY. At WF 8, crossing those distances would require a respective 1.08 and 2.61 days, both of which are supposed to be roughly a day more than they have. Adding 1 to 0.94 and 3.38 gives 1.94 and 4.38. It isn't surprising that both results are larger than the travel times, because obviously the ship couldn't fly at WF 8 continuously; it had to slow down to approach Vulcan (and eventually Altair VI), and Spock had to go down to his planet. Still, 4.48 is so much more than 2.61, it makes the figures suspect, so we can reasonably assume that $X + Y$ are no more than 1995.5 LY (that is, their original speed was WF 5). To find a lower limit for $X + Y$, pretend they *could* have done all those things that consumed the remaining 0.86 days at WF 8—they would have traveled 1558 LY in that time, so $X + Y$ cannot be less than that. Finally, even if the ship, Vulcan, and Altair

lay on a straight line, a loss of 2.8 days at WF 5 would put Vulcan at least 619 LY from Altair (1.4 days back and forth at WF 5). And allowing at the very least an hour between Christine Chapel's rushing to tell Spock the ship is going to Vulcan after all and their arrival in the system, *X* cannot be less than 75.5 LY (1 hour times WF 8). Putting those extremes into the equation shows *Y* must be between 619 and 1920 LY. If Vulcan is this distance from Altair and if Altair is 16.5 LY from Earth, Vulcan must be between 602.5 and 1936 LY from Earth.

Hmmm . . . *per aspera,* indeed. These calculations were necessarily approximate, but since the maximum "Amok Time" distance is only 3 percent greater than the minimum *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* distance, we cannot be far off the mark. Combining this range with that from *STTMP* means that the star of Vulcan must be some 1880 to 1937 LY from Earth. This puts an end to any chance of its being 40 or Epsilon Eridani, Procyon, Fomalhaut, or any other nearby star. But that should have been obvious all along. Vulcans advanced scientifically faster than Terrans. If Vulcan were within 30 LY of Earth, they would have had ample time to detect and respond to our earliest radio broadcasts. Given that Earth doesn't learn of Vulcan until after the mid twenty-first century, Vulcan must be at least 65 LY away. At the distance determined above, a star as bright as Vulcan's would be just at the limit of visibility of a six-inch telescope, far too dim to be one of the familiar, naked-eye stars. Still, we know its distance, spectral class, and physical characteristics, and, recalling the galaxy's roughly cylindrical shape, the volume of the search has been reduced by 99.99 percent. Spock and Chekov were able to find "The Way to Eden" with less information. Surely, then, finding Vulcan is only a matter of . . . time.

THE ROMULAN COMMANDER: THE GREAT REAPPEARING WOMAN

by Michelle Kusik

D. C. Fontana's third-season script, "The Enterprise Incident," provided Trekdom with one of its most popular guest characters. Known officially as the "Romulan Commander," she first locked Kirk into her brig for his treaty violation; she was then seduced by Spock in a scheme to obtain the Romulan cloaking device. Although some were not warmed by her proposed execution of Spock, it was clear by the end of the episode that the Vulcan had won a special place in her heart. It was also evident that this was a brave woman, and (in spite of her weakness for a certain elusive Vulcan) a capable ship's commander, who was quite willing to give her life for her Empire.

It is easy to understand why the Romulan Commander has made her way into no less than six original Star Trek novels. In spite of being "the enemy," she is still a part of our Star Trek universe; and, if she truly was the one great love of Spock's life (as some fans believe), then she is also a part of our Star Trek family. And so we greet her with open arms as she appears in these novels, as much as we would Kevin Riley or Lieutenant Kyle. The appearance of these familiar faces increases the sense of continuity between the novels and the series; it makes novel readers feel as though they are seeing an old friend. But with the Romulan Commander, there is more than the usual emotional attachment: There is the excitement of Fu-

ture Possibilities (i.e., Will Spock and his Romulan lady ever get together again? Will they rekindle romance? Did he really care about her?).

More important to the actual plot, the Romulan Commander has *power*. That is, she could step in and help our heroes if they could somehow get on her good side (and we're fairly certain that Spock could). She also has great potential in scenarios of political intrigue.

All of the above factors make this lady a character of great potential for the Star Trek novels. What is disturbing to readers is the lack of continuity in the use of this particular character. It seems firmly established that all the Star Trek adventures take place in one continuous universe. Thus, the characters therein have (or *should* have) a consistent history.

Yet it is extremely disconcerting to discover that the same Romulan Commander has, in the course of six novels, done all of the following:

Having retained her position as Commander, she aided Kirk and Spock in the fight against the villain Omne (and took Kirk's duplicate as a lover, no less) in *The Price of the Phoenix* and *The Fate of the Phoenix,* by Marshak and Culbreath.

In Diane Duane's *My Enemy, My Ally,* it is revealed that she lost her rank and her command, was publicly shamed and exiled, and became a "nonperson."

In *Killing Time* by Della van Hise, she is given the name "Thea," discovered to be the leading Romulan Praetor (something akin to Emperor), and also helps a time-altered *Enterprise* crew right the damage done by a Romulan time-tampering plot.

Her next appearance is in Sonni Cooper's *Black Fire,* where she meets a wayward Spock and explains (through an aura of bitterness and hatred) that she has lost her position and rank; she now serves in minor capacities in unimportant missions. When the ship she now serves is caught in an explosion, the former Romulan Commander (here named "Clea") also loses her life. (The events in *Black Fire* occur around the time

of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture;* this is the time frame established by the introduction of the pajama uniforms, and Chekov's promotion to lieutenant.)

Clea/Thea's next entrance onto the Star Trek stage is in *Dwellers in the Crucible* by Margaret Wander Bonanno. In this novel she is once again the commander of her original ship (and still with Sub-Commander Tal, her not-so-secret lover). She apparently rewon her command by a long and hard struggle, but still has enough power to threaten several stubborn Klingons and help Kirk and Spock regain valuable Federation prisoners. (This indicates she *could not* have become a "nonperson" as Duane's novel states, since an exile would not have any clout in Imperial government negotiations.)

Obviously, one single character (no matter how remarkable) could not have been exiled, demoted, still in command, absolute ruler, and dead all in the same lifetime. Many of the above are permanent conditions, even if the novels mentioned take place in different times in the overall Star Trek history (as established by movies and the time frames given in pertinent novels). Unless . . . what if there is more here than meets the eye as far as the course of this woman's life is concerned?

Unfortunately, your humble writer happens to love the majority of the novels mentioned, and so cannot simply set them aside as unfaithful representations of the Star Trek saga. Even though (by technicalities of copyright dates) some of these could be said to contain the "proper" history of this character, it is also evident that the above-mentioned novelists could have been working on their own novels and not known about previously established, conflicting facts. (Consider, as well, that all these writers feel a right to use their ideas for their own creations, even though all these novels are probably supposed to fit together and basically conform to each other in facts.) These are all well-written, creative works, some by established writers like Sondra Marshak and Myrna Culbreath, Diane Duane, Sonni Cooper, and Margaret Wander

Bonanno. It can only be hoped that these people have done their homework as far as character background is concerned.

In the face of all these (sometimes adverse) realities, this humble (and puzzled) writer decided to come up with a (hopefully) plausible explanation for almost all the conflicts evident in even a brief comparison of these six novels. This is done with all due respect to the novelists involved, as it is obviously a variation on their original intents concerning the fate of the Romulan Commander. It is hoped, however, that it will bridge the gap between some fairly diverse pictures of this character's true identity and history.

In order to make this explanation workable, the Romulan Commander either has to be the old Praetor's daughter or lover (the first is established in *Killing Time;* the lover idea is hinted at in *Dwellers in the Crucible*). Perhaps she was the daughter of one Praetor; inherited his throne, and then abdicated it in order to command her ship again. The man who replaced her could either be an occasional or aspiring lover. The point is, the Romulan Commander has influence with the absolute ruler of their Empire. Moreover, if she were the sole heir to the Praetor's throne and is thus the rightful Praetor, she holds absolute power herself. In *Killing Time,* "Thea" explains to the time-changed Spock that she formerly commanded a Bird of Prey as a test—a test that would prove to her father (the Praetor) that she was worthy of both command and the royal throne. According to her, she failed—and it was only nepotism that saved her from losing her position. This explains how she could still command her flagship in both of the *Phoenix* novels, in addition to *Dwellers.*

What, then, of her exile and unNaming (and therefore, lack of personhood) mentioned in *My Enemy, My Ally*? What of her disgrace, demotion, and death depicted in *Black Fire*? (Especially since she came back as a restored, and living, commander in *Dwellers,* which features Saavik and occurred shortly before *The Wrath of Khan.*)

Yes, these do seem to stray from the original explanation of how she was returned to, or managed not to lose, her position in the Imperial Romulan Fleet. But we Star Trek fans never lose hope about understanding the seemingly impossible scenario. After all, how else could we figure out what really happened in "Tomorrow Is Yesterday" and "Yesteryear"? (Why else would Leslie Thompson get so much mail?) These little conflicts *can* be woven into the above explanation.

For instance, on the public disgrace and unNaming described in Duane's novel: Granted, Ael (the *other* Romulan Commander) was Clea/Thea's aunt, and would most probably know about her being the Praetor's daughter. The idea of a public trial for the loss of the cloaking device is not far-fetched; it is likely that the Romulan people would have demanded it. It was not common knowledge that Clea/Thea was the Praetor's daughter, as is quite clear from the character's own explanation in *Killing Time.* Therefore, the Praetor probably wouldn't have rushed to his daughter's aid, since the loss of the cloaking device was a major embarrassment for him, as well. If Ael badgered the Praetor about this, he could simply claim that he had disowned his daughter for her dishonor. All of this would make it easier for Clea/Thea's later reestablishment as Commander of her flagship. If the Praetor kept quiet for a while, and kept his daughter's identity a secret, she could eventually be given back her command—and, after her father's death, rule the Empire.

She is seen in *Black Fire* as a lowly crew member on an obscure ship. She has been exiled (which is more consistent with *My Enemy, My Ally*), but she has managed to at least retain a tenuous place in the Romulan Fleet. If, as hypothesized, all of this were part of a great conspiracy on the Praetor's part to return his daughter's command, then the public shaming and, years later, granting of a very minor post while the Commander was still in exile would be logical, gradual steps in moving Clea/Thea back

to power. All of these machinations would give the public time to forget about the disgraced Commander. With quiet and careful scheming, the Romulan Commander could very well have maintained her power and her position.

The only other major problem standing in the way of this explanation is the explosion in which she was fatally injured in *Black Fire*. Spock believed she was a casualty. There is one way she could have escaped, however. Clea/Thea's father, knowing that she would often face danger in deep space, and not wanting her killed since she was his only heir, had her life safeguarded by one or more secret Romulan security agents. They would have been sworn to secrecy about her identity and would also have the means to remove her from imminent or possible danger at any time.

By the time she was back in command of her own ship, this practice could have been abandoned, since (a) her father was most likely dead at that point and she was Praetor, or (b) an active starship commander cannot be removed at any hint of danger. As she now had the power to be in charge of her own destiny, she would have to protect herself from threats to her life—the same way Jim Kirk did.

At any rate, when the explosion occurred, Clea/Thea had been spirited off the ship and spared from certain doom. Of course it was coldhearted to let the rest of the crew die, but this woman was, after all, the Praetor's daughter. She needed to preserve her anonymity. An alternate explanation for her absence from her ship during the explosion could have been merely a fortuitous accident, whereby she was called off to rendezvous with her father at that time. As long as she somehow avoided being killed in that instance, she could have her ship and command back in time for the events of *Dwellers in the Crucible*.

Of course, this explanation is a bit convoluted and contrived; then again, it's amazing that there even *exists* a way to explain such contradictions. This writer can only hope there are no more novels written that

feature other inconsistent versions of the Romulan Commander's life and identity. As for the biggest mystery of all—what the Romulan Commander's name actually is—that is gratefully left for Leslie Thompson to solve!

A LOOK AT THE ROMULAN COMMANDER

by Dan Day

The Romulan Commander, despite her only appearance in "official" Star Trek, has made a sizable impression on a number of Trekkers. She is even a heroine to some. Fans admire her for her courage and intelligence, despite the fact that she was the villain in the episode in which she appeared ("The Enterprise Incident"). She even has her own cult, and there has been almost as much written about her in fan circles as there has been about any of Star Trek's main characters.

The reasons for this are obvious and many. The main reason is her "love" for Spock. There are a number of female fans in love with the Vulcan, and any female in the series who showed an interest in him is bound to get some attention. There is a common fan belief that Spock and the Romulan Commander would make a perfect match, but this seems absurd, no matter how many fans dream about it. The Commander felt very little love for Spock. When watching "Incident," one wonders how anyone can make the assumption that there was a love affair going on.

It is my belief that, like the great love affair, the Romulan Commander herself is greatly overrated, and, to an extent, blown out of proportion. To show how this is true, one must re-examine her only true appearance in the Star Trek universe, in "The Enterprise Incident."

This episode appeared in the infamous third season. It was originally written by Dorothy Fontana, but there were changes made to her story before it evolved into a final script. Such changes to an author's original story were a common occurrence on *Star Trek*. Fontana herself has said that she was not happy with what was done to the story. The original script was, by most accounts, more realistic.

The story (as aired) begins with Captain Kirk acting as if he has gone mad. This is just an excuse to explain why the *Enterprise* has entered Romulan space. The real reason is to steal the Romulan cloaking device. Kirk gets the ship captured, and he and Spock meet the Romulan Commander. Spock betrays Kirk, winning the respect and admiration of the Commander, and Kirk a seat in the Romulan brig.

It is hard to believe that, even though he was under secret orders, Kirk did not inform the crew about the mission. He would certainly not try to appear insane in front of them or trick them into believing he was dead. As Spock said in "The Enemy Within," if the Captain was anything less than perfect in the eyes of the crew, he would lose respect and command.

Would you respect a captain who did not even tell his closest friends and his most trusted officers about an important mission? I think not. Of course, it wasn't that Kirk didn't trust the crew. This is television, and the audience had to be fooled. Their intelligence was insulted, as well.

The next sequence of events is even worse. Kirk attacks Spock for his treachery, and Spock kills him with the "Vulcan death grip." But, surprise, surprise—Kirk isn't dead after all. It's a plot (as if we didn't know). Spock and the Commander get down to some serious conversation, and Kirk puts on a Romulan disguise, with the help of the now-enlightened McCoy. Kirk beams aboard the Romulan ship, grabs the cloaking device, and literally runs away with it. (The cloaking device looks like a cross between Nomad and Sargon.)

The intelligent Commander, who hasn't figured out

a thing, tries to get Spock to join the Romulan Empire. (I have always had a suspicion that one of the greatest Star Trek fans' dreams is to have Spock become a Romulan, which is another reason why this show is so popular.) The Commander realizes too late that Vulcans are not traitors. As Spock is beamed aboard to safety, she holds onto him, which shows real love, apparently. At the end, everyone makes jokes about Kirk's pointed ears, and Spock gets to escort his lady love to the brig.

There are a number of things wrong with this story. One of the biggest is Kirk's dressing up as a Romulan. He even talks to a real Romulan while on the ship. Where did the Romulan learn English, or better yet, where did Kirk learn Romulan? Kirk was the worst choice possible for this part of the mission. As captain, there was no way he should have risked himself by trying to steal the device. Starfleet should have assigned another Vulcan onboard to do the job. A young Vulcan, trained in Romulan customs and language, would have been perfect. But this is television, and we have to see the hero do his thing. However, the sight of Kirk running around the ship with the device clutched in his arms is ludicrous.

Another mistake is the all-too-obvious overplaying of the relationship between Spock and the Romulan Commander. This is the main reason for the popularity of the episode and the Commander.

Spock was *not* in love with the Commander. He was doing his duty, no matter how much he might have enjoyed it. And just because he could have enjoyed it does not mean he was "in love." Spock more than likely got some satisfaction in pulling a fast one on the vain and conceited Commander.

Vain and conceited? Yes, that's what the Romulan Commander is. Many fans, however, think differently. They have made her out to be an all-beautiful, all-intelligent, all-noble superwoman. This is not an exaggeration. The Romulan Commander has been turned into a respected heroine, and in some fans' minds, she ranks above Chapel and even Uhura.

This is a little sad, because the Commander's character is not as interesting as one may be led to believe. In the episode she acts childish and spoiled when she does not get her own way. She certainly does not seem "heroic." She also can't be too intelligent, for the plot against her was enacted almost right under her nose, and she didn't find out until it was too late.

Nevertheless, the Romulan Commander caught on with a number of Star Trek fans, despite the quality of the episode in which she appeared. Most of these fans are female, and most of them have an attraction to Spock. That is the key to the Commander's popularity. Her desire for Spock made her the foremost of a number of all-body, no-brains females who seemed to populate the Star Trek universe during the third season. A good example of this is Droxine (from the "worst episode" candidate number three, "The Cloud Minders"). She makes the Romulan Commander look like the superwoman the fans make her out to be.

Perhaps this is another reason why the Romulan Commander is so popular. She didn't have much competition during the third season. Of course, there was Zarabeth, but no one gave her a thought until *Yesterday's Son* came along. Even so, she never made an appearance in the novel.

Another factor in the Commander's popularity is her race. Romulans are, by far, more popular with fans than are the Klingons, who have almost become a cliché. But the Romulans themselves have become a cliché, and we will later see why this is so.

The Commander has become so popular that she has even overshadowed the actress who played her, Joanne Linville. Although more than enough has been written about her character, almost nothing has been written about Linville. Her portrayal of the Commander isn't bad, although a little stiff, and she certainly doesn't seem sensitive. The reasons for the Commander's hold over Star Trek fans is in her actions and her motives, and the fact that we know very little about the Commander herself. Most of the Commander's fans seem to have forgotten Linville alto-

gether, as if they want to place their own version of the Commander into Star Trek continuity rather than the television version.

This is a perfect example of the fans' getting out of hand and changing the Star Trek universe to their own liking. There is nothing wrong with the fans being creative, but here is a situation where the fans have taken a character and changed it totally out of context from what was originally presented. The Romulan Commander may be an interesting character, but there are several other characters in the world of Star Trek who deserve more attention and the type of adoration given to her.

Besides, such adoration for the Commander seems a little ridiculous, since the Commander is more than likely dead.

Dead?

Yes, dead. Think about it.

The Romulans are a very proud race. Any insult or disgrace is not to be taken lightly. Certainly, the Commander's encounter with the *Enterprise* was a major disgrace for the Romulan Empire. The cloaking device was stolen, thus putting an end to a major advantage the Romulans had over the Federation. The device would more than likely have been stolen anyway, but the Romulans had to hold onto that advantage as long as they could. The Commander herself was "captured." It has been said that Romulans prefer death to capture. If that is true, then the Commander suffered an even worse disgrace, especially if the Romulans found out that she gave herself up to them. They would not be pleased about that part of the incident.

Because of the way the Romulans run their society, the Commander would have to suffer harsh penalties. She could be sentenced to death, or her disgrace would be such that she could be forced to seek total isolation, or she could even commit suicide. The Commander's fans would consider the idea of her killing herself ridiculous, but when one thinks about it, it makes sense. Romulans would consider it perfectly un-

derstandable. Suicide is even respected in the Romulan society, especially when it is done to save face.

The Commander could also have been imprisoned. Whatever the result, it must have been some sort of punishment. Most Star Trek fans, however, fail to understand the Commander's situation and take it for granted that nothing ever happened to her and that she never paid the price for her actions.

In his article "Love in Star Trek—Part Two," which appeared in *The Best of Trek* #7, Walter Irwin says of the Commander: "... she's out there somewhere today, fighting battles, advancing her career, and helping spread the many good things that are part of the Romulan Way." This doesn't ring true. She certainly wouldn't have gotten away that easily. She certainly would never have gotten back onto a Romulan ship, whether as a commander, lowly private, or civilian.

It now seems the right time to discuss the Star Trek novels and the Commander's many appearances in them; as well as how the Commander herself has influenced the story lines and the way the Romulan race has been portrayed.

As stated before, the Romulan Commander has become a heroine. Because of this, in almost every novel, short story, or article written about them, the Romulans are made out to be a proud, noble, and honorable race of warriors. They have been so lauded that they are virtually no longer villains. They have become, in fact, the anti-heroes of Star Trek. Certainly, the popularity of the female Commander (and the earlier, Mark Lenard-portrayed male Commander, as well) brought this change about. But as I stated earlier, the "proud, noble" Romulans have become a cliché as well.

As of this writing, seven of the Star Trek novels involve Romulans. They are *Yesterday's Son* (in which our good friend Commander Tal pops up), *Black Fire, Web of the Romulans, Killing Time, Dwellers in the Crucible, Mindshadow,* and, in my opinion, the best Star Trek novel, *My Enemy, My Ally*. The Romulan Commander is mentioned or appears in each of these

seven novels. When Kirk and company meet up with a Romulan, he or she either mentions the Commander or reveals that she is related to them somehow. The impression one gets from reading these novels is that the Commander is related to more than half the Romulan Empire.

It is also obvious that the authors of these novels have tried to invent their own Commander-like characters, as is evident in Sonni Cooper's *Black Fire.* Here Spock is held prisoner for a while on a backward alien planet with a female Romulan, Julina. Julina saves his life a couple of times, and she falls in love with him. Julina really doesn't have too much in common with her more famous counterpart, but there are obvious similarities. Julina is proud and noble, and just when you think she is a hard one to crack, along comes Spock and . . .

This novel has everything: An attack on the *Enterprise,* which almost succeeds; Spock tortured by a cavewoman (who actually reminds one of the Romulan Commander more than does Julina); Spock sent to a Federation prison, escaping with a Romulan, and becoming a famous, romantic pirate; and after his high-space escapades, he finally becomes a Romulan officer.

The dream of many a Star Trek fan comes true in this book. And, you guessed it, during his Romulan sojourn, Spock meets up with the Commander herself. She makes no more than a cameo appearance, attending a farewell party for Romulan officers about to shove off. (How she got on the guest list is beyond my comprehension.) She treats Spock rather coldly, but then, who can blame her?

In *Web of the Romulans,* the Praetor is stopping at nothing, even war, to end the famine in the Romulan Empire. Opposing him is S'Talon, who is being protected by S'Tarleya. S'Tarleya is another proud, noble, and beautiful Romulan female. This novel isn't really that bad; at least S'Tarleya doesn't fall in love with Spock.

The Romulans in *Yesterday's Son* are the basic vil-

lains of the story, which makes for a somewhat refreshing change. As stated before, Commander Tal turns up in this one. Because of his association with the famous Commander, Tal has gotten more attention and more appearances than any other secondhand villain in another episode would have received.

In *Mindshadow,* we see yet another proud, noble Romulan woman being thrust into the role of antihero. This time, Kirk and McCoy, as well as Spock, have an attraction to her. The similarity to the Commander is very strong in this character.

Killing Time is one of the most confusing and complex of all Star Trek novels. The Commander herself appears in this one, playing a major role in the story instead of being briefly mentioned. In this one the Commander has become *Praetor,* of all things. There is also another young, proud, and noble Romulan helping out the Commander, or in this case, her excellency. The plot concerns the Praetor's attempts at changing Federation history through the use of a Romulan time-tampering project called Second History. The book is overlong, puzzling, and boring. One really doesn't care what happens at the end.

Dwellers in the Crucible, by Margaret Wander Bonanno, manages to stay away from the old clichés, especially in the treatment of the Romulans—a well-written and innovative novel.

We finally come to Diane Duane's masterpiece, *My Enemy, My Ally.* At first glance it looks like this novel is going to be the same old story: A proud, noble Romulan female, who is related to the Commander, figures prominently in the book. But Duane does not let the characters become clichés.

The story concerns Ael, who is the Commander's aunt. She is a respected veteran of the Romulan fleet, who is sickened by her Empire's use of Vulcans in mind and brain experiments. She seeks out the aid of Captain Kirk and the *Enterprise,* and the surprised Kirk agrees to help her.

Duane probably knows more about the Romulans than anyone; she takes us into the Romulan culture

like no other writer. Other writers merely say that Romulans are proud and noble, but Duane shows us why. Her character, Ael, is one of the best ever created in a Star Trek novel.

The Romulan Commander also makes an appearance in the *Phoenix* novels written by Marshak and Culbreath. However, these novels are so far-fetched it is hard to call them Star Trek novels at all.

The Romulan Commander has become one of the most exaggerated and overrated characters in the Star Trek universe. Perhaps this character will finally be put into her proper place and thought of as she should be. Instead of the superwoman the fans have made her out to be, the Romulan Commander, in the end, becomes nothing more than a vain, arrogant, and not-too-bright woman who fell for the wrong Vulcan.

PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE TENSE: A SPECULATIVE COMMENTARY ON CAPTAIN JEAN-LUC PICARD AND DR. BEVERLY CRUSHER

by E. A. Lowe

Part I—Intimations of Paternity: Whence Wesley?

There has been some speculation among fans of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* on the likelihood that Acting Ensign Wesley Crusher is actually Captain Jean-Luc Picard's son. My own speculations about the story of the relationship between Captain Picard and Dr. Beverly Crusher (or its present and future) do not embrace that likelihood. The very idea is downright unsettling, as it flies in the case of what I feel and believe about the characters involved.

I place Walker Keel's introduction of Beverly to Jack Crusher and Jean-Luc Picard somewhere within a five-year span, between twenty-two and seventeen years prior to the last portion of the first season of *The Next Generation*. The reasons for these specific time limits? Beverly did not know Jenice Manheim, so introductions had likely not been made before Picard left Jenice twenty-two years ago. At the other extreme, seventeen years ago is about one year before

Wesley's birth. This timing allows Jack and Beverly all of three months for meeting, courtship, marriage, and conception. A whirlwind romance, but certainly possible.

My objections to Picard's paternity of Wesley Crusher rest substantially on the personal character traits of Captain Picard and Dr. Crusher, as revealed in the series' first-season episodes.

First: That either Jean-Luc Picard or Beverly Crusher would have betrayed Jack Crusher strikes me as unbelievable. (I confess to bias here. I have a strong liking and respect for both these characters and a possibly naive faith in their personal integrity, loyalty, and just plain decency. I do not *want* them diminished by such a betrayal.)

Jack was Beverly's husband and, as Picard tells Counselor Deanna Troi in "Conspiracy," one of Picard's "oldest and closest" friends. Even if I could entertain the idea of Beverly's infidelity (*her* integrity notwithstanding, we *know* next to nothing about the Crushers' marital relationship), we have seen how Picard behaves regarding at least one other "old friend"—his unshakable personal loyalty to Captain Walker Keel in "Conspiracy," even at the risk of his own career. Committing adultery with a good friend's wife, or even having an affair with that friend's fiancée or girlfriend, is just not consistent with that revealed behavior.

We have also seen how Picard behaves regarding a woman with whom he *did* have an affair long ago and for whom he still has strong feelings, but who is now the wife of a man who is not his friend. Would Picard have treated Jack Crusher with any less respect and consideration than he does Dr. Paul Manheim? Unlikely.

Second: Picard and Beverly do not at all behave toward each other as if they had once shared a sexually intimate relationship. By contrast, the nuances of the behavior (e.g., despite the underlying tension, the private joking that verges on playfulness) between Pi-

card and Jenice Manheim in "We'll Always Have Paris" are redolent of such intimacy.

Picard's remark to Beverly, "I hope we can be friends," and the way they shake hands in "Encounter at Farpoint" are not the acts of former lovers.

Also, Picard and Beverly seem not to have access to lovers' secrets—the kinds of details about each other's personal lives, histories, and family backgrounds that are typically exchanged by lovers. When Picard comments to Beverly in "The Arsenal of Freedom," ". . . there must be a lot of things about you that I don't know," it is the casual, offhand remark of a man who does not expect himself to have a thorough knowledge of this particular woman.

When Beverly is overcome by the intoxicating effects of the contaminant in "The Naked Now," and professes her ardent desire for Picard, she is obviously surprised at her own emotions and dismayed at her "lack of good judgment."

As for Picard: Long after Beverly has telegraphed her intent to the audience, he is still very much in the dark about what she is suggesting. Picard is either the galaxy's most imperceptive ex-lover—and his behavior with Jenice Manheim rather dispels that idea—or Beverly is expressing feelings for him she has never before displayed and he has no reason to expect she ever would display. This second option seems the more plausible explanation.

Then, when Picard is affected by the contaminant himself and finally clues in to Beverly's arousal, the first thing he does is retreat from her advances. Hardly the act of a man faced with the delightful prospect of resuming a sexual relationship with a highly desirable and obviously willing previous lover. More likely, Picard is reacting in surprise and confusion, both to the intoxicant and to the unanticipated revelation of Beverly's desire for him.

Within moments this initial response is followed by his plea to her, "Not *now* . . . !" clearly implying, *Yes, later.* But, despite the progressively disinhibiting influence of the intoxicant, Picard and Beverly never do

consummate their mutual desire—they do not even embrace or kiss!—and once the contaminant is neutralized, *later* simply does not happen.

Third: Picard demonstrates not the slightest suspicion that Wesley might be his own son. A man who has engaged in sexual relations with a woman, whether before or after her marriage to another man, might reasonably be expected to at least wonder about the paternity of a subsequent child.

Picard shoulders full responsibility for the consequence of his own actions—and he can count to nine. If he suspected he were Wesley's real father, could he have abandoned his own son and the boy's mother as abruptly and thoroughly as he did after Jack Crusher's funeral? In spite of Picard's self-confessed uneasiness with children, he hardly seems capable of that.

Then, too, when Beverly tells Picard in "Justice," "If he were your son, you'd be as frightened—" Picard interrupts her, not to demand if Wesley *is* his son, but to affirm, "But, I am," that is, as frightened as she is, even without Wesley's being his own child.

Fourth: Beverly's behavior, generally, with Picard or Wesley, lends no support to the idea that Wesley might be Picard's son. And, in "Justice," her conduct fairly screams against it. If Picard *had* fathered Wesley, the threat to her son's life in this episode furnishes the strongest possible motive for Beverly to finally disclose to him Wesley's true paternity. She does not.

If the evidence of the episodes needs bolstering, Patrick Stewart himself scotches the Picard/Crusher paternity theory during an interview in *Star Trek: The Official Club Magazine* [issue No. 62, pg. 9]: "People who say that are very suspicious individuals! But, no, Wesley is not Picard's son."

Therefore, it seems most reasonable to conclude that, whatever offspring Jean-Luc Picard may or may not have littered about the galaxy, Wesley Crusher, at least, is not one of them.

Part II—View from the Bridge: Scanning Jean-Luc Picard

To reject the idea that Acting Ensign Wesley Crusher is Captain Jean-Luc Picard's son, or even that Captain Picard and Dr. Beverly Crusher were once lovers, is not to say that Picard felt no attraction toward her. By no means. In fact, he was probably very attracted to her.

When Walker Keel introduced Beverly to Jack Crusher and Jean-Luc Picard, she must have been a strikingly attractive young woman. After all, perhaps twenty years later in "Encounter at Farpoint," Beverly Crusher is highly attractive still—articulate, professional, passionate, physically lovely, and possessed of a lively intelligence and wit—all qualities Picard appreciates and admires, and despite himself, responds to.

Three factors likely discouraged his following through and declaring himself openly to her at their earliest acquaintance, though.

First, Picard is a somewhat reserved person, lacking the easy charm of a James Kirk or William Riker. It takes a while for Picard to warm up to others and for others to warm up to him.

Second, Picard would hesitate about another romantic involvement after the painful ending of his affair with Jenice (later Mrs. Paul Manheim).

Meanwhile, Jack Crusher, unencumbered by such restraints, would presumably be much taken with Beverly and would be sparing no effort (and no time, either) to get her to reciprocate.

Third, Picard would be reluctant to disrupt the romance already rapidly developing between his friend and Beverly.

In spite of his own feelings of attraction, Picard may even have been relieved at this turn of events. His prior commitment to Starfleet seems to have precluded a deeply committed, long-term relationship with any woman. Especially after the shabby, cowardly

way in which he broke off his affair with Jenice, Picard seems to have recognized that uncomfortable truth about himself, even though he has not been totally happy with it nor proud of it.

Far from presenting himself to Beverly as an alternative suitor, Picard would be more likely to suppress his inappropriate emotions and stage an orderly retreat. The captain's use of the phrase, "avoid temptation," at the end of "The Naked Now," rather than the more usual "resist temptation," is a significant indicator of Picard's life-long strategy for not "confronting deep personal issues," as Counselor Deanna Troi puts it in "We'll Always Have Paris." Picard probably became more reserved and began avoiding Beverly's company whenever it was feasible and not too obvious.

And so, some time later, Jack and Beverly were married; Wesley was born; perhaps three or four years passed.

Then, Jack Crusher was killed.

Apart from having to contend with his own feelings of grief at the loss of his friend and with a starship captain's ultimate responsibility for the lives, and deaths, of his people, Picard also had to return Jack's body to his widow and child. Picard fulfilled that painful duty, then promptly vanished from their lives for the next several years, up until the events of "Encounter at Farpoint."

Picard justified this abrupt severing of contact by persuading himself that he could serve only to remind Beverly of their shared tragedy. This was likely, in part, a valid assessment of the situation at that time. It may also have been, in part, a relationship devised to camouflage his other intent, which was to spare his own emotional life as well as hers.

Picard's problem? His attraction to Beverly, still stubbornly alive despite long burial, might have been resurrected, provoking even more guilt feelings in him.

A subordinate officer is killed in action, leaving the path to his desirable widow conveniently clear for his commander. A well-read man, Picard must have been

sensitive to the parallels in his situation with the biblical account of David, Bathsheba, and Uriah. Granted, there are many crucial differences as well, but the superficial similarities are bound to have made Picard uneasy. If the commanding officer in question refused to press his supposed advantage with the widow, however, then even this flimsy comparison would unravel and, along with it, at least some of the guilt.

So, again his emotions were deemed inappropriate, again suppressed, and this time, Picard carried the avoidance strategy to its logical extreme.

As before, Picard may well have felt some relief at evading a serious romantic involvement. This ambivalence toward Beverly could only have been aggravated by the presence of Wesley.

Picard himself admits that dealing with children has never been his forte. Indeed, the captain handles alien life forms with much greater ease and finesse than he does the preadult members of his own species. And why not? Skills, and the confidence that comes with them, are built on the familiarity of experience. Since his own adolescence Picard's experiences have tended to hone those skills necessary for acceptance and success within the almost exclusively adult world of Starfleet. His work has required Picard to learn how to interact comfortably with adults, alien and human, in and out of Starfleet, but with children not at all. It shows.

No wonder, then, that Jack Crusher's widow and young son prove too complicating and daunting a combination for him. Picard decides to take off, get on with his life as best he can, and let the surviving Crushers get on with theirs. When they all eventually do meet again, it is, significantly, by Beverly's choice, not Picard's.

Even then, he continues to avoid her during the *several hours* after she has first boarded the *Enterprise* in "Encounter at Farpoint" and begun her duties as his Chief Medical Officer. He fails to welcome her aboard, in effect, forcing her to come to him on the bridge. This behavior is inconsistent with Picard's own

professed ideals of proper personal and professional courtesy, for breach of which he duly apologizes.

(Contrast Picard's general diffidence regarding Dr. Crusher with his command-rank self-assurance when it comes to Dr. Katherine Pulaski. Dr. Pulaski fails to report in during the second-season premiere episode, "The Child." Made aware of this, Picard seeks out Pulaski *immediately and personally* to deliver a lecture on protocol, with a view, no doubt, to eliciting an apology from *her.*)

In "Encounter at Farpoint" when Picard offers to "consider and approve" Beverly's application for transfer off the *Enterprise,* she floors him with the information that it was she who requested the *Enterprise* posting in the first place.

This news demolishes his quite truthful, publicly avowed reasons for avoiding her (i.e., his belief that his would be a painful presence in her life), but not the perhaps barely acknowledged, and certainly unresolved, private reason (i.e., his own continuing attraction to her).

At this point one may well wonder why Picard's desire for Beverly could still, paradoxically, be the very factor impelling him to avoid her. After all, several years have passed. Can Picard still be concerned about any possible David and Bathsheba comparisons?

Wesley Crusher is fast approaching adulthood, so there is no small child for Picard to feel uncomfortable with. There is no other man in Beverly's life to whom Picard might feel obliged to defer, and no reason, either, for Picard to fear that Beverly would find his attentions unwelcome. After the events of "The Naked Now," he has every reason to conclude, rightly, that Jean-Luc Picard is the one man Beverly Crusher would like to have in her life. Serving on the same ship for the duration of a lengthy mission, Picard and Beverly would not even be forced into long, frequent, stressful separations for the sake of their Starfleet careers.

Although it is true that time has swept away old obstacles, if not all of their residual effects, it is

equally true that time has introduced some new complications.

Beverly Crusher—Commander Crusher—is now a fellow Starfleet officer serving within Picard's command. Simply put: Picard likely considers her taboo, romantically.

When Q makes the sneering comment in "Hide and Q," "Consorting with lower-ranked females . . . ?," it sounds suspiciously like one of the things he has "borrowed" from the "stodgy captain's mind." But the jibe falls flat and Q knows it. It falls flat because the woman Picard had his hands on then happened to be Tasha Yar, and all three know full well that Picard has not been doing anything remotely like "consorting" with her.

If, however, instead of Tasha, it had been Beverly alone with Picard in the same stance, Q's barb could have proved a much more effective charge against the captain.

How does one keep personal feelings from compromising professional judgments or, conversely, ship's business out of private quarters? In the path between bedroom and bridge, at what point does a lovers' quarrel become dissension in the ranks; or a lover's request, the captain's order?

Even "lower ranked females" are wary of this potentially ruinous blurring of roles. Hence, Lt. Yar's wistful "Captain—oh, if you weren't a captain—" in the same episode; and her quietly imperative "It never happened," directed to Data in "The Naked Now."

It is highly probable that, especially after achieving captain's rank, Picard has largely steered clear of liaisons involving women within Starfleet generally, and those on his own ship, most particularly. Picard's falling-out with Captain Philippa Louvois over the *Stargazer* court-martial likely reinforced this policy.

Beverly Crusher is not the only officer who concerns Picard, though. In short order Wesley Crusher, too, comes under Picard's command with the rank of Acting Ensign.

It is part of a captain's responsibility to maintain

good working relations with all his officers. As captain, therefore, Picard must take some care to prevent his strictly personal desires from jeopardizing those relations. With the history that Picard and the Crushers already share, these three are balancing a lot of mixed feelings about one another as it is. Could Picard court Beverly without upsetting the equilibrium?

Frankly, Beverly would probably be delighted at the prospect. But what of Wesley?

A child, even *after* childhood, often has difficulty in viewing a parent (most notably, the mother) as a normal sexual being, with normal sexual drives—especially when those drives focus on a person who is not the child's other parent. The situation is further complicated if the chosen partner is already, independently, a pivotal figure in the child's life.

How might Picard risk skewing his own developing relationship with Ensign Crusher, as well as Beverly's loving rapport with her son? And what might be the effects on Wesley himself?

Put another way: Given the same background and circumstances, how would an adolescent *Ensign* Picard have reacted to a romance between his own mother and his captain? For Picard that must be a most disturbing question.

In "Code of Honor," when Picard is asked what he knows of the kinds of feelings and forces besetting the supposedly love-driven Lutan, Picard replies, "Nothing—well, almost nothing—in my position as ship's captain." Those added qualifications speak volumes about the restrictions Picard puts on himself in his capacity as captain, but volumes also about that side of Picard that is not captain.

Picard takes *himself* much less seriously than he does his professional role as starship captain within Starfleet and diplomatic representative of the Federation, with all the terrific power and equally terrific pressure that position entails. Likewise, Picard is less concerned with how *others* may perceive him personally than professionally. Therefore, Picard's ego—and Dr. Pulaski accurately points out in the second sea-

son's "Samaritan Snare" that Picard does have an ego—is also less concerned with propping up his personal dignity and pride than with maintaining the "image" he feels is proper to his captain's rank.

The observation of the holodeck-generated Minuet in "11001001" that Commander Riker's job "consumes and enthralls" him might equally be applied to Picard. So might Riker's assertion to Minuet about his identity with his work, "It *is* me. It's what I am."

Picard's work, too, very much defines Picard. A deeply passionate man, Picard has channeled a lot of that passion into his profession, rather than personal, life. The choice lends a decided warp (no pun intended) to his personality.

Picard integrates these two facets of himself—Jean-Luc and the Captain; the private man and the public figure; their goals, priorities, and passions—but there is no doubting to which he grants dominance.

As Lwaxana Troi, with uncharacteristic understatement, puts it in the second season's "Manhunt," Picard is "a little bit on the stiff side." So, although Jean-Luc Picard's inclination might be to invite the delectable Beverly Crusher to his cabin for a mutually pleasurable tryst (or several), Captain Picard is just not going to allow himself anything of the sort unless he can first satisfactorily resolve his professional concerns.

Besides these, however, Picard has powerful personal considerations to weigh as well (considerations that, it is important to keep in mind, are always colored by his professional priorities).

Marriage, or even a shipboard affair, would certainly disrupt the lifestyle Picard has established for himself over many years. He would have to adjust the settled routines and habits of his day-to-day life to accommodate the needs of his partner and, if this were Beverly, the needs of her son, as well—all the stresses and strains of a ready-made family for a person who frankly admits in "Encounter at Farpoint" he is "not a family man."

And on the subject of family, though from an en-

tirely different angle: A man's handling of his adult relationships with women is often attributed to his childhood relationship with his mother. It is easy to understand how an abusive, domineering, critical, or remote mother could distort her son's responses to all women. But, oddly, a close, affectionate bonding may sometimes prove as inhibiting.

As the adolescent boy strains toward independent young manhood, he strains, also, against the engulfing emotional dependence that the child within him still feels for his mother. Most men achieve a balanced emotional perspective with adulthood. For some men, however, this adolescent fear of emotional dependence may linger throughout their lives, leaving them unwilling, or unable, to form a deep emotional relationship with any other woman.

"Where No One Has Gone Before" offers a poignant glimpse into Picard's warm, loving attachment to his own mother. His memories of her still evoke in him a sense of security, and, long after her death, he still feels her comforting presence in his life.

With his crew behaving in seemingly lunatic fashion, and after his own terrifying experience in the turbolift, Picard is probably wishing he could step back for a minute, take a break, and try to puzzle out this bizarre situation over a calming cup of tea, the kind his mother used to make for him (by any chance, "Earl Grey, hot," as he orders in the second season's "Contagion" and "Pen Pals"?). The soothing effect of the tea may have less to do with the tea itself than with its abiding maternal associations for him.

But, no sooner wished than, to Picard's utter astonishment, his wishing makes it so. Impossibly, there sits Picard *mere,* in the middle of an *Enterprise* corridor, serving up his tea.

Whatever he may consider her—hallucination or recreation, thought projection or living spirit—Picard treats the apparition with the same filial regard he would show the genuine article. And, like a child, Jean-Luc goes to his "*maman*" for the answers to what is happening to him and his crew.

Then, poised on the brink of her revelations, Jean-Luc's attention wavers. The captain vents his annoyance at Commander Riker's interruption, and the damage is done. When Picard looks back, the apparition has vanished.

Picard, usually so controlled, requires a few moments to master the shock of grief plainly welling up in him just then. After too brief a reunion, he has lost his mother a second time.

The bare facts of Picard's deep affection for his mother support no firm conclusions about the relationship's likely effects on his later emotional growth, although it does raise an interesting question.

By his midteens, Picard had probably already left home to enroll as a Starfleet Academy cadet. Could the physical separation from his mother during his critical adolescent development have rendered Picard less capable of adequately resolving the emotional separation, an adjustment he should ordinarily have accomplished by adulthood?

The death of Picard's mother provokes several questions, too. In the twenty-fourth century, after all, we might expect to find both of his parents alive and well and enjoying retirement.

What happened to Picard's father? Was Picard raised by his mother alone? At what point in Picard's life did she die? How did she die? Gradually, of a wasting illness? Or suddenly, by accident? Was Picard able to be with her at the end? Or was he away on a mission and informed of her death only later? Most important (in terms of this exploration), could his mother's death have reinforced any uncertainties Picard might already have been feeling about emotional involvements with women, generally?

About this part of Jean-Luc Picard's life, there are, as Picard complains to Riker about the troubling events of "Time Squared," "A lot of questions . . . damn few answers." And, as long as the series does not shed more light on the subject, one way or another, answers will not be forthcoming.

Proceeding to more solid terrain, then: In

"11001001" Picard makes a comment to Riker about love beginning "with the illusion more real than the woman." His remark suggests a distrust, not of women, but of love itself, as though he considered it a mirage or an emotional quicksand for the unwary. Picard's distrust of his own loving feelings inhibits his free and open expression of them.

Conversely, Picard is readily disconcerted by an open response to his own romantic appeal, possibly because, in general, he takes little account of it himself. Though neither ignorant nor contemptuous of his sexuality, Picard does not dwell on it overmuch (not that the series gives him a lot of opportunity for that sort of preoccupation). Little wonder, then, that unabashed sexual interest in him displayed by a female catches Picard quite unaware.

Picard's hasty retreat from Beverly in "The Naked Now," for example, is not entirely due to the sudden rush of intoxicant to his brain. It is also a by-product of his startled realization, finally, of just what "sort of thing" Beverly would "love to show" him and regrets they have "no time for" right then. Picard is not prepared to deal with blatant sexual overtures during routine ship's business, much less during an escalating emergency and at the instant of induced intoxication, to boot.

Then, in the second season's "The Measure of a Man," the outspoken Philippa Louvois unexpectedly delivers Picard a telling little double-jab about finding him "still a pompous ass . . . and a damn sexy man." Understandably nettled by her first charge, Picard gives every appearance of being even more taken aback by her second. Fortunately for him, though, just as the conversation takes this uncomfortable turn, the impeccably timed approach of a Starfleet admiral saves Picard the trouble of devising his own escape.

Still later, in "Manhunt," Lwaxana Troi's libidinous gambit with Picard actually spooks him into hiding out on the holodeck.

In pursuing his life's quest, Picard has indeed boldly gone, but largely alone and untethered. He may well

have (as he himself speculates in "We'll Always Have Paris,") a deep, underlying fear "of being connected, rooted" or "losing" himself in a relationship.

What Picard may really be afraid of losing, though, is control; not just control of an emotional situation, but also, and more important, control of himself. Order, discipline, self-control—these are crucial to Picard and crucial to any understanding of him. He has built most of his life and all of his career on them. To some degree, making allowances for his fully human attributes, Picard is not unlike Mr. Spock in this respect.

And, to some degree, Picard's fear, like Spock's, is justified. Loss of control is the essence of the love experience—a marvelous, exhilarating, overwhelming, sometimes frightening emancipation from comfortably familiar rules and established ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving.

From the scant evidence available, it seems that Picard's ventures onto the field of romantic love have been, again, like Spock's, both infrequent and fraught with self-conflict. Picard's failures in this area seem to have stemmed largely from his own restraint, inhibition, fear—call it what you will—rather than from any discernible lack of passionate feeling on his part or on the part of the women with whom he has been involved.

Picard's behavior with a woman whose interest he has aroused, or with one who has also aroused his own, stands in marked contrast to the air of masterful self-assurance he normally projects. With such a woman Picard holds back. He hesitates, offers no encouragement. Paradoxically, Picard actually manages to seize the initiative by forcing the woman to make the first move, if she will. *If* she does, then Picard's response is often a study in rigid nonresponse or even outright retreat.

Seemingly strange behavior for a man who admonishes Jake Kurland in "Coming of Age," "... running away solves nothing." In fairness to Picard, however, it is only in his romantic dealings with women that this emotionally crippling tendency is evident.

Picard could hardly advertise more plainly his dread: Of what might he not be capable of were he ever, even once, to cut loose and let himself go?

Jean-Luc Picard, out of control. An image to give pause, certainly, but not necessarily to freeze the blood. To Picard, however, it is clearly a downright unnerving prospect. (Not surprising in light of Picard's near-death due to his own early lack of discipline, as confessed to Wesley Crusher in "Samaritan Snare.")

In this context Picard seems to view his own emotional yearnings, his potential to love deeply, as some unquiet monster from whose ravenings he must keep safe both the captain and the captain's well-ordered world—and this, solely by the iron will of his own unceasing self-control. Picard has not found it an easy task by any means.

One of the most revealing statements Picard ever makes on the subject follows Wesley's youthful braggadocio in "Samaritan Snare," "Where women are concerned, I am in complete control." Although Picard allows himself some gently disguised skepticism ("Really! Mmmm."), he has the good grace not to remind Wesley of the boy's less than "complete control" with Salia, earlier, in "The Dauphin." Then, in an endearing burst of self-mocking candor, Picard gives Wesley the benefit of his own more seasoned experience, confiding, "I've always ... rather had to work at that." And Picard continues "to work at that" to protect, not only himself, but the women involved also.

He hurt Jenice terribly when he ended their affair. He hurt her, especially, in the brutal way in which he chose to end it; sneaking off without a word of explanation or even warning; leaving her to wait for a "rendezvous" he had no intention of keeping; running away, afraid that even one brief contact with her might yet succeed in changing his mind.

He knew he was hurting her even as he did it and was ashamed. Twenty-two years later, Picard has the decency to feel that shame still.

The emotionally disastrous ending of his affair with

Jenice was a critical turning point in Picard's life. Up to that time, he may have taken for granted, without seriously considering it, the vague idea that he might be married to someone, somewhere, some day. When distant and unlikely possibility threatened to transform itself into imminent reality, however, Picard's courage failed and he fled in fear. Recognizing and admitting to himself this unpleasant, unflattering truth must have left him badly shaken.

Despite the love he genuinely held for Jenice—and their affair may have been the first truly serious one, emotionally, for Picard—he could not bring himself to commit to her in the kind of unreservedly devoted relationship he felt she deserved, and assumed she expected. His prior commitment to Starfleet took precedence. Picard was even then very much consumed and enthralled by his work.

In contemplating how he might combine marriage to Jenice with his career, Picard was rather in the position of a man faced with the challenge of attempting to satisfy two most alluring and demanding mistresses. And he was unable to imagine how he could avoid shortchanging all parties involved.

Picard foresaw that, within or without marriage, Jenice would find herself always relegated to second place in his busy agenda, which would of course include frequent, lengthy deep-space missions. He deemed this an untenable position for her—joyless and, inevitably, soul-destroying.

On the flip side of this coin lay Picard's other fear (a fear, incidentally, Picard shares with both James Kirk and William Riker): A sustained commitment to any woman might divert his energies from the goals he had already set for himself, blunt his Starfleet ambitions, and, in so doing, compromise both his personal and professional ideals.

Picard himself warns young Ensign Crusher in "Samaritan Snare," "For ambitious Starfleet officers there are certain costs involved. You must be cautious of long-term commitments, Wesley."

In "We'll Always Have Paris," Jenice Menheim's

acute sensitivity to Picard, and to his hopes and fears, can still leave him rocking. She strikes a nerve with her assertion, "... your greatest fear, the real reason you left ... [was] ... that life with me would have somehow made you ... ordinary." Shrewdly, she has deduced that Picard pictured his becoming, perhaps, a fair-to-middling husband to her (with effort, maybe even a good one) and, along the way, perhaps, a good starship captain, too.

By settling for merely good, however, Picard would have fallen short of the standards of excellence he had long striven to attain. His dreams of greatness would have gone unrealized, his destiny unfulfilled, in a future that would have held no "great starship on the far reaches of the galaxy" (in Jenice Menheim's words) under the command of living legend Captain Jean-Luc Picard.

Picard could only predict that, against such a backdrop of blighted hopes on both sides, his relationship with Jenice must surely suffer a protracted dying from the slow poison of his own emotionally conflicting drives and ambitions.

Better to make a choice, however painful, in favor of one mistress over the other. Picard makes that choice, sacrificing his love for Jenice on the altar of his devotion to Starfleet. Having survived the crucible of that choice, Picard emerges a changed man.

With Jenice Picard had allowed his passions free rein. The result? He had lost his nerve in the crisis and ended up savaging them both, all due to what he seems to regard as a design flaw in his emotional wiring—a flaw he furthermore seems to regard as making him peculiarly unfit for any lasting, intimate, man-woman relationship.

No matter whether or not Picard's dismal forecast may have been accurate. No matter, either, whether or not Picard may really have been as emotionally dysfunctional as he seems to have believed.

Picard may have sold himself short.

It is difficult to imagine Picard giving Starfleet anything less than outstanding service. On the other hand,

it is equally difficult to imagine Picard in the role of doting husband or, especially, doting father.

Then again, marriage with Jenice might have transformed Picard's life in unexpected, delightful ways—re-orienting his priorities, without necessarily compromising them, and leaving him a lot more at ease with his emotional self.

In any case, he certainly sold Jenice short. Picard admits as much to her husband.

She married, after all, a man with the same kind of work-oriented personality as Picard himself. Dr. Manheim is every bit as dedicated to his research as Captain Picard is to his ship. He even voices the same kind of doubts that Picard probably felt about his worthiness for a wife like Jenice, and his ability to satisfy her emotional needs. Nonetheless, and despite all other problems, Jenice Manheim has managed to remain remarkably secure, both in her husband's love and in her love for him.

Seeing her again—and, especially, seeing her with Paul Manheim—slams home to Picard the keenest appreciation of just what he forfeited by his choice twenty-two years ago.

No matter. What does matter is Picard's belief, the belief itself, that a deficiency in his emotional makeup would have guaranteed the relationship's failure. It was this belief that compelled his flight from Jenice.

This belief also constitutes the chief ingredient of what has become a notable emotional dysfunction, in truth, for Picard. Believing himself incapable, over the long haul, of a mutually fulfilling, intimate relationship with any woman, Picard has constructed an impressive array of emotional defenses against such a relationship even budding, to say nothing of blossoming.

Picard is hardly likely to have opted for celibacy during the last twenty-two years of his life. He is rather more likely to have become, instead, altogether more guarded in the liaisons he *has* formed during this period, taking some care to restrict them to women he considers safe; that is, women as little susceptible to any long-term emotional commitment to him as he is

to them. Captain Philippa Louvois may have fit into this select category; Dr. Beverly Crusher, clearly, does not.

The affairs Picard permitted himself may well have been grounded in mutual affection as well as desire. If so, they have probably been neither meaningless nor casual for him. At the same time, they have probably also been distinguished by a singular unwillingness to risk the emotional hinterland beyond the safe boundaries of mutually gratifying, but likewise mutually noncommittal, sex.

Sex, however, has the capricious potential to transform itself into a much more emotionally involving act than first expected—and usually when least expected.

Being as fallible as anyone, Picard has likely made the occasional miscalculation of an affair's margin of safety, i.e., the nature of the woman's feelings, his own, or both.

Given the evidence of the series, Picard's probable reaction to such an event can be reasonably predicted.

Yearnings for the profoundly engaging emotional intimacies of committed love are too potent a reminder of the debacle with Jenice. They trigger Picard's internal alarms. Alerted to such dangerous yearnings within himself, Picard fights with every defensive weapon in his arsenal, including flight if necessary. When this threat is detected from without, as well, then Picard really bolts for cover.

In "Skin of Evil" Tasha Yar scores two posthumous points when she characterizes Picard as having "the heart of an explorer and the soul of a poet." Picard is indeed a study in contrasts—sometimes complementary, sometimes contradictory. He is, at once, adventurer and philosopher; at once, man of action and man of thought and feeling.

The explorer is evident in Picard's choice of career, which sends him forth "to seek new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no one has gone before"—as much a fulfillment of his own questing spirit as it is a Starfleet directive. The poet is evident in Picard's literary and cultural interests; but he is evident, espe-

cially, in Picard's ideals of what humanity, Starfleet, and the Federation are and, more important, may yet become.

For all his no-nonsense pragmatism in the running of his ship and the completion of his missions, Picard is also a true visionary hero and, in that sense, a courageous, passionate romantic. Sadly, though, the basic, yet not-so-simple, human impulse to love (at least as applied to himself) apparently leaves Picard bereft of both courage and vision.

The unhappy pattern Picard set with Jenice over two decades ago—the sequence of love, fear, and flight—now appears ingrained in him. He seems programmed to replay it with every woman who touches him deeply. The deeper his emotional response to her, or hers to him, the greater his struggle against that response.

Beverly touches Picard more deeply and directly than any woman has for some time. That she is, in addition, Jack Crusher's widow—with all the residual guilt feelings that fact can still revive in him—only further complicates an already complex emotional problem for him.

Is Picard prepared, at this stage in his life, to make so drastic a change? One can almost hear echoes from *My Fair Lady,* as Professor Henry Higgins proclaims himself "a confirmed old bachelor and likely to remain so."

Therefore, despite Picard's desire for Beverly, he is hardly inclined to be as wholehearted in the desire for all the unsettling emotional entanglements and commitments that are bound to proceed from any intimate relationship with her. Unless these personal misgivings are resolved, along with the professional, there is scant likelihood of Picard's encouraging, much less initiating, such a relationship.

DESIRABLE UNEMOTIONALS (OR, "COULD YOU FALL IN LOVE WITH A TOASTER?")

by Dale Kesterson

Star Trek fans everywhere awaited the arrival of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* with all the anxiety of an expectant father pacing in a maternity ward waiting room. The new series was launched with the pomp and publicity previously missing from any Star Trek project and, to the delight of fans, has been successful. It has exceeded the aspirations of Paramount, whose brass figured they had another short-lived flame to temporarily boost Star Trek revenues. The new series has already outlived the original from which it was derived (even if one adds in the twenty-two animated episodes), especially since it has been renewed for an unprecedented fifth season. It has won over a whole new generation (sorry about the pun, but it is accurate) of fans who are now eagerly perusing the classic series to see what started all of this. The new season will also herald the arrival of the sixth motion picture. So far, so good.

Yet with all the newness, there are apparently still some things that haven't changed. We are at the twenty-fifth anniversary of Star Trek, but in a sense we are only back to the beginning. Once again, we have watched a trend develop that may even be considered disturbing. Fans who can remember back to the days of "Spockmania" may see similarities between the "I Grok Spock" troops and the females who are dying to make it with Data. The writers seem unable to resist these ideas; but then they never have.

Gene Roddenberry has always created and developed intriguing characters, and Star Trek has tried to keep a balance of personnel on board the various incarnations of the *Enterprise*. These characters are basic and necessary to the running of a starship, but the personalities attributed to them are fascinating. Each can be said to appeal to a specific section of fans, but it doesn't always work out the way it is planned. There was the dashing and handsome Captain Kirk, over whom alien women and fans alike drooled; that was how it should be. Dr. McCoy was held in high regard as a sort of father-confessor and conscience to the crew, with an occasional romance to liven things up and keep him human. Scotty appealed to the upcoming generation of computer enthusiasts; he was buried in his beloved technical intricacies, but he was also allowed to foray as the red-blooded man he was. Uhura provided a strong role model for women, and (more specifically) blacks; she was a capable officer who expertly handled her console without losing her femininity. Sulu was the Oriental who broke with stereotypes by being very scrutable, and Chekov was added to the bridge crew to provide a character with whom younger viewers could identify while he also demonstrated that Russians weren't all bad.

Then there was the alien, Spock. The network had demanded the "one with the pointed ears" be dropped because they were afraid of scaring off viewers. Little did anyone suspect that the unemotional Vulcan would touch off a cultlike reaction.

Mr. Roddenberry's idea was to spotlight human situations and problems on Earth using these characters' reactions to familiar ones "out there," hoping to show our frailties and possibly spur us to correct some wrongs. By depicting the crew as a united whole composed of varying nationalities (and both sexes), the viewing audience was provided with a base with which almost anyone could identify. Only one crew member stood alone.

Spock gave (indeed, still does give) writers and viewers a chance to explore the effects of emotional

responses, as well as the lack of them. Yet he was a half-human hybrid, so he was never totally alien to our experiences. He had a heart, was mortal, and was even subject to disease and the effects of induced chemicals. That he was not openly emotional added to his mystique and tended to make him more attractive to females—crew, aliens, and fans alike. A virtual subculture of fandom erupted based on efforts to seduce or "unfreeze" the hidden emotions of the Vulcan. The movement took the production staff by surprise, but it had help, and lots of it.

Spock, that wonderfully logical being, at least admitted to having feelings. He just seemed to have considerable difficulty expressing them—he couldn't even tell his mother that he loved her.

An inordinate number of females (of a surprisingly wide age range) decided that all it would take is the *right* woman to break through that icy Vulcan exterior to the seething passion they were certain existed. He was almost humanly proud of his emotional control. He stated more than once that the logical way was the best and continually tried to submerse his human half into his Vulcan heritage and training. Spock, of course, did exhibit considerable emotional attachments every now and then, but it was always excused as a hormonal imbalance or a chemical influence or even a time warp effect. It seemed to happen about once a season. This tendency almost played with the feelings of fans, who started to believe that if it could happen with Leila Kalomi or Zarabeth, it might just happen with the *right* female. (Most Spock fans did agree that the incident involving T'Pring was outright manipulation—his hormones and her plotting—so they tended not to include it.)

There was also clear evidence that Star Trek's favorite Vulcan was not above *faking* romance, even if it was in the line of duty. The Romulan Commander in "The Enterprise Incident" fell prey to his charms, and he just led her down that merry little path, again to the titillation of his fans. The *hope* that it might just happen, given the right circumstances, was kept

alive. After all, they reasoned, Spock's father had fallen for a human female, so why not the son? Even Christine Chapel never quite gave up the hope of a more-than-professional relationship, and she certainly had a pretty good idea of how things stood. Yet the producers and writers, realizing that Spock romance stories were popular, continued to put them together. So have the authors of the Star Trek novels.

All of this playful thinking probably caused Leonard Nimoy to have third and fourth thoughts (much less second ones) about continuing to play the role. Fans do tend to get the personalities of the characters and the actors who portray them confused, especially ones like the *Enterprise* crew. Leonard Nimoy felt compelled to write a book, *I Am Not Spock,* in which he tried to relegate his alter ego into the slot of being just a character. It was a rather futile gesture. Despite being one of the hottest directors in Hollywood, despite playing a running character (Paris) on the original *Mission: Impossible* series, Mr. Nimoy is and always shall be Mr. Spock.

This fascination with Spock was carried one step further with another Roddenberry creation, the android Questor, after the cancellation of the first *Star Trek* series. It would be interesting to note if Robert Foxworth would have had similar problems regarding his character, Questor, had that series been bought by a network and produced. After all, Questor (an advanced humanoid android central to a series of the same name) actually had a night of romance written for him in the pilot film. He needed information, and Dana Wynter's character had it; Questor disappeared into her room after dinner, and in the morning was seen emerging with the necessary information. The censors had fits, of course. Mr. Roddenberry was berated for allowing a human female to "do it" with a robot; he took the censure in stride and the idea remained. Questor, apparently, was a fully functional android. Certainly, no complaints were heard from Ms. Wynter's character, and Mr. Roddenberry quite reasonably pointed out that there was no damage

done if either the human female didn't know he was a robot or (if she did know) didn't care. However, since the series didn't sell, Mr. Foxworth was spared any ordeals of fan attachments and the censors were spared any ordeals of trying to impose morality on the android.

Now we have a new android, Data. It was noted early in the series's publicity that Data may be the combination of Spock and Questor—a totally logical being with no foolish feelings to corrupt him. Yet Data is more than a robot. He is a trained and commissioned officer in Starfleet, third in the chain of command of what is the premier starship of the fleet. Given this character, and the chance to examine human frailties and foibles through nonhuman eyes (a favorite theme in Roddenberry's stories), the writers of the show have been having a field day. (It would have been interesting if Mr. Nimoy had sought out Brent Spiner for a chat prior to the filming of *Star Trek: The Next Generation;* perhaps a warning might have been in order. . . .)

Data, whose android status was proclaimed so many times in the series pilot that it became tiring, is naive but intelligent. Totally machine, and although he has been endowed with a program designed to approximate a personality, he is not truly human in any way but form. He has become a mirror in which all faults and quirks are seen and somewhat magnified, while at the same time he provides a humorous slant that never allows humanity to take itself too seriously. He is struggling to learn from the races around him, all the while teaching lessons of his own. Poor Data, who is already confused by human behavior, has to deal with being fully programmed for adult pleasures while he has little understanding of the emotional aspects of what to him is merely an exercise (or, worse, just one of his programs). The producers did not waste any time in having the "fully functional" label pinned on the android, and the writers of the show have taken care to create situations for him where he has to deal

with the feelings of others while having none of his own.

There are other characters on the new *Enterprise,* roughly equivalent to the ones on the original ship. The captain is not so young, but he is just as charismatic and attractive; the "rough and ready" tasks have been relegated to the second-in-command, Commander Riker. Instead of one doctor, there are now two: an empathic psychologist and a woman Chief Medical Officer. The original head of Security was a woman as well, but after her death, the position was given to a Klingon. The head of Engineering is a black man who is blind-but-visored, and there are a variety of lesser officers all of whom have received individual story lines during the course of the series so far. However, considerable attention—both plot lines and fan response—has centered on Data.

Data is unique, having a highly advanced positronic brain, a memory that will not quit, and a tendency to babble. He was nicknamed Pinocchio by Commander Riker in the pilot episode, but he might be better known as the Tin Man from *The Wizard of Oz.* It took the writers a while to decide exactly how to handle this character, but his position in Starfleet was settled in the second season. Data put rules and regulations to a test when a robotics scientist asked to study him by dismantling him, a procedure he was unwilling to undergo. This touched off a controversy as to whether or not he is a sentient being or merely a piece of highly technical equipment owned by Starfleet. Data is not a toaster, but it took a court hearing to realize it.

His singularity has been emphasized steadily. During the course of one mission, he came across a disassembled version of himself, also created by Dr. Soong, and discovered that this twin brother of his, Lore, has something he does not, emotions. This Lore is also capable of lying, deceit, and manipulation, all of which are foreign and illogical to Data. Data is unswervingly loyal, and his devotion to duty allows him to deal

logically with his errant sibling, although he does express regret at having to do so.

That incident has been followed by others. Data has had to rescue, cajole, and lead humans and other life forms in situations of all types. He has been programmed to respect and protect life, and this does endow him with something akin to compassion. Anxious to please, he is literal, but he is learning. He has been introduced to several intimate human rites (birth, lovemaking, marriage, death), reflected on his experiences afterward, and as a result his insight into the human condition has grown. Unfortunately, situations keep arising where Data is asked to react on an emotional level he does not possess. When he has such an encounter, he has tried explaining his lacks, always expressing his regrets and apologizing for not having any feelings, but sometimes his efforts are futile.

In an attempt to be more like those around him, Data created his own child, Lal, in his own android image. Something went very wrong, however, and he found that his offspring had developed emotions that reduced her circuits to a level of malfunctioning even he could not repair. When told by Tam that the purpose of life is to care for and take care of something, he adopted a pet cat. The cat, named Spot, fills a gap he sees within his life while it does not ask more from him than he is capable of giving.

More recently, he has even tried to emulate human mating behavior after studying the patterns recorded for human marital relationships. He acted according to those studies, even to the extent of starting a fight because it seemed logical. Once again, it seems, his programmed courtesy, polite mannerisms, and reluctance to inflict hurt were taken for genuine feelings. The experiment failed, with almost disastrous results, and left Data with his cat.

This is the message fans seem to miss. Data may not be a toaster, but he is not a human either, and he cannot react as one. Realizing, once again, that stories surrounding Data's attempts to become more human are popular with the fans, the writers are happily sup-

plying the material. It is increasingly reminiscent of the Spock Phenomenon of the original shows. Oddly enough, the fan devotion to Spock seems to be waning, as if the older Spock is either more acceptable as an unemotional being or perhaps the first generation of fans has finally grown up a bit. The crown for the most desirable unemotional character, however, has not been cast into a disintegration chamber. It seems only to have been passed, like a torch, to the newer character, and that is troubling.

The idea of having an android as a romantic lead, when the character of Riker was created as the young, dashing hero type, was probably not in the plans. Still, fan reactions have not always been predictable, and the letters started flowing into the Paramount offices. Data (and Brent Spiner) headed the reaction roster early in the course of the first season. As far back as May of 1988, Mr. Spiner was receiving love letters and marriage proposals. A trend of "Please, I can help you become fully human!" was quickly seen, echoing the "I can help you express your emotions!" of the Spock era. (An interesting side note: Michael Dorn has also received love letters, but that is another article.) It must be rather disconcerting for the other cast members to be continually reminded that the android is so popular, much less why.

Fans may be sending a message not only to the production staff but to the world as well. It could be that they would rather become attached to an unemotional being, in what could best be described as a somewhat superficial manner. Maybe the idea is that this type of character, typified by Spock, Questor, and Data, is less threatening than their human counterparts.

Another possibility is that the mystery of a new life form is so totally enthralling as to be irresistible. Perhaps the real world holds so many terrors and so much emotional pain, the vicarious relationships fans have with these specific characters are safe and controlled. Of course, the thought of a fully programmed and functional robot might be considered so intriguing as

to be hypnotic. In today's world of instant gratification, a date with Data would meet most fantasies. (It would certainly make the idea of a hot date look positively arctic.) However, it would be a blatant comment on the human condition if the answer was truly to emerge as a preference for safely programmed robots over flesh-and-blood men.

STARSHIP AMERICA: POLITICS AND THE STAR TREK FILMS

by Tom Lalli

There is no joy in Trekville; the mighty Shatner has struck out. That was the consensus, though many fans (and a handful of critics) enjoyed *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier.* The film isn't perfect, certainly, but it is entertaining—why did it run into a buzzsaw of negative opinions? A look back suggests an answer.

The Star Trek movies seem to have an immunity to the hard-nosed political analysis routinely directed at other genre films. *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan* (1982), for example, has a rich political subtext that has been completely ignored: Khan is Khomeini.

Khan, like Khomeini, ends a fifteen-year exile by lashing out from a desert. He hijacks the Starship *Reliant,* which represents its partial anagram, Iran: a U.S. (Federation) ally that is suddenly usurped by a vengeful, turban-clad fanatic. The marooned *Reliant* crew and murdered Genesis scientists represent the American hostages; the security-minded Saavik echoes SAVAK, the Shah's secret police; while Kirk and company's bewilderment matches our initial reaction to the ayatollah.

When Harve Bennett cooked up this plot, the American hostages were still captive in Iran. A business-minded television producer (and recently Hollywood Armed Forces liaison), Bennett (inadvertently?) resurrected Khan as a future reflection of the despised Khomeini (Ricardo Montalban resembles the late des-

pot). Khan: "On Earth, two hundred years ago, I was a prince, with power over millions."

Accordingly, the film's Admiral Kirk changes from a weak, hesitant Carter-surrogate into a Reaganesque, aging-but-wily warrior. Like *Star Trek—The Motion Picture, The Wrath of Khan* begins with Kirk in an unfulfilling administrative position. Kirk's backsliding is puzzling, but it was necessary for the film to parallel recent American history.

Wrath of Khan takes place in an alternate present: this explains such anachronisms as the "No Smoking" sign on the bridge, the art deco furniture in Kirk's apartment, and Scotty's playing "Amazing Grace" at Spock's funeral. (The film claims to be set "In the twenty-third century . . ." but the first stardate we hear is 8130.3, which could be construed as March 30, 1981.) In this alternate reality, our enemies are vanquished, and a superhuman extraterrestrial gives his life to save us. By his sacrifice, Spock becomes a full-fledged Christ figure. The film strongly suggests that Spock knew he was going to die, and that his death is a temporary condition.

The film abandons any pretense at teamwork and allows superheroes Kirk and Spock to accomplish everything, with a few pointers from Saavik. McCoy, Scott, Uhura, and Sulu contribute little more than moral support, while most of the cadets abandon their posts during the initial battle. Like Reagan, *Wrath of Khan*'s Kirk is an experienced, tough-talking military savior—the Admiral makes a grand, back-lit entrance befitting General Patton or John Wayne. Kirk leads the restored "Starship America" into battle (the color scheme is a lurid red-white-and-blue; a large "A" graces the bridge door), and exorcises the specter of Vietnam: "I don't believe in a no-win scenario," he declares.

The Genesis Device, which gives the film a science fiction veneer, is potentially the ultimate weapon; in early drafts, "The Omega System" had no constructive applications. A vast "improvement" over the neutron bomb, Genesis destroys all life "in favor of its new

matrix." Like a nuclear bomb Genesis is first tested underground with the help of the "Starfleet Corps of Engineers," and later on a barren site; it even looks like a bomb. But this bomb creates an instant paradise, thus fulfilling the ultimate right-wing fantasy: peace and prosperity through superior firepower.

It's not surprising that Gene Roddenberry complained about the militarism and violence of this film. Despite its soap operatics and literary allusions, *Wrath of Khan* is a war movie, replete with military trappings—the uniforms, Vietnam-style communicators, uptight security measures, constant references to "tacticals," "battle stations," etc.—and lovingly details the mechanics of warfare. It justifies a strong military like Reagan's as our only defense against terrorists and dictators like Khan/Khomeini, arguing that as long as weapons technology remains in the hands of "our side," the universe will be safe for democracy. The naive scientists, like American liberals, wrongly assume the military is the villain.

It's a depressingly conservative film. Consider that it was necessary to introduce a new character, David Marcus, to argue the liberal side (until he is co-opted, as well). The moral of the film—"the needs of the many outweigh the needs of the one"—sounds like a military recruiting slogan. As for Spock, his curiosity and internal conflicts have been erased in favor of military servitude. He pooh-poohs McCoy's doubts about Genesis and tells Kirk, "I have been and always shall be yours." If we shed tears, it is the historical Spock we mourn, for this Spock is a good soldier who inspires little affection.

Most references to Khan's deceased wife, Marla McGivers, were deleted from the script, presumably because they would have evoked sympathy for him. Kirk does seem to feel a tiny bit guilty about her death, but it's clear that Khan is overreacting, a madman. In other words, the United States should not be blamed for the events in Iran or other third-world countries; our purity is symbolized by Kirk's white-glove test of the spotless *Enterprise*. The foreigners,

cruel fanatics who cannot be reasoned with, are to blame. They are less technologically adept than Starfleet's finest, have no sense of humor, never bathe, and are good for one thing only—sorely needed target practice for our renascent military.

For the final showdown the combatants return to the patriotically hued Mutara Nebula, which renders shields useless, thus allowing some real blood-and-guts warfare. During the battle we are treated to anachronistic shots of the *Enterprise*'s all-male torpedo crew launching missiles. We become part of the crew and vicariously enjoy the *Reliant*'s destruction. Khan/Khomeini manages to detonate Genesis/the bomb, but since this film is a pacifying fantasy (unlike Nicholas Meyer's *The Day After*), our heroes (less one) are able to escape. For an audience subconsciously terrified of nuclear war, the shot of the *Enterprise* speeding away from the explosion is tremendously satisfying.

Some viewers were confused by the film's upbeat ending. Kirk eulogizes Spock by calling him "human," and saying that he "gave his life to protect and nourish" the Genesis planet, then claims he "feels young," none of which makes any sense. Still, most viewers ignored this, sensing the film for what it was, an expression of the rediscovered pride of early-eighties America.

From this film, you'd never know that Star Trek was ever anything besides glorified space opera. Indeed, the film succeeded partly because it pandered to those who doubted Star Trek's claims to intelligence, and were delighted to have their suspicions confirmed (Pauline Kael called the film "dumb fun."). It also appealed to fans who were tired of the outdated morality of the original series, and longed for a Star Trek popular with critics and nonfans. (Some fans did see through the film at the time: See Kyle Holland's "Indiana Skywalker Meets the Son of Star Trek" in *The Best of Trek* #7.)

Wrath of Khan's success also owed much to *Star Trek: The Motion Picture,* to which it was very favorably compared. The color and fast pace of *Wrath of*

Khan were welcomed after the turgid, drab original; few realized that the first film was more faithful to the original series. Consider: In *STTMP* humanity is redeemed by love, patience, and transcendence. In *Wrath of Khan,* disaster is delayed by deceit and aggression, and redemption comes only from a Christ-like savior.)

Scriptwriter Jack Sowards approached *WOK* on the assumption that the Federation had abandoned exploration and colonization, with Starfleet becoming a purely military organization, just as America's space program was militarized in the eighties. So, the *Enterprise* was portrayed as a battleship. In *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock* (1984), the battle-scarred ship returns to Earth, but there is no "hero's welcome."

The Search for Spock falls into the Vietnam revisionist subgenre. As do *Rambo, Missing in Action,* etc., *The Search for Spock* has a tough warrior disobey his soft, rule-quoting superiors, and enter dangerous territory to kick ass and rescue his comrades. Prior to the release of *The Voyage Home,* Leonard Nimoy and William Shatner appeared on a talk show with David Brenner. At one point Brenner joked that the next sequel should be "Rocky and Rambo Meet Star Trek." Oddly enough, this idea had already been used—in *The Search for Spock* and *The Voyage Home.*

Again, the parallels to recent American history are clear. Dr. McCoy has "deep emotional problems," and Mr. Spock is dead/M.I.A. Genesis, "a galactic controversy," represents Vietnam, while the Klingons serve as "gooks." "This time we've paid for the party with our dearest blood," laments Kirk, who at least makes an articulate, well-dressed Rambo.

The Search for Spock is more restrained than its predecessor, but the filmmakers were not about to alienate *Wrath of Khan*'s large audience, and used many elements from that film: a cruel villain after Genesis, deceit, violence, self-sacrifice. The third film begins with a replay of some of the more subdued moments from *Wrath of Khan,* including Nimoy's reading of the "final frontier" narration. (He sounds

like a New Age medium.) An above-the-clouds shot foreshadows the return of Spock to the company of mere mortals. Kirk, feeling old again, is grieving for Spock, and soon jumps out of character by referring to the deity, thus signaling the religious tack the film will take.

The crew, which seemed to be semiretired at the beginning of *Wrath of Khan,* are now put on indefinite leave and shown little gratitude for their loyal service. Kirk's request for a ship is refused by Admiral Morrow, who doesn't break rules and has "never understood Vulcan mysticism." Kirk, here an apologist for religion, tells him, "You don't have to believe." Morrow is a faithless bureaucrat, a pharisee; needless to say, the film will prove him wrong.

Wrath of Khan ended on a utopian note: With Khan dead and a new sun rising over the Genesis planet, the galaxy seemed a "paradise regained." Paradise is a dull setting for a movie, though, so in *The Search for Spock,* the Federation has become a troubled and paranoid society. Starfleet is paralyzed by political tensions. Security personnel lurk around every corner. People spend their time in bars or mental institutions. Writer/producer Harve Bennett failed to understand, or simply didn't care, that a positive portrayal of Starfleet and the Federation is an integral part of Star Trek. But then, like its predecessor, *The Search for Spock* does not really take place in the Star Trek universe.

The film's setting is an alternate present heavily influenced by the *Star Wars* universe. (Uhura says it best: "This isn't reality—this is fantasy.") The seedy bar scene is right out of *Star Wars,* as are the space dock and the scene with Valkrys. Like the *Star Wars* films, *The Search for Spock* is peopled with traitors and criminals—the "backward" alien in the bar, the crew of the transport vessel, David Marcus, even Kirk and crew—thus undermining our admiration for the Federation.

The *Excelsior* is the physical manifestation of *The Search for Spock*'s contempt for Starfleet, whose highest officers are portrayed as timid, self-satisfied, "button-

pushing brassheads"; this is a clumsy way of making our heroes seem superior; admittedly, this technique is also sometimes used in televised *Star Trek.*

Kirk steals the *Enterprise* and speeds toward the Genesis Planet like the U.S. Cavalry (note director Leonard Nimoy's crosscutting), leaving a red-white-and-blue trail all the way. The *Grissom* has been destroyed by Klingon Lord Kruge, a villain who, unlike Khan, is at least rational. His accusation, "The Federation, in creating an ultimate weapon, has become a gang of intergalactic criminals," brings Reagan's Star Wars system to mind, but *The Search for Spock* is not as patriotically gung-ho as *Wrath of Khan,* and something has gone wrong: Genesis doesn't work, due to David Marcus's use of "protomatter."

Kirk's son becomes the scapegoat for all the violence in both films: "How much damage have you done?" asks Saavik. "And what is yet to come?" Blaming so much death and mayhem on this innocuous character is a shameless plot device used to set up the death of the "weakling David" (and thus provide an excuse for Kirk's killing the "Klingon bastard" Kruge), to help "pay" for Spock's return, and to scuttle Genesis, which is indeed a horrific weapon.

As in *The Search for Spock,* Kirk survives only because he knows more about starships than his opponent. This time he must destroy that symbol of sixties humanism, the *Enterprise,* in the process. *The Search for Spock* improves on its predecessor by allowing Kirk to beat up and kill his opponent—Kirk and Khan never actually meet face-to-face in *Wrath of Khan*—but first an interesting exchange occurs. Kirk points out that both he and Kruge will die on the Genesis planet unless they help each other. Kruge replies, "Then that's the way it shall be." This dialogue suggests that America's enemies, Russians at the time, do not care about the destruction of Earth (Genesis), and may even find the prospect of Armageddon "exhilarating."

The ending of *The Search for Spock* goes over the top, as we visit Vulcan's Mount Seleya (Olympus,

Sinai) to witness a parade of virgins and the very spooky refusion ceremony. Dr. McCoy is now "McCoy, son of David," and Vulcan no more alien than an Oriental monastery. Spock's resurrection could have been portrayed scientifically, but instead an unabashedly religious milieu was chosen, again contradicting the ideology of the original series.

The original series never denied the possibility of a God, or of an eternal soul. What it did deny most fervently was that these or similar beliefs are necessary conditions of human worth and dignity. *The Search for Spock* undermines this assertion by demonstrating that an afterlife *does* exist in the Star Trek universe. Perhaps it's not coincidental that everyone in this morose film seems consumed by guilt. In stark contrast to the original series, Christian martyrdom and hand-wringing guilt are present in *Wrath of Khan* and central to *The Search for Spock.*

The Search for Spock has been called an "antiestablishment" film, and it is, in the sense that *Rambo* is an antiestablishment film. Obviously, *The Search for Spock* is more subtle than *Rambo,* but its inspiration is largely the same: frustration over Vietnam and the treatment of veterans, and desire for revenge against the "commies" and for the return of POWs.

The Search for Spock is not so cynically commercial as *Wrath of Khan* and is less perverse in denying the original series—the computer voice is once again female, Saavik acts like a Vulcan, and we are temporarily rid of those awful marching-band uniforms. The film is beautifully photographed and has fleeting moments of beauty and wonder. Unfortunately, they are always interrupted by more violence and macho posturing, and the film is too compromised in intent to amount to much.

By 1986, the national mood had mellowed enough to embrace a liberal Star Trek film ... as long as it didn't take itself too seriously and chose an innocuous target (any whale hunters in the audience?). It would be nice to credit *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*'s rousing success to its rehabilitation of the show's hu-

mane values, but its breezy humor was probably the deciding factor. Still, many viewers must have found 1986 San Francisco a pleasant change from the violent twenty-third century of the previous two films.

The Voyage Home was the first film since *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* to be more than a simple transposition of current American foreign policy into the future. This film takes a moral stand (animal rights), thus allowing us to step off the "needs-of-the-many-outweigh-the-needs-of-the-one-outweigh-the-needs-of-the-many" carousel. (As Harry M. Geduld wrote in his review of *The Search for Spock* in *The Humanist* magazine: "Each moral obviously cancels out the other . . . so what's the point?") As in the previous two films, Kirk and crew solve what is essentially a twentieth-century problem, but it is one worthy of our attention, not a black-hat, scenery-chewing villain.

While completing the trilogy, *Wrath of Khan* reverses the conservative trend; this is a liberal film. This is shown not only in the environmental theme, but by one of the strongest female characters in Star Trek history, the lack of a hateful villain, and by Kirk's lines "They're still using money," and "We're not in the military." *The Voyage Home* is not apologetic about its optimistic view of a peaceful future, nor does it depend on violence or mysticism for its appeal. With *The Voyage Home* the nightmare that began with Kirk's "thataway" at the end of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture* (if only he'd known where he was headed!) was finally over.

The Voyage Home was the first *good* Star Trek film, politically correct and a lot of fun, but it's not perfect. It's a bit bland, like an "afterschool special," and hardly reminiscent of the original series.

Star Trek V: The Final Frontier is the only film of the five to reprise the format of Gene Roddenberry's original (a morality play set in a utopian future), subject matter (exploration of outer and "inner" space), superficial trappings (the shuttlecraft, the admiral's urgent viewscreen message, etc.), and humanist morality (distrust of easy answers, reluctance to kill). If *Star Trek IV* was the "voyage home," then *Star Trek V* is the "visit" itself.

There are flaws—the film is a bit self-conscious, sexist (not a dignified female character in sight), and, as William Shatner has admitted, slow to get started—but there's much more to like.

The Final Frontier is a great-looking, smart, vital and heartfelt work. Shatner's direction is stylish; the regulars are in character—adults of long acquaintance, they admit to getting on each other's nerves—and the plot is focused and meaningful. And despite its excessive jokiness, *The Final Frontier* has plenty of high drama, including the wrenching flashbacks to McCoy's and Spock's pasts, and the clever ending, with the Klingons helping Spock to destroy their common enemy. Like the series, and unlike its xenophobic predecessors, *The Final Frontier* portrays cooperation with the alien.

Despite complaints, *The Final Frontier* is no more derivative than the other films; it's a vast improvement on the main source episode, 1969's "The Way to Eden." What's been ignored is that *The Final Frontier* is an aggressive reworking of *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.

Sybok, like Khan, is a "ghost" from the past, an obsessive leader of a failed colony who lures Kirk, then attacks; both films end in an "Eden." Director Shatner and producer Bennett have both acknowledged Sybok's kinship with Khomeini, and Kirk's failed hostage rescue mission strongly recalls President Carter's disastrous Project Eagle Claw. *The Final Frontier* admits that such old-fashioned police actions are, at best, temporary solutions. Instead of using scapegoats and subtle racism, this film acknowledges some of the causes of unrest: poverty, or abused environment ("Pack out your trash," Shatner urges), and the divisiveness of traditional religion.

The film not only eschews dumb-fun Ramboics (Kirk's dismissive salutes to Starfleet and Klingon honchos), but gives us a villain more misguided than evil. Sybok, like the original series' adversaries, is a sympathetic character we can learn from; he possesses the "superior intellect" that Khan raved about, but never displayed in the second movie. Sybok is right about some

things: McCoy has let pain poison his soul, and fear is what has stopped exploration beyond the Great Barrier. (It turns out that modern starships traverse the Barrier with relative ease.) What Spock's brother fails to realize is that no amount of faith can satisfy the universal longing for paradise, a longing beautifully dramatized by the identical reactions of four species to "Eden."

The Final Frontier does not simply reject religion as superstition, like *Star Trek: The Next Generation,* nor does it indulge our fear of death, like *The Search for Spock*'s mystical resurrection of Spock. Instead, it insists that spirituality must be personal and practical, accepting of pain, mystery, and mortality. (Kirk's "I've always known I'll die alone" sets an elegiac tone that gently urges Trekkers to prepare for the inevitable.) This theme may not be original, but it is beautifully expressed, and well worth repeating to a world plagued by drugs, violence, and desperation.

Literal-minded viewers fussed over the film's symbolic ending, in which Kirk and company descend to the "god planet" in the shuttle *Copernicus,* named for the astronomer who suggested a more sophisticated world view. Some were disappointed not actually to see God, expecting a movie to solve the ultimate mystery and ignoring the absurdity of God "living" someplace. It's only appropriate that the planet is as barren as Sybok's philosophy, his "God" a vindictive monster.

In real life there is no Genesis device to destroy our Satanic enemies while creating paradise; our loved ones don't come back from the dead; nor can we rewrite history according to our liking. *The Final Frontier* forces us to face reality, individually and as a species, in order to survive and be truly alive. As Dr. Boyce says in "The Cage," "A man either lives life as it happens to him, meets it head on and licks it, or he turns his back on it and starts to wither away." Overcoming obstacles like El Capitan, personal turmoil, or the "God creature" itself, can only strengthen us. *The Final Frontier* portrays humans as forever

tempted to project their fears and desires on outside agents, but ultimately capable of taking responsibility for themselves, while maintaining a healthy spirituality and awe of existence.

It's this unrepentant humanist message that many found corny, preachy, and maybe a bit frightening (or incomprehensible—some critics simply didn't get it). Forgivable in a sixties TV series, it's not fit for consumption by today's audience, which prefers vigilante fantasies, such as that "evil twin" of another sixties series, the mega-hit movie, *Batman.* And with the popular "next generation" waiting on the sidelines, the original *Star Trek* was ripe for its comeuppance.

Star Trek V: The Final Frontier is a wonderful film, rich with meaning and drama and emotion. It offers metaphysics and a sense of wonder without the ponderousness of *Star Trek—The Motion Picture,* adventure and camaraderie without the jingoistic melodrama of *Wrath of Khan* and *The Search for Spock,* and humor without the timidity of *The Voyage Home.* Its critical and commercial failure, ironically, was due largely to its faithfulness to the original series and its refusal to pander to the audience of the previous films. Unfortunately, the benefits of hindsight will be required before it is acknowledged as the best of the five.

A POSITIVE EXAMPLE OF VIOLATION OF THE PRIME DIRECTIVE: EARTH'S HISTORY OF REVEALED RELIGIONS

by Pierre C. Dubreuil

The Star Trek universe is often seen as speculation about our future. Many episodes are inspired by mythology or the Bible, as noted by Mary Hamburger's and Sarah Schaper's *Best of Trek* articles. This essay will attempt to answer the comment made by Walt Harris in *The Best of Trek* #14. Being a Raelian from an international movement to welcome extraterrestrials, I also have some ideas about Star Trek.

Isn't it possible to use Star Trek's affirmation that a highly advanced technological civilization may be taken for gods by a primitive race, and compare this with our own past history of Earth's revealed religions? Prepare yourself for a thought-provoking, if not heretical, voyage in our real universe, which is perhaps not very far away from the Star Trek universe of tomorrow.

This idea is not new, as the Bible says in Ecclesiastes 3:15, "Whatever is had been long ago and what is to be has been long ago."

Before going any further, it is vital to understand that the words "angel of God" are a translation of the Hebrew *malakh elohim*. The word *elohim* is a plural and literally means "gods." These gods were thought to live in the sky. The belief in God for the Jews,

Christians, and Muslims comes from a "revelation" given by God or his angels. The word "angel" comes from the Greek translation of *malakh, aggelos,* which means "messenger." So, an angel of God means "a messenger of the (sky) gods." Keep that in mind as you read this essay.

Sacred books like our Bible or the Koran are often seen in Star Trek. An example: The Book of the People in "For the World Is Hollow and I Have Touched the Sky." According to Natira, the book was a gift to be opened and read when her people reached the promised world. Their Oracle demands they worship their creators, so the Yonadans regard the Fabrini as gods, not as ancestors. Our Bible says, in Daniel 12:9, "And now, O Daniel, bind up the words, and seal the book, till the time of the end."

The obelisk in "The Paradise Syndrome" is a message left by the Preservers, an advanced race that once traveled the galaxy and may well be responsible for there being so many humanoids in the galaxy. The idea of a language of musical tones from this episode was later used in *Close Encounters of the Third Kind.* Earth's own religious history includes the chanting of the universal vibration *Om.* Spock's translation of the symbols on the obelisk can be compared to Isaiah 29:11; "The revelation of all these things has become to you like the words of a scroll that is sealed." The revelation of the obelisk was hidden from the Indians because "every man is like an animal from lack of knowledge" (Jeremiah 10:14). But Spock had the knowledge of science.

In the same episode, when Kirk saves a half-drowned child, these primitive people see it as a resurrection and see Kirk as a god. In *The Voyage Home,* when McCoy cures Chekov and an old woman, that also seems miraculous to contemporary doctors, since they (we) are still primitives. The Bible is also full of resurrections or miracles. Read 1 Kings 17:22: "And YHWH listened to the voice of Elijah, and the soul of the boy returned to him, and he lived." Elisha, in 2 Kings 4:32–37, performed the same miracle as his

father. Think of the resurrection of Lazarus by Jesus in John 11:41: "And Jesus lifted his eyes upward and said, 'Father, I thank you that you heard me.' " Was Jesus' father the captain of a starship? After all, even the technologically advanced Nomad probe can resurrect humans, as it did Scotty.

In *Star Trek III: The Search for Spock,* Spock's resurrection could be the result of cloning. Every living creature's cells contain DNA, which is the plan or genetic code for itself. Daniel 12:2 says, "And many of those who sleep in the land of dust shall awake," and Ezekiel 37:3, "O mortal man, can these bones live?" Couldn't our souls also be reactivated from our DNA by a very advanced civilization that is named *elohim* in the Bible, the (sky) gods?

The Documents in "The Omega Glory" are another example of a sacred book, this one venerated by the Yangs. They tried to make sense out of the fragments of knowledge on the papers, but the meaning became sadly twisted. Aren't our own religious wars a twisting of the Scriptures given to us by the creators of our humanity, as stated in Genesis 1:26: "Elohim said, 'Let *us* make man in our own image, in our likeness." Inform yourself of the present-day eugenic project and plans to terraform Mars into Earth 2 by the year 2170, and you'll see the parallels with the Genesis Probe from *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan.*

In "Return to Tomorrow," Sargon's planet is named Arret; in Hebrew, the Earth is *eretz.* Sargon called mankind "my children," and explained, "As you leave your seed on distant planets, so we left our seed behind us." Isn't it what Genesis 1 is telling us? A direct affirmation that some of the gods of Earth history are of extraterrestrial origin is made in "Who Mourns for Adonais?"

In Greek mythology, the gods lived on Mt. Olympus. The Bible has kept the memory of that "legend" in Genesis 6:4: "The *Nephilim* [usually translated as "giants," but some people think it should be "the fallen"—i.e., fallen angels] were on the earth in those days—and also afterward—when the sons of Elohim

went to the daughters of men and had children by them. They were the heroes of old and men of renown."

The Himalayas and Peru are other places said to be the Earth homes of the gods. That brings us back to the Bible, in Amos 4:13: "He who treads upon the heights of the earth, YHWH, the God of hosts, is his name." In Hebrew, *YHWH* is not pronounced, but replaced by "*Adonai,*" which was later translated by the word "Lord." If he was an extraterrestrial with eternal life, everything becomes clear.

French scientists have recently succeeded in prolonging the life of a fly by modifying its DNA, in French, A.D.N. The Hebrew letters of Adonai are *aleph, daled, nun, yod,* so, when I say, "My *Lord,*" I'm saying "my *A.D.N.(Y.)*" A coincidence?

Flint, in "Requiem for Methuselah," said he was the Methuselah of the Bible who lived 969 years. He also said he knew Moses personally. Can it be that he was like the one who "used to speak to Moses face to face, as one man would speak to another" (Exodus 33:11)?

In "Bread and Circuses," McCoy said that he'd like just once to beam down to a primitive planet and say, "Behold! I am the Archangel Gabriel!" In Christianity, Gabriel is an angel of the highest order entrusted with waking the dead on Judgment Day. He announced the birth of Jesus to Mary, and also spoke with Daniel, in chapter 12, verse 7: "Then I heard the man clothed in linen, who appears above the waters of the river." Gabriel is also the one who revealed the Koran to the prophet Mohammed and took him to the Celestial Jerusalem, where he met Moses and Jesus. Was Mohammed taken aboard a space ship, like Commander Christopher? The Bible says that Enoch and Elijah were also both taken to Heaven alive. Remember, angel of God means "messenger of the (sky) gods."

In "The Return of the Archons," there is a prophecy that says the Archons will come back to save those who fight the Body. We know that the Archons were the crew of the U.S.S. *Archon.* We then understand

that men who can travel in space and land on a primitive planet can be mistaken for saviors or gods. The episode "Who Watches the Watchers?" is also a good example. Christians believe that Jesus will return some day. He said that his kingdom is not of this world. On the day of ascension, was Jesus moved up by some kind of tractor beam, the same one that calmed the turbulence when he walked on the waters? Certainly a lot of turbulence was created by the "landing" of the glory of God on Mt. Sinai: "There was thunder and lightning, with a heavy cloud over the mountain" (Exodus 19:16) and "The glory of YHWH looked to the Israelites like a consuming fire" (Exodus 24:17). Maybe we should rename the glory of YHWH the U.S.S. *Yhwh*.

The Mahabharata, a sacred book of Hinduism, also speaks of flying vessels called *vimanas,* used by the gods to travel in the air. Everywhere on Earth, we find such stories of gods coming from the sky. Is it only another coincidence? Are these just legends created by primitive minds? Or are they souvenirs of real contacts that these primitive people had with a race of space explorers that we today call extraterrestrials?

Now let's come to the main question: Was there a violation of the Prime Directive in our own Earth's history of revealed religion? The simple fact that revealed religions exist is, in my opinion, proof of that violation. But let's look again in the Bible to try to find where things went wrong.

In Genesis 3:4, we read: "But the serpent said to the woman, you should not die at all, for Elohim knows that the very day you eat of it, your eyes will be opened, and you will be like Elohim." You will be like the gods of the sky if you eat of the tree of knowledge—science. And God-Elohim confirmed it was true in Genesis 3:22: "Then YHWH Elohim said, see the man who has become like one of us." Doesn't that sound like Captain Kirk speaking to Mr. Spock at the end of "The Apple"?

Is Captain Kirk more respectful of the Prime Directive than the God-Elohim of the Bible? We find a

clue in Genesis 9:11: "I establish my covenant with you, that never again shall all flesh be destroyed by the waters of a flood." Maybe someone can try to excuse God-Elohim by saying, as Gary Mitchell did in "Where No Man Has Gone Before," "Morals are for men, not for gods." But this is certainly the worst case of a violation of the Prime Directive.

All this is in contrast to the kind of intervention by Gary Seven in "Assignment: Earth." A twentieth-century Earthman is raised and trained by unknown and unnamed aliens to prevent Earth from destroying itself. Perhaps the prophets of our religious history are like the androids we discover at the end of "The Questor Tapes."

All this might also have something to do with a race like the "Q" of *The Next Generation*. To me, the "Q" character looks a lot like Satan: the adversary. "For the accuser of our brothers, who accuses them before our Elohim day and night has been buried down" (Revelations 12:10). Compare also the book of Job 1:6: "One day as the sons of Elohim came to present themselves before YHWH, Satan, the Accuser, came with them." See the similarity if we change some names in verse 8 of Job? "Then YHWH asked the 'Q,' have you noticed my servant Picard?" And the rest of the story has been told in *Encounter at Farpoint*. Also the temptation of Riker in "Hide and Q," and the temptation of Christ in the desert.

There are so many parallels that can be made between our own Earth's history of revealed religions and Star Trek that it would take an entire book to explore the subject in depth.

Let me conclude with an example that takes us back to the first biblical quotation at the beginning of this essay, Ecclesiastes 3:15. The episode is "Tomorrow Is Yesterday." The U.S.S. *Enterprise* is taken for a UFO by the primitive peoples of 1968. Can we find any UFOs in the Bible? Read Ezekiel 1; this is a description of a UFO by a primitive man. (Read *The Spaceship of Ezekiel* by Joseph Blunrich, a NASA scientist.) The Bible has another interesting description, in 2

Kings 2:11: "Now as they were going along conversing, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire separated the two of them and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into the heavens." U.S.S. *Yhwh,* beam me up!

It is also evident that the Star of Bethlehem was a UFO. Jesus was put to death because he said (Matthew 24:30), "Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in the sky, and all the nations of the earth will lament when they see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of the sky, in all his power and splendor. And he will send out his angels with a loud trumpet-call, and they will gather his chosen people from the four winds, from one end of the sky to the other." Does all this have something to do with present-day UFO sightings? The word "God," translated from the word "Deus," is thought to mean "light" by some people.

What will be our reactions, if someday, the U.S.S. *Yhwh* really comes back with Jesus, Moses, and Elijah still alive thanks to cloning techniques of the advanced extraterrestrials that our primitive ancestors took for the Elohim, the sky gods? Ezekiel 48:36 concludes the book by speaking of Jerusalem: "And the name of the city from that day onward shall be YHWH is there." And the revelation of John 22:20 says, "It is true, I am coming very soon." Also read Isaiah 11:9.

If I am right, the religion of those Elohim will be very close to the philosophy of the Vulcan IDIC, "Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations." The glory of creation lies in its infinite diversity of life forms and universes. We cannot conceive of the Infinite, EN SOF; one can only try in every way to open one's mind to infinity and to place oneself in harmony with it.

Star Trek may be so popular because it is not just speculation about the future, it is also a prophecy for those with the intelligence to understand: "Only the wise shall understand" (Daniel 12: 10). Star Trek can also be defined as a new mythology because it opens our minds to a new interpretation of our real universe, past, present, and future. Perhaps someday we'll receive our own Gary Seven to prevent us from destroy-

ing ourselves, as predicted in Malachi 3:1: "See, I will send my messenger, who will prepare the way before me. Then suddenly the Adonai you are seeking will come to his temple; the messenger of the covenant, whom you desire, will come, says YHWH of Hosts." Perhaps he is already among us, since we have reached the Apocalypse as predicted by the Greeks, whose word *apokalypsis* meant "revelation." This will be a revelation about our true origin and destiny.

It's up to you, now, to form your own opinion about this essay. Star Trek can help us to understand that our own Earth's history of revealed religions was perhaps a violation of the Prime Directive. But if someday I really see God-Elohim, the sky gods, land near Jerusalem, I will forgive them for ignoring the Prime Directive. It will really be a day of *Pesach* (Hebrew for "Passover"), which the Christians have transformed into Easter. On that day I will be able to really say, "The human adventure is just beginning."

THE LONG TREK

by Karen Sullivan

Stardate 111288.8. Well, it finally happened. After all these years, I made it: My first Star Trek convention. Of course, I had to travel from the planet Philadelphia, just a few parsecs from Starbase 28, all the way to Starbase 37, located in the Scranton quadrant of the Pennsylvania Star System, a full 135 parsecs distant. (All alone, I might add.) Then I had to wait in line for one Earth hour (in deep-space cold) in order to get in and wade through an ocean of Trekkers as high as a Vulcan's ears once I entered. I really think I deserve the Starfleet Medal of Valor for self-sacrifice, heroism, and self-deprivation, in light of all I went through to get there; but then, it is nothing any other Starfleet officer wouldn't do to serve her fleet. It's in the job description.

Being my first time and all, the night before the convention, I hardly slept. I stayed up late watching tapes of old and new episodes to set the mood for the next day (as if I needed prompting). I was so excited. For once in my life, I didn't need an ejector bed to hurl me onto my feet when the alarm went off at six a.m. I jumped into the sonic shower, then pulled on a pair of jeans and a Star Trek T-shirt. (Drat! My uniform was at the cleaners. Officer out of uniform. Ten demerits.) Then I quickly gulped down two cups of freshly brewed, 100 percent pure Andorian coffee and grabbed a third for the road.

Scranton, the first frontier. This is the first voyage of the shuttlecraft U.S.S. *Celica.* Its mission: to explore

strange new highways, to seek out fellow fans and new memorabilia. To boldly go where no Toyota has gone before! Shift; grind; screech; thunk. (Not if you blow the transmission, you dunderhead!)

As I boldly trekked along the Pennsylvania Turnpike at Warp 5.5 toward Scranton, gladly going where I had never gone before, I tried to imagine what new life forms and new memorabilia I would find there and what new adventures this alien frontier would hold.

Alas, as I trekked merrily along, the coffee soon kicked in (never could trust those blasted snowheads!), and I soon found myself crossing my legs in the command chair. I loudly hummed a medley of Star Trek's Greatest Hits to take my mind off the problem, but it only worked for a short while. Then I saw a sign. (Yes, there are many signs, my friends.) Only this sign wasn't *prophetic*—it was *pathetic*. Thirty-seven parsecs to the nearest port, Starbase 33. Ye gods, I'll never make it! I immediately conjured up a picture of Alan Shepard in my mind, waiting to be the first American launched into space. Like a good soldier, he waited four long hours while NASA came up with one reason or another to delay lift-off. Suited up, strapped in, buckled down, the hatch door bolted shut behind him. Vacuum-sealed for freshness, he was all tucked into his spacesuit, snug as a bug in a rug in the tiny capsule. It had everything. Well, almost everything. It was temperature controlled, pressure controlled, fire resistant, biomedically linked to mission control, and had a state-of-the-art communications linkup. It had everything but a way for Shepard to relieve himself.

He waited. And he waited. And he waited. Finally, he could wait no longer. He received permission to do it in the suit, shorting out a number of minor circuits in the process.

(I guess that's why the early space flights lasted only for short periods of time. These itty-bitty space vehicles ain't got no bathrooms!)

Well, daydreaming killed some time. But it also made me laugh. Now I really had to go. Of course,

Alan Shepard got away with it, why couldn't I? But then, he was only going into space for fifteen minutes in that suit. I was going to Scranton for two days in the same pair of jeans. Not to mention what it would do to the upholstery.

Scotty, I never needed you more than I did at that very moment. I was about to summon a Starfleet Security code #32, which indicates a crisis of natural origin. (This certainly qualified!) Or, perhaps a Security Code #33, which is used for a biomedical crisis requiring immediate evacuation of personnel, was in order. (Either one would have OK!)

But, unfortunately, I had forgotten my communicator. (It was probably at the cleaner's with my uniform—I wonder what tetrachloroethylene will do to the components? Dereliction of duty, inadequately prepared. So much for my Girl Scout training. Ten more demerits.) And even if I had remembered my communicator, I was well out of transporter range. So I did what any self-respecting starship captain would do. I punched it up to Warp 7.5 (as fast as my little 4-cylinder shuttle would go), and kept my eyeballs peeled for the enemy.

Sure enough, in no time at all, I spotted one. It wasn't easy because he was cloaked, but he was there, all right. He was so close I could smell him. (Or maybe I was just passing through a farming colony!) I knew he was out there hiding, waiting for me. You can't fool an old tar like me, no sir. I've been down this pike before. I know every inch of this star route, every asteroid, every moon, every . . . billboard? (I told you there were signs.)

Anyway, there he was. A Romulan Bird of Prey at two o'clock. He scanned me and knew I wasn't heavily armed. He had his phasers armed and ready, and trained on my warp nacelles. He was ready to pounce. He'd do me in a second and not give it another thought. But in the end, I outsmarted him and made my escape. I pulled up close behind a huge Class I Transwarp Freighter named the U.S.S. *Mack*. Packing a powerful 18-wheel—er, 18–power unit design, I

knew if I flew in her wake her systems would override and jam up any tracking systems those raunchy Romulans might be using.

Just as I suspected, this baby was equipped with "long lance" plasma torpedoes specially designed to disrupt enemy sensors and control systems. In addition to protecting her own precious cargo (supplies for the Federation-wide colonizers of royal descendants, code name: Burger King) she was also running interference for sister ships up and down the shipping lanes. No Romulan had a chance against her. It pays t' keep up wi' your technical journals after all, laddie. I opened hailing frequencies and scrambled a message to her captain informing him of my plan. Then I positioned myself directly behind her and rode her draft. Now we were cruisin'. Next stop—Starbase 33.

In no time at all, I made it to the con. While waiting for permission to come aboard, I mingled with other personnel, humanoids and aliens alike, of various ranks, positions, and backgrounds. We exchanged any information that wasn't classified on the latest goings-on within the fleet, as well as ship assignment locations, so we could correspond after the weekend briefing.

As I stepped over the threshold, I found myself in a Star Trek wonderland! As far as the eye could see, nothing but Star Trek memorabilia, costumes, books. Alexander Courage's theme filled the air, and off to one side blooper tapes rolled continuous clips of botched shots and madcap routines. But most important of all, there were Star Trek friends—soul mates.

I guess I don't have to tell you how wonderful it feels not to be the only one in the room who loves Star Trek. I'm sure we've all lived through the nightmare where everyone stares at your "I Love Spock" button and says, "Oh, don't you just love his books? How many children do you have?" (Mistheads!) I smile McCoyly and tell them that *Doctor* Spock didn't write all those books on child psychology, *Mister* Spock did. It was a typo. Mr. Spock came back in

time via the Entropy Effect, gave us all that great advice on how to raise our kids, then did a mind meld on some street person, because, being a modest Vulcan male and not liking large crowds and a lot of publicity, he didn't want to have to hang around to do the talk show circuit with Donahue and Winfrey.

Crude but effective commentary. You could almost see their wisdom teeth when their mouths dropped open. But they deserve it. After all, these blockheads are the real aliens. The slimy Regulan bloodworms should have their heads squashed. (Now, now. Make nice, Mommy told me.) Anyway, the Prime Directive prevents me from taking any adverse action, such as putting bamboo under their fingernails until they cry out, "Beam me up, Scotty!"

(Am I rambling? I'm rambling. Sorry.)

Anyway, I was finally in a room where every single person I met was a Trekker. What a comfort. What a joy. What a crowd! All ages and shapes and sizes and colors. All kinds of jobs and professions and backgrounds. Some came even farther than I did to be here. Five minutes into the convention my newfound friends and I were already making plans to meet at the next one.

I was very impressed by the order and manners and kindness of all I met that weekend—officers and gentlemen all. I stopped going to concerts millennia ago because I couldn't stand the crazies, but there were none here. Everyone was polite and calm and waited patiently in line for tickets, for autographs and pictures, and politely raised their hands during question and answer sessions in the auditorium.

All my planning, patience, and efforts were being well rewarded in the new friends I made through the course of the weekend, the memorabilia I purchased and the chance to speak with Ann Crispin, Hal Clement, and Dave McDonald.

And then, the grand prize of them all, two autographed glossies and the opportunity to exchange a few words with none other than Captain Jean-Luc Picard himself, Mr. Patrick Stewart. He is even more

captivatingly charming and handsome in person than he is on the screen.

I planned everything. As he signed an autograph for me, I wanted to tell him how wonderful he was in the series and how much I enjoyed that afternoon's presentation and what a superb actor he was. As I stood in line waiting for my turn, I planned every word I would say, the voice inflection I would use, and worked on the perfect smile. Sweet and cute and shy, or soft and sultry and mysterious? I wanted to say something really profound. I'm an adult. He's an adult. We could have a really nice conversation here. But I also wanted him to notice me as a special fan, to stand out among the others.

I was so nervous. I mean, after all, how often does one get to meet the captain of a starship? Finally it was my turn. Come on, say it. What are you waiting for, you fool? I just stared at him like some ogle-eyed teenager. He was so pleasant and warm. He looked up and smiled and those cool smoky eyes of his gazed back at me and he said, "Hello, how are you today?" I was so overwhelmed that when I opened my mouth, all that came out was air. I felt like such a Throephobe! Worse yet, I looked like a fish with my mouth fluttering open and shut and no sound coming out. (Sorry, sir. Hailing frequencies have been jammed by the Idiot Squad.) He signed the eight-by-ten glossy I handed him in beautiful silver script, handed it back to me, smiled again, and thanked *me* for coming. Flushed with embarrassment, I mumbled, "Thank you," and shuffled away.

You sot! You wouldn't make janitor on that man's starship. Turn in your communicator, mister, you're grounded. (Aye, sir. As soon as it comes back from the cleaners.) Well, I did accomplish one thing. He probably won't forget the goofy-looking girl with the blonde hair and the bugged-out eyes. (Does acting gaga classify as insubordination? Ten more demerits. You're really racking them up there, kid. Well, maybe if you don't tell anyone you almost wet your drawers

on this mission, they'll let you come back tomorrow. But watch yourself, mister; you're walking a thin line.)

I left the con that night and wrote Mr. Stewart a note telling him all the things I could not say that afternoon, determined to give it to him the second day of the convention. Alas, once again, as I handed him a picture to autograph, I chickened out. However, all was not for naught. I closed my eyes, took a deep breath, and managed to drag out the words, "Hello, how are you today?" I gulped some more air and continued, "Have a nice trip back to the coast. Wouldn't it be nice if you could just beam back?" (Not bad. Three complete sentences. We're making definite progress here.) Then he smiled and said, "Yes, that would be nice, wouldn't it?" *I* beamed. We actually had a conversation. I asked a question and he answered it. My friends scraped me off the floor and we went on our way. Now I could die happy.

Back to the dealer's room. Amazing place: Anything you could possibly ever want was right there in that very room. They've got everything! First, you've got the entire collection of what this year's best-dressed Trekkers are wearing: jackets, jerseys, jumpsuits, T-shirts, trousers, boots, and caps. Then you've got your phasers, your communicators and tricorders, plus scanners and hypos. And who could leave this place without an agonizer? (No trouble getting a seat on the train Monday morning with one of those babies!) And what will this year's Trekker be driving? Starship *Enterprise* models, of course! However, for those who can't afford to fuel an entire starship, there are also cute little shuttlecraft models. And then, for those who like to live dangerously, there are Ferengi Fighters, Klingon Cruisers, Romulan Birds of Prey. You can get action figures in every race, color, creed, and galactic origin, and dioramas to transport them all to.

Then you've got your books and manuals, your magazines and fanzines, posters, postcards and greeting cards, movie tapes, episode tapes, and blooper tapes, lunch boxes, plates, and mugs (where's the cut-

lery?), matchbook covers and calendars, shower curtains and bedspreads (what? no toothbrushes?), pins and patches and bumper stickers (I especially like the ones that read, "My other car is a Starship," and "He's dead, Jim. You get his phaser, I'll get his wallet"), frisbees, and buttons. And who could forget those cute and fuzzy little tribbles? (They make great companions for any hamster or gerbil, *and* they're already housebroken.) There are record albums and cassette tapes. Did I forget anything? Probably, but I'll find it next time.

Among all of this splendor, what more could one ask? What more could one want? What more is there?

Yet I couldn't help feeling that something was missing. Missing? The only thing missing at this point was my sanity. Maybe it was just the pressure getting to me. Then I heard this loud, gurgling, alien noise inside my stomach. (No, I am not a member of Commander Remick's goon squad.) Maybe I was just hungry. Heaven knows, we've been so busy Trekking along all day, we haven't thought about eating. Besides, I don't remember seeing any of those famous ubiquitous wall slots, so prevalent aboard the *Enterprise,* yet conspicuously absent here, where you push a button and food pops out of the wall. I suppose no one has come up with Star Trek *food* yet.

Warping out of Trekland, my fellow officers and I set course on a new mission—Star Trek VII: The Search for Food. Later, our mission accomplished, we set course for home, happy and contented little Trekkers, to await the next convention.

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