



## I Am Spock

*Leonard Nimoy*

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## I Am Spock Leonard Nimoy

The long-awaited memoir by the actor behind the most beloved character from the Star Trek universe--Leonard Nimoy's Mr. Spock. From the first incarnations of the character through Nimoy's triumphant appearance on a special episode of The Next Generation, this memoir gives a fascinating behind-the-scenes look at the making of a phenomenon--and the creation of a legendary character. HC: Hyperion.

## I Am Spock Details

Date : Published October 26th 1995 by Hyperion (first published October 26th 1994)

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Author : Leonard Nimoy

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## From Reader Review I Am Spock for online ebook

### Aaron Million says

Written twenty years ago, this seems to have been re-released due to Leonard Nimoy's death earlier this year at the age of 83. Twenty years prior to writing this, Nimoy had written a poorly-received book titled *I Am Not Spock*. He later realized that the title gave out a mistaken impression that he wanted to separate himself from the character of Spock. This, newer, book is Nimoy's corrective to address that misperception.

Nimoy was a highly intelligent man, and his writing is quite clear and crisp. He starts by talking about his birth and upbringing in Boston, then gradually becoming involved in acting, moving to Hollywood, and then struggling to find a regular acting job for many years until *Star Trek* came along. He devotes a lot of time to discussing his role as Spock, his approach to the role, and how the character gradually became a part of him, to the point where he would - in his personal life - often find himself thinking like Spock might. Throughout the book, he has imaginary (or maybe some of them were real) conversations between himself and Spock. I like this touch to the book - it shows Nimoy's depth and development as a person and an actor. He does stray from this somewhat later in the book when he talks about other high points of his career (such as directing *Three Men And A Baby*), but returns to it towards the end when he talks about the making of *Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country* and his guest-star appearance on the series *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

The vast bulk of his stores surrounding *Star Trek* concern Spock's development, and Nimoy's battles with Gene Roddenberry (who disappears almost completely from the last half of the book - it is clear from reading that those two did not get along too well), Fred Freiberger, Harve Bennett, and various Paramount executives. While having mainly positive things to say about William Shatner, it is obvious that there was friction between them (competing egos). Much has been made about how close these two guys were, yet I did not get that impression here. Friends, but not necessarily close friends. DeForest Kelley does not appear much in here, but whenever he does, Nimoy is very complimentary of him. The other cast members are really on the periphery, and not mentioned very much. This leads me to think that the rumors of Shatner and Nimoy somewhat isolating themselves from the rest of the stars of the show have some validity to them.

He did briefly talk about his role as the Amazing Paris on *Mission: Impossible* and how he did not care for it. It is clear that he did enjoy directing films and TV episodes, even though it required a great degree of energy, time, and patience. His family is mentioned only in passing, and nothing substantive is said about them. He closes the book by writing presciently that is open to playing Spock again (which of course is exactly what happened in 2009 and 2013). Overall, an enjoyable read. I never got the sense that he had an axe to grind, which was refreshing.

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### Charles says

What can I say? Back in the mid seventies, I had models of the Enterprise, a Klingon battle cruiser and a Romulan bird of prey hanging from three different corners in my living room, and when we got home from work, we sat down with my son and watched Star Trek.

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## Fiona says

This book was a really interesting insight into the world behind Star Trek and plus into the professional life of Leonard Nimoy besides this phenomenon.

I really loved the dialogs between Nimoy and Spock and his little anecdotes.

Plus this book made me want to rewatch the tvshow and the movies again. And in the end I was really sad, that the book was over, the last sentences ("I'm only human, and I have no doubt Spock will outlive me by many years. I can only hope that, once in a while, when people look at Spock's visage, they might sometimes think of me.") almost made me cry, especially having in mind that Leonard Nimoy passed away a few month ago. Yes, you will be thought of. Thank you for this great character.

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## Sophie says

**"Why, of course I know him! My son watches him on TV all the time!" And she reached out to shake my hand. "You're Leonard Spock!"**

let me confess up front that i'm a trekkie, i love everything about star trek and i worship leonard nimoy (*and of course the character he portrayed, spock*). having said that, it was impossible for me not to adore this book. it was well-written, informative, fascinating and extremely witty. i highly recommend it to anyone interested in learning more about star trek.

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## rivka says

March 2015: With Nimoy's recent death, it seemed an appropriate time to re-read this.

And it was indeed. RIP, Mr. Nimoy.

April 2014: While probably only of passing interest to those who are not fans of Star Trek's original series, definitely recommended to all those who are.

Nimoy's bias is obvious and expected, but he manages to speak of most of those he disagreed with in a courteous manner that cemented my view of him as a mentch. He does skirt some of the more explosive stuff, like barely mentioning the reaction the movie *The Good Mother* got.

Lots of interesting little tidbits for the ST fan. Made me want to rewatch STIII, STIV -- and *Three Men and a Baby!*

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## Erin says

Let's start by saying I am not a Trekkie. I have never seen an episode of Star Trek or any of the spin offs. I have never seen a Star Trek movie with the exception of the 2009 film which I consented to see because of

LOTR alum Karl Urban (a fact which reveals a lot about my inner geek).

With that in mind I have to say that this book is AMAZING. This is what an actor's bio should be. Well-written, humorous, informative... basically this was everything that *There and Back Again: An Actor's Tale* should have been (yes, I am still bitter about that one). Honestly, *I Am Spock* speaks for itself. Perfect ten, five stars, two thumbs up, however you want to put it, this is one you don't want to pass up.

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### **Dave says**

I couldn't help but thinking while I was reading this that Leonard Nimoy was a royal pain in the ass during his affiliation with Star Trek. It seemed as though the big heads of the show were constantly trying to find a way to get rid of, or at least diminish the role of Spock without trying to offend Leonard Nimoy. The fans had the last word on this, however.

Nimoy also made it seem as though Spock was far and beyond the most important character on the show. I will agree that Spock was important, but not to the point that he was the saving grace. I think that all of the characters were important and they all fed off of each other.

The last annoyance I had toward this book was his defending of some of the motion pictures. None of the Star Trek movies were all that good and least of all the one that Nimoy hails as the best, *The Voyage Home*. This movie was horrible and made the characters look like a joke. Remember the scene at the end where they are all splashing around in the water! I don't know about you, but I was embarrassed to watch and I didn't even have anything to do with it.

All in all, it's fun to have an insiders look at something that you grew up with, but I think Nimoy's version is full of bias.

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### **Alison says**

I listened to this on audiobook which is read by Leonard Nimoy with his great, iconic voice. I am not a particular Star Trek fan and I did not know the history of the *I Am Not Spock* story which is a focus of the early part of the book. I enjoyed hearing Nimoy's story read by him. The behind the scenes insight is interesting. I did make a note of Nimoy's favorite Spock Star Trek episodes and plan to watch them sometime.

It is a relatively short tale and was about as much talk of Spock I needed.

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### **Lindsay Stares says**

Reading this book has caused me to think a bit about my own perspective. I wonder what it's like to read a book like this, an actor's memoir, and not have a background in the performing arts. Does it help people understand what it's like to work in the industry, or do they come away from the book thinking they understand, but with the wrong messages?

I do come at this book with a background in performing arts, and am familiar with actors of many types, so

what I get from this book, especially when combined with *Beyond Uhura* (reviewed here), is a plausible portrait of actors who seem an awful lot like actors I've known.

A great deal of the book is concerned in assuring the reader that Nimoy really does love Spock, and that the title of his earlier memoir (*I Am Not Spock*) was never intended to convey animosity. From skimming excerpts of that book online, I would say that he is not exaggerating. The earlier book has the same respect and enjoyment about the Vulcan that comes through here.

Nimoy's very devotion to the character is what created some of the tension on the set reported by Nichols. Comparing and contrasting the books was really interesting. It's an example of how people can be in the same room and at the same time on different worlds. Neither one is "right" or "wrong", but how different actors approach a job, what opportunities they have to take control of a role, or not, and the vagaries of fans combine to create vastly different working experiences.

Some of this difference is in the system. Nimoy relates an interchange with the producers in which they refuse to provide his assistant with pencils for responding to fan mail. Nichols relates a conversation when a mail-room worker comes secretly to tell her that the higher-ups told them not to send her most of her fan mail, but if she comes down to the mail room, they'd be glad to pass it on. It isn't like the two actors are starting on the same playing field.

Some of it, however, is just in style. Some actors seize control of roles, of situations, and I understand why they feel they have to do that, and sometimes it is a great thing to do for the piece. Some prefer to work with an ensemble, building a team-based dynamic. Often actors don't even realize which way they're behaving at any given time, so I'm not sure whether Nimoy doesn't mention the occasional tension within the cast out of courtesy toward his co-stars, or whether he was simply unconscious of it.

This book is also interesting for containing a rather exhausting litany of how each piece of Spock and Vulcan was developed, and by who. There are also some interesting historical notes here. Nimoy films a mini-series in Beijing in 1981 and travels to the USSR in 1984 for a screening of *Star Trek IV*, and has perceptive observations in each case.

I respect Nimoy for his work, and it was a highly entertaining book: well written, clever, sweet. There was a slight sense of self-congratulation here and there, but it more often seems like remembering the best of things than a conscious re-writing of history.

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## Laura says

### **Disclaimer: I am a Star Trek fan although I'm not of the obsessed type.**

As a teacher, I felt the need this summer to read for my own enjoyment. I bought this book (\$.99 + S&H) on eBay and added it to my To-Be-Read pile. I finally made my way down to this book last week.

When I opened the book, I noticed a blue (Sharpie?) scrawl on the title page. I figured it was part of the "good condition" (some writing in book) on the auction description.

In chapter 2, I found a Borders bookmark and a folded sheet of paper. A lot of used books come with paper detritus and normally I just throw them into recycling. Before I did, I opened the sheet of paper which happened to contain the "rules" for getting a signed book from Leonard Nimoy at the book signing.

OMG!!!! I HAD A SIGNED BOOK!!!!

I had to make a decision: Put the book safely away or read it. After much soul-searching, I continued reading.

An earlier reviewer felt the book was biased. Well, duh! It's about Leonard Nimoy and written by Leonard Nimoy.

Another reviewer thought Leonard Nimoy must have been a pain to work with. I agree. I admire his willingness to stick his neck out to keep Spock true to his character.

On the other hand, I really wanted to learn more about Leonard Nimoy's personal life. His parents were briefly mentioned. His wife made her appearances without any information about their courtship or wedding. His children (I'm still not sure how many) appeared sporadically with no mention of their number, gender, or births.

While I deeply appreciate learning so much about Nimoy's relationship with Spock, I'd have liked to have learned more about him.

Perhaps I need to read *I am Not Spock*.

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### **Bettie? says**

[Bettie's Books (hide spoiler)]

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### **Jim Cooper says**

Listened to the audio version read by the author. Nimoy covers his Star Trek life from the original series through the movie. Was really cool to see everything from his point of view, especially the creation of the show.

Also - Leonard Nimoy directed *Three Men and a Baby*?! I did not know this.

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### **Pat Flewwelling says**

If you're not reading the audible book, you're doing yourself a disservice. This is only the second time I've laughed out loud on a crowded train, listening to an audiobook (the first being with Andy Weir's *The Martian*).

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**Mauojenn ~ \*Mouthy Jenn\* ~ says**

I love this guy. I was very sad to hear when he passed a few weeks ago, but he will forever live in us, his fans!!

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This was such a great book about the life of Leonard Nimoy and how he made the character Spock a cult icon. His acting as Spock brought me back for reruns during my childhood in the 1980's to going to the theater with my folks to see the movies. Such an awesome guy and actor!!

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**Melissa ♥ Dog/Wolf Lover ♥ Martin says**

May 3, 2016: I am going to update a little on this review since I just read Leonard: My Fifty-Year Friendship with a Remarkable Man and I feel I need to come back to this book a little.

This book was re-issued not long after Leonard's passing. Or at least I think it was because suddenly it was available to buy again and I grabbed up my copy. This book is so wonderful, it tells so many things I never knew about Leonard. I know that I loved him so much and I cried my eyes out for a few days after his passing. You do that when you grow up with someone you love and admire. Spock wasn't just a tv/movie character to me, he always brought some kind of wisdom and I loved that.

I remember me and dad sitting up and watching Star Trek and how much fun we had. I remember getting Spock and Kirk action figures as a child and still have them packed away somewhere in the chaos of my life.

Life is never the same when we lose family members (including our animals) or people that we admired on tv. Spock will always be one of my heroes. \*SOB\*

**ORIGINAL REVIEW BELOW**

It made me very sad to read this book because of the passing of one of my heroes growing up, but it was a great and wonderful book. Reading about the man who made Spock was very wonderful and just so sad :(

I love reading memoirs about my favorite actors and actresses. Finding out all of these little tidbits that you never knew about them.

The ongoing dialog between Spock and Leonard throughout the book is classic. He would have these conversations between him and Spock. They were quite comical and I enjoyed them immensely.

Leonard Nimoy was a man of many talents. He not only starred in a lot of films and plays, he was a great director.

I think anyone that loves the Star Trek franchise, especially Spock, will love this book. I highly recommend!

**Lived Long and Prospered!!!!**

**RIP ~ Leonard Nimoy**

MY BLOG: Melissa Martin's Reading List

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