

= North Star (Star Trek : Enterprise) =

" North Star " is the sixty @-@ first episode of the American science fiction television series Star Trek : Enterprise , the ninth episode of the third season . It first aired on November 12 , 2003 on UPN . The episode was written by David A. Goodman and directed by David Straiton .

Set in the 22nd century , the series follows the adventures of the first Starfleet starship Enterprise , registration NX @-@ 01 . In this episode , the crew of the Enterprise discover a lost colony of humans in the Delphic Expanse . The colony originated from a wagon train from the American Old West in the 1860s which was abducted as slave labor by an alien race called the Skagarans . The humans overthrew the Skagarans and now treat them as second class citizens .

Goodman wrote the episode after he was set a challenge by executive producer Rick Berman , and wrote in references to the 1940 film Santa Fe Trail and The Original Series episode " Spectre of the Gun " . The episode was mostly filmed on the Western town set nicknamed " Six Points Texas " at the Universal Studios lot . Critical response to the episode was mixed , but the ratings held steady from the previous episode with a 2 @.@ 6 / 4 % share .

= = Plot = =

Whilst in the Delphic Expanse , Enterprise discovers a planet inhabited by 6 @,@ 000 humans who are living in the fashion of the 1860s American frontier . Captain Archer , Commander Tucker and Sub @-@ Commander T 'Pol beam @-@ down to the surface in period costume to investigate . They head into one of the numerous towns to observe the humans and aliens first @-@ hand , and while Tucker and T 'Pol acquire a horse , Archer stops Deputy Bennings from belittling a " Skag " waiter in the town 's tavern . After questioning Archer on his plans and intentions , Sheriff MacReady tells Bennings to keep a close eye on Archer .

Archer , wishing to learn more about the Skagarans , enters the house of a teacher named Bethany he had seen earlier . The two depart for " Skag Town " , the remnants of a 300 @-@ year @-@ old wrecked spacecraft , but the deputy notices them leave . They arrive and find Tucker and T 'Pol , who had arrived earlier . They then travel back to Enterprise to investigate some data logs found in the wreckage , while Archer stays behind . On Enterprise Ensign Sato discovers that the humans overthrew their Skagaran masters after being brought to the planet . Meanwhile Bennings and some men arrive and arrest Bethany for teaching the children , and she is later detained in prison . Archer helps her to escape , but she is shot in the process . Archer orders an emergency beam @-@ up in front of Bennings and other locals .

Doctor Phlox treats her injury and discovers that she is one @-@ quarter Skagaran . Meanwhile , back on the planet , Bennings hands in his deputy badge because MacReady orders him not to take any further action against the Skagarans . Archer returns in a shuttlepod along with T 'Pol and a security crew , led by Lieutenant Reed ? all wearing their modern uniforms . Landing in the center of town , he informs the Sheriff that he is from Earth and will return to help them once their mission is over . Bennings then shoots MacReady , starting a firefight . In the chaos , Archer is also shot by Bennings , but finally overpowers him in a fistfight . Enterprise then departs , but not before returning Bethany to the surface , and providing her with a PADD to educate the local children about Earth 's recent history .

= = Production = =

" North Star " was the third episode of the season to be directed by David Straiton , while writer David A. Goodman had previously written the episodes " Judgment " and " Precious Cargo " . He also wrote the Star Trek themed Futurama episode " Where No Fan Has Gone Before " . Goodman explained after the episode that he was inspired by The Original Series episodes " A Piece of the Action " and " Patterns of Force " after executive producer Rick Berman set him the challenge of writing a " parallel Earth " story similar to those featured in TOS but would fit with Enterprise . These types of stories were featured in Gene Roddenberry 's original pitch for Star Trek to NBC , which

was where humans had evolved societies on other planets similar to our own .

Goodman also added a reference to the TOS episode " Spectre of the Gun " with the naming of the character Cronin , but said that the character Kitty was named after a character in the 1940 film Santa Fe Trail rather than the radio / television series Gunsmoke . Goodman later described " North Star " as his favourite episode of the series . It was the third Western @-@ themed episode of Star Trek , after The Original Series 's " Spectre of the Gun " and The Next Generation 's " A Fistful of Datas " . This episode included a number of guest cast members . Emily Bergl appeared as Bethany in " North Star " , having previously appeared in the miniseries Taken , produced by the Sci Fi Channel . Glenn Morshower had previously appeared in episodes of The Next Generation and Voyager , and appeared once more in this episode as Sheriff MacReady . James Parks had also appeared in Voyager , and played Deputy Bennings in " North Star " .

It was the first episode to be filmed on location during season three , but the production only moved from the Paramount Studios lot to the Universal Studios backlot where the Western town set " Six Points Texas " was used . The shoot there started on the second day of filming over five days and utilized a number of sets including the main street , livery stable , saloon and schoolhouse . The sets have been used to film more movies than any other set in the world ; the livery stable in particular was used in the 1940 film My Little Chickadee . A shuttlepod set @-@ piece was brought from Paramount Studios and was used for filming scenes after it had landed , while in @-@ air shots were added with special effects after filming was completed .

Twelve horses were used , and due to safety considerations , in some scenes stunt doubles undertook the action scenes where main cast members were required to ride on horseback . The episode was heavy on the number of stunts , which were supervised by Vince Deadrick , Jr . Scenes using the standing sets at Paramount were filmed on the first and last days of shooting , which overlapped with the first day of shooting of the following episode , " Similitude " .

= = Reception and home media release = =

" North Star " was first aired on November 12 , 2003 on UPN . It received a 2 @. @ 6 / 4 % share among adults between the ages of 18 and 49 . This means that it was seen by 2 @. @ 6 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds , and 4 percent of all 18- to 49 @-@ year @-@ olds watching television at the time of the broadcast . This was the same as the ratings received by the previous episode entitled " Twilight " , but showed a loss of 200 @, @ 000 viewers overall . " North Star " received lower ratings than the following episode " Similitude " , which received a ratings share of 3 @. @ 0 / 5 % .

Michelle Erica Green watched the episode for TrekNation , saying that she was expecting something similar to The Original Series episode " Spectre of the Gun " but was pleased to find it was more similar to Voyager 's " The 37 's " . She said that , " because the episode is stylish and beautifully paced , the morality play doesn 't get too heavy @-@ handed or silly " , but felt that it was one @-@ sided because of the lack of information on the Skagarans . She summed up the " North Star " by describing it as a " fun , throw away " episode . Jamahl Epsicokhan on his website " Jammer 's Reviews " described it as a " shallow Trek adventure by the numbers " which was " all about setting and rarely about substance " . He gave it a score of two out of four . When Epsicokhan was summing up the whole of season three , " North Star " was described as one of the mediocre episodes in the season .

" North Star " was released as part of the season three DVD box set , released in the United States on September 27 , 2005 . The season was released on Blu @-@ ray in the United States on January 7 , 2014 .