



Robert Orci (left) and Alex Kurtzman have not yet begun working on the next *Trek* film script.

Warping ahead: What about the next *Star Trek* movie?

So, what is the status of the script for the next *Star Trek* feature film?

During the recent Comic-Con in San Diego, California, Zoe Saldana (Uhura) told fans she believed the script was already “half done,” leading to speculation that the next film might be ready in 2010.

However, *Trek* scribes Bob Orci and Alex Kurtzman said they had to correct what Saldana had said, according to the *TrekMovie.com* website.

Regarding the *Trek* sequel, they haven’t even started writing yet. During a promotional appearance for Fox’s *Fringe*, they also talked about the balance of new stories versus elements of Classic *Trek*, writing with Damon Lindelof (from *Lost*) and other topics.

According to Orci, the team is still in the “re-reading and taking-it-all-in phase” and have not yet begun writing it. As expected, much of the debate is between new storylines and revisiting previous *Trek* material within the new timeline, but apparently those can sometimes mesh, with Orci noting, “Even when you pitch stuff,

sometimes someone will be like, ‘Wow, that’s like that one episode.’ So even in trying to stay away from it, you can crash back in there.”

It also seems that the team is going to stick with the formula for the first film and try to make the sequel just as accessible to a general audience, but still true to *Trek*, Kurtzman notes.

“A lot of what die-hard Trekkers really focus on in *Trek* are those details that can sometimes be alienating to people who are not on the inside,” he said. “That leads us back to what are the big themes, the emotional ideas. That’s a language everybody speaks.”

Orci also talked about how the five-member “supreme court” will work, with Lindelof also getting more involved with the script this time around.

“We’re going to come up with the story together, obviously, in consultation with J.J. Abrams and Bryan Burk. Then we’re going to write it up together, the story. Also Damon, and then Alex and I will go write the script.” ■

IN THIS ISSUE:

Art Credits	3
Captain's Log	2
Club Members	
Insert front	
Coming Events	6
Directions to Meeting	
Insert front	
Meeting Minutes	
Insert back	
Reflections	4
Science Trek	3
Wayne's Worlds	5

Pool party! Don't miss the August club meeting!

The next meeting of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, August 15, at the Lindstrom home in Gaithersburg, Maryland. It's our yearly pool party!

We'll get together at the pool for fun in the sun at 3:00 p.m. Then, we'll go to dinner at 5:00 p.m. Our club meeting will

start no later than 7:00 p.m.

During this month's meeting, we'll talk about what fellow club members have been up to and catch up on the latest sci-fi television shows and feature films.

If you need directions to this month's meeting, get the latest Insert in our Yahoo! Group. ■



Sulu and Worf fight to the death in "Star Trek: The Next Generation: The Last Generation"

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CAPTAIN'S LOG: "The Last Generation"

One of the things this summer's blockbuster *Star Trek* movie has shown is that an alternate timeline can be embraced by fans if it's done well.

Star Trek: The Next Generation: The Last Generation, besides probably having the longest comics title ever, asks the question: What if Captain Kirk was unable to save the Federation president at Camp Khitomer during the end of *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*?

For the answer, writer Andrew Steven Harris and penciler Gordon Purcell moved more than 70 years later, when the Federation was in ruins and the Klingons had even conquered Earth.

But there was still hope in the form of a resistance led by Jean-Luc Picard, who was joined in his fight by such familiar characters as Tasha Yar, Ro Laren, Beverly Crusher, Robin Leffler, Miles O'Brien and Guinan, who was romantically involved with Picard.

Picard announced he had a "radical" plan to restore the proper timeline, which convinced Wesley Crusher to challenge Picard for leadership of the resistance. The young Crusher changed his hair style to resemble a Mohawk to show that the group is "going into battle" and he should "look the part."

But Wesley's plan unraveled during the mission, resulting in the death of Ro Laren and Picard placing him behind bars.

While heading to Earth with a key element in Picard's plan—the android Data—Geordi LaForge and Will Riker stopped at an underground bunker on the moon, but all three were captured by Klingons.

Fearing that Data's mind could become a terrible weapon in the Klingons' hands, LaForge and Riker were rescued by the Silver Ghost, who was actually Captain Hikaru Sulu in the *U.S.S. Excelsior* with Rachel Garrett (who was supposed to be the captain of the *Enterprise C* in the "real" timeline) as his first officer.

But Worf, who lost an eye in combat, was having troubles of his own. He learned that his concubine—Deanna Troi—was a spy for the resistance. The Klingon killed her with a thrust of his knife.

After LaForge, Riker and Sulu met to work out the details of Picard's plan, the group gathered on the *Excelsior* to attempt a "slingshot around the sun" to travel to the past.

But an attempt to re-capture Data led to the *Excelsior* being surrounded by a Klingon fleet under Worf's command, and Sulu noted that his Klingon enemy "doesn't want this ship." Instead, "he wants me."

Sulu then left his starship in a shuttle so the Klingons would focus all their attention on his vessel.

The captain then sent a message to Worf that the Klingon was "still afraid to face me, warrior to warrior, man ... to old man. Don't be such a coward. I know that's how you want this to end."

"I can see it in your eye," Sulu said.

When the Klingons lowered their shields to beam Sulu on board, the *Excelsior* was able to transport Data to their ship and head for the sun.

The battle between Sulu with his fencing sword and Worf with a Klingon bat'leth was particularly brutal. The *Excelsior* captain put his sword into the Klingon's remaining eye, but at the same time, Worf used his bat'leth to administer a killing blow to Sulu's chest.

"Silver Ghost, I can no longer see you," Worf said.

"Then you also probably can't see this," Captain Sulu said as he lifted a transmitter to send his shuttle crashing into the Klingon vessel.

Using that distraction, the *Excelsior*, now led by Picard, went back to just before the Federation president was killed. At that point, Picard replaced Kirk in the attempt to rescue the president, but he was unsuccessful as well.

continued on page 6

SCIENCE TREK: Communications, Communications, Communications

A long time ago, when the club was young and I had slightly more hair, it seemed that every November meeting was at my (parents') house. One of those, huh, I hadn't realized that moment. After that, it seemed that *every* November meeting *had* to be at my parents' house because, well, in November we met at Phil's parents' house.

Looking back across previous columns while preparing this month's topic, I realized I tend to talk about communications between March and August. So, it being August, I guess I have to talk about communications. Just don't expect the same topic next spring/summer.

One of those columns (June 2005 to be precise) discussed how science fiction tackles the problem of communicating across interstellar (and intergalactic distances). This month, we'll broaden the discussion to talk about communications and science fiction in general.

Futuristic communication has long played a part in science fiction, although the definition of "futuristic" has changed over time. That's not right, is it? Rather, today's present was the past's future. (Of course, today's future would also have been yesterday's future.) Got it?

Let me *'splain*. Herbert George (H.G.) Wells published *Men Like Gods* in 1923. Therein, he wrote a scene in which Mister Barnstaple—having been transported to an alternate universe eponymous Utopia—is witness to an unusual communications device. In the middle of a field stood a pillar (one of countless electrically powered pillars) where a Utopian could bring a contraption ("a little bundle of wires and light rods") and, tapping a stud on the pillar with a key, communicate wirelessly via the pillar with "stations" in other districts, listening to messages and replying as they wish. A wireless access point in 1923.

How about another example? The great Hugo Gernsback, better known as an editor but a writer as well, penned *Ralph 124C 41+* in 1911. Ralph is "one of 10 men on the whole planet Earth permitted to use the Plus sign after his name."

Not only that, but he also had a "Telephot," a screen that allowed him to communicate with his buddy Edward (and presumably others with a Telephot). The Telephot, though slow to connect, or perhaps just power up, allowed its user to see the person they were contacting (and the person being called could see the caller on their own Telephot). I'm sure you've already figured it out ... a video phone.

But, of course, we all know that's what science fiction is. Not just tomorrow's technologies today, but today's technology yesterday. Let's look at some more examples:

- Frederick Pohl's 1965 *The Age of the Pussyfoot* describes the "Joymaker," which would be better known today as your Palm Pilot, Blackberry Storm, or iPhone. (Okay, I'll give you the iPhone does a lot more than Pohl described for the Joymaker, but even 49 years old, it's a got a cooler name.)
- Jerry Pournelle and Larry Niven's 1981 *Oath of Fealty* with its communication implants to send and receive information from the central computer, MILLIE. They're \$1.20 a gross today, but 38 years ago ...
- James Blish's 1957 *Cities in Flight* gives up the "Dirac" for instantaneous communications across galactic distances. Yes, the man wrote science fiction before *Star Trek*, and his communications device didn't take hours or days like *Trek's* subspace. Of course, if Kirk could call up Starfleet Command and get an immediate answer anytime he had a question, his name would have been Picard.

continued on page 6



Is this the future of communication?

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REFLECTIONS: Lightning strikes again

It was a warm day in October. Extremely warm. It was as if August fell in love with the area and decided to stick around, making September and October wait until it was through. Even though it had come and gone a month ago, you were still held in its grasp. Heat Miser had come to visit and stuck around for the *Star Trek* convention.

The Hunt Valley Marriott, where said convention was being held, was not used to running its air conditioners that late in the year. By now, you usually feel the sharp, crisp snap in the air, especially at night. Heat Miser was having none of that this year. The summer holdover of intense heat and humidity was still upon us, lingering like a bad rash. It was so thick that it could steam the wrinkles out of freshly laundered clothing. All in all, my kind of weather.

Saturday, October 2, 2000, was the second day of a three-day convention, and Editor Wayne Hall approached me with an idea. Why not head to his place in Laurel, Maryland, and pick up a videotape he had running? See, this was also the premiere date of the new Gene Roddenberry show, *Andromeda*. We had done an *Andromeda* panel sight unseen back in July, and it was a rousing success, even though we knew not what we spoke. So we decided to do it again, hoping this time we would have seen the show.

This was a good idea. So we hopped in his car and headed to his house. All the while I couldn't help but think how this would enhance our already impeccable reputation as panel givers extraordinaire. We get to Wayne's house. The show began. It was already passed my expectation, and this was only the first 10 minutes!

Then, the program froze! We waited and waited, but it never started again. It was replaced by some infomercial for some fitness machine. I was crushed. Then Wayne suggested that we go to D.C. to my place and retrieve my tape.

Great idea! We headed to my apartment, only to discover, once we got there, that my door keys were still in my hotel room! Once again, despair had set in until Wayne suggested that I break into my own place and retrieve the tape. I hesitated, but only for a second. I was inside my place in no time! I never realized how easy it was to break into my place and how easy it came for me. Maybe I missed my calling?

So we got back to the convention, and the people were shocked to be treated to the first episode of *Andromeda*. We were labeled wise men most high, and never again was our word taken in vain or in jest. I still wish Wayne had left out the part about me breaking into my place so easily, but that's what con legends are made of.

• "To Loose the Fateful Lightning" – Matt Kiene/Joe Reinkemeyer

Andromeda finds a High Guard station inhabited by children who are descendants of the station managers. Seeing Dylan in his uniform and his entire High Guard splendor, the children were convinced that he was their savior.

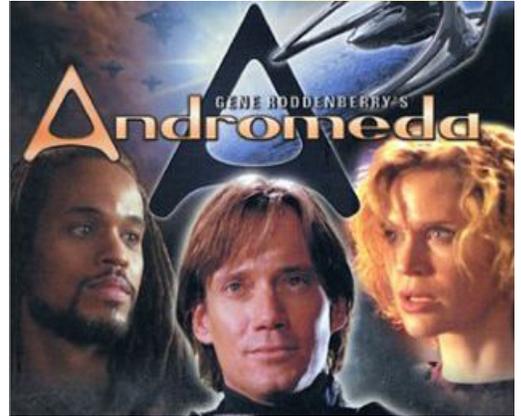
Great episode and a smart example how word of mouth can be totally screwed, especially when there's been 300 years of it. At first glance, it may have seemed to be a play on the original *Trek* episode "Miri," but it revealed a much darker consequence when the children decided to take over after Dylan told them how they screwed up everything the Commonwealth stood for. The scene of a naked Rommy showing the youngsters who's boss is priceless. Rating:

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

• "D Minus Zero" – Zack Stentz/Ashley Edward Miller

A silent and mysterious ship attacks the *Andromeda Ascendant*. Beka and Tyr

continued on page 5



Some of *Andromeda*'s cast: Keith Hamilton Cobb as Tyr (left), Kevin Sorbo as Captain Dylan Hunt, and Lisa Ryder as Beka.

WAYNE'S WORLDS: HBO's *True Blood*

Why is it always a *human* woman and a *vampire* guy? Why can't it ever be a *vampire woman* and a *human guy*? I'd just like to know that.

Alan Ball, creator of *Six Feet Under*, has created for HBO a sexy, scary new drama that delves into the meticulously crafted world of novelist Charlaine Harris. Since a Japanese scientist's invention of synthetic

blood, vampires had progressed from legendary monsters to fellow citizens overnight. And while humans had been safely removed from the menu, many people remain apprehensive about vampires living amongst them in rural Louisiana.

A local barmaid, Sookie Stackhouse (Anna Paquin) understands what it's like

to be an outcast. Cursed with the ability to listen in on people's thoughts, she's also open-minded about the integration of vampires. She is especially intrigued by Bill (Stephen Moyer), a handsome

173-year-old living up the road. But as Sookie is drawn into a series of mysteries surrounding Bill's arrival in Bon Temps, that tolerance is being put to the test.

I think Lorenzo may have said it exactly right when he called this show "vampire porn." (And if anyone ought to know about porn, Lorenzo used to work in a place that sold it.)

True Blood has its funny moments and quirky characters, but overall, stuff happens. For no good reason. For no good reason at all. Most things just happen, then slosh along to the next thing that just happens. If you want plot, there is plot, but it doesn't hold cohesively together in this very popular show.

Instead, the program is about the cute characters and the "gee-whiz" Southern town it is set in. I really despise the current storyline of Sookie's brother Jason and the Fellowship of the Sun. It is so predictable, I roll my eyes every week.

If you like this sort of thing, you'll like it ... I guess. I'd rather watch *Dexter* on Showtime, honestly. ■

Chief of Security Wayne Hall



It doesn't happen often, but here Sookie (left) sees eye to eye with her vampire lover Bill on *True Blood*.

REFLECTIONS: Lightning strikes again (concluded)

continued from page 4

disagree with Dylan's tactics in handling the attackers.

This episode clearly demonstrated why neither Tyr nor Beka should be the captain of the *Andromeda*.

Dylan tried diplomacy, but that didn't work. Dylan tried to avoid a confrontation, but that didn't work either. All this went on with Beka and Tyr backseat captaining. Beka wanted to run while Tyr wanted to crush them like a bug. Dylan clearly understood that neither of these tactics would answer any much-needed questions like: Who are these people, and why are they trying to kill us? Another good one. Rating: ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲.

• "Double Helix" – Matt Kiene/Joe Reinkemeyer

After Dylan saved a Than (a being from an insectoid race) ship about to be destroyed by Nietzscheans, the Nietzscheans tried to persuade Tyr to join them.

For two guys whose best work was seen on the legal drama *L.A. Law*, Matt and Joe sure know their way around science fiction. This is not only a Tyr episode, with him outwitting these crazed Nietzscheans and getting a little wild thing on the side, but it was also a Dylan episode as well since he showed that he understood his crew more than they realized. He put Tyr in a situation where attempting to betray Dylan actually led him to help him, and it also let Tyr know that Dylan Hunt understood Nietzscheans. Rating: ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲ ▲.

Next month: More episode guide. ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard

COMING EVENTS

AUGUST

August 15 Could it already be time for our annual pool party in Gaithersburg, Maryland? Why, it is! Watch for more information about that day from First Officer Abby Lindstrom coming over our club's e-mail reflector. Following our party, we'll have dinner, then begin our monthly club meeting no later than 7:00 p.m.!

SEPTEMBER

September 19 It's not an "early fall" ... at least, not yet! Before the new season begins, come to our next gathering, place yet to be determined. Be sure to watch this space! Dinner will likely start at 5:00, then our monthly club meeting will start no later than 7:00 p.m.!

CAPTAIN'S LOG: "The Last Generation" (concluded)

continued from page 2

Then the true menace revealed himself to Picard: Captain Braxton, a Starfleet officer from the 29th century who had clashed with *Voyager* in the two-part "Future's End."

Braxton explained to Picard that he had been studying history from many viewpoints, and the only timelines that still existed did so because the Federation no longer existed.

"If the future is to survive, then your generation of the Federation must be its last," he declared.

But Picard replied that Braxton could only conceive of far fewer timelines than Data and his android brain. With that, Braxton found himself in front of the Federation president and receiving the shot meant for him.

Still, Braxton threatened to damage future timelines if Picard continued to interfere.

Back on the *Excelsior*, Commander Garrett ordered Data to beam everyone but her to the surface below. Data did so, but he still sent Garrett to safety before the vessel crashed into Braxton's ship.

With the threat neutralized, Picard told the other survivors: "Braxton believed that for the galaxy to survive, this would have to be our last generation.

"But Braxton was wrong," he continued. "We're not the last generation. We're the **next** generation."

"The Last Generation" is now available as a trade paperback in comics specialty shops and other bookstores like Border's and Barnes & Noble. ■

Captain Randy Hall

SCIENCE TREK: Communications ... (concluded)

continued from page 3

- Bruce Sterling's 1984 "Twenty Evocations" published in *Interzone* presents Nikolai who has not only a (nano-sized) television system implanted in his eye socket and connected directly to his optic nerve, but also had room for a clock, a biofeedback monitor and of course, his eye.

Talk about falling asleep with the television on!

Science-fiction writers are not always

accurate with their predictions and futuristic inventions. (Where's your flying car parked?) For instance, Jules Verne's 1889 novel *In the Year 2889* described a "phonotelephote," predating Gernsback's "telephoto" by 22 years, but then Verne's system was wired. ■

Second Officer Phil Margolies

Web Notes:

- http://www.technovelgy.com/ct/Science_List_Detail.asp?BT=Communication.