

Aliens and Empires intrigue York author

By PAUL ARMSTRONG

"Beam me up, Scotty." These few words are possibly the best known in television history. The universal popularity of Star Trek is unequalled in the annals of broadcasting and this makes a discussion of its ideological ramifications both interesting and significant.

Empire, Aliens and Conquest, by Jay Goulding (currently a part-time professor at York) is quite probably one of the most fascinating and original books one could read on the subject of Star Trek. The furthest thing from a gushing, fannish pledge of allegiance to the Star Trek universe, Empire is a provocative study of the socio-political and ideological underpinnings of popular culture in western liberal democracies, using the Star Trek series, the spin-off movies, and the Star Wars trilogy as examples.

Goulding's book, while dealing with the many subtle and not-sosubtle ways in which ideology is portrayed in pop culture and the Star Trek series is, however, more concerned with the pervasiveness of the process and how it is accepted, unquestioningly, by the viewers and fans.

Some of the concepts developed and analogies drawn from the series may come as no surprise to some. Others may find them shocking. The fact that Star Trek came along at a point in American history when the national morale was at an all-time low is no great revelation. The US was engaged in a virtually unwinnable war in Vietnam and young men were being drafted to do battle and die in a strange and foreign land. The idea that Star Trek, with its good guys (the Federation) and the bad guys (the Klingons) helped promote (intentionally or otherwise) the ethics of 'gunboat diplomacy' and the kind of patriotic fervor that would push boys out into the jungles

of Vietnam to fight the 'Klingons' is distressing. The Klingons, as we know, have a slightly oriental appearance and are notorious for their ruthlessness and ferocity in combat.

The recurring theme of the book, above and beyond a mere compilation of hypotheses and examples, is the comparison to the story of Odysseus. Kirk is likened to Odysseus, the indestructible hero who craves and thrives on adventure and battle. Far more than just the world at his disposal, Kirk's domain is the galaxy, his vehicle a mammoth starship of Herculean power. From planet to planet and ship to ship he combats and defeats the enemies of free space, the Federation and democracy.

The concepts of Kirk's universe mirror those of 20th century western-style capitalism. Productivity, profit and defense; they are the uses of labor, material and property. Thus mining the planets must provide dilithium crystals to power starships, much as US navy vessels are powered by oil and uranium produced by various countries around the world. Hence, any culture or society that does not produce for profit is suspected of being either unhealthly, or worse, a cover for Klingon (Soviet?) operations.

The triumvirate of Kirk, Spock and McCoy accomplishes a marvellous feat, according to Goulding. These characters represent a dialogue between science (Spock) and religion (McCoy), with politics (Kirk) acting as the mediator between the two. This configuration has allowed the series to explore various concepts of a social and political nature out of the context of modern America, issues such as war/peace, armament/disarmament, racism, fascism and, of course, freedom. Goulding suggests that these issues have been treated in a rather heavyhanded, right-wing fashion.

One of the few shortcomings of

N E Pots, Rats, and Follies

Arts: The Final Frontier

These are the voyages of the column Fine Lines. An Excalibur mission, to seek out new art. New artists. To boldly write . . .

Picasso experimented with it. So did Leger, Vlaminck, Bonnard, and Derain. Q'uest-ce que c'est? Tinglazed earthenware, often called 'painter's pottery," now on display at the Glendon Gallery until November 10.

Begun as a European traditional art form, this pottery known as "maiolica" has been explored by North American ceramists and painters for over two decades. Painted Pottery: Continuing the Tradition of Tin-Glazed Earthenware will feature the work of maiolica North American revival leader Andrea Gill. Matthias Osterman, Walter Ostrom, Helena Schumaus Shooner, and Ian

Empire, Aliens and Conquest is its peripheral traetment of the Star Wars trilogy. Star Wars and the sequel movies represent not only a quantum leap in the art and technology of movie-making, but also a drop, of equal magnitude, in the level of intelligence of the stories and content of today's so-called science fiction films.

Finally, Empire, Aliens and Conquests avoids or ignores an aspect of Star Trek which is, perhaps, as important as any other: the human element. In terms of characterization Star Trek is head and shoulders above most other television series, surely one of the reasons for its longevity in the face of shows with special effects which now make Star Trek look crude, even quaint, in comparison. Amid the obsolete visuals, the bravado and the adventure is human warmth and compassion.

Star Trek was more than a television and movie series. It was a phenomenon, seminal and unique. In spite of its minor shortcomings so too is Empires, Aliens and Conquest, which critically examines that phenomenon. It is an insightful and often savage attack on a oncefamiliar universe. What emerges after this literary exploratory surgery is neither comforting nor familiar, but it is, as Mr. Spock would say, "fascinating."

Symons will also display their pottery.

Glendon Gallery will be featuring a selection of tin-glazed earthenware from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. These have been obtained from the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) collection, and were selected by K. Cory Keeble of the ROM.

The Glendon Gallery is located in York Hall of Glendon College, and gallery hours are Mon.-Fri. 10-5; Thurs. 6-9, and Sunday 2-5. Admission is free. If you're wondering what to do while YUFA is on strike, visit the Painted Pottery exhibit for both an educational and pleasurable experience.

Hoofing it up

York Dance Department will present four York Dance Labs this year, starting next Wednesday, October 16 at 4:00 p.m. at Burton Auditorium. The Dance Labs consist of works choreographed and performed by York Dance students from the Repertoire, Composition and Music courses.

The October 16 York Dance Lab will feature works choreographed by dance student Bernadette Shannahan and by Patricia Fraser, dance alumna and currently a modern and repertoire dance teacher in the Dance Department. Also, works by artist-in-residence Juan Antonio and by dance alumna Fanny Ghorayeb will be featured giving a preview of November 8-9 performances at the Winchester Street Theatre downtown.

York Dance Labs will be presented on December 5-6, on February 12 when experimental works and works-in-progress will be presented in Studio "3" of the Fine Arts Building and on April 3 when the highlights of the dance year will be shown.

Piper plays the part

Frollicking, fatuous rats are the name of the game October 17 in Atkinson Studio. At 12:10 p.m. The Pied Piper of Hamlin, immersed in modern politics, will tootle his way across the stage in a reading of Spanish playwright Jordi Texidor's play. Performed and directed by members of the fourth-year theatre performance class, the reading is part of the theatre department's Soundstage series.

The series will take place throughout the year, providing theatre students with an opportunity to explore works and areas of interest of their own choosing. Keep your eyes peeled to Fine Lines for info on future events.

Excalibur's weekl 'ents on Campi puide to arts

Contemporary Cuban Photographs by Ivan Canas Norman Bethune Gallery, until Oct. 11

Re: Union, a multi-media exhibition of the work of 39 graduates of York's Master of Fine Arts program, 1976-1985 Featured at all six York galleries: Art Gallery of York University, Founder Gallery, Winters Gallery, Norman Bethune, I.D.A. Gallery, Samuel J. Zacks Gallery (Stong College) Also featuring the outside installation piece "York York Uni Norman Gallery (Also feat Swings"

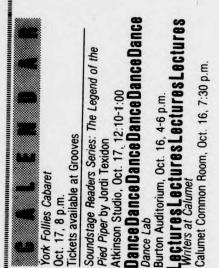
by Alex de uus Stong College

galleries Galleries Galleries Galleries Canada Council Readings this week featuring John Winters Senior Common Room, Oct. 15, 5 p.m.

Founders Lecture Series: "The Role of a Liberal Arts College in a Large University", featuring Joh Yolton, Dean of Arts, Rutgers University Founders Common room, Oct. 17, 3 p.m.

M.F.A. Alumna Kathy Browning and the group

Theatre, Oct. 15, 8:30 p.m.





BEAMING INTO YOUR VERY OWN LIVING-ROOM: Captain James Kirk (played always with great subtlety by William Shatner) seems to think he's above literary criticism, and maybe doesn't care to be labelled a Reaganite imperialist.

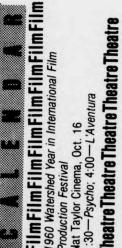
EXCALIBUR October 11, 1985

3501 AL PRESSAR RUBLEDING

Wanna fool friends?

he Follies are coming! The Follies are coming! October 17th! Burton Auditorium! Come one, come all! Students! Staff! Faculty and alumni! All, yes all, will be participating in this multi-media event which promises to make a laughing stock of this university and you! Yes you!! So if you want a foot to stand on in your defense, don your trench coat and sunglasses, grab your violin case and siddle on down to witness the trial. If, on the other hand, you wish to be a member of the prosecution, get your act together and contact Donald Berkowitz in 200J Admin. Studies. If you have a phone he responds to -3524 or -6165. But there ain't much time left so speed the process. Music, theatre, dance, any type of performance is what they're into. Do your searing opinions of York life lack an audience? Well, the York Follies could be your answer!

This week's Fine Lines by R.C., P.P., and N.D.



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Collected Works of Billy the Kid by Michael Department's 3rd year workshop

production Atkinson Studio, Oct. 10, 8:00 p.m.

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