

**Boston Legal Themes and Allusions in Comparison with StarTrek
For Parallel Universe: Trek in the Courtroom for Boston-Legal.org
Episode: Ivan the Incurable [02x22: airdate: April 18, 2006] by Debb from Montreal**

Theme 1: “Not exactly Emily Post” On Manners and Mannerisms: Jerry “Hands” Espensen, as portrayed by Christian Clemenson, is the latest in a long line of socially inept characters that are both endearing and pivotal. In this episode, we join Alan Shore and Jerry Espensen as Alan attempts to help Jerry fulfil his goal of becoming a first rate trial attorney. Jerry has obviously worked hard to improve his social skills and feels confident enough to try his new found communications skills in the courtroom. Despite his best efforts and preparations, Jerry is unable to hold it together during a cross and makes a unrecoverable mistake. Alan, with Jerry’s best interests at heart, reminds him that not everyone is cut out to become a trial attorney, especially Jerry who still holds a certain innocence and decency that would not serve him well in the cut throat business of law. These qualities... innocence, naiveté, and decency and the desire to better oneself hearken back to some favourite characters in Star Trek.

Captain Kirk (William Shatner) was fond of saying that what defined humanity was the pursuit of bettering oneself and our world. So did Picard and Janeway. They all maintained that bettering oneself and the world is the essence of humanity.

TOS: Although Spock (Leonard Nimoy) did not strive to become human (he was half human afterall), he did strive to understand humanity. He struggled to comprehend many human behaviours; specifically, feelings, love, and humour.

Kirk upon the death of Spock (Wrath of Khan) (from : ***“Of my friend I can only say this... of all the souls I’ve encountered in my travels, his was the most... human. “***



www.70disco.com/images/spockil6.jpg



http://memory-alpha.org/en/wiki/Image:Reginald_barclay.jpg

TNG: Reginald Endicott "Reg" Barclay III (Dwight Schultz) was a highly talented Starfleet diagnostic engineer. Like Espensen, he always appeared to be nervous and lacking in confidence and was known to be reclusive and extremely introverted. Barclay had a tendency to stutter whenever he found himself in a public speaking situation. He was also a hypochondriac.

Barclay had a tendency to spend more time inside the holodeck than in real social situations – especially with the ladies. (TNG: "Hollow Pursuits") Barclay also suffered from severe transporter phobia, although he later overcame this psychological barrier. Barclay would later be integral in the Voyager series as the man who brings Voyager back.

TNG: Lt. Cmdr Data (Brent Spiner), an android, had a unique programming that enabled him to “evolve”. This programming caused Data to better himself in a program of continuous improvement and he equated that with becoming more human. The proverbial Pinocchio, TNG fans enjoyed seven seasons watching Data evolve into a more human like character. He also struggled with many of the same social skills as Spock... love, humour, and feelings. At right, Dr. Beverley Crusher (Gates McFadden) teaches Data how to dance.



www.memory-alpha.org/nl/wiki/Afbeelding:Crusher_Data_dancing.jpg

Captain Picard upon the death of Data speaks to Data’s “brother” B-9 (formerly B-4): Here is the dialogue from the Nemesis (ST X) script:

www.hundland.com/scripts/StarTrekNemesis.txt

INT. ENTERPRISE - PICARD'S CABIN - NIGHT

Picard sits at his desk, speaking quietly to someone we do not see.

PICARD: I don't know if all this has made sense to you, but I wanted you to know what kind of man he was. In his quest to be more like us, he helped show us what it means to be human.

We see it is the now re-activated B-9 sitting across from him.

B-9: My brother was not a human.

PICARD: No, he wasn't... But his wonder and his curiosity about every facet of human life helped all of us see the best parts of ourselves. He embraced change... **because he always wanted to be more than he was.**

VOY: The Holodoc (EMH – Emergency Medical Hologram) as portrayed by Robert Picardo was



<http://members.aol.com/Spacer1701/7of9.gif>

another non-organic character who becomes more than the sum of his programming. Ironically, the Holodoc becomes the mentor to Seven of Nine (Jeri Ryan), who was repatriated from the Borg collective into the Voyager crew. As Seven struggles to regain her humanity, it is the Holodoc who schools her in the social skills (including dating) necessary to integrate her back into the human race. The EMH developed a distinct personality over the ship's seven year-long journey to the Alpha Quadrant. It was granted all privileges and rights of a living



www.robertpicardo.com/holodoc/7kiss2.jpg

person.

Theme 2 – The Bard Sayeth: Shakespeare references in Star Trek are a plenty. And now I notice that they are prevalent in Boston Legal. But it is when the Shakespearean quotation appears in both Star Trek and Boston Legal that causes my eyebrows to raise:

Spader: ***“Kill all the lawyers!”***

TNG "Encounter at Farpoint"

Just a brief 2 Henry VI quotation by Captain Picard: "The first thing we do, let's ***kill all the lawyers***" (IV.ii.74)

For more Shakespearean references in Star Trek, this website has documented many of them:

www.wsu.edu/~delahoyd/shakespeare/star.trek.html

Theme 3 - Star Trek Alumni: William Shatner (Denny Crane), René Auberjonois (Paul Lewiston),

Other than our regular cast members, the episode was conspicuously absent of Trek alumni.