



They told me it wouldn't snow!

November 9, 1967

SAVE STAR TREK

Saving STAR TREK should not have to be an annual project, but the sad truth is that, as soon as fan mail to NEC stops coming in, the Ivory Tower types start getting nervous. When that happens, the network either drops the show or reduces it to the "proven" kiddie format of intelligence-insulting scripts. A few farsighted people are fighting for mature science fiction TV shows, but they need the aid of the fans; keeping up the quality of TV viewing is your job, and a constant one! Let the networks know that you enjoy a show; otherwise they will assume that the Neilson ratings are correct. The result will be that, through your lack of response, the really good shows will fail, because sponsors and networks prefer to "play it safe" with formula TV shows than to try anything different.

The second season has not been as successful as the first for STAR TREK, which is a natural state of the industry, since many concessions had to be made. Two factors could aid the show; Gene Roddenberry could be encouraged to return to his original job of writing and producing, instead of using his creative talents on other commitments, and loud protests should be lodged against the Friday night time slot. Scheduling STAR TREK for Friday night was grossly unfair, since the show is for young people who are vital and energetic, and use Friday nights for dates, dinner out, and such, and doing everything else but watch TV!

Options are picked up around January and February, so this is not a job to put off until you "get around to it". The plain facts of Hollywood are this; if a show looks unsteady, people must necessarily begin at once to look for other jobs. If they find something else, they may take it, or risk being without. The result is, that the show might lose an actor or a crewman (who doesn't really want to leave, he too, must "play it safe"). Besides the difficulty of replacing a good man, the loss hurts morale.

It is too easy for fans to sit back and enjoy the old American tradition of Letting the Other Guy do the work, and then complaining about the way the job was fumbled. One more letter could be the deciding factor; the difference between keeping STAR TREK on TV or not. We will all deserve the fate of having nothing on TV but "situation comedies", etc. Through inaction, we let progress die!

If we have time to publish, we have time to write a few letters.

DO: be neat, write clearly, and sign the letter. Reason: It does no good to send an anonymous letter because such mail is seen only by the person who operates the letter-opener and sorts the mail. I doubt if any of you would write a sloppy letter.

DON'T: get smart, address a V.I.P. familiarly, use insulting language or the telling of a network their business. Reason: You are asking a favor, the privilege of seeing STAR TREK next season. The wrong attitude will nullify your letter.

- DO:** write "fan mail" to people on the show, but address it to the Network and don't put the actors name on the outside of the envelope. Reason: the network will open the mail first and then pass it on to the person intended for, another subtle way of letting the network know your enjoyment of the show.
- DON'T:** write STAR TREK on the outside of the envelope. Reason: the letters will be sent, unopened, directly to the show and not seen by NBC, to whom you are making your appeal.
- DO:** be sincere. If you don't buy a sponsor's product, just say something nice about their sponsoring an intelligent show like STAR TREK. These people can spot a "put on" as fast as you can. If you do buy the product, tho, be sure to say so! Reason: Sponsors seldom get anything but complaints, and a sincere letter of praise and thanks can encourage them to continue sponsoring STAR TREK.
- DON'T:** send letters directly to STAR TREK unless you want to say something to the people there. Reason: Letters sent to the show are not seen by network officials; only letters addressed as above can be effective.
- DO:** send carbons when they will be effective; to show NBC that you have written to the sponsors, for instance. Be sure to include a letter directly to NBC, however. Reason: This will show that you are going to all possible lengths to save STAR TREK.
- DON'T:** send form letters of any kind; mimeographed or multiple carbons, or copy the wording from someone else's letter. Your letters need not be long, but they must be in your own words. Reason: Anything approaching a form letter is easily detected; even the use of similar wording will give the impression that only a tiny segment of fans are doing all the writing. Your letter should be original in every aspect.
- DO:** circulate petitions among fellow workers, classmates, church groups, etc. with the appeal to save STAR TREK and change the Friday night time slot. Also encourage the petitioners to send individual letters. Reason: Signatures on a petition can impress NBC somewhat with an idea of how many people, some of whom will not write in otherwise, really watch STAR TREK.
- DON'T:** represent yourself as a group if you really aren't. Reason: As with form letters, networks are geared to ferret out spurious claims, and tricks will never help at all!
- DO:** Use company letterheads or club stationery whenever you can legitimately do so, especially for a petition. Reason: Professional people and community groups can carry a lot of weight, particularly when the letters are addressed to NBC or RCA, who owns NBC. Networks and holding corporations are extremely sensitive to groups which could become "pressure groups" at some future time. This includes educators, student groups, pastors and priests, and almost any club.

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DON'T: mention any connection with the studio, STAR TREK, or Gene Roddenberry, or anyone else on the show. Reason: Networks have suspicious minds, and mentioning such a connection to NBC will only nullify your letter, because they will immediately suspect that you have been talked into writing them by the show, instead of this being a fan's accolade.

ADDRESSES

Mr. Julian Goodman, President
National Broadcasting Co.
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New York, New York, 10026

Mr. Lort Werner
NBC Television
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New York, New York, 10026

H.G. Peters & Co.
2421 East Washington St.
Indianapolis, Indiana
(RCA's Ad Agency)

also write: your local TV station
T.V. Guide
newspaper T.V. columnists

and, of course, and perhaps the most important, write to all the sponsors that appear on the STAR TREK program in your area. Usually the address found on the product package will be sufficient to get to the right people.