



## **Walter Koenig** *Biography*

Born in Chicago, Illinois, on September 14, 1936, Walter Koenig spent his childhood in the Inwood area of Manhattan, NY and has been a life-long Yankee's fan. His parents were Russian Jewish immigrants from the Republic of Lithuania in the Soviet Union. He attended New York public grammar schools and graduated from Fieldston High School in Riverdale, NY. He did his first on-stage work in high school with the lead role in both *Peer Gynt* and *Shaw's Devil's Disciple*.

Walter's interest in psychiatry prompted him to attend Grinnell College in Iowa with a pre-med major; he later transferred to UCLA. After receiving a BA in psychology, a professor encouraged him to invest in his acting talents and he enrolled in New York's Neighborhood Playhouse. His classmates there included Dabney Coleman, Brenda Vaccaro, Christopher Lloyd, Jessica Walters, Elizabeth Ashley and James Caan. His work at the Playhouse was rewarded with a scholarship from the school's regents.

Walter Koenig's professional acting career spans more than forty six years of stage, television and film work. His remarkable talents and range as an actor have won him accolades for roles including everything from a teenage gang leader (*Alfred Hitchcock Presents*) to a middle-aged Tom Sawyer (*The Boys In Autumn*).

On television, Walter's work began in 1960 with several roles on the series *A Day in Court*. He has since appeared on television over 110 times in no less than 42 separate roles. In a touch of irony, Walter is best known for his recurring television portrayals both of the hated, intensely driven Alfred Bester (*Babylon 5*) and the likable, perpetually cheerful Pavel Chekov (*Star Trek*). His recurring role of Bester on *Babylon 5* was voted as "Best Guest Villain" in a poll of over one hundred thousand fans, and in later polls was voted both "The Man We Most Love to Hate" and "The Best Villain in a Series: Most Evil and Complicated Character". Walter's film work includes the first seven *Star Trek* feature films, for which he earned two Saturn Award Best Supporting Actor nominations. His many other films have been independent projects with challenging roles. Walter also has a long and varied resume of stage work including over three dozen productions.

Walter is an intelligent, honest, insightful, and remarkably funny man whose wide range of talents is not limited to acting. He has been the producer of films, directed stage productions, and is a published author. As a writer, Walter has penned books, screenplays, episodes for

several television series, plays, and a comic book series for Malibu Comics. You're Never Alone When You're a Schizophrenic, a one-man play Walter wrote and performed, was a finalist in the 1996 New York Film Festival.

Walter has shared his multiple talents by teaching classes in acting, directing and psychology. He has taught privately and at UCLA, Actor's Alley Repertory Company, the California School of Professional Psychology, and The Sherwood Oaks Experimental Film College in Hollywood. Walter has been married to Judy Levitt since 1965. They have two children: Andrew and Danielle Koenig. The entire family is involved in the film and theater industries in a variety of ways.

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