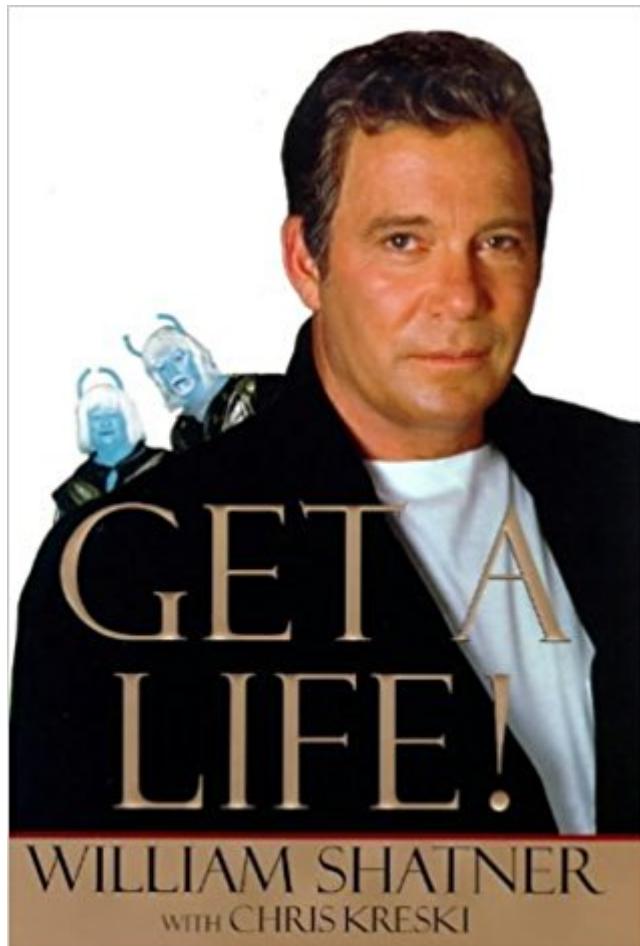


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Get A Life!



Synopsis

Get A Life! with the possible exception of "Beam me up, Scotty," is clearly the most repeated catchphrase in the history of Star Trek®. Poking fun at Star Trek's gung-ho fans and conventions in a now infamous Saturday Night Live sketch, William Shatner's comic rallying cry has been indelibly emblazoned into the collective psyche of trekkers everywhere. Through the years, the phrase has spurred laughter, anger, controversy, and far more than its fair share of debate. It's now also given birth to an honest, sentimental, insightful book. Uncomfortable with speaking onstage, William Shatner had spent the better part of the previous quarter century steadfastly avoiding convention appearances. However, to publicize the release of Star Trek Generations, Shatner agreed to a rare series of speaking engagements at Star Trek conventions around the globe. He was jolted by an unavoidable dose of reality. Shatner was met with wild enthusiasm, love, and good humor at convention after convention. Touched and fascinated, he was overwhelmed with the realization that in almost three decades of starship hopping, he'd never really taken the time to enjoy or understand Star Trek's fans or their conventions. That's when the light bulb clicked on; that's when "Captain Kirk" dove headfirst into action. For the past several years, William Shatner has been treating each Star Trek convention like an enormous research project. Interviewing fans, dealers, fellow castmembers, convention organizers, and promoters -- even going undercover beneath alien makeup -- Shatner's been scouring convention floors. Having grilled trekkers and trekkies in all corners of the planet, Shatner's had his eyes opened and his mind boggled. He's amassed a small mountain of research material, and cultivated his findings in Get A Life! This is a first-person journey of discovery told with self-deprecating wit, unflagging honesty, and his trademark enthusiasm and humor. Get a Life! tells William Shatner's own story of how the actor who played the now deceased starship captain, James T. Kirk, can finally come to grips with his past, his fans, their love, and his own intergalactic legacy.

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Customer Reviews

For years, William Shatner's attitude toward Star Trek conventions was strictly professional: he'd typically fly in the day of his appearance, go straight from the airport to the stage, and then leave as quickly as possible. But when he went on an extensive tour to promote *Generations*, he became "Ebenezer Scrooge on Christmas morning." Soon he was talking to fellow cast members, convention organizers, and the fans themselves, discovering how love of a science fiction show had helped create a tight-knit community. In the course of this book, Shatner gives us a short history of Trek fandom, reveals the thinking behind Paramount's decision to kill off James T. Kirk, briefly explains the origins of the infamous Saturday Night Live sketch that gives the book its title, holds a seminar with the three other starship captains, and even takes lessons on the proper way to imitate Kirk from the master, Kevin Pollak, an actor/comedian. (Among the insights gained: those dramatic pauses in Kirk's speeches were the result of Shatner trying to remember his next line.) And there are plenty of jokes at the expense of Leonard Nimoy, as well as a few skewering Shatner. (The "elephant story" is a classic in itself. Once, when Shatner was on a photo safari in Africa, an elephant did number two on his head. He tells the story at cons, and the fans seem to love it, for some reason.) But the most touching segments of *Get a Life!* are Shatner's interviews with the fans, particularly those to whom the show and the fan community have given a social and emotional lifeline. Once you've read the conversations with the shy veterinary student who made friends by dressing his cats in Star Trek uniforms, or with a young woman whose severe emotional and sexual trauma had led to the development of multiple personalities that included three healing presences in the form of Kirk, Spock, and McCoy, you will never be able to make a Trekkie joke quite so readily again. --Ron Hogan

William Shatner is the author of nine Star Trek ® novels, including the New York Times bestsellers *The Ashes of Eden* and *The Return*. He is also the author of several nonfiction books, including *Get a Life!* and I'm Working on That. In addition to his role as Captain James T. Kirk, he stars as Denny Crane in the hit television series from David E. Kelley, *Boston Legal* "a role for which he has

won two Emmy Awards and a Golden Globe. Find more information at WilliamShatner.com.

I enjoyed it. We learn in detail of Shatner's change of heart about Star Trek fandom. Apparently for some many years, Shatner was wary of the fans, having had the earlier unpleasant experience of having his shirt torn off. He couldn't grasp the fans' obsession with the show and apparently thought many of the fans were a little (or a lot) cuckoo. Hence his infamous SNL skit- "Get a life! It's just a TV show!" After years of not understanding the obsessions of Star Trek Fandom, Bill had a change of heart when he went undercover to the conventions. He discovered that, while there are a few fans who are probably unhinged, many others are successful professionals whose careers in science were spurred by their love of Star Trek. In talking with the fans, he learned that Star Trek fandom has provided for many fans a sense of belonging, community and even family. People are drawn into the show because of the values portrayed. The USS Enterprise is an enlightened futuristic world, where a combination of logic and decency always saves the day in less than an hour. In spite of that, Bill admits there is an underbelly at the conventions, where rabid fans have been taken advantage of, and sold worthless, fake relics of the show, ie "a piece of so and so's uniform." Still, he came to believe that the fandom is largely a positive force, embracing it, as described in this book. Interesting read for the fans.

The least of Shatner's behind the scenes of Star Trek books. His 'Star Trek Memories' & 'Star Trek Movie Memories' are both well researched, documentary style 'making of' mixed with first -person pivotal remembrances. His autobiography, "Up Till Now", covers a million interesting and annoying Shatner stories (including Star Trek stuff). "Get A Life" is primarily stories of Star Trek fandom: the weird, the stupid, the slightly profound. If you've ever gone to a Star Trek convention you know how bad it can get. Bill has endured it all for nearly 50 years. "Get A Life" is yet another of Shatner's zen-mixed-with-Greed-Is-Good projects designed to cash in on the phenomenon by embracing it, and the fans, rather than fighting it, and insulting the folks who've paid all his bills over the decades. "Get A Life" is part of a complete Shatner audiobook collection, and so you must have it. It is the only one not available digitally at audible.com, and therefore a rare gem to be enjoyed in the old Walkman.

If you are in a mood for light and fun reading, this is it. There were colorful personalities, and anecdotal stories.

I enjoy Shatner's writing, and always have. He has a good sense of humor and tells interesting stories. I was not expecting this book to be so good, though, because I thought he was knocking fandom. I could just imagine him going "undercover" to see what fan conventions are really like, and reporting what he found in this book! This is a very enjoyable read for Star Trek fans.

Even if you have no interest in Star Trek, you will probably love this book. Shatner relates numerous, hilarious accounts of "close encounters" with Trek fans. He discusses his original loathing of Star Trek conventions, and his eventual understanding of what makes the Star Trek phenomenon the success it has become. Most of all, this book is funny. Tons of humorous stories and anecdotes, most of them at the expense of Shatner himself. I don't see how anyone could fail to enjoy this book.

You can tell that a lot of research and time was put into making this book and it really shows because it is so hard to put down once it gets going. If you have ever wanted to know the workings of and behind the scenes stories of Star Trek conventions, then this is for you. In "Get A Life!", William Shatner gives the history of the end of Star Trek (which is just a retelling of the story that is in his other book "Star Trek Memories") but it sets up the story of how the conventions began beautifully. Not only that, but Shatner interviews cast members as well as those who worked behind the scenes of the series, fans and conventioneers who run the conventions. Needless to say, you get an insight into this world. If you loved other books that he has written on Trek, then this is no exception. I'm telling you, it is just a real page turner because you can relate to these people in the interviews if you are a Trekkie. Shatner literally goes undercover in make-up at a convention to get the true feel of a Star Trek convention, so this is also first hand experience speaking the entire time. The best thing is that by the books end, you get the feeling that Shatner (finally!) understands the fans and knows why we love it so much. Overall, really fun! Definitely a must have in your Star Trek library.

In this book, Star Trek's Captain Kirk sets out to understand the most baffling "Strange New World" of all, the world of Star Trek Fandom. After Kirk's cinematic death in "Generations" Shatner makes an effort to understand the bizarre sub culture that has made his career such a success. Long content to keep his association with Star Trek "on the clock", Shatner begins to don an alien mask and move incognito on convention floors. He begins to interview fans, convention organizers and merchants. As Shatner's understanding of Trek fandom mounts in the pages of the book, he

becomes more and more in tune with a world that heretofore existed beneath his notice. His tales of revalation are often funny, sometimes touching, and always enteraining. Shatner, in the twilight of his legendary career, sets out to understand Trek Fandom, a phenomenon also in its twilight stage. This is one for posterity, and hilarity!

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