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Cowboy Up and Kirk Out: 'Trek Stars Go West' on DVD

<u>William Shatner</u> is hilarious. We've known it for years, whether it was his super-serious attitude on the original "<u>Star Trek</u>" or his caricature of himself in those Priceline commercials — but you'll gain a far greater appreciation for it with "<u>Trek Stars Go West</u>," a collection of TV shows and films that starred "Star Trek" actors in Westerns before and during their time in fake space. Shatner as a peyote-smoking half-white, half-Comanche sociopath is probably the greatest thing you've ever seen the former Capt. Kirk do — you know, in a bad way.

That absurdity is just the kind of delight this Video Services Corp. release (\$16.99 at <u>Amazon</u>) offers, with a focus on Shatner, Leonard Nimoy (Spock), DeForest Kelley (Dr. Leonard "Bones" McCoy) and James Doohan (Montgomery "Scotty" Scott). For "Trek" fans, it's a silly expenditure — the production values aren't great, there aren't any special features and the black-and-white is frustratingly grainy. All those flaws withstanding, though, you'll certainly laugh at Nimoy as a philosophical, violent Comanche warrior or at Kelley as a dazed East Coast-educated ranch-owner who gets saved by the Lone Ranger. Nerds, rejoice.

The set comes in two discs, with the first including a 1960 episode of Western TV show "<u>Tate</u>" featuring Nimoy, a 1960 episode of "<u>Bonanza</u>" also with Nimoy and two 1960 episodes of "Outlaws" starring Shatner; the second has a 1949 episode of "<u>The Lone Ranger</u>" with Kelley, a 1957 episode of <u>"Last of the Mohicans</u>" featuring Doohan, another 1960 episode of "Outlaws," but this time with Nimoy, and the 1968 film "<u>White Comanche</u>," starring Shatner in both lead roles. Some have aged better than others — the second episode of "Outlaws," for instance, is miserable to watch — but it's the episode of "Tate" and the "White Comanche" film that are must-sees.

The "Tate" episode, titled "Comanche Scalps," gets the set started the right way with Nimoy in a scene-stealing role as a warrior bothering the residents of a pleasant white town. Good-guy gunslinger Tate (David McLean) and traveling companion Amos (Frank Overton) aren't surprised when Nimoy's character (named only "The Comanche") shows up at the scene of a slaughter. In a silly headband and wig, Nimoy wonders, "How should I kill you? I shall dwell on it," cementing his character as a calculating badass.

In "White Comanche," Shatner plays good white guy Johnny Moon and bad guy Notah, a half-Comanche warrior who hates shirts but loves face paint. Shanter plays both half-brothers who despise each other, and his ability to ham it up as Notah (who says gems like "The pale eyes will die!") keeps the film hilarious through its hour-and-a-half runtime. Camp has always been Shatner's best quality, and in "White Comanche," he oozes it — making "Trek Stars Go West" a totally necessary novelty.

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