

Star Trek sans Mr. Spock may prove less enterprising

By Pete Mason
Entertainment editor

I have some good news and some bad news.

First, the good news. *Star Trek* is coming back. Now for the bad news. At this writing, the show is Spock-less.

The word is that *Star Trek* will return as a syndicated series with all the original cast except Leonard Nimoy.

The whole *Star Trek* phenomenon is one of the strangest chapters in television history. During its three-year run, the show barely broke even in the ratings. In the end it lost the race—and all hell broke loose.

NBC was deluged with angry mail. "Bring Back *Star Trek*" groups formed all

All the main characters on the bridge of the United Starship Enterprise were heroes and each displayed his heroism every week. Dr. McCoy dedicated himself to medicine, life and the unassailable fact that there is nothing more important than the integrity of the human heart.

Capt. Kirk held one thing above all others: his responsibility to his crew and his mistress, the Enterprise.

Scotty believed only in the ship's engines and good scotch, while Sulu, Chekov and Uhura dedicated their lives to the captain and the service. All were heroes, each with distinctive qualities.

And then there was Spock. Spock undoubtedly is one of the most unique and complex characters ever developed for television.

Half human-half Vulcan, Spock was a sort of Dr. Jekyll-Mr. Hyde held in check. His Vulcan side was stoic, analytical and devoid of emotion. It was in constant conflict with his human side.

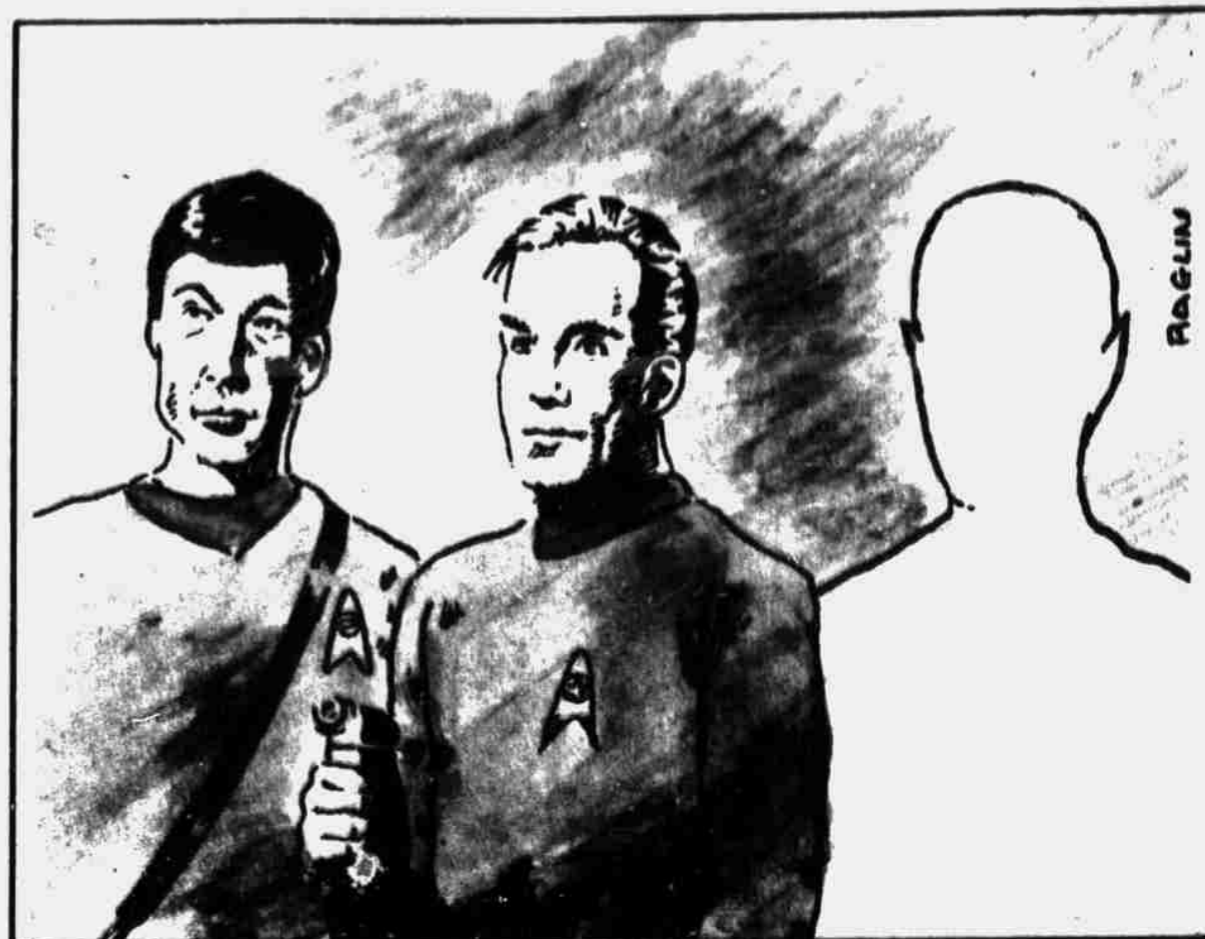
When through some sort of external stimulus, the human part of Spock appeared, it gushed out in a fury, much to his later embarrassment.

This is the stuff real heroes are made of. It was this conflict between emotion and total cool which attracted the audience and quickly made Spock a cult leader. Interestingly enough, Spock's character is essentially the same as television's current captain of cool, the Fonz.

At first Nimoy reveled in the character's popularity. He once appeared on the *Tonight Show* in make-up and played the Spock part to the hilt, not once answering a question as Leonard Nimoy.

After the show was dropped, the Spock legend lived on. Nimoy went to the *Star Trek* conventions and sat for the fan magazine interviews.

But Nimoy is an actor who is serious about his craft and began to realize he could be forced into a hole he never could crawl out of. In the last few years, he has done work on and off of Broadway to ex-



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over the country.

Corporate executives and Nielsen disciples scratched their heads and wondered where all those viewers suddenly had come from. They certainly weren't indicated in the ratings.

That was in 1970. Today they're still scratching their heads. The show went into syndication soon after the network dropped it, and it since has commanded a hefty percentage of the viewing audience wherever it plays. What the hey...?

It isn't really hard to understand why the "Trekkies" have hung on for so long. First, at its best, *Star Trek* was excellent television. The show attracted such renowned sci-fi writers as Theodore Sturgeon and Harlan Ellison—hence, fine screenplays.

Second, it had Spock.

Star Trek would have been a good show with or without the Vulcan first officer. But whatever extra, intangible something there was which gave *Star Trek* its fanatical following can be attributed to his character alone.

New drummer, bassist help Mitchell expand musically

By Jeff Taebel

Joni Mitchell's music at the beginning of her career was characterized by lilting vocals, which usually were supported by her simple guitar or piano accompaniments.

album review

But despite her talents for writing melodies and lyrics, her songs were confined to somewhat conventional structures.

With the release of *Blue*, her fourth album, she began experimenting with a free-form songwriting style, achieving mixed results. After *Blue*, she signed with David Geffen's Asylum label and embarked on a new phase of her career.

Her first Asylum album, *For The Roses*, featured a full band and marked the beginning of her musical association with saxophonist Tom Scott. She followed this album with two successful releases, *Court and Spark* and *Miles of Aisles*, which featured Scott and the L.A. Express.

After *Miles Of Aisles*, Mitchell again changed direction with her next two albums, *The Hissing of Summer Lawns* and *Hejira*. Both featured more spacious

arrangements and a return to free-flowing song style.

On her latest effort, a two-record set entitled *Don Juan's Reckless Daughter*, Mitchell musically stretches out with the help of L.A. Express drummer John Guerin and Jaco Pastorius, the incomparable Weather Report bassist.

The first thing one notices is the amazing sound quality of this three-piece outfit.

Mitchell's guitar sounds crisp and bright as it plays off Guerin's light, understated drumming. Pastorius roams freely providing the bass and lead, and adds his unique touch.

With this dynamic back-up, Mitchell's vocals soar, especially on up-tempo numbers, such as "Talk To Me," which highlights side one.

Side two consists entirely of "Paprika Plains," which features Wayne Shorter on soprano sax.

The lyrics are interesting but demand more attention than the music. Although it is hard for the song to maintain its impact for 16:30 occasional orchestral interludes add a nice touch.

Side three is made interesting by a rhythmic instrumental called "The Tenth World." This drum-dominated piece features Weather Report percussionists

Manolo Badrena and Alejandro Acuna.

"The Tenth World" is followed by "Dreamland," another rhythm number on which Mitchell and Chaka Khan sing, accompanied only by the percussionists and Pastorius, Don Alias and Airto. The song's engaging lyrics and unique arrangement create a flowing musical effect.

The album's final side begins with the spirited title song on which Mitchell and Pastorius excel instrumentally. Mitchell's guitar phrasing and Pastorius' incredibly imaginative bass work push the vocals to new heights.

This song is followed by a somewhat disappointing "Off Night Backstreet," which features guest vocalists J.D. Souther and Glen Frey. The number seems to painfully slug along. It is not one of Mitchell's strongest vocal or lyrical outings.

The album is concluded in fine fashion with "The Silky Veils of Ardor." Appropriately, it is performed by only Mitchell. Her guitar and vocal blend beautifully.

As the vocal gently drops at the end, one realizes that although Mitchell's music does not work listeners into a frenzy, it does have a unique musical and lyrical sense.

One can speculate that her continued experimentation and collaboration with artists like Pastorius and Shorter could only result in the production of more fine albums.

UNL music students present clarinet, piano recitals today

Two women UNL School of Music students will present free, public recitals today at 3:30 p. a.

Gail Hiddleston, a senior, will play two selections on the clarinet: *Chorus No. 2* by H. Villa-Lobos and *Sonata in E Flat* by Johannes Brahms.

Hiddleston will perform in the Choral Room of Westbrook Music Building and will be accompanied by Mary Indermuehle on piano and Chris Erickson on flute.

Priscilla Kiewer, a graduate piano stu-

dent, will perform in Sheldon Art Gallery Auditorium.

Her program includes *Sonata in F Major, K. 332* by Wolfgang Mozart, *Kreutzeriana, Opus 16* by Robert Schumann and *Images, Series I* by Claude Debussy.

Kiewer has played several of these selections in master classes with Mozart expert Thomas Richner, concert artist Claude Frandk and William Race, head of the keyboard division of the University of Texas School of Music in Austin.



Joni Mitchell

Photo courtesy of Asylum Records