

**Boston Legal Themes and Allusions in Comparison with StarTrek  
For Parallel Universe: Trek in the Courtroom for Boston-Legal.org  
Season Three, Episode 5: (03x05) Whose God Is It, Anyway? Airdate: Oct 17, 2006  
by Debb from Montreal**

**Theme 1: Religiously yours,**

Religion in Star Trek has been discussed in many other forums and I certainly do not have the theological background to give the topic its due personally. However, I did find the following analysis from: <http://members.aol.com/herakliit1/startrek.htm> which sums up the Freedom From Religion point of view that Alan Shore uses as his defensive argument which mirrors that of Gene Roddenberry's vision of Star Trek.

"[introduction omitted]

....Certainly Star Trek shows no signs of pantheism. The religious message Roddenberry puts across in the series is a humanist one. It is almost always critical of alien religions, which are usually disguised Earth faiths.



In **Who mourns for Adonais**, the Enterprise picks up signals of an unknown life form near the planet Pollux IV of Beta Geminorum system. This turns out to be the God Apollo - a man-shaped entity with an extra organ in his chest, through which he could channel extraordinary energies. After retiring here from Earth, Apollo missed the adoration he had from the Greeks. He tries to force the Enterprise crew to worship him as a God. When they refuse, he dissolves himself into the wind.



The film **Star Trek: Final Frontier** tackles a similar theme. In revolt against Vulcan rationalism, Spock's brother Sybok hijacks the Enterprise and heads for the planet Sha Ka Ree near the galactic centre, where he believes the Creator lives. But this "God" turns out to be a tyrannical old man who kills anyone who doesn't do exactly what he says. It was a bold theme, since "God" was very similar to Moses' idea of Yahweh. This was a film which started up without Roddenberry, and which Roddenberry opposed – but, actually, it embodies the typical Star Trek humanist theology.



In **The Way to Eden** Spock discovers the planet Eden, which at first sight appears a place of beauty and peace, but on investigation turns out to have vegetation impregnated with deadly acids.



In **The Apple**, the inhabitants of Gamma Trianguli VI worship the God Vaal, which appears as the gigantic face of a snake-like reptile with burning eyes. Vaal provides an idyllic life for the people in exchange for fuel to power its energy systems. Vaal's priest Akuta wears antennae on his head so he can hear commands from the machine. The Enterprise crew discover that Vaal is a computer-controlled machine and destroy it with a blast of phaser fire, thus liberating the locals from their debilitating subservience to a cruel deity (but violating the Prime Directive in a very cavalier manner).



**The Next Generation Episode Justice** presents an almost identical theme. The Edos on the planet Rubicun III live a child-like, hedonistic life, worshipping a "God" which turns out to be a multi-dimensional life form in a transparent spaceship orbiting the planet. Despite the Prime Directive, the Enterprise crew question and then violate Edo law, and show one of their leaders the spaceship which is the visible form of "God." At least they respect the directive enough to leave without liberating the Edos from their superstition - though they have probably done enough to start a dissident faction among the Edos.

In Star Trek, religious mythologies and supernatural phenomena almost always have scientific explanations. Alien gods are never really supernatural - their powers are always explained by exo-biology or by mechanical devices. Indeed 'gods' are often malevolent or egotistical. When they are benevolent, they usually turn their worshippers into mindless or childlike zombies. Add this message up, and it is amazing that Roddenberry managed to slip so much past the censor.

Everything in Roddenberry's universe was not all reason and science, however. Several Star Trek episodes suggest the possibility that souls could live on after the body has died, or might be separated from bodies, or might be capable of telepathy. In **What Are Little Girls Made Of** Roger Korby transfers his soul into the body of an android, while several episodes involve people swapping souls (**Return to Tomorrow**, **Turnabout Intruder**).



It is clear that Roddenberry felt a fairly deep hostility to organized religions, to transcendental gods and supernatural powers, though he seems to have acknowledged the civilizing mission of **Christianity in Bread and Circuses**, where the "*Children of the Son*" refuse to participate in gladiatorial combats."

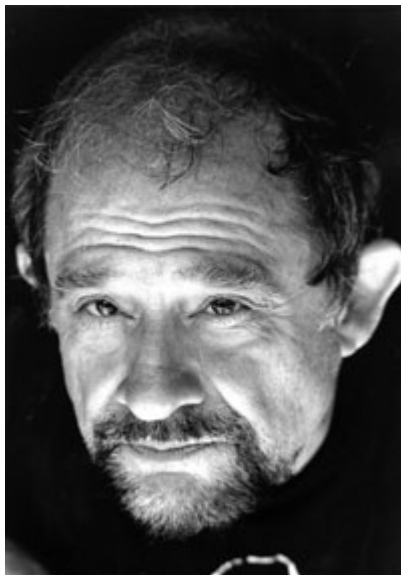
In summary, to paraphrase Alan Shore's defensive argument, "you have a right to be weird, and I have a right to be creeped out by it."

All screencaps above from [www.startrek.com](http://www.startrek.com)

**Theme 2: Star Trek Alumni:** William Shatner (Denny Crane), René Auberjonois (Paul Lewiston), Ron Canada (Judge Willard Reese), Ethan Phillips (Michael Schiller), Armin Shimmerman (Judge Brian Hooper), Lou Antonio (Director),



pics from <http://memory-alpha.org>



Director, Lou Antonio

[www.dga.org/news/v26\\_2/images/Lou Antonio.jpg](http://www.dga.org/news/v26_2/images/Lou%20Antonio.jpg)



TOS: Lokai (Lou Antonio) and Captain James T. Kirk (William Shatner) in "Let That Be Your Last Battlefield"

[www.startrek.com/](http://www.startrek.com/)

### Theme 3: Head Count!

Recently, it was noted in at least one online article that Boston Legal features a record number of Star Trek alumni. Having tracked many of their appearances in this report since its inception (Season 2, Episode 8), the question begging to be answered is: “Just how many?”

Well, according to the table below, to date, there have been **78** actors/actresses/production people who have contributed to Boston Legal in front of and behind the camera. By no means is the table is 100% accurate and names appear only once although many of the characters appear in multiple episodes of Boston Legal.

The table is sorted by episode. The green shaded areas indicate the person is featured in a previous Trek in the Courtroom report.

Actor/Actress/Production		Boston Legal Character			
Given Name	Family Name		Season	Episode	Title
Steven	Anderson	Walter Seymour	1	1	Head Cases
Sharon	Lawrence	Judge Rita Sharpley	1	1	Head Cases
Rebecca	Lin	Receptionist	1	1	Head Cases
Tom	Ormeny (Orme)	Man No. 1	1	1	Head Cases
Todd	Stashwick	Mathew Calder	1	1	Head Cases
Thomas	Knickerbocker	Dr. Mahoney	1	2	Still Crazy After All These Years
Andy	Milder	Dr. Gill	1	2	Still Crazy After All These Years
Victor	Raider-Wexler	Dr. Bender	1	2	Still Crazy After All These Years
Todd	Waring	Daniel Ralston	1	3	Catch and Release
Robert	Joy	A.D.A. William Preston	1	4	Change of Course
David	Clennan	Attorney Braxton Mason	1	5	An Eye for An Eye
Louis	Giambalvo	Judge Franzetti	1	5	An Eye for An Eye
Marcy	Goldman	Foreperson	1	5	An Eye for An Eye
Derek	Magyar	Gregory Stone	1	5	An Eye for An Eye
Michael	Oberlander	Dr. Steven Rayburn	1	5	An Eye for An Eye
Jack	Shearer	Night Court Judge	1	5	An Eye for An Eye
Henry	Hayashi	Dr. Lee	1	6	Truth Be Told
Sandra	Rowden	<i>makeup artist</i>	1	6	Truth Be Told
Scott Alan	Smith	Dr. Randall	1	7	Questionable Characters
Cynthia	Hernandez	<i>makeup artist</i>	1	7	Questionable Characters
Andy	Clement	<i>makeup artist</i>	1	7	Questionable Characters
Jim	O'Heir	Gil Furnald	1	8	Loose Lips
Gina	Rivera	Dr. Amanda Gerard	1	9	A Greater Good
Dey	Young	Sarah Berman	1	9	A Greater Good
John	Cragan	Paramedic	1	10	Hired Guns
Charles	Emmett	Detective Smiley	1	10	Hired Guns
Aaron	Lustig	Dr. Herbert Waylon	1	10	Hired Guns
Lo	Ming	Dr. Lee Chang	1	10	Hired Guns
Ed	O'Ross	Judge Phillip Stevens	1	10	Hired Guns
Crystal	Allen	Maddie Taylor	1	11	Schmidt Happens
Leslie	Jordan	Bernard Ferion	1	11	Schmidt Happens
Lisa	Kaminir	D. A. Valerie Murrow	1	11	Schmidt Happens
Tony	Pasqualini	U.S. Attorney Joyner	1	11	Schmidt Happens
Michael	Wiseman	D.A. Bret Haber	1	11	Schmidt Happens

Sam	Anderson	Waltre Fife	1	12	From Whence We Came
Holmes	Osborne	Mayor George Bostwick	1	13	It Girls and Beyond
John	Short	Dr. Raymond Young	1	14	'Til We Meet Again
Leigh Allyn	Baker	Frannie Huber	1	15	Tortured Souls
Vyto	Ruginis	Captain Larry McDonald	1	15	Tortured Souls
Conor	O'Farrell	A.D.A. Glenn Jackson	1	17	Death Be Not Proud
Kat	Sawyer-young	Judge Martha Brenford	1	17	Death Be Not Proud
Michael	Hughhins	<i>stunt double</i>	1	17	Death Be Not Proud
Richard	Fancy	Father Michael Ryan	2	9	Gone
Billy	Mayo	Detective Sean Wilkins	2	9	Gone
Joanna	Cassidy	Beverly Bridge	2	11	The Cancer Man Can
Kelly	Connell	Attorney John Hoberg	2	12	Helping Hands
Scott	MacDonald	Officer Michael Minden	2	14	Breast in Show
Alex	Nevil	Terry	2	14	Breast in Show
Ron	Canada	Judge Willard Reese	2	15	Smile
Shannon	O'Hurley	Phyllis Deaver	2	15	Smile
Don	McManus	Attorney John Lennox	2	15	Smile
Freda	Foh Shen	Dr. Ann Kumi	2	15	Smile
Michael	Ensign	Judge Paul Resnick	2	16	Live Big
Corbin	Bernson	Attorney Eli Granger	2	17	There's Fire
Patti	Yasutake	Dr. Claire Simon	2	17	There's Fire
Phillip (Phil)	Weyland	<i>stand-in</i>	2	17	There's Fire
Fran	Bennette	Judge Diane Avent	2	18	Shock and Oww!
Daniel	Roebuck	Russell Blayney	2	18	Shock and Oww!
William	Shatner	Denny Crane	2	19	Stick It
René	Auberjonois	Paul Lewiston	2	19	Stick It
Ed	Begley Jr.	Clifford Cabot	2	20	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
Matt	Malloy	Donald Wharton	2	20	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
Andrew	Prine	Sam Wolfson	2	20	Chitty Chitty Bang Bang
Christopher	Carroll	Judge Stephen Bickel	2	21	Word Salad
Joel	Polis	Attorney Eric Yavitch	2	21	Word Salad
Ken	Land	Dr. Samuel Williams	2	21	Word Salad
Jennifer	Parsons	Dr. Reesa Klaywig	2	21	Word Salad
Lorna	Raver	Judge Katherine Taylor	2	24	Deepend of the Poole
Michael	Reisz	<i>writer</i>	2	24	Deepend of the Poole
Jeri	Ryan	Courtney Reese	2	26	Spring Fever
David	Burke	D.A. Casey Mathias	2	26	Spring Fever
Dennis	Cockrum	Detective Gary Jacobs	2	26	Spring Fever
Robert	Foxworth	Judge Simon Devon	2	27	Los Angeles
Armin	Shimmerman	Judge Brian Hooper	3	1	Why Can't We All Get a Lung?
Henry	Gibson	Judge Clark Brown	3	1	Why Can't We All Get a Lung?
Annie	Wersching	Ellen Tanner	3	1	Why Can't We All Get a Lung?
D. Elliot	Woods	"The Man"	3	1	Why Can't We All Get a Lung?
Ethan	Phillips	Michael Schiller	3	3	Desparately Seeking Shirley
Mark L.	Taylor	Attorney Adam Jovanka	3	3	Desparately Seeking Shirley
Lou	Antonio	<i>Director</i>	3	5	Who's God is It Anyway?
Tim	Sitarz	<i>stunt double</i>	3	5	Who's God is It Anyway?