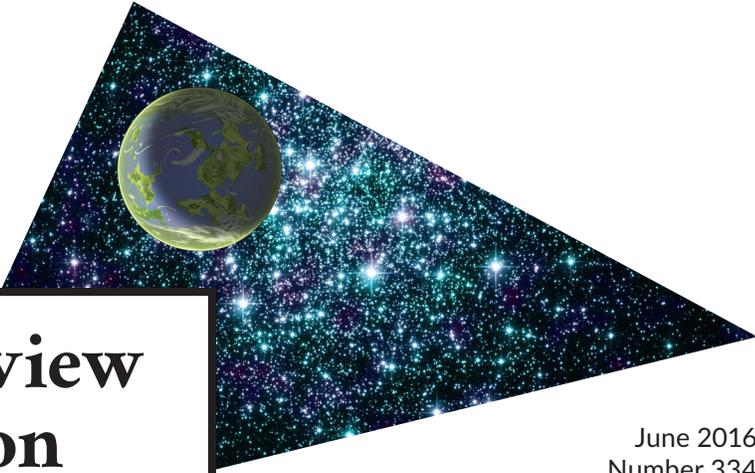


Twenty-two
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and Gina Abercrombie-Winstanley
**Words are Here on Top:
Diplomacy in *Star Trek***



“Words are here on top. What’s under them, their meaning, is what’s important.”

Star Trek is a fictional future history that spans the twenty-second to twenty-fourth centuries. This narrative places humanity within the United Federation of Planets, a polity of allied worlds that comprises a “(l)iberal, post-capitalist, almost perfectly socialist utopian democracy ... a constitutional republic” (Grech, “Philosophical Concepts” 1). The Federation behaves like a Kantian “league of nations,” a supranational grouping that facilitates amicable internal relations, permits defence against external threats (Kant, 1785), and attempts to respect the ideals of national sovereignty outlined in the Peace of Westphalia of 1648 (Grech, “Philosophical Concepts” 2). These ideals are based on (1) the right of political self-determination, (2) the tenet of legal equality between states, and (3) the principle of nonintervention in the internal affairs of other states (Gross, 1948). In this utopian future, per Gene Roddenberry’s guide for writers of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*,

most (if not all) of the major problems facing the human species have been resolved and the Earth has since been transformed into a human paradise, with ... a literate and compassionate population that has learned to appreciate life as a grand adventure. (35)

The explicit mission statement of the starships that constitute Starfleet, the exploratory arm of the Federation, prefaces the 257 episodes of *The Original Series* and *Next Generation*: “to

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Special For a Better Future Issue

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~~Brian Stableford~~ ~~Technology and Liberty in French~~ ~~Utopian Fiction~~



~~[This article is a version of the eleventh Thomas Taylor Lecture, delivered at the Prometheus Trust’s Annual Conference in June 2016. Although it overlaps some of the previous articles in this series, I hope that it contains enough new material, and a sufficiently original narrative, to be of interest.]~~

~~Before commencing an analysis of this kind, it is useful to draw attention to certain technical elaborations of the term *utopia*, which was initially coined by Thomas More to mean “no place.” Because of the way in which was generalized it was often construed as if it were spelled with an initial “e,” signifying “a better place,” and that is the narrower fashion in which it is employed in this paper, together with two significant modifications, one being “euchronian,” referring to better times, or futuristic hypothetical societies, and the other being “dystopian,” referring to worse places or times.~~

~~The French Revolution of 1789 was guided by the~~

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explore strange new worlds, to seek out new life and new civilizations, to boldly go where no [man/one] has gone before.” It’s a “diplomatic mission.... one of [Starfleet’s] primary functions [is] negotiations” (Kroeker, “Unimatrix Zero”). But “Starfleet isn’t just about diplomacy, exploration. A lot of the time, it’s just hard work” (Singer, “Heart of Stone”), requiring extremely dedicated members.

The active search for and discovery of new civilizations inevitably requires expert training and specialized techniques in order to avoid misunderstandings or even outright conflict with others. An ambassador, diplomat, or envoy is a person who specializes in facilitating peaceful relations between different groupings, and this concept may be extended to relations with putative fictional alien species. Such a role is considered absolutely crucial as evidenced by two statements to this effect in one movie: The fate of entire planetary systems (and not just nation states) “resides in the hands of the diplomats” and is “the purview of the diplomats” (Meyer, *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*).

Such individuals may be hired or appointed and need not necessarily actually belong to the grouping/s that they represent (Scheerer, “The Price”). Their success in the Federation is evident: “Wars between opposing star systems no longer prevail” (Taylor, “The Mark of Gideon”). Mediation is therefore imperative as “The Federation wishes to avoid war at all cost” (Beaumont, “Face of the Enemy”). The recognized importance of mediation is such that diplomats may even be transported to dedicated neutral facilities in order to facilitate these encounters. Examples within the canon include:

the neutral planetoid code-named Babel... the *Enterprise* has been assigned to transport ambassadors of Federation planets to this vitally important council. The issues of the council are politically complex, the passengers explosive. (Pevney, “Journey to Babel”)

Yet another example is the “neutral conference planet, called Parliament,” where envoys of two warring species are transported by the *Enterprise* for a peace conference “in the hope their dispute can be resolved” (Bole, “Lonely among Us”), reiterating the Federation’s peace-fostering role.

In international relations, diplomatic approaches to encounters between two or more groupings may be simply classified as Old World or New World. The Old World style is characterized by politeness and cordiality, the compulsion not to give offense, and circumlocution that may appear to border on deception or even disguise such deception. In contrast, the New World approach is markedly different, a direct methodology bereft of circumspection and innuendo. Historically, “seen from the US, diplomacy was a particularly offensive Old World practice” (Neumann 609). Indeed, during the American Revolution, Benjamin Franklin became one of the first American envoys. However, he eschewed the conventional formalities of the role, even refusing to dress the part (Neumann 609). This echoes Thomas Paine in *The*

Rights of Man (1791), in one of the first uses of the term “diplomatic”:

The diplomatic character is of itself the narrowest sphere of society that man can act in. It forbids intercourse by the reciprocity of suspicion; and a diplomat is a sort of unconnected atom, continually repelling and repelled. But this was not the case with Dr. Franklin. He was not the diplomat of a Court, but of MAN. (Der Derian 172)

Again, historically, it was clearly believed that “American diplomacy should be a new diplomacy” (Neumann 609) of a less artificial and stilted nature and a more authentic and direct dialog sans deceit and duplicity. Old World politicians are therefore egotistic and “suspicious spokesmen of specifics, whereas American diplomats speak for mankind in general” (McGeorge 3) and are therefore perceived as nobler and more authentic.

Starship captains of United Earth in the series *Enterprise* and the ensuing Starfleet of the United Federation of Planets, along with dedicated diplomats from the Federation Diplomatic Corps, were frequently called upon to facilitate first contact with alien species and to mediate between alien species whether by specific assignment or emergent necessity (Meyer, *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country*). This is eminently possible since a Federation diplomat is always “glad to offer ... services as negotiator.... I’ve had some small experiences in such matters” (Pevney, “A Taste of Armageddon”).

However, “[h]armony is duller than conflict” (Neumann 619), so in order to enliven episodes, diplomacy is often deliberately riven by conflict and brought to the brink of failure or outright collapse, elevating tension and viewer ratings subsequently. Varying levels of conflict are therefore automatically privileged.

We will review diverse aspects of diplomacy in *Star Trek* with special reference to the trajectory of diplomacy in the *Star Trek* timeline which will be seen to evolve from the New World to the Old World and back to the New World style over the course of the future charted out in the franchise. It will also be shown that the latter transition coincided with the death of Gene Roddenberry, the creator of the *Star Trek gesamtkunstwerk* (body of work).

The Original Series

The Original Series spanned 1966–69 in “the grand old days of Kirk’s considerably less politically aware exploits. Forged in the heat of the Cold War and the New Frontier politics of Kennedy” (Johnson-Smith 115) and in the midst of “the political and social turmoil of the mid to late 1960s: the US civil rights movement, Lyndon B. Johnson’s policy dream of the ‘Great Society,’ the escalation of the Vietnam War, and the emerging counterculture” (Gonzalez 27–28).

George Gonzalez has reviewed various aspects of diplomacy in *Star Trek*, limited to *The Original Series* and *Next Generation*. He notes that *The Original Series* prefigured “Samuel Huntington’s concept of the ‘clash of civilizations’

between the Federation” and other, alien spheres of influence (Gonzalez 16). Indeed, in *The Original Series*, Klingons were deliberately depicted as swarthy “[o]riental, hard-faced” (Gerrold, 100) mustachioed menaces with bronze skin suggestive of North Asian peoples in the mould of Genghis Khan and Fu Manchu (Pevney, “The Trouble with Tribbles”; Chomsky, “Day of the Dove”). “[T]hink of the Mongol Hordes with spaceships and ray guns” (Gerrold, 100). “Klingons of that era were raised to despise humans. We’ll try diplomacy. But I promise you it won’t work. And then you’ll have to destroy them” (Bole, “The Emissary”).

More importantly, Gonzales notes that “*The Original Series* sought to directly comment on US foreign policy and the Cold War, whereas *The Next Generation* explicitly forewent these issues” (16). He observes that *The Original Series* expresses “sharply worded critical comments and scenarios that can be readily interpreted as directed against US (Western) relations with the developing world” and that the equivalent commentary is notable in its absence in *The Next Generation* (18).

For example, in *The Original Series*, a comparison is made between US polices in Vietnam and the events in the episode “A Private Little War” (Daniels) wherein Kirk explicitly reminisces about the

twentieth-century brush wars on the Asian continent....
Two giant powers involved ... Neither side could pull out.... The only solution is what happened back then. Balance of power.... The trickiest, most difficult, dirtiest game of them all, but the only one that preserves both sides.

Gonzalez also reads two further episodes as “allegories for Western intervention in developing societies” (Gonzalez 18–19), “Patterns of Force” (McEveety) and “A Piece of the Action” (Komack). He also notes that these episodes inform the viewers of the contemporary apprehension with regard to the real risk of global thermonuclear conflict. The fictional solution is almost a *deus ex machina*, as found in “Errand of Mercy” (Newland), where the Federation and the Klingon Empire are forced by a far more powerful race of pure energy beings to strike a truce. The two parties are informed that they “will become fast friends ... will work together” (Gonzalez 21), prefiguring the fall of the Berlin Wall and the Soviet Union as well as the Klingon-Federation Khitomer accords (Meyer).

However, in more pedestrian circumstances that do not involve outright war, the *Enterprise* is regularly involved in diplomatic missions that are often depicted as crucial. Indeed, the command crew is trained to deal with such situations as McCoy, the ship’s doctor, reminds Captain Kirk: “Maybe you’re a soldier so often that you forget you’re also trained to be a diplomat. Why not try a carrot instead of a stick?” (Senensky, “Metamorphosis”). In fact, Kirk is fully cognizant of his duties vis-à-vis interspecies relations, even at the cost of potentially involving his fellow crewmembers: “I have a diplomatic responsibility. This happened under Argelian jurisdiction. If they want to arrest him, try him, even convict him, I have to go along with it” (Pevney, “Wolf in the Fold”).

Even more dramatically: “Captain’s Log: Stardate 4372.5. On a top-secret diplomatic mission, the *Enterprise* has entered the Tellun star system” (Lucas, “Elaan of Troyius”). As mentioned, the starship may also be required to ferry diplomats as in that episode and many others; these individuals may have crucial roles to play such as “to prevent a war” (Senensky, “Metamorphosis”) or to mitigate circumstances that lead to unnecessary deaths. For example, a Federation ambassador determinedly informs Captain Kirk that “in the past twenty years, thousands of lives have been lost in this quadrant. Lives that could have been saved if the Federation had a treaty port here. We mean to have that port and I’m here to get it” (Pevney, “A Taste of Armageddon”).

Other examples include: “Captain’s log, Stardate 3192.1. The *Enterprise* is *en route* to star cluster NGC 321. Objective, to open diplomatic relations with the civilizations known to be there” (Pevney, “A Taste of Armageddon”). Later in the episode, with increasing tension: “Captain’s log, Stardate 3192.5. Now in standard orbit around planet Eminiar Seven. My orders are clear. We must establish diplomatic relations at all cost” (Pevney, “A Taste of Armageddon”).

However, these episodes also demonstrate that diplomacy may segue into conflict despite the best of intentions on the Federation’s side even when led by diplomats who take priority under specific circumstances in the ship’s command structure, as shown in this exchange between the *Enterprise*’s chief engineer, Mr. Scott, and Ambassador Fox (Pevney, “A Taste of Armageddon”):

Scott: I’m responsible for the safety of this ship.

Fox: And I’m responsible for the success of this mission, and that’s more important than this ship. Is that clear? We came here to establish diplomatic relations with these people.

Scott: But they’re the ones who’re looking for a fight, Mister Fox.

Fox: This is a diplomatic matter. If you check your regulations, you’ll find that my orders get priority....

Scott: Diplomats. The best diplomat I know is a fully activated phaser bank.

Clearly, Scotty is of the belief that a show of force is superior to diplomatic wrangling. The following exchange results after the ship’s captain is abducted by alien humanoids represented by their leader, Anan, when he beams to the planet. The altercation demonstrates a recourse to Old World diplomacy and the crew’s skepticism to such an approach:

Fox: I’m sure that from this day forward, your planet and our Federation will attain the deepest friendship. I look forward to seeing you. Diplomacy, gentlemen, should be a job left to diplomats. You will, of course, immediately resume a peaceful status.... You are taking orders from me. You will lower the screens as a sign

of good faith.... I want you and expect you to obey my lawful orders.... Your refusal to comply with my orders has endangered the entire success of this mission. I can have you sent to a penal colony for this.

However, both Scott and McCoy resist any additional actions that might endanger the ship.

Scott: No, sir, I will not.... I'll not lower the screens, not until the captain tells me to.... I know about your authority, but the screens stay up.... No, sir. I won't lower the screens.

McCoy: Mister Fox, they faked a message from the captain; they've launched an attack against our ship.

Scott's contempt for Old World diplomacy and such a placid approach to the captain's abduction is evident: "The haggis is in the fire for sure, but I'll not lower my defenses on the word of that mealy-mouthed gentleman down below. Not until I know what happened to the captain." He is proved correct when Fox too beams to the planet and is in his own turn abducted and ordered to "get in line" in a queue leading to an execution chamber. However, the normally stoic Spock overpowers the guards, acquires a hand disrupter, and advises all to "please move quickly away from the chamber or you may be injured." He destroys the chamber and informs Fox that he is "practicing a peculiar variety of diplomacy," a euphemism for the New World direct approach.

New World diplomacy may also involve not-so-subtle shows of strength by the Federation such as when the *Enterprise* is sent to Altair as "one of three starships. Very impressive, very diplomatic." This is because

Altair Six is no ordinary matter. That area is just putting itself together after a long interplanetary conflict. This inauguration will stabilize the entire Altair system. Our appearance there is a demonstration of friendship and strength which will cause ripples clear to the Klingon Empire.... (Pevney, "Amok Time")

The ambivalence and outright tension that starship captains face is succinctly expressed by Kirk: "Gentlemen. I'm a soldier, not a diplomat. I can only tell you the truth" (Newland, "Errand of Mercy"), as well as his frank admission: "My diplomacy is somewhat inadequate" (Taylor, "The Cloud Minders"). However, the crew repeatedly express their faith in Kirk's diplomatic abilities: "The captain will employ his usual diplomatic balm" (Taylor, "The Cloud Minders").

The willingness to eschew Old World diplomacy in *The Original Series* is frequently restated: "Stop being so diplomatic. She respects strength. Go in strong" (Lucas, "Elaan of Troyius"). Even the ever-stoic Spock admits that "we must acknowledge once and for all that the purpose of diplomacy is to prolong a crisis" (Taylor, "The Mark of Gideon"). The latter is prompted by an exchange deliberately designed to frustrate a search for Captain Kirk, who is missing in yet another episode. The exchange between Ambassador Hodin

and Spock goes thus:

Hodin: Your captain is definitely not on Gideon. As you requested, we made a most thorough search, and you will be relieved to know that you may now investigate all the other possibilities and forget about Gideon.

Spock: But that is not what we requested.

Hodin: You requested a most thorough search. It is in the record. And we have used every means at our disposal to accommodate you.... Surely, Mister Spock, you do not intend, I hope, to create a dispute between the Federation and Gideon?

Spock: ... I merely suggest that the language of our statement may not have been understood exactly as intended.

Hodin: Mister Spock, you're an officer of a spaceship. In your profession, you use many instruments, tools, and weapons to achieve your objectives.... However, the only tool diplomacy has is language. It is of the utmost importance that the meaning be crystal clear.

Spock: Your Excellency, I am basically a scientist. Clarity of formulation is essential in my profession also.

Hodin: I'm glad to hear it. Perhaps you could then make greater effort to choose your words more precisely.

Scott is sympathetic: "No matter what you say, Mister Spock, he'll twist your meaning." And so is Uhura: "Yes, he's infuriating, sir. How can you stand it?" It is therefore no wonder that the normally impassive Spock hints at his frustration.

The movies featuring *The Original Series* crew overlap with the production of *The Next Generation*, and they continue to demonstrate disdain toward diplomacy in general, particularly of the Old World type. This is particularly evident in *Star Trek V: The Final Frontier* (1989). A human ambassador on the planet Nimbus III, a planet that he himself considers a "worthless lump of rock," cynically explains that:

Paradise City [is the] capital of the so-called "Planet of Galactic Peace." ... Twenty years ago, our three governments agreed to develop this planet together. A new age was born. Our new age died a quick death. And the settlers we conned into coming here, they were the dregs of the galaxy. They immediately took to fighting amongst themselves. We forbade them weapons, but they soon began to fashion their own.

One of the ambassadors is a famous Klingon, General Korrd, whose "military strategies were required learning." However, Korrd had "apparently fallen out of favor with the Klingon High Command," and he was relegated to Nimbus III. The Klingon empire clearly holds diplomats in low esteem as does Kirk, who comments on Korrd's situation, "when they put me

out to pasture, I hope I fare better than Korrd.” Roddenberry branded his view of how *Star Trek* storylines should evolve in line with his own personal vision with an iron hand, and his vision at this point was pragmatically New World. Since he was

very much concerned with the “message” of his work, Roddenberry wrote many of the episodes and was involved with almost every other aspect of the show’s development (casting, selecting and revising scripts, and so on)

in *The Original Series* and the early episodes of *The Next Generation* (Bernardi 214). One writer reminisced “You suspend your own feelings and beliefs and you get with his vision—or you get rewritten” (Lundeen and Wagner 8). Indeed,

[w]hile some persons involved in the production of *Trek* may have had misgivings about various aspects of this vision on philosophical or artistic grounds, most admit that it has provided the unifying, hopeful vision that makes *Trek* so beloved and so durable. (*ibid*)

The Next Generation

This series spanned 1987–94 and was less influenced by Roddenberry after the end of the 1980s due to his waning health (Nichols 11). “[W]hereas *The Original Series* indicated that the global system is fundamentally stable, *The Next Generation* suggests instability is the rule in international relations as the result of unstable and bellicose politics amongst developing civilizations” (Gonzalez 18). While the former is in keeping with Roddenberry’s utopian outlook for the future, the latter is more in keeping with the true nature of reality, at least as experienced to date in relations between different countries.

Indeed, the Berlin Wall fell and the Soviet Union collapsed during the run of this series, and this “radically altered the political world-view of its predecessor, and of the new series as it aired ... a world-system which was now unstable and dangerous, represented by the uncertain alliance with the Klingons and multiple enemies” (Gonzalez 28).

The producers, directors, and writers noted that a significant issue with this series was that Roddenberry

created a group of characters that he purposely chose not to allow conflict between. Starfleet officers cannot be in conflict, thus it’s murderous to write these shows because there is no good drama without conflict, and the conflict has to come from outside the group. (Altman and Gross 8)

To be sure, Gonzalez comments that *The Next Generation* “centers its narrative on this ‘clash,’ and the idea that the world system is inherently unstable—as are the politics of the developing world,” (Gonzalez 16) “a geo-political system fraught with dangers” (21) and far from the relative stability depicted in *The Original Series*.

This change required the services of a captain with greater

diplomatic flair and suavity, and indeed Captain Picard is an Old World Frenchman, “the epitome of a twenty-fourth century Starfleet captain” (Grech, “Picard” 20), “the Enterprise crew was now in the hands of a very British character, fond of quoting Shakespeare and enjoying a cup of Earl Grey tea” (Rheindorf 1), a less dashing and more Old World approach. Time and again, Picard demonstrates his smooth diplomatic skills: “I have negotiated peace treaties between implacable enemies. I have represented the Federation in first contact with twenty-seven alien species” (Baird, *Star Trek Nemesis*). He himself acknowledges that diplomacy is not an easy task. “Patience. Diplomacy is a very exacting occupation” (Baird, *Star Trek Nemesis*), as evidenced in the following exchange:

This is primarily a diplomatic mission. The Jaradan are strategically important to the Federation. Previous attempts have failed because they are so easily irritated. A slip in the pronunciation of the greeting caused a twenty-year rift... The Captain has to recite the entire greeting without making any mistakes. (Scanlan, “The Big Goodbye”)

But Picard optimistically insists that “[t]here is a way out of every box, a solution to every puzzle, it’s just a matter of finding it” (Frakes, “Attached”). All this indicates a leaning toward an Old World approach with formal training in diplomatic skills for all command officers, which includes “diplomatic law, first contact procedures” as well as “bridge operations [and] engineering” (Kolbe, “Thine Own Self”). Furthermore, Picard is ably helped by a partially telepathic half-human, half-alien psychologist. “In diplomatic negotiations ... there have been instances when having an empath along has been helpful” (Kolbe, “Man of the People”).

As already mentioned, Roddenberry’s ill health resulted in a steadily decreasing participation in *Star Trek*, culminating in his death in 1991. A return to New World diplomacy seems to have occurred at around this time, accompanied by the reappearance of Spock from *The Original Series*, who is now an ambassador. This episode (“Unification Part 2”) was aired in the year of Roddenberry’s death (1991) and this telling exchange summarizes the reappearance of the New World trajectory. When Picard finds Spock clandestinely operating on the enemy planet Romulus, he is taken aback and demands to know the reasons for this presumably solo operation:

It is very much Starfleet’s concern. You’re in a position to compromise the security of the Federation.... I will not return without a full explanation. Ambassador, with great respect for all that you’ve achieved on behalf of the Federation, this sort of cowboy diplomacy will not easily be tolerated any more.... If you wish to undertake a mission with obvious repercussions to the Federation, then you should discuss it with the Federation. I’m here as their representative.... I speak as a Starfleet officer, and I cannot ignore the risks to you.... I’m not prepared to leave until your affairs are completed.

“Cowboy diplomacy” is “an explicit reference to the clear-cut ideology of the original *Star Trek*” (Johnson-Smith 115). The term was first used by Jackie Lawlor to describe US President Theodore Roosevelt’s foreign policies, whose famous adage with regard to international relations was “speak softly and carry a big stick,” intimating brashness and/or military threats (Harrell 821). Spock’s riposte to Picard’s critique is both cutting and decisive:

You may assure your superiors, Captain, that I am here on a personal mission of peace, and I will advise Starfleet when it is appropriate.... I was involved with cowboy diplomacy, as you describe it, long before you were born.... In your own way, you are as stubborn as another Captain of the *Enterprise* I once knew. (Bole, “Unification Part 2”)

Johnson-Smith has noted that the films featuring *The Next Generation* crew, all of which aired after Roddenberry’s death,

tend towards a less subtle approach to the *Star Trek* universe in their narrative, and certainly play more to the gallery through ... incongruities and so forth. In *Star Trek: Generations* (1994), Data most clearly articulates the frontier values lurking close beneath the surface most clearly, declaring: “Saddle-up, lock and load.” (Johnson-Smith 116)

Distrust in Old World diplomacy is repeatedly witnessed after Roddenberry’s death. For example, an alien frankly tells Picard “you speak the language of diplomacy very well, Captain. It is a language I appreciate and understand, but I have learned to not always trust it” (Bole, “First Contact”). And outright contempt for ambassadors is evidenced in this description of an alien about an ambassador of her own species. He “is nobody. He’s the token Bajoran that respectable people invite to symposiums and diplomatic soirees. But he has no real influence among my people” (Landau, “Ensign Ro”).

The deprecation of diplomacy in *The Next Generation* is perhaps most aptly summarized in these statements relating to formal dress. The first is by an alien ambassador who exclaims: “Diplomacy. I adore diplomacy. Everyone dresses so well” (Landau, “Half a Life”). The second is by the *Enterprise*’s Security Officer, who growls, “I do not enjoy these diplomatic situations.... I do not see why it is necessary to wear these ridiculous uniforms.... Protocol ... They look like dresses” (Bole, “Liaisons” 1993).

Deep Space Nine

The series *Deep Space Nine* spanned 1993–99, well after Roddenberry’s death and with little input from him even during the show’s initial planning stages due his ill health (Gross and Altman 328). It is perhaps for this reason that “[a]s *The Next Generation* finished, so *Deep Space Nine* began, offering a darker, politically astute” series (Johnson-Smith 115). The producers, directors, and writers noted that what they

wanted to do was something that was almost paradoxical—bring conflict but not break Gene’s rules. They still play paramount importance in what we’re doing. We created an environment where Starfleet officers were in a location that they weren’t happy about being in, and they were in a location where the people who lived there weren’t all that happy about them being there. We also created a situation where we had people who were members of our core group who were not Starfleet ... so we have a lot of frustration and conflict. (Gross and Altman 8)

In this series, not only is humanity under threat but also most of the species in the galaxy, menaced by a fluid race of shapeshifters known as the Changelings but who call themselves the “Founders” and who rule the “Dominion.”

The liminality of the founders ... is not only presented as a matter of nature and substance, but also as one of culture and history ... they were hounded [so] they embarked on a new career as empire builders ... to “bring order to chaos.” (Neumann 615)

Two key storylines emerge that expose an elision of the black-and-white morality of the first two series, a necessary set of compromises brought about because of the desperate need to win a losing war.

In order to do this, a new type of captain is needed. Sisko is the Starfleet officer in charge of the space station Deep Space 9. His temper is much shorter than his predecessors’, and he is far more impulsive. In an exchange with an alien who has also encountered Picard, Sisko informs him “I’m not Picard,” to which the alien retorts, “Indeed not. You’re much easier to provoke. How fortunate for me” (Lynch, “Q-less”).

Sisko explains the need to acquire new allies in order to win the war against the Changelings—specifically, to shift the Romulan Empire away from the Dominion and onto the Federation side.

I need to talk about this.... I can see where it all went wrong. Where I went wrong.... the moment I made the decision. It was like I had stepped through a door and locked it behind me. I was going to bring the Romulans into the war.... to guarantee that we obtain evidence of a Dominion plan to attack the Romulans, I suggest that we manufacture that evidence ourselves.... Maybe I should have put a stop to it right there.... in my heart, I knew what he was saying made sense.... That was my first moment of real doubt, when I started to wonder if this whole thing was a mistake. So then I went back to my office and there was a new casualty list waiting for me. People are dying out there every day. Entire worlds are struggling for their freedom, and here I am still worrying about the finer points of morality. No, I had to keep my eye on the ball. Win the war, stop the bloodshed. Those were the priorities! ... And every time another doubt appeared before me, I just found another way to shove it aside.... So I lied, I cheated, I bribed men

to cover the crimes of other men. I am an accessory to murder. (Lobl, "In The Pale Moonlight")

Sisko succeeds and sardonically comments that the ends justify the means, an unconscionable course of action to previous captains in *Star Trek*:

My father used to say that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. I laid the first stone right there. I'd committed myself. I'd pay any price, go to any lengths, because my cause was righteous. My intentions were good. In the beginning, that seemed like enough.... This is a huge victory for the good guys. This may even be the turning point of the entire war.... But most damning thing of all, I think I can live with it. And if I had to do it all over again, I would.... A guilty conscience is a small price to pay. (*ibid*)

On an even broader scale, a Federation black ops chapter referred to as Section 31 "set out to commit genocide" by infecting the Changelings with a genetically engineered, fatal viral infection. This is further aggravated by the fact that the carrier that Section 31 infects in order to pass on the disease is the only Changeling allied with and working for the Federation, Odo.

These narratives clearly evidence a previously unprecedented level of grittiness, and that as the episode title proclaims, "Inter Arma Enim Silent Leges," which is popularly translated as "in times of war, the law falls silent." This maxim is attributed to Cicero's *Pro Milone*. Section 31 defends its *raison d'être*, reasoning that

The Federation needs men ... of conscience, men of principle, men who can sleep at night. You're ... the reason Section 31 exists. Someone has to protect men like you from a universe that doesn't share your sense of right and wrong. (Livingston, "Inter Arma Enim Silent Leges")

However, there is another hypocritical facet to the argument as sarcastically summarized by a Federation ally: "The Federation claims to abhor Section 31's tactics, but when they need the dirty work done, they look the other way. It's a tidy little arrangement, wouldn't you say?" (Brooks, "The Dogs of War").

Interestingly, the Changelings are also portrayed as masters of genetic engineering, and they create an entire race called the "Vorta," sterile diplomats who are cloned as needed and who also serve as scientists and military commanders (Brooks, "Ties of Blood and Water"). These are depicted as oily and scheming, caricatures of Old World diplomacy. Their dealings are "as inauthentic as they are themselves. The first narrative of progress, thus, spawns a representation of diplomacy marked by dissimulation, subterfuge, a closeness to war" (Neumann 619).

Another diplomatic novum is a delegation that visits the space station and is completely obsessed with gambling, an integral part of their culture (Carson, "Move Along Home"),

demonstrating tolerance by the Federation towards different cultures even if they are wildly different. Indeed, John Gerard Ruggie observes that American discourse with regard to diplomacy is entrenched in a liberal discourse, a narrative wherein both individuals and states are liberated from old world chains and must fend for themselves (Ruggie).

The last episode of the series emphasizes the overall distaste for Old World diplomacy, which is ably expressed in the following exchange, wherein a Klingon who has been named chancellor (leader of the Klingon Empire) deems it a cruel trick; his main interest in receiving an ambassador is as a companion to take along on hunts:

Ross: Commander, how would you feel about being named Federation Ambassador to Kronos?

Worf: I am not a diplomat.

Martok: And I am not a politician. But sometimes fate plays cruel tricks on us.... An Ambassador who'll go targ hunting with me. Well, perhaps being Chancellor won't be so bad after all. (Kroeker, "What You Leave Behind")

"In effect, after *The Next Generation's* quiet and secure diplomacy, with the advent of *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager*, the *Star Trek* universe fragmented" (Johnson-Smith 115), degenerating into a stark and harsh vision of the future that is more in keeping with contemporary reality.

Voyager

The series *Voyager* aired between 1995 and 2001 and featured a Federation starship accidentally transported across the galaxy, facing a seventy year journey back to Earth. In order to survive, the ship must not only maintain good relations with aliens along the way but also be willing to use force. Kate Mulgrew, who plays Captain Katherine Janeway, is "the spitting image of [Katherine] Hepburn circa 1957—her long red hair coiled atop her head in a tight bun, exactly as Hepburn wore it in *The Desk Set*" (Steffen-Fluhr and Wiley 131). Janeway is a captain potentially as smooth and suave as Picard, but due to the ship's dire situation, the pragmatic Janeway knows full well that "there is a time for diplomacy and a time for war" (Neumann 603), remarking, "grab a phaser, Ambassador" (Singer, "Macrocosm") when a show of force is needed. For example "the Mokra are paranoid and hostile. They have no use for diplomacy. I wouldn't be surprised if they started shooting at us immediately" (Kolbe, "Resistance").

But Janeway is always resolute: "Sometimes diplomacy requires a little sabre rattling" (McNeill, "Body and Soul"). And "we try diplomacy ... when diplomacy fails, we need a backup plan" (Windell, "Shattered"). This accedes to Neumann's contention that "there is a grey zone where diplomacy involves the extension of threats, which, if they are acted upon, may lead to war" (Neumann 611).

Even more dramatically, it is revealed that for a particular alien hunter species that the ship encounters, "diplomacy

isn't a part of their lifestyle. They don't see us as equals. To them, we're simply game," to which Janeway retorts "it's time we convince them otherwise or like any other cornered animal, we'll show our teeth" (Eastman, "Prey"). Diplomatic relations of any kind are difficult when a species views all "other species as prey to be hunted down and killed for sport. One does not communicate with one's prey in other modes than through the hunt. Diplomacy is, therefore, ruled out as a mode of communication" (Neumann 617). Janeway, however, eventually finds a diplomatic solution. This accords with Neumann's contention that *Star Trek* is an

American representation of diplomacy, which is universalistic, is of reaching out to the universe at large, inviting it to partake in the community of mankind by entering into the dialogue out of which diplomacy is eventually constructed. (Neumann 611–2).

It has been argued that "Janeway's gender offers the only difference: in every other sense, *Voyager* echoes the original series" (Johnson-Smith 115) but in many instances, Janeway is shown to be an accomplished and charming diplomat, just like Picard. "Diplomacy. Janeway's answer to everything" (Kroeker, "Juggernaut"). Indeed, diplomacy is so important for this lonely starship that even the Medical Hologram is coached in "diplomatic skills" (Conway, "Innocence"). The crew also run simulations to hone these skills (Burton, "Q2"). Like Picard, Janeway thus authentically practices an honest form of Old World diplomacy. This is different from diplomacy "represented as an Old World practice of mutual suspicion. This type is morally abominable, because it is read as being closely akin to or even leading to war" (Neumann 611).

Furthermore, active humor toward diplomacy is employed when the ship's First Officer describes how he was almost "shipped back to the Academy for remedial training." This happens when he "made the traditional gesture for hello, not realizing that males and females of their race use different styles of movement, and I was actually propositioning the Ambassador" (Conway, "Innocence"). Neumann observes in earlier series that this is a key point that "concerns the show's ability to be ironic about its most dearly held representations," a reflexive self-irony (Neumann 619).

Janeway's diplomacy is also shown to have had negative effects. In her "estimation, Species Eight Four Seven Two posed a greater threat than the Borg" but the rejoinder is, "Who are you to make that decision? A stranger to this Quadrant... Diplomacy, Captain? Your diplomacy destroyed my world..." (Kolbe, "Hope and Fear"). This is because "the Borg, our most lethal enemy" (Frakes, *First Contact*) "are post-diplomatic in a rather more thoroughgoing sense than are the Founders. Their goal is 'to reach perfection'; to reach a state of absolute order" (Neumann 616) by forcibly assimilating all other species into the collective, erasing individuality and replacing it with a hive mind.

In the episode "For the Cause," a former Federation officer argues that the Federation is hegemonic, attempting to unite all within its folds, especially apostates who abandon the

Federation,

and that's the one thing you can't accept. Nobody leaves paradise. Everyone should want to be in the Federation.... In some ways you're worse than the Borg. At least they tell you about their plans for assimilation. You're more insidious. You assimilate people, and they don't even know it.

It is arguably true that in some ways benevolent Federation expansionism is Borg-like, a normalization that problematizes diversity and encourages acculturation. Crucially, the Federation is therefore similar to the Borg since the Borg's goal

is to make the non-Borg world into more of the Borg same. Within that same, no externality can be left to explore, and where there is no externality, there can be no space of communication to traverse. Indeed, Borg communication is totally internal. (Neumann 616)

(In a *Next Generation* storyline, the Borg captured and assimilated Picard, morphing him into a Borg called Locutus, Latin for "the one who addresses"; his understanding of the Federation advantages the Borg in their struggle to assimilate humanity. The Federation's paragon and their greatest virtue is therefore suborned, the ultimate defeat.)

Enterprise

This show ran between 2001 and 2005 and was set in the *Star Trek* timeline before *The Original Series*. For this reason, it can "return to maverick heroics and wild adventures with a wry and knowing postmodern smile" (Johnson-Smith 116).

Captain Jonathan Archer is "reminiscent of Kirk in his more maverick moments: a man who keeps a young beagle named Porthos and wears his heart on his sleeve ... a storyline which maintains a degree of freshness despite covering old ground" (Johnson-Smith 116).

Even in this early part of the timeline, to some extent, the entire crew have a modicum of diplomatic training. "I considered myself a diplomat from the minute I set foot in that vessel" (Vejar, "Unexpected").

Archer is a newbie setting precedents, and he does not understand "the complexities of interstellar diplomacy" (Conway, "Broken Bow"), despite being "a trained diplomat" (Straiton, "A Night In Sickbay"). He naively but half seriously confesses, "I imagined my first diplomatic mission would involve sitting around a big table, toasting with champagne, signing things with lots of pens" (Straiton, "Cease Fire").

Further Analysis

The Next Generation crew and the following series, up to and including *Enterprise*, evidence protagonists who "were less avatars of liberal democracy, signified by Kirk's hero-worship of Lincoln, and more often participants operating as best they could within political structures beyond their control"

(Gonzalez 28), a more realistic representation of the situation that the Federation and its agents would find themselves in. The roots of *The Original Series*' values appear to arise from a fundamental belief that the

articulate major premise of our democracy, and the inarticulate major premise of our new diplomacy is that people are not deeply different from one another. It followed that one could and should think of making the world safe for democracy by ways and means drawn directly from the American political tradition (McGeorge 3).

Neumann notes that both Old and New World diplomatic styles "carry within themselves an element of anti-diplomacy," the former "by seeing diplomacy as a cloak for something else, namely dissembling," ultimately represented by the Dominion-engineered Vorta, and the latter "by seeing it as a step on the way to sameness" (Neumann 611–2) in a benevolent but almost Borg-like conspiracy for collectivization. In a parallel to the basis for the increasing focus America puts on public diplomacy, it is almost as if "the Federation should be loved when known, and it is just a question of time before everybody knows it" (Neumann 619).

Neumann also notes that the Federation perforce interacts with three types of political entities in the first two series, and this is extendable to all of the series as shown above. These entities are namely those "clamoring to join the United Federation of Planets," reminiscent of less developed European countries attempting to join the European Union. There are also worlds that "follow a policy of neutrality vis-à-vis the Federation," similar to Switzerland in Europe. Third, there are the other "great powers" that are usually depicted as empires, and it is on the latter that the show concentrates (Neumann 617).

The canon displays a "certain technological determinism" (Neumann 614). In addition to the above cultures with approximately equivalent levels of technological development, the Federation must also interact with two other levels of civilizations. First, with less developed cultures wherein these dealings must adhere to the "Prime Directive.... No identification of self or mission. No interference with the social development of said planet. No references to space, or the fact that there are other worlds, or more advanced civilizations" (Senensky, "Bread and Circus"). More advanced civilizations treat the Federation in the same manner as evidenced by beings of pure force, such as the Organians. "Millions of years ago ... we were humanoid like yourselves, but we have developed beyond the need of physical bodies" (Newland, "Errand of Mercy"). These species simply do not interact with Federation-level cultures, "it is the other party which finds the Federation wanting" (Neumann 614).

Neumann's contention, that from the first two series only *The Original Series* "posited thoughtful criticisms and commentary" of the prevailing political situation, can be challenged based on several episodes of *The Next Generation*, including "The Wounded" (Chalmers), which highlights the

challenges that face international diplomacy when trying to end wars via truces. The modern-day parallel would include the conflicts in Ukraine, Yemen, and Syria as larger powers try to broker peace talks that are frequently endangered by broken truces. Yet another is *The Next Generation* episode, "The Outcast" (Scheerer), that raises the issue of whether to respect the mores of other cultures that are wildly divergent to our own. In *Deep Space 9*, the earlier quote from "For The Cause," challenged the western ideal of every country becoming more like us once we expose them to our values, culture and way of life.

The swing from New to Old World diplomacy was retained for just the single series, *The Next Generation*, with a progressive shift back to New World diplomacy culminating in the last series, *Enterprise*.

"Diplomacy is the art of the possible," (Allen, "Journey's End"), a crucial concept to bear in mind as "when diplomacy fails, there's only one alternative. Violence. Force must be applied without apology" (Russ, "Living Witness"). In conclusion, whatever the form of diplomacy, "words are here on top. What's under them, their meaning, is what's important" (Shaw, "Loud as a Whisper").

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