

are necessitated by economic motivation to get in there and be a "hack." So, what usually happens is by the end of the second draft, the script comes in and it doesn't sound anything like the way we ordinarily sound. And then the script editor takes the whole thing and rewrites it in the manner that the script editor would think we talk.

And I have noticed, for example, that during the first year, when the man who was doing most of the rewriting was Gene Roddenbury himself, we sounded one way. The second year, there was a gentleman--a very fine writer--by the name of Gene Coon, and he wrote in another way. He was an ex-Marine and he wrote tough and terse. And this year, we had a more verbose script editor who wrote in longer paragraphs and our speeches are longer and our questions more academic. "But what would you do if...", you know. So it was changed. And in the final analysis, when we get on the set and look at the script, and we'd say, "Good Lord, I'd never say that!" and we'd change it.

Karen: Have you ever had a script writer who actually wrote the character into the script well?

Mr. Shatner: Very few. I think on one or two occasions. Of all the scripts we've had--all 79 scripts that we shot and maybe some hundred scripts that were bought--I think on a very isolated occasions did the script writer write in the manner that Captain Kirk and Mr. Spock and Dr. McCoy would speak traditionally and still maintain the same relationship.

Very difficult. And I don't know why. I think "Star Trek" is particularly difficult in that way because other shows don't seem to have that trouble. They acquire a stable of writers--seven, eight writers--and then the guys keep bringing in scripts. They make around \$3500 for a script and so a top writer, a top talent--mathematically you can figure out--if he gets in one a month, he's not making by comparison as much income as he could--as others are.

James: How long does it take you to learn your script?

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* Mr. Shatner: Well, I have acquired--
* it's an acquired characteristic, memory.
* When I was working free lance before
* the series, I would take my script home
* and learn it in time so that when I went
* in for the first day of shooting--and
* you shoot out of sequence; you don't
* necessarily shoot the first scene the
* first day--I would know the whole script
* cold and I'd know exactly what I was
* going to do in what scenes. So, if they
* shot the middle of the show, I would
* know what was leading up to that. Well,
* on a series, you can't do that because
* of the dint of time. I mean, sometimes
* we'd finish a show in the morning and
* some in the afternoon. Sometimes you
* barely have time to read them.

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* Well, in the first half of the first
* season, I found myself learning as much
* as I could when the show started and
* then taking that first weekend and
* learning the rest, so that at some point
* during the entire show, I learned the
* whole script. In the second half, I
* found that I could learn what was nec-
* essary to learn the night before for
* the following day's shooting. In the
* second season, I got so that I could
* learn the scenes coming up at the makeup
* table. Finally, in the third season,
* I got so adept at memorizing, and needing
* the necessity of a challenge, I would
* wait (laughing) until we had rehearsed it
* or wait until everything was set to start
* learning massive speeches. And I got
* pretty adept at it.

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* James: Is it true that you like some
* special passages of Shakespeare?

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* Mr. Shatner: Shakespeare, in the English
* language, is the finest dramatist, so
* any actor with any knowledge of his craft
* has necessarily to like Shakespeare.
* Whether he can do it or not is another
* question. But as for favorite passages,
* those that have become clichés in our
* language have been quoted because they
* are the great passages and so I care for
* them, too.

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* Mr. Nicholson: You had formal training
* in the theater at McGill?

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