



Trek Stars Go West. Now We Know Why They Were Shot Into Space.

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Does corn, like wine, improve with age? Not really, but at least simplicity maintains its charm. Long before they boarded the Enterprise, the stars of *Star Trek* appeared in a variety of entertainment vehicles. In the recently released DVD, *Trek Stars Go West*, DeForest Kelley, James Doohan, Leonard Nimoy, and William Shatner prove that they are more than just space cowboys.

Leonard Nimoy played a Comanche terrorizing Robert Redford in *Tate*, a card-sharp in *Bonanza*, and a “card-hustling gun-for-hire” in *Outlaws*. James Doohan appeared on *Last of the Mohicans* July 10, 1957, in a very small part as an angry townsman, and a week later—on the same show—as a “revenge-crazed Indian”; the good-guy Indian was played by Lon Chaney, Jr., taking a break from cheesy horror films.

The best television episode on *Trek Stars Go West*, is an episode of *The Lone Ranger* in which DeForest Kelley starred as a “young rancher bedeviled by bad guys.” Like many ancient TV westerns, *The Lone Ranger* used a very simple formula: there are good guys and there are bad guys. The bad guys do bad things to people, and the good guys spend about twenty minutes administering frontier justice.

William Shatner appeared as a fresh-faced (but conflicted) “king of thieves” on a two-part *Outlaws*. The conflict he displayed could not compare to the performance he gave in the made-in-Spain *White Comanche*, a 1968 theatrical release. Shatner was called on to play two roles, twin brothers (except for the eyes), who were half-Comanche. Fair-haired, milky-complected Shatner played both Johnny Moon (the hero) and his peyote-riddled, psychotic brother, Notah Moon. His first scene together makes as much sense as Joseph Cotton accepting the role of sheriff in this stinker. This film is distinguished by a bounty hunter who talks like Elmer Fudd, ridiculous dialogue, and illogical scene after scene. Yes, this is a three-bags-o’-popcorn movie; you just have to throw something at the screen. There is one positive comment one could make—leading lady Rosanna Yanni’s costume is an engineering marvel.

White Comanche is interesting as a step in the evolution of an actor. Shatner had not yet mastered his craft; he was unable to portray the range and depth of emotions he would later demonstrate in Priceline ads.

Trek Stars Go West is a nostalgia-laced collection of white hats vs. black hats, heavily accented with stereotypical Native Americans and Mexicans. None of the dance hall girls are pros, and the good guys always win. It is entertaining, more so if you share it with a friend (especially if your friend brings the beer), but the Enterprise crew probably left these work experiences off their resumes.

Read more: <http://technorati.com/entertainment/film/article/trek-stars-go-west-now-we1/#ixzz18CnS53CL>