



Lance Reddick from *Fringe* got into acting because of Captain Kirk on *Star Trek*.

## Did Shatner's demands cut him out of *Star Trek XI*?

Over the past months, there has been much discussion as to whether William Shatner, who is famous for playing Captain James T. Kirk, would be in *Star Trek XI* or wouldn't be (or should be or shouldn't be), but it may be that the actor's demands made it impossible for it to happen.

As reported by *AMCTV.com*, in the course of being interviewed about his newest Fox series *Fringe*, J.J. Abrams discussed Shatner's anger at not having a role in next year's *Star Trek XI*. "It was very tricky," said Abrams. "We actually had written a scene with him in it that was a flashback kind of thing, but the truth is, it didn't quite feel right."

Complicating matters was Shatner himself, who sought a bigger role than he was offered. "The bigger thing was that he was very vocal that he didn't want to do a cameo," explained Abrams. "We tried desperately to put him in the movie, but he was making it very clear that he wanted the movie to focus on him significantly which, frankly, he deserves."

In addition, there were concerns over canon and the desire to make the storytelling consistent. "The truth is, the story that we were telling required a certain adherence to the *Trek* canon and consistency of storytelling," said Abrams. "It's funny, a lot of the

people who were proclaiming that he must be in this movie were the same people saying it must adhere to canon. Well, his character died on screen. Maybe a smarter group of filmmakers could have figured out how to resolve that."

There is still skepticism that this means Shatner will not appear in the film. After all, the actor appeared as Kirk in a DirecTV commercial, and fandom didn't know it was happening. The first time it was known was when the commercial started to air. Could the same thing be taking place now?

*Star Trek XI* will appear in theaters on Friday, May 8, 2009.

▲ Lance Reddick, who is appearing on J.J. Abrams' new sci-fi series *Fringe*, would have preferred a spot in one of Abrams' other projects.

Reddick, a lifetime *Star Trek* fan, got into acting because of his love of Captain Kirk. "Honestly, it's ironic that J.J. is doing *Star Trek* because the first thing that drew me to acting was wanting to be Captain Kirk when I was a kid. It's weird because growing up, I never thought I would be an actor, but I was a huge fan of *Star Trek*."

Visiting the *Star Trek XI* set one day to meet with Abrams was a thrill for Reddick. "I flipped out," he said. ■

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## Come to the September club meeting in Laurel!

The next meeting of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, September 20, at the Laurel, Maryland, home of Starfleet Intelligence Officer Annie White and Chief of Computer Operations John White.

We'll get together at 5:00 p.m. to decide where to go for dinner. Our club meeting, will

start no later than 7:00 p.m.

We'll find out what fellow club members have been up to as well as discuss the latest news about *Star Trek* and other sci-fi television shows and feature films.

Need directions to this month's meeting? Get this month's Insert, which is in our Yahoo! Group. ■

The "Captain's Log" will return next month!

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## MOVIE REVIEW: *The X-Files: I wanted to believe*

Fifteen years. It's been 15 years since *The X-Files* debuted on FOX. It started out as a brilliant show that soon became arrogant and conceited, then engulfed and overwhelmed by its own success. But I'm not here to talk about the show. I've already done that. I'm here to review the new movie, *The X-Files: I Want to Believe*.

The franchise's first feature, released in 1998, was pointless, plotless and a gigantic waste of time. It was sort of like eating a twenty-course meal followed by three quarts of ice cream, a whole chocolate cake and chasing it down with a diet soda. The sequel (of sorts) does have a plot and it even has a purpose. It just doesn't have an "x-file."

Basically, Mulder is still on the lam from the Feds (which he was at the end of the series finale), Scully's still a doctor—just not for the F.B.I.—and she is approached to enlist her help in enlisting Mulder's help on a case that is very *X-Files*-like. Of course, Mulder refuses at first, then he recants his refusal after he gets a whiff of the actual case, and those old juices start flowing again. Scully, of course, wants nothing to do with it, but goes along because of Mulder.

It is not a bad movie. It's not a great movie either, but it is enjoyable and downright funny in some parts. The lack of a real "x-file" bothers me. The actual case is interesting, but it is not an "x-file!"

This show had the greatest potential to be an amazing movie franchise! All the things they couldn't do on the small screen (and believe me, they got away with a lot!) would be perfectly acceptable on the large screen. Every gory notion, every gross detail could proudly displayed for all to see.

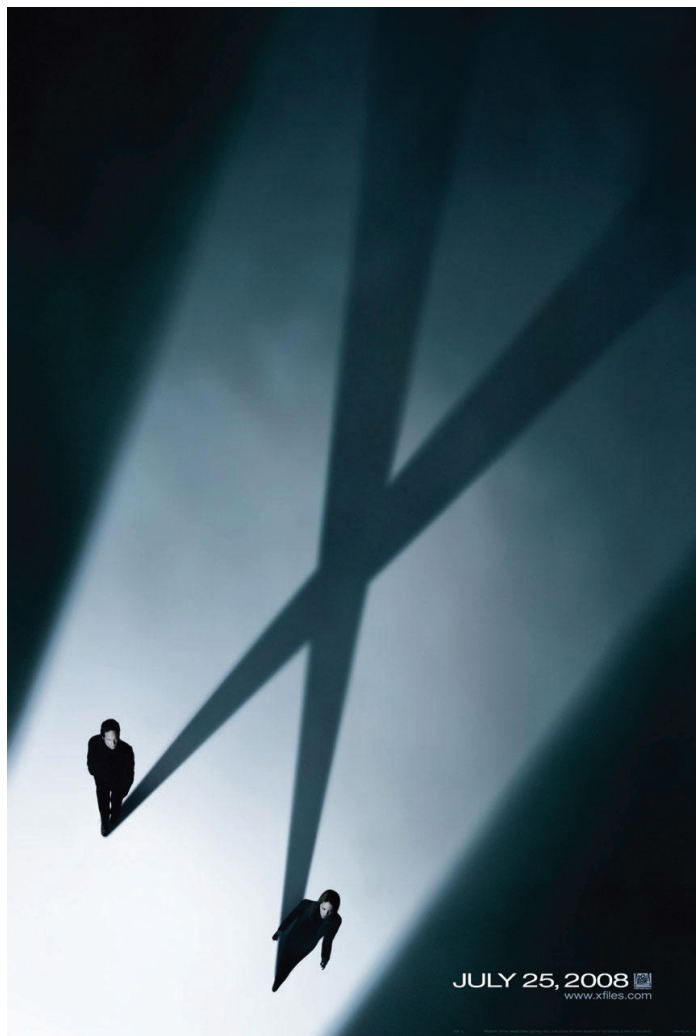
What do we get? A two-hour wet dream for all the Mulder/Scully fans. I always thought having them romantically involved was a mistake, and there was nothing in this film to prove me wrong. The Mulder/Scully romance is right up front, and it does nothing but drag the movie down.

Another problem, albeit not

as major as you would have thought, was the director, Chris Carter. I thought he was a bad television director; his film directing is not as bad, but it is bad. The film is full of overblown scenes, scene-chewing performances and shots and angles that do nothing to promote the narrative. Most of his shots are routine; when they're not routine, they're pointless and just plain dumb.

Admittedly, it was nice seeing Mulder and Scully as a team again. And there are a few surprises along the way, including the return of one of the show's most-loved characters. But, in the end, the lack of a real "x-file" sticks out like a Mundane at a *Star Trek* convention. And the inclusion of the dreaded Mulder/Scully romance almost drags the movie to a screeching halt. It is a good movie. *X-Files* fans should see this, but it is not great even though it could have been. ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard



The money wasn't out there for *The X-Files: I Want to Believe*.

# SCIENCE *TREK*: The ultimate demolition derby

The world did not end yesterday, September 10, 2008, as you probably noticed.

Scientists at the European Organization for Nuclear Research (or CERN in French) pressed the start button on the Large Hadron Collider (LHC), a particle accelerator 27-kilometers in diameter beneath the border of France and Switzerland. As the results of the test fire flashed onto the screen, an intrepid but imaginary observer would have thought, “A game of Pong is more exciting.” Yet, those first blips on a screen are the start of the search for God ... the “God” particle, that is.

## *Should I be concerned about CERN?*

Established in 1954, CERN, the world’s largest particle physics laboratory, is run by 20 European member states. Over the past decades, CERN has been deeply involved in the advancement of particle science, including the discovery of W and Z bosons in 1983 and the creation of the first anti-hydrogen atoms in 1995. (W and Z bosons are particles that control the Weak Force, one of the four basic forces in nature, the others being the Strong Force, Electro-magnetic Force, and everyone’s favorite, Gravity.)

You might not know that in the late 1980s, two CERN scientists, Tim Berners-Lee and Robert Cailliau, started up a hypertext project to aid in information sharing. You have probably heard of the end result—the World Wide Web.

Primarily, though, CERN is known for its particle accelerators. The newly opened Large Hadron Collector occupies a space that formerly housed the Large Electron-Positron Collider (LEP) from 1989 until 2000. Within a few months, the LHC will be fully operational, accelerating particles in opposite directions to nearly the speed of light before smashing them together and observing the results ... the ultimate demolition derby.

## *Why all the worry?*

The main concern of the CERN critics is that the LHC could create a black hole that would swallow the Earth. Nothing serious, right? Much of the concern and the assurances of safety are theoretical ... at least until we start smashing particles together.

What is known is this—colliding cosmic

rays produce far higher energies than possible with the LHC. In fact, sometimes those collisions create microscopic black holes (or so we theorize from our observations of extremely distant collisions). Whether those black holes are stable or quickly decay is not known. However, it is clear that the universe still exists. If a microscopic black hole were created in the LHC, it would likely either: 1) Decay almost instantly; 2) Keep going into the nether reaches of space; or 3) Get trapped by the Earth but take longer than the lifetime of the universe to grow into a problem.

Of course, science fiction is full of scientists telling the common folk, “It’s nothing to worry about.”

## *Why would anyone want to collect Large Hedrons?*

Because everyone needs a hobby? Seriously, “large” refers to the size of the ring ... it’s 27 kilometers around. The key reason for building the LHC is to discover the Higgs boson—if it exists.

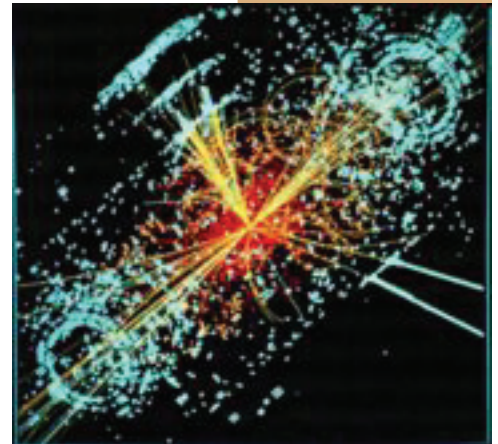
Our current understanding of particle physics—the study not only of protons, neutrons, electrons, but the particles that form them and control the interactions between them—is called the “Standard Model.” So far, scientists have discovered all the particles theorized by the Standard Model, except for the Higgs boson.

Long-winded, intensive scientific explanation shortened: photons (electro-magnetic force) don’t have mass. W and Z bosons (Weak Force) do. Oversimplifying, the Higgs boson is not only responsible for mass of elementary particles, but also ties together the electro-magnetic and weak forces into the electro-weak force.

For those who have little use for the highly theoretical, think of this example from CNN’s article: the discovery of the electron at first seemed only a scientific crowd-pleaser, but it gave us the computer and changed our world. Can the Higgs boson do the same ... if it even exists?

Beyond Higgs, the LHC or its descendent

*Continued on page 6*



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## REFLECTIONS: *Earth's* first season revisited

As we wind up our analysis of the television show that was *Earth: Final Conflict*, no account would be fully accurate and precise without a closer, albeit a condensed look at all five seasons of the first of Gene Roddenberry's post mortem television productions. Hopefully, this will make plain that, even though this was far from a perfect show, it was a significant one that not only set a few milestones in genre television, but also in television itself. So join me as I reflect upon Gene Roddenberry's *Earth: Final Conflict*, and may the Prophets have mercy on our soul.

### Season 1

Three years after the Taelons arrived on Earth, they were using their advanced technology to help humanity achieve a better quality of life. Jonathan Doors, a businessman with close ties to the Taelons, was targeted by an assassin while making a speech with the North American Taelon Companion, Da'an. Doors was apparently killed by the assassin, but Da'an's life was saved by Police Commander William Boone. Da'an was impressed with Boone's work and offered him a job as a Taelon Protector, a personal bodyguard and envoy for the Taelons ... kind of like the Alien Secret Service.

Boone politely refused because he wanted to start a family with his wife. Also, deep down, he didn't trust the Taelons. Subsequently, Boone's wife was mysteriously murdered, and Boone found out that Jonathan Doors faked his own death so that he could focus on an underground Resistance movement. Doors believed the Taelons had sinister intentions and wanted to find out their true motives. He also believed that the Taelons had something to do with the murder of Boone's wife. With this revelation, Boone agreed to accept Da'an's offer and also worked as a double agent for the Resistance.

Once a person became a Protector, he or she was fitted with a Cyber-Viral Implant (CVI) that gave the wearer enhanced mental abilities, including perfect recall. While the CVI gave one increased mental functions, it also altered the mind of the host, making them singularly loyal to the Taelons. He or she placed the Taelons above friends, family and the human race as a whole, thus assuring one's devotion to Taelon interests.

The Resistance saw to it that Boone received a modified CVI, leaving his loyalties and sensibilities unaltered, allowing him to continue as a double agent. He also received a bio-engineered weapon called a Skrill that attached to a person's arm. One of Boone's partners was fellow double agent and ex-Marine Lili Marquette. She piloted the Taelon shuttlecraft (It can travel in inter-dimensional space.) and handled any kind of firearms. His other partner, from the Taelon side, was Agent Ronald Sandoval, another Taelon Protector who was fully loyal to the Taelon.

Boone soon discovered that Sandoval had his wife killed so that he would have no reason to reject Da'an's offer. Sandoval's wife opposed his becoming a Protector, so he had her institutionalized to get her out of the way. He didn't want Boone to have the same problem, so he told Boone this was why he had his wife killed. Sandoval told him this, believing that he was under the influence of the CVI. Boone agreed, pretending to be under the influence as well. He then knew there was something amiss with the Taelons.

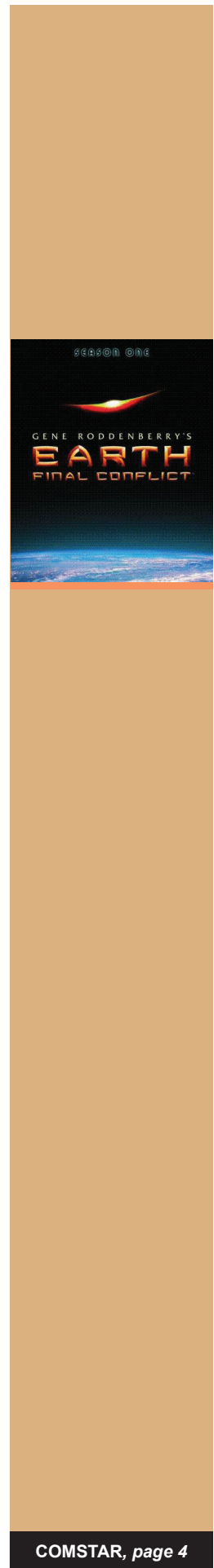
Boone introduced Lili to Augur, a technical genius and computer hacker who Boone often used when doing police work. Later, Lili and Boone became acquainted with Doors' state-of-the-art base for the Resistance movement. This was when they discovered that Augur had been a member of the Resistance all along.

Boone continued to search for clues as to the true nature of the Taelon visit. In doing his duties, he actually became close to Da'an and started to explore Taelon philosophy and religion. Da'an grew to respect mankind and human tradition. They became good friends. Zo'or, a less sympathetic Taelon, was assigned to North America and worked alongside Da'an. He had no respect for mankind and saw them for what they were—a means to an end and a resource to exploit.

In the meantime, Boone discovered that a Taelon named Ma'el visited Earth centuries ago and predicted that humanity would one day be equal to the Taelons. Da'an embraced this sentiment, but Zo'or wanted all knowledge of this destroyed.

An enemy of the Taelons from a race of beings called the Kimera arrived on Earth.

*Continued on page 6*



## WAYNE'S WORLDS: Where's the beef?

"There are no new science-fiction shows on television this fall!"

I was having a discussion with one of my "hardcore SF" friends about all the new programs I'll be watching during the 2008/2009 television season. Luckily, we can disagree without being disagreeable. He would have none of what I was saying.

I reminded him that the future of science-fiction on television is *Eureka*, not *Battlestar Galactica*.

As costs to produce expensive shows like *BSG* continue to escalate, we'll see more and more Earth-based shows like *Eureka*, I told him.

And we need to attract as many non-SF fans as we can so we can at least enjoy *some* level of SF in our shows, I said. We need to make SF as appealing to as many people as possible.

"You've got it backwards," he told me. "The more these shows are watered down same-old-(stuff) with a little SF window dressing on them, the less they are science fiction."

I opened my mouth to try and give a brilliant retort, but I couldn't say anything. My friend was, in some ways, absolutely right.

I was suddenly reminded of that classic Wendy's commercial with Clara Peller looking angrily at a huge bun with a teensy burger on it, asking, "Where's the beef?"

This year, the *SyFy Portal* website is covering more shows than ever before. The staff struggled and debated about which programs we'd review and provide news about, ending up with a hefty list, more than we've ever covered previously.

The question is: Are they science fiction?

My friend always holds up *Star Trek* as the pinnacle of sci-fi, and I think he's perfectly right to do so. And I've been watching some of the Classic *Trek* episodes that have been remastered, which has been a reminder of why I fell in love with science fiction in the first place. For example, I recently saw "The Ultimate Computer," and it was good to revisit the point of that episode: How will computers and humans interact? It's been decades since that show aired, and I still don't think we have an answer to that question.

I also remember *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*, which used to leave me lost in thought

about topics like war and life and humanity so long that I wouldn't realize it had been a half hour since the show ended.

Let me say yet again that I love variety in my SF. I love light and breezy as much as deep and profound. I just don't want a steady diet of only one kind. As much as I love *Eureka*, do I want to watch 20 other shows that are just like it?

I had to think, which new program will delve into the important issues of science that will impact our everyday lives? *Knight Rider*?

Which show will explore the conundrums of science and how the advances that tend to make our lives better may actually make them worse as well? Perhaps *Fringe*, but I can't think of any other ones.

There's a lot of discussion about "character-driven" episodes, ones that focus on the "people" we have come to believe in and know on SF shows. But if every episode worries about how they are going to pay their bills and survive action-oriented plots, is that any different from a cop or mystery show? What will we learn or how will we grow from the same old storylines that are now dressed in sparkling, fancier special effects?

I hope we're not just being "brought along for the ride" on these new programs. I hope that we aren't being lured in with eye-popping effects just so we can bolster a show that otherwise might not make it if SF genre fans weren't watching.

As fans of science fiction, we need to support genre shows as much as we can. But are we just being used by the networks?

Only time and the new season will tell. ■

Chief of Security Wayne Hall



Clara Peller (right) asks during a commercial for Wendy's Restaurants, "Where's the beef?"

# COMING EVENTS

## SEPTEMBER

- September 20** ..... The next meeting will be on Saturday, September 20, at the Whites' house in Laurel, Maryland. We'll gather for dinner at 5 p.m., followed by our monthly meeting no later than 7 p.m.
- September 27-28** ..... The Baltimore Comic-Con at the Baltimore Convention Center. If you would like more information regarding the event, visit <http://www.comicon.com/baltimore/>.

## SCIENCE TREK: The ultimate demolition derby (concluded)

*continued from page 3*

may answer questions such as why is gravity the weakest by farthest reaching of the four fundamental forces, what are dark matter and dark energy, and do extra dimensions (proposed by string theory) exist?

We might not be able to find the answers with the LHC, but at least we can now start phrasing the question(s) correctly. And, chances are, we'll still be here in the morning.

(For those who can remember back that long, in the 1980's the U.S. planned to build its own version of the LHC in Texas, but Congress killed the project because, well, it was just too darn expensive. Apparently, the Europeans have no such concern about costs.) ■

### Web Notes

- <http://www.cnn.com/TECH/09/10/lhc/collider/index.html> (The search begins.);
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CERN> (Is the opposite of concern *procern*?);
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W\\_and\\_Z\\_bosons](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/W_and_Z_bosons) (That's bosons with an "n.");
- <http://www.w3.org/History/19921103-hypertext/hypertext/WWW/TheProject.html> (The first Web page);
- <http://public.web.cern.ch/public/en/LHC/Safety-en.html> (The Safety Brochure); and
- <http://ca.youtube.com/watch?v=j50ZssEojtM> (The CERN LHC Rap);

*Second Officer Phil Margolies*

## REFLECTIONS: Earth's first season (concluded)

*continued from page 4*

Ha'gel had the power to temporarily assume the forms of other beings, leaving them incapacitated. He had come to monitor Taelon activity in order to exact revenge upon them for betraying the Kimera. Ha'gel stole Sandoval's form and impregnated Siobhan Beckett, an Irish Taelon Protector who had the hots

for Sandoval. Boone tried to confront Ha'gel and was badly wounded. Ha'gel was eventually killed, and Beckett went through an extremely accelerated pregnancy and labor. She gave birth on the Taelon ship while Zo'or slipped away and vaporized Boone's body.

*Next month: Season 2.* ■

*Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard*

## PHASERS ON FUN: Memory Leak

### Memory Leak

by Brian Shearer



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