



Dan Blackley

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*To the students
of El Toro High School.*

*Thanks for the inspiration
and the perspiration.*

Doggone It! A Story of a Boy and His Dog was first performed on Dec. 9, 2015 at Rancho Cucamonga High School, Rancho Cucamonga, CA: Dan Blackley, director.

TRAVIS: Kyle Monte
PA: Cole Fischer
MA: Maddie Rae
ARLISS: Kristen Keeby
USELESS: Hailey Meador
OLD YELLER: Jennifer McGrade
WOLF: Bearlauren Jean
RABID WOLF: Ereeny Kamel
STRANGER: Cole Peloquin
BILLY: Aidan Sathoff
BOLD YELLER: Alyssa Wroniak
RACOONS: Aidan Sathoff, Alyssa Wroniak

A Case of Indigestion was first performed on Dec. 8, 2014 at Rancho Cucamonga High School, Rancho Cucamonga, CA: Dan Blackley, director.

FRANK: Kyle Seitz
CASSANDRA: Melanie Young
BETTY: Amanda Moncure
SEAN: Jeff Bartholemy
ED: Chase Knittle
SVEN: Alex Taylor
GLORIA: Kian Rabbani

Star Trek: The Prom Directive was first performed on Dec. 10, 2016 at Rancho Cucamonga High School, Rancho Cucamonga, CA: Dan Blackley, director.

CAPTAIN JAMES T. KIRK: Kyle Monte

MR. SPOCK: Heather Trivonovich

BONES: Cole Fischer

LT. UHURA: Aliah Tamez

MR. SULU: David Ailanjian

REDSHIRT: Sam Hernandez

OFFICER IN BLUE: Madelyn Lund

SCOTTY: Jayden Carbajal

RICK: Aidan Sathoff

NORMAN: Max Bennett

KIMBERLY: Abbie West

JULIA: Alyssa Wroniak

NATASHA: Jana Karns

A Case of Indigestion

COLLECTION/SPOOF. These three short plays spoof all-American classics including the children's novel *Old Yeller*, 1940's film noir movies, and the 1960's TV series *Star Trek*. In "Doggone It," a heartfelt novel about a boy and a stray dog has been cut to 20 minutes due to the short attention span of today's youth. In "A Case of Indigestion," a private investigator on the hunt for a femme fatale's missing boyfriend ends up with two corpses, no dinner, and a stinky fish. In "The Prom Directive," the U.S.S. Enterprising crew organizes a prom to bring peace to Auditoriumus, a planet resembling 1980s Earth inhabited by teen aliens.

Performance Time: Approximately 45-60 minutes.



Cover of *Old Yeller*. Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall in the 1946 film noir classic *The Big Sleep*. Promotional photo of the cast of *Star Trek*.

About the Story

Old Yeller, a 1956 award-winning children's novel by Fred Gipson, features a stray yellow dog that comes to live with a frontier family in Texas and protects them from wild hogs, a bear, and a rabid wolf.

Noir films emerged in the United States in 1940s. The storylines usually involve crime investigations with flashbacks and voiceovers. Noir films are known for flawed, cynical main characters including detectives and femme fatales. Stark lighting and dramatic shadows define the fatalistic, pessimistic noir visual style and mood. Famous noir films include *The Maltese Falcon*, *The Big Sleep*, and *Double Indemnity*.

The science fiction TV series, *Star Trek*, ran from 1966 to 1969. In it, the crew of the U.S.S. Enterprise travel through the Milky Way exploring planets and alien cultures. At first, TV executives urged Gene Roddenberry, the show's creator, to get rid of the character Spock because they thought he looked satanic. The stock "redshirt" character—who wears a red shirt and is always killed off—became a fan favorite. Several episodes were set on planets that conveniently look like Earth so that the show could reuse props, costumes, and sets. The episode, "The Trouble with Tribbles," features small furry aliens that have a penchant for reproducing en masse.

Characters

Doggone it! A Story of a Boy and His Dog

(4 M, 3 F, 7 flexible)

(With doubling: 3 M, 3 F, 4 flexible)

TRAVIS: Eldest son; wears overalls and a cowboy hat and is bare foot; male.

PA: Travis's father who leaves home to work on a cattle drive; male.

MA: Travis's mother; female.

ARLISS: Travis's younger brother; female. (Male but played by a female for comedic effect.)

USELESS: Travis's younger brother; flexible. (Male but played by a female for comedic effect.)

OLD YELLER: Stray yellow dog that appears at the family's Texas homestead; wears yellow clothes and has yellow dog ears; flexible.

STRANGER: Old Yeller's owner who trades Old Yeller for a home-cooked meal; a thin man who looks like he had been on his own most of his life; male.

BILLY: Character from the novel *Where the Red Fern Grows*; male.

PETER PAN: Character from the novel *Peter Pan and Wendy*; wears a green shirt and leotard; flexible. (Male but may be played by a female.)

BEAR: Bear that fights Old Yeller; non-speaking; wears a fur coat and ears or a bear costume; flexible.

RACCOON 1, 2: Raccoons that eat the family's corn; non-speaking; wear raccoon costumes with robber masks; flexible.

LONE WOLF: Wolf that does a western dance with Old Yeller; non-speaking; flexible.

RABID WOLF: Wolf who wears a wolf costume and sign around his neck that reads “rabid”; non-speaking; flexible.

Options for Doubling

RACCOON 1/PETER PAN (flexible)
RACCOON 2/BEAR (flexible)
LONE WOLF/RABID WOLF (flexible)
STRANGER/BILLY (male)

A Case of Indigestion

(2 M, 3 F, 2 flexible)

(With doubling: 2 M, 3 F, 1 flexible)

FRANK MARANO: Private investigator; wears a trench coat; male.

CASSANDRA: Femme fatale with red/orange hair; wears a dress and a large hat; carries a purse or clutch; female.

GLORIA: Waitress at Rick’s Place; has brown hair and wears a waitress uniform or apron; female.

SVEN/SVETLANA: Looks like he has just come off of an all-night pie-eating contest and lost; flexible. (Note: “Svetlana” if female.)

SEAN: A wiry fellow with bad clothes and bad manners; has a meat thermometer sticking out of his back; male.

BETTY: Cook who works at The Icehouse; wears a chef’s hat and apron; female.

ED/EDNA: Dimwitted bait shop worker; has a knife stuck in his back; wears a butcher’s apron; flexible. (Note: “Edna” if female.)

Option for Doubling

SVEN/ED (flexible)

The Prom Directive

(7 M, 5 F, 1 flexible)

- CAPTAIN JAMES T. QUIRK:** Commanding officer of the U.S.S. Enterprising; wears a gold shirt and black pants; male.
- MR. STOCK:** Half-human/half-Vulcan science officer and first executive officer of the U.S.S. Enterprising; wears a blue shirt and black pants; male.
- BONEY:** Chief medical officer of the U.S.S. Enterprising; wears a blue shirt and black pants; male.
- LT. HOO-RAH:** Communications officer of the U.S.S. Enterprising; wears a short red dress and has an earpiece that sticks out of her ear; female.
- MR. HULU:** Helmsman of the U.S.S. Enterprising; wears a gold shirt and black pants; male.
- MAROON SHIRT:** Officer whose sole purpose is to die violently to show the danger facing the main characters; wears a maroon shirt with black pants; flexible.
- BLUE WOMAN:** Serves as Maroon Shirt's replacement; wears a short maroon dress; has blue skin, opt.; female.
- IRISH:** Chief engineer of the U.S.S. Enterprising; wears a red shirt and a Scottish kilt; male.
- KIMBERLY:** Teenage Shemalian leader who used to date the Hemian leader Rick; looks and speaks like a 1980's valley girl; female.
- JULIA:** Teenage Shemalian cheerleader; looks and speaks like a 1980's valley girl; wears a cheerleading uniform; female.
- NATASHA:** Teenage Shemalian student; wears a 1980's Jane Fonda-type workout leotard, leg warmers, and a headband, carries around arm weights; female.
- RICK:** Teenage Hemian leader, aka "The Rickster," who used to date Kimberly; wears stereotypical 1980's clothing; male.
- NORMAN:** Teenage Hemian surfer and Rick's best bud; wears a t-shirt and board shorts; carries a surfboard; male.

NOTE: For the prom scene, the U.S.S. Enterprising crew changes out of their uniforms and into stereotypical 1980's clothing.

Settings/Sets

Doggone It! A Story of a Boy and His Dog

A Texas plain, 1889.

Texas plain. A bare stage or a backdrop of a Texas plain may be used. Cow cutouts may be used in Scene 5 but are optional. A fence to tie Old Yeller to is needed in Scene 6. The fence can either slide or roll on.

A Case of Indigestion

A 1940's Hollywood film noir Los Angeles.

Private investigator's office. There is a desk chair and a desk with a phone on it. Another chair sits across from the desk. The desk and chairs should slide on and off.

Rick's Place. A café counter and a stool with a plate of crullers and a coffee cup and saucer on it. The counter slides/rolls on and off.

Ed's bait shop/fish market. A counter slides on with a chopping block, plastic meat cleaver, and plastic fish on it.

Bedroom set. Bedroom set slides on and off. There is a telephone.

The Prom Directive

The U.S.S. *Enterprising*, 2279, and the planet Auditoriumus, which resembles Earth circa 1985.

U.S.S. *Enterprising* bridge. Resembles the famous 1960's *Star Trek* set or can be an over-the-top version. Captain Quirk's chair is CS. Doors that slide open are optional.

U.S.S. *Enterprising* ready room. There is a table with four chairs.

High school cafetorium, planet Auditoriumus. Resembles a 1985 high school cafetorium on Earth. Makeshift prom set with a prom banner, a table with a punchbowl, and a DJ station.

PROPS

Doggone It: Long rifle, blanket, two sacks with “corn” written on them, a piece of rope.

A Case of Indigestion: Cigarette (opt.), ashtray (opt.), piece of paper, plate of crullers, coffee cup with saucer, coffeepot, toy gun, telephone, meat thermometer, red plastic fish (to represent red herring), mixing bowl, wooden spoon, chopping block, plastic fish, plastic meat cleaver, plastic knife, Casablanca-type grey trench coat and fedora, bright 1950s-style dress with a monogram of “S. Lee” on the left shoulder (for Cassandra), pound cake.

The Prom Directive: Two large empty picture frames, model of the U.S.S. Enterprising, a sign that reads “The Prom Directive,” assorted shopping bags, arm weights, surfboard, handheld “communicator” (cell phone or walkie-talkie), 3 prom dresses and coats (for Shemalians), microphone, ray gun, furry ball (to represent Dribble).

Special Effects

Doggone It: Theme music for Old Yeller, gunshot, whistle, Peter Pan-type theme music.

A Case of Indigestion: Lights shine through the window shades and cast shadows, a spinning fan breaks the light streaming into the room, sound of a lonely trumpet, film noir music to underscore the scene, sound of rain, sound of stomach growling, desk phone ringing, fog (opt.), drone of a plane, Casablanca-type music, gunshot.

The Prom Directive: Red flashing lights, theme music, warning sounds, sound of transporter beam, zapping sound, 1980’s music.

"That there Dog Done saved our lives!
We should call him..."

- A.) "Champion"
- B.) "Sunny"
- C.) "Old Yeller"
- D.) All of the above

Doggone It!
A Story of a Boy and His Dog
Scene 1

(AT RISE: A Texas plain, 1889. A table and chair are onstage. Travis enters, holding a long rifle. Note: To maximize humor, all characters play it straight.)

TRAVIS: (To audience.) Howdy, folks! My name is Travis. I am a boy from Texas in the 1880s. This is the time in history right after the War of the States. Some of you Yankees might know this as the Civil War, but you would be wrong. (Note: For the following, characters enter when Travis says their name.) I live here with my Pa, Ma, my brothers Arliss and Useless. Some of you smarter people might notice that my brothers are portrayed by girls. This is because the playwright works in the public school system where there is always a shortage of boys in theater. I don't know what that means, but who am I to challenge him? My story is one of pathos and woe. It is a familiar story that you might have seen in a moving picture. A Mr. Walt Dizz-Knee made my story into a fun-filled family frontier movie with a stirring theme song. But since today's youth have the attention span of a gnat, I am going to tell my story in 20 minutes. You might notice that I am carrying my pa's rifle. This is called "foreshadowing." One day, Pa said he was going on a cattle drive.

PA: I'm going on a cattle drive.

TRAVIS: Ma said, "Oh, no!"

MA: Oh, no!

TRAVIS: My brothers were perplexed.

(Arliss and Useless stand there with a dumb looks.)

MA: What are you going to do about the chores, Pa?

PA: Travis will take care of you. *(To Travis.)* Son, you have to be the man of the house. You need to milk the cows, feed the pigs, find meat and shoot it, take care of your brothers and your mama, and make sure that the cornfield doesn't get attacked by varmints or neglect. Here is my rifle. *(Takes the rifle from Travis and then hands it back to him.)* Don't shoot yourself.

TRAVIS: *(To audience.)* I didn't want to be the man of the house, but I didn't have a choice. *(Sighs.)* These are hard times to be a boy in Texas. I envy you all sitting there with your new-fangled gadgets and phones that are attached to your eyes. *(Pause. Waits for audience reaction. Continues.)* But what's a boy to do in Texas? Pa then said his goodbyes.

PA: Goodbyes. *(Exits.)*

ARLISS: Mama, what's fer supper?

USELESS: *(To Mama.)* Yeah!

MAMA: Well, that depends on what Travis finds in the woods.

(Mama, Useless, and Arliss stare at Travis until he "leaves.")

TRAVIS: *(To audience.)* As I was looking for a rabbit to shoot fer supper, my brother Useless found himself a dawg. Here he is. *(Old Yeller enters.)* I didn't like him when I saw him, but I was the man of the house and didn't have no time fer no dogs. *(To Old Yeller, shouts.)* I don't have no time fer you.

OLD YELLER: Bark!

(Blackout.)

Scene 2

(AT RISE: A few weeks later.)

MA: *(To audience.)* We had been getting along fine for a few weeks. Travis was mad that the dog kept stealing food from the smokehouse. Arliss and Useless liked having him around. I was too busy trying to raise three boys to notice. One morning, Arliss, Useless, and myself went out to pick blueberries. Useless saw a baby bear.

USELESS: *(Pointing off, shouts.)* Lookee there!

(Bear enters.)

MA: *(Shouts.)* Run, Useless! That there's a bear!

(Freeze action. Travis enters.)

TRAVIS: *(To audience.)* At this time, I was milking the cows. The dog had heard Ma and took off like a cyclone in a trailer park. I followed as fast as I could, but he was a fast pup. When I got onto the scene, he was fightin' that there bear and protecting Ma and my brothers. *(Action resumes. Old Yeller runs on. Old Yeller and Bear fight.)* It was a whale of a fight, but that there dog scared off the bear and protected my brothers and Ma. *(Bear runs off.)* Ma said...

MA: That there dog done saved our lives! We should call him "Champion"!

ARLISS: No, let's call him "Sunny"!

USELESS: Let's call him "Old Yeller"!

[END OF FREEVIEW]

"This was getting me nowhere.
I had two CORPSES,
no Dinner,
and a smelly fish in my pocket."

—Frank

A Case of Indigestion

(AT RISE: A 1940's Hollywood film noir Los Angeles. A private investigator's office. A lonely trumpet is heard in the background. Lights shine through the window shades, casting shadows on Frank, a private investigator. A spinning fan breaks the light streaming into the room. Frank is sitting at his desk. There is a lit cigarette in an ashtray (optional). Note: Film noir-type music underscores the following.)

FRANK: *(To audience.)* People in this city don't know how lucky they are. Having three squares a day and a place to sleep is a luxury. I didn't have that, but I worked the mean streets where even the police didn't go. I didn't have a dime since my ex had fleeced me for a fortune. I was going from case to case trying to make a living, but it was all just a house of cards waiting for Santa Ana winds to blow it all down. *(Slight pause.)* I was about to close up shop and head down to the local diner when she walked in...

(Cassandra enters and sits across from Frank.)

CASSANDRA: Mr. Marano? I need your help.

FRANK: *(To audience.)* She was the kind of a dame that made grown men weak in the knees. Her legs would have gone on forever if the floor hadn't stopped them. I knew she was trouble, but trouble is my middle name. *(On second thought.)* Actually, it's Irving, but I digress. *(Continues.)* Her hair was the color of ripe cantaloupe. Her eyes were like limpid pools of Jell-O. Her lips were like two slices of strawberry pie. *(To himself.)* Gee, I'm hungry. *(Snaps out of it.)* What's the problem, Miss?

CASSANDRA: I'm at the end of my rope. I don't know who to turn to. I heard you were someone that a girl could turn to if she was in a bad way.

FRANK: Tell me the problem.

CASSANDRA: It's Johnny.

FRANK: I'll bite. Who's Johnny?

CASSANDRA: Johnny's my boyfriend. He started his small business with a hot dog stand and it grew into an empire...

(Note: As Frank addresses the audience during the following, Cassandra continues talking in pantomime.)

FRANK: *(To audience.)* I couldn't look at her. All I could think about was hot dogs. I didn't have any green, so I listened for the magic words...

CASSANDRA: So if you could help me find him, I'll pay you for your —

FRANK: *(To audience.)* Bingo! *(To Cassandra.)* I'll take the case. Where is the last place you saw Johnny?

CASSANDRA: I saw him at the Buck Buck Chicken Stand. He is the fiery passion that is in my soul... *(On second thought.)* ...or really strong Tabasco. I can never tell.

FRANK: *(To himself.)* Tabasco...my archenemy. *(To audience.)* I would have stopped her, but my intestines wouldn't let me. It was then that I knew I had gas. *(Makes an uncomfortable face.)*

CASSANDRA: What's wrong, Mr. Marano?

FRANK: *(To audience.)* I couldn't let on that I had the Mexican combo for breakfast. Well, Miss, I'll take the case.

(Cassandra stands.)

CASSANDRA: Here's the address. *(Hands Frank a piece of paper.)* Find Johnny and be careful.

(Cassandra exits. Music stops. Sound of rain. Frank moves downstage.)

FRANK: *(To audience.)* It was raining cats and dogs, and I stepped in a poodle. My shoes felt like liver and onions that were left out in the rain... *(Takes off one of his shoes and smells it.)* ...and smelled like it. I pushed on until I came to the stand. There are one million people living in Los Angeles, but I was only after one. If my math was correct, I was in for a long night. The night air was frigid just like a cold day in Phoenix. I noticed a man trailing me when I walked out of my office. He had tried to tail me but wasn't doing a very good job of it. *(Trying to be nonchalant, Sven enters. Indicating Sven.)* He looked like he had just come off an all-night pie-eating contest...and lost. I didn't want to talk to him, but that's my job. *(To Sven.)* Okay, tough guy, spill it. *(To audience.)* He did. *(Sven turns, "vomits," and exits.)* It was then I knew why people called us "gumshoes." *(Shakes his foot.)* I had no leads, no prospects, and no lunch. I figured a cup of joe at Rick's Place might be in order.

(A stool and counter slide on to represent Rick's Place. On the counter there is a plate of crullers or other doughnuts and a coffee cup with a saucer. Gloria enters, carrying a coffeepot.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]

"This is called a 'cafetorium'...
a pseudo theatre/cafeteria/multi-useless room."

—Captain James T. Quirk

The Prom Directive

Scene 1

(AT RISE: The bridge of the U.S.S. Enterprising. Captain James T. Quirk is sitting in his captain's chair CS. Lt. Hoo-rah is seated SR with a earpiece sticking out of her ear. Maroon Shirt is USR of Quirk. Lt. Hulu is USL of Quirk. Mr. Stock is standing SL of Quirk.)

QUIRK: (Voiceover.) Captain's log, stardate 385769383045-6.

We have come to a new planet in the beta quadrant, Auditoriumus. This planet is one that we have not encountered in our travels, yet there is something altogether familiar—

HOO-RAH: Captain, I am trying to contact the surface, but there seems to be too much interference.

QUIRK: Open a hailing frequency.

HOO-RAH: Yes, Captain.

QUIRK: Mr. Stock, what can you tell me about the inhabitants?

MR. STOCK: Very similar to your home planet of Earth...although the average age is well below the normal lifespan of a Homo sapiens.

QUIRK: You think that humans live to be too old, Mr. Stock? You, yourself, are half human.

MR. STOCK: Yes, Captain. But since I am half Vulcan, I can control my emotions so that I cannot let my heart lead my head.

HOO-RAH: That's for sure.

QUIRK: What was that, Lieutenant?

HOO-RAH: Nothing, sir.

QUIRK: Sometimes it's better to lead with your instincts instead of either, Mr. Stock.

(Doors slide open, opt. Boney enters.)

QUIRK: Boney, maybe you can shed some light on what the people are like down there.

BONEY: [Dammit], Jim, I'm a doctor, not an anthropologist!
[Or insert "dang it."]

MR. STOCK: Highly illogical.

BONEY: *(Insulted.)* Is that what I am, Mr. Stock...you green-blooded, pointy-eared half-breed!

MR. STOCK: I normally would respond to your homespun philosophy; however, I do not want to, nor do I want to upset the eldest member of the ship.

QUIRK: Gentlemen, please! We need to know what to do if we are to help these people.

HOO-RAH: Captain, I am receiving a message from the Hemian leader.

QUIRK: On screen.

(Rick, the Hemian leader, appears on one side of the stage holding a large picture frame around his face.)

RICK: Hey, spacecraft dudes! I'm Rick or "The Rickster," as the Betties call me.

QUIRK: I am Captain James T. Quirk of the U.S.S. Enterprising. We are here to have a peace treaty conference with you and the Shemalians. Do you acknowledge?

RICK: *(Confused.)* What are you saying?

HOO-RAH: Captain, I'm receiving a message from the leader of the Shemalians.

QUIRK: On screen.

(Kimberly, the Shemalian leader, appears opposite Rick, holding a large picture frame around her face.)

KIMBERLY: Hello? Is there anyone there?

QUIRK: This is Captain James T. Quirk of the U.S.S. Enterprising. I have just spoken with Rick from the—

KIMBERLY: You talked to Rick?! Gag me with a spoon! I am totally not going to, like, speak to you if you talked to that barf bag!

QUIRK: What is your name?

KIMBERLY: I'm Kimberly, and I totally rule the Shemalians. I'm, like, totally late for the Galaxy Shopping Center. I'll call you later. *(Exits.)*

HULU: *(Sees something on his screen, startled.)* Oh, my!

QUIRK: Mr. Hulu?

HULU: I think the planet is gearing up to fire upon us with some sort of weapon. I'm picking up a large surge of energy from the planet's main living quarters. It could be a weapon!

QUIRK: Go to red alert!

(Red lights flash and warning sounds are heard. Theme music is heard as a model of the U.S.S. Enterprising ship is carried across the stage. A sign that reads "The Prom Directive" pops up.)

[END OF FREEVIEW]