

Re: FWIW: ST Enterprise Cancelled

Source: <http://sci.tech-archive.net/Archive/sci.space.history/2005-02/0494.html>

From: Andre Lieven (*dg411_at_FreeNet.Carleton.CA*)

Date: 02/05/05

Date: 5 Feb 2005 17:25:39 GMT

Pat Flannery (*flanner@daktel.com*) writes:

> *Andre Lieven wrote:*

>

>>>*Instead, he waited till the man he criticizes was dead, and couldn't
>>>offer a rebuttal to his charges...in my opinion, particularly given that
>>>this is just about a single script for episode of a one hour television
>>>program, his behavior in this matter impresses me both as extremely
>>>petty and indeed wretched and base.*

>>

>>*That strikes me as a double standard: The *evidence* of not only
>>Roddenberry's lies, but others, is amply made in Ellison's book.*

>>

>>*Why is your ire only aimed at the recipient of the lies, and *not*
>>their tellers ?*

>>

> *Okay... here's one for you...since it didn't cost too much to film, and
> since the characters were apparently acting in, rather than out of,
> character...why didn't they just film it the way Harlan wanted them to?*

Well... read the book. Its all there, and its a complex web of internal politics. Like Roddenberry telling Harlan to " put the ship in danger ", so Harlan did, in a couple of scenes where Rand and some security guards hold the transporter room, as the time shift has made the Enterprise the pirate ship Condor. R told Ellison that " the network demands this ! ". NBC did demand... that that be *cut*.

> *There doesn't seem to be any problem with it, so why didn't they just go
> for it? If you're writing for a episodic television series, then the
> producers of the series have the right to tell you what you will and
> will not do with their continuing characters and overall storyline, as
> they are the ones who have to live with how their characters and overall
> feel of the show get modified in any particular episode, and how that
> will affect future episodes of the series.*

Well, jms had a better way of dealing with this, as when a neat script from another writer came in, and he could work it into the arc, he did, so Gerrold had a script, and so on.

Oh, don't forget that Roddenberry's mendacity caused Gerrold to sue R, and win a judgement of \$70,000... After Season 1 of TNG...

- > *If they had it all to do over again, I doubt there would ever be an*
- > *Organian Treaty, as it screwed the whole Federation/Klingon rivalry up*
- > *royally...in fact, that's why they were very careful to tell the writers*
- > *for STTNG just what they could and couldn't do so as not to paint*
- > *themselves into a corner like that again.*

Indeed. It worked for that one episode, but then...

And, they still did shit like that in TNG: Remember " I can't drive warp 5.5 " ?

- > *You have an anthology series like Twilight Zone, and you can have far*
- > *more room to do what you want, but when you come to a series like Star*
- > *Trek, then you should realize that they, not you, have the final say in*
- > *how things should be done. You can run your car in the race– provided*
- > *you are going the direction everybody else is, and don't start pouring*
- > *nails on the track.*

And, Harlan did that. His original script included Rand, as she was with the cast, when that was written. When Whitney's contract was not renewed, he removed her character from the script.

Read what Ellison had to say, in the book, about how, when he had a script on The Outer Limits, and Justman was producing, and they had a cost problem with one scene, Justman sat Ellison down, and they, together, figured out a way to maintain a story, yet solve the problem.

This is the same Justman who later claimed that Ellison's script was too expensive, but who *never brought* that to Ellison's attention, the way he did, when on TOL.

- >>>*This guy –not to put too fine a point on it– is a world–class asshole.*
- >>
- >>*No proof offered ? Claim fails.*
- >
- > *Okay, you prove to me that he's a nice guy. This ax can swing both ways.*

Sure: Read what Peter David says about Ellison, in David's afterward, in the book.

- >>>*I'm glad you inspired me to do some digging around for info on this*
- >>>*matter. Before I started this, I thought he was a sometimes amusing*
- >>>*loudmouth.*
- >>>*Now, I'd like to spit on the little bastard.*
- >>
- >>*Well, ain't hate... pretty ?*
- >>
- >><*shudder*> *I thought that you're a gifted guy, Pat. Funny and*

- >>creative as hell. I still do. But, this side of you, well, its
- >>nastier than anything that you criticise Ellison for.
- >
- > Tearing somebody's reputation apart (and I know full well that
- > Roddenberry wasn't a saint by any standard) after there is no way he can
- > defend himself is a low thing;

As low as doing that to Ellison *for thirty years* ?

You say this as if this is all based on Harlan's unsupported word:
It ISN'T. There is *evidence* aplenty in the book.

- > particularly when you do it around thirty
- > years after the presumed crime, rather than when your opponent can't
- > speak for himself in regards to your criticisms.

Thirty years of mis-speaking counts for nothing ?

<cough> Hypocrisy <cough>.

- > Using terms like
- > "Great Pretender" "El Supremo" and "an outright naked liar" is pretty
- > rough by any standards,

I just re-read most of the book, since yesterday evening, and I don't find any of those phrases. Care to offer me page cites ?

" Your claim, your burden of proof ".

Just found one: Page 50: " And this 1987 version (another interview one page of which is reprinted in the book, where yet again, R claims that " He had my Scotty dealing in interplanetary drugs ! ") of El Supremo's inability to tell the truth... "

Now, he does call Joan Collin's ghostwriter a " pinhead ", as he has Collins calling her City character Edith Cleaver, says that said character was a Nazi, and refers to 1701's exec as DR. Spock.

" I thought having Shatner getting it all mixed up was bad. I didn't know when I was well off. " Page 70.

- > and the sort of language I'd expect from the
- > likes of Bill O'Reilly more than someone who considers himself a
- > thoughtful author.

As opposed to the interviewer from Video Review, who, when interviewing R, who claimed that " he had my Scotty dealing drugs ", and the topic of show budget comes up (Remember, I've posted a cite from a letter from R to Ellison, stating that the costs were not majorly overrun), R says that " it would have cost \$200,000 more than I had to spend ".

Oh, and R also claims, *falsely*, that Ellison wrote the first draft " but then he wouldn't change it. ". The book contains an inventory from the Trek papers at the Roddenberry Collection at UCLA (pages 26–27), listing *numerous* versions of the script *all written by Ellison*.

Oh, the interviewer, when faced with R's claim that Ellison " wouldn't change it ", says " Thats Harlan. "

I'm amazed that Ellison didn't sue for slander. He should have.

The bullshit Video Review Roddenberry interview resulted in Alan Brennert (Then executive story consultant for CBS' Twilight Zone) writing a letter to VR, which they published (That page is also reproduced) in which he says: " Either Gene is seriously misremembering the script—it was, after all, 20 years ago—or he is deliberately perpetuating an untruth. "

Also reproduced is R's letter to Brennert, in which he says he " misremembered " the script. Then, he kept going out and... "misremembered " it some more...

And, on the whole issue of can Ellison write, and re-write teevee scripts: Hes the ONLY script writer to have won four WGA Awards. And, if Ellison was so bad, why was he asked to contribute to Star Trek movies 1–4 ?

> *In fact this whole thing reminds me of someone else...Spike Lee to be
> precise; he complained when he didn't get an Oscar for what he thought
> was good work, just like Harlan's tirade over no dramatic presentation
> Hugo being awarded in some years.*

Which years ? I have this past Worldcon's souvenir book, which lists all Hugo winners, since they started. That award first appeared in 1960 (Twilight Zone, winner), again in '61 & '62 (ditto), no award in '63, none offered in '64, Strangelove took it in '65, none offered in '66, The Menagerie (TOS) took it in '67, City won in '68, 2001 won in '69, TV coverage of Apollo 11 (Yay, on topic. <g>) did in '70, no award in '71, and the last no award was in '77.

> *He also loves to stir up trouble that
> he can be at the center of, like the idiotic attempt to sue Spike
> network for their alleged use of his name; he also once did something
> like "Dangerous Visions"— in his case it was "Spike And Company— Do It
> Acappella" a CD collection of Acappella artists with guess who's picture
> on the cover.*

Well, I don't know much about Mr. Lee. Not at point, anyway.

> *Lot of great stories in "Dangerous Visions"— and Harlan's name on the
> cover, and a story that is derivative of one of the other contributors*

> *on the inside.*

Now, can you cite any of those other writers saying that ?

>>*Hate makes us worse than what we hate.*

>

> *Well, Harlan certainly hated Roddenberry from his choice of language,*

> *didn't he?*

Huh ?

>> *And, when it's *personal*,*

>>*thats the most reflective kind of hate of them all. Ugly, even.*

>

> *You're right...I won't spit on Harlan if I ever meet him...I'll wait*

> *till he's been dead for five years, and then pee on his grave.*

Funny you should mention that: " As one disillusioned ex-Trek official recently said, ' You know why they cremated Gene ? They were afraid people would come by to piss on the grave.' ". Page 25.

I'll leave with Sam Peeples, quoted in " Where No One Has Gone Before; A History In Pictures ", J.M. Dillard, 1994/96, page 31:

" Writer Sam Peeples concurred. 'I thought Harlan's version of the script that won the Writers Guild award was far better than the script that was shot... "

I've got cites... So far, in that, I'm... alone. :-)

Andre

--

" I'm a man... But, I can change... If I have to... I guess. "
The Man Prayer, Red Green.