



The Making of Star Trek

Stephen E. Whitfield , Gene Roddenberry

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"A complete history of the original Star Trek™. Filled with quotations from cast members, memos to and from Gene Roddenberry, biographies of cast members, sketches, photographs, set descriptions, and even budgets and cast schedules, this volume is a fascinating, invaluable behind-the-scenes account of the development and production of the original Star Trek™ series."

- source unknown

"The book on how to write for TV! The complete story on how the *U.S.S. Enterprise* was designed, the original concept behind the show, backgrounds of the characters—the whole authentic history." - Ballantine

The Making of Star Trek Details

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From Reader Review The Making of Star Trek for online ebook

Scott Williams says

For many years I have heard artists I admire say that this was the book that made them realize they could work in TV or that this book inspired them to do so. I finally tracked down a copy and I enjoyed it.

This was originally published in 1968 as Star Trek was heading into its third and final season. Whitfield gained unprecedented access to the set and the crew. The book is filled with great informal quotations from Gene Roddenberry. It's also filled with wonderful exchanges of memos between Roddenberry, Bob Justman and others.

I really enjoy some of the rare photos, designs and diagrams that are included. There are reproductions of call sheets, casting notes, etc. which give you a real sense of what it must have been like working in the production office. You get a very informal, uncensored look at the show's staff. Unfortunately, this includes rampant 1960s sexism.

These days, this kind of book is much more common but in 1968 I can well imagine it being an incredible eye-opener for fans of the show and those interested in TV production.

Louisa Jenness says

For how much information is packed into a book this size, it is remarkably well written. It is engaging and oftentimes funny. Definitely a must-read for any Trekkie.

Sarah says

Overall, I think this book was a worthwhile read, particularly since I'm working through watching the original series for the first time right now. Not having had any background into how a show is made, I found the discussions of how a script goes from idea to final editing and post production fascinating, and the inclusion of examples of dailies, scripts, schedules, notes, etc. were really interesting to read. The book has a good focus on all the non-acting parts of creating the show, which are often given short shrift. It only suffers slightly from the typical gushing you get in these kinds of books, and is filled out with so much real content that you can forgive it when it happens.

Mark Woodland says

This book popped up on the Recommendation function on my home page, and I was terribly surprised to recognize it, since I read it when I was about 10. OK, I've read it, so I added it in, why not? It's horribly dated at this point, but it was the first book of its type about Star Trek (along with The World of Star Trek by David Gerrold, and yes, I must be some kind of geek to know that). It's not really worth reading anymore unless you have some strange desire to read a 40-year-old account of the series. Its value, per se, is limited to two things: 1) If you had a copy in good condition, you could get a lot of bucks for it at a Star Trek Convention. 2) It contains Gene Roddenberry's words to the theme music of the original series. They're more

than extremely awful. Don't remember the whole thing, but it starts out with "Beyond the rim of the star light, my true love lies off in star flight". It was all downhill from there....

Elliot Kravitz says

Fascinating (apologies to Lieutenant Commander Spock/Leonard Nimoy) behind the scenes look at the creation and execution of Star Trek. Written while still on the air (between the second and third seasons), there is an immediacy that most histories fail to capture. Of course, some errors slip through, such as the oft repeated, but now debunked, notion that Trek suffered due to poor ratings. Poignantly, the book is bittersweet as the optimistic view of the future (of both the series and humanity) are marred with impending potential cancellation and the plethora of social troubles that we continue to grapple with today. Still, Star Trek lives on as arguably the most important science fiction franchise in history and I think Roddenberry would not be disappointed. If you want to know how it all came together, this book serves very well.

Kris says

My best guess as to when I read this book was sometime in 1978. I was, and still am, a nerd.

Arnied says

If you are a Star Trek fan, you will love this book. But you will also love it if you are in a creative industry. There is a great sequence in the book where a director is telling Sulu to push a certain button to fire the phasers on the Enterprise. Sulu says, "That button doesn't fire the phasers." On a sound stage with what is basically a prop NONE OF THE BUTTONS FIRE THE PHASERS. It's just a button. But not in this case. Roddenberry infused this show with so much reality and backstory that the actors were living it -- just like we were watching at home. The creative process involved in putting this show together was extensive. And the problem solving is genius. A whole new world was created with clear rules and structure on a shoestring budget. No one in Hollywood had seen or worked on anything like this. The show, like the Enterprise, was boldly going where none had gone before. And this book takes you on that ride. Godspeed.

Clint Hall says

I happened upon this book by chance one day at the used bookstore and thought I would give it a whirl. And let me tell you, if your interests include Star Trek and the subtle nuance of making television, this is the book for you.

You will get to see intra-office correspondence with writers and producers about keeping the show believable and the sarcastic response that results from trying to keep it too believable. You will get to see some of the pains felt by Roddenberry as he tried to get his classic to the air. You will read interviews with writers and actors and even get exact dollar amounts for what some props and full episodes cost to make.

It is a very fascinating delve into not only behind the scenes Trek, but the business of making television in the late 1960s.

TJ says

"The Making of Star Trek" is an interesting behind-the-scenes look at the making of Star Trek. Written in 1968 while the show was in the 2nd half of Season 3, authors Stephen Whitfield and (Star Trek creator) Gene Roddenberry give readers a complete tour of the nascency and execution of the legendary show. The authors introduce readers to each of the important players, producers, directors, and support crew who got this show on the air for 3 short years, but in the hearts and minds of its fans for decades after. There's enough here to keep avid fans of the series interested, but those unfamiliar with the show will be less enthralled.

Tripleness says

This book gives an interesting and *very* detailed account of the making of *Star Trek*. It covers pretty much every aspect of production, gives character development and backstory, and shares interesting anecdotes. Since it was written at the time the show was still being made, the book itself can also be seen as an interesting piece of *Star Trek* history. It's a very fun and informative read and if you're a big *Star Trek* fan, I recommend it.

While very good overall, though, the book does have a couple of major downsides. The first is that, given when it was written and its subject matter, it is occasionally racist, sexist, etc. The second is that it is very heavily biased and presents everything in a saccharine light. According to this book, absolutely everyone who worked on *Star Trek* was a fantastic person who could not have been more talented or hardworking, every last person got along fabulously with every other, and everything about the show was perfect- blatant falsehoods, in some cases.

If you can get past those negatives, however, the book is pretty great.

Elizabeth Johnson says

I'm a bit of a "Trekkie." I love the logic of Spock, the literal humor of Data, the imaginative new worlds that are created for the show, the sense of honor and adventure upheld by Kirk and Picard, the imperative necessity of the Prime Directive. So when my Dad handed me this book that he had growing up, I was excited to catch a glimpse behind the scenes of the great enterprise, Star Trek. (See what I did there? ;)) I wasn't disappointed. This book not only discussed the chain of events that led to beginning the television series, but also explored the impact that Star Trek had on medical science, astronomy, and even the military. It was pretty fascinating to learn of the interplay between Roddenberry and researchers at NASA or medical doctors, as they imagined how things might look several hundred years in the future -- and then consider how to improve the science of their day, based on those theoretical advancements.

Wsm says

I read this when I was looking rather desperately for anything to do with Star Trek. It was no longer on TV and the later series were years away. It did surprise me, after reading this book, how meager were the resources

at the disposal of the producers of the original series. I'm not a "trekkie" but this book would be a trekkie's delight with all the technical details it goes into. I skimmed through the book but it did contain some interesting anecdotes and tidbits about the show.

Sam says

"The sets were built right next to the men's room." Damn if this book doesn't rock ass. I don't even like the original series that much, but this was written in 1968. Fresh accounts right from the source, from pre-production to post. A must-read for all geeks.

Luke Sayese says

This book is hard to find as it's no longer in circulation so you have to pick it up used on eBay or Amazon, but if you can find it, I would highly suggest reading it if you're a big fan of the franchise. The book was written while the show was still being made so you get a real eyewitness perspective as Whitfield walks you through the planning and production stages of the show. Whitfield also offers a lot of casual anecdotal stories that adds a casual and playful nature to his book with his stories of wasp infestations, salt-shakers, and on-set pranks. One caveat of course is that as the book was written in the sixties, you should also be mindful that it was also product of its time and uses some rather outdated language such as using "men" to describe the TV crew despite that women were also a big part of the show (such as DC Fontana).

John Moretz says

This is one of the best "behind-the-scenes" books ever devoted to a TV show. It covers every aspect of production from the initial concept, early story ideas, the casting process, and so on. Tons of fantastic photos.

The Making of Star Trek is required reading for fans of *Star Trek*.
