

Women at Warp Episode 23 Transcript: Star Trek Through the J.J. Verse

00:00 | [Announcer]

You're listening to Trek F.M.

00:02 | [Clip]

[Dialogue from *Star Trek* (2009)]

00:25 | Jarrah

Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp. Join us as our crew of four women *Star Trek* fans boldly go on our bi-weekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name's Jarrah, and thanks for tuning in. Today with us we have our crew members, Andi-

00:40 | Andi

Hi, everyone.

00:40 | Jarrah

... and Sue.

00:42 | Sue

Hey, there.

00:44 | Jarrah

And, uh, before we get started on our topic today, uh, we just wanted to remind you about our, uh, Women at Warp Patreon. If you go to patreon.com/womenatwarp, you

can help support our work. Uh, it helps us do things like pay for our website hosting, and, uh, to be able to spread the word via getting, you know, business cards printed, and heading to conventions to do, uh, convention reporting and things like that. Um, so again, that's P-A-T-R-E-O-N dot com slash womenatwarp.

Um, another housekeeping announcement is that if you have not yet joined our Goodreads Book Club, you can do that at Goodreads and just search Women at Warp in the groups. Uh, we have a new book that we've picked out that we will be doing an episode on, uh, probably in February or March, uh, which is the book *Mosaic* by Jeri Taylor. It's basically a Captain Janeway origin story. You can join the discussion in advance of the episode on our Goodreads Book Club.

All right, so getting onto our main topic today, we are going to take a *Star Trek* over, around, through, alongside, and into the J.J.-verse, looking at the movie *Star Trek (2009)* and *Star Trek: Into Darkness*, and then we're gonna talk about the new trailer, uh, for *Star Trek: Beyond* that came out a couple of weeks back.

So, we put out the call for your comments for what you thought of the movies on our Facebook page and Twitter, um, and thought we might start off with a few of your observations. Sue, do you wanna read the first one?

02:22 | Sue

Sure. So, our first comment is from Bill, who says, "As a fan since 1973, I have enjoyed these fun, though flawed, movies. They fit in just fine in an expandable universe which includes TV, movies, novels, comic books, and more, and I'm perplexed and saddened by the amount of vitriol they inspire in some fans. That said, I think they have only made baby steps in the treatment of women."

02:47 | Jarrah

Awesome. Thanks, Bill. So, Andi, do you wanna read the next one?

02:52 | Andi

Okay. Uh, Raman's comment is, "I call the reboots Hot Trek, or Sexy *Star Trek*. Hot people running around being hot and doing hot people things, like hooking up and being sassy, but in space. Oh, and blowing things up. So, that pretty much sums up my clearly low opinion of them. That being said, I suppose an assessment of improving their treatment of women depends on the benchmark. Are we saying compared to *TOS*? I suppose, but is that saying much? Congratulations, alien females don't just look like green go-go dancers."

03:24 | Jarrah

Awesome, and then, um, I just excerpted this comment from Rick because I have to apparently make fun of Brannon Braga in every episode. Uh, Rick said, "I had expected Mr. Braga to have a cameo and yell, 'They're sexy! They're all sexy in the future! No beautiful normal women, just sexy hot models for you to enjoy!'"

03:44 | Sue

That sounds about right.

03:45 | Jarrah

So, that is some commentary on sort of overall how people felt, how some of our listeners felt about the J.J.-verse movies. Um, but how about we start off with *Star Trek* (2009), and I would love for you to both tell me about your initial impressions. Like, how, when did you first see this movie and how did you feel the first time you saw it? So, maybe start with Andi.

04:09 | Andi

I actually saw it in 2009, so *Star Trek* (2009) is the first *Star Trek* I ever saw. And I-

04:17 | Sue

I'm sorry.

04:18 | Andi

No, no, Sue. Come on. No, it was good. I actually really enjoyed it when I was in the theater. I was in the theater in downtown Chicago, and it was big, and things were exploding. And just in general, I really enjoyed it. I had a good time.

I almost started watching *Star Trek* after that, um, I think I even went so far as to look it up on Netflix to see if I should watch it, and then for whatever reason, I just didn't move on. But I liked the characters, and I thought it was a fun movie, um, so it is a, actually a pretty decent introduction to *Trek*.

But then when I started getting into my First Time Trekking in 2013, uh, by then, I had basically forgotten most of it. I remembered that I enjoyed it, but not much more than that. And then, you know, throughout 2013 through 2015 now, um, I've been, you know, doing this, this watch of *Star Trek*, so when I went back to watch *Star Trek (2009)* after watching *The Original Series*, and specifically the *Original Series* movies, I had a much different impression of it. Um, I actually think my enjoyment went down after that, c- maybe because the bar had s- been set higher for me by then, but my first impression was a positive one, a very positive one, actually.

I was just gonna say that, which is actually kind of probably what they were going for, right? They were trying to get non-*Trek* people interested in *Star Trek* through this movie, and in that I would say they probably succeeded pretty well, because I had never seen a thing *Star Trek*. I didn't know anything about *Star Trek*, and I still was able to not only follow but enjoy the movie, so that says something, I'd say.

05:59 | Jarrah

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I'm sure this is something we're gonna keep coming back to a bit. Um, the Subspace Transmissions podcast, when they reviewed this, they actually had, um, two-... real, like, *Star Trek*noobs on who were awesome and basically didn't know anything about *Star Trek*. They were like, "Oh, was that guy named Chekov?" And, um, the, uh, woman who was on it really, really enjoyed it. Um, and it was really

interesting listening to that perspective versus some of us more seasoned *Star Trek* fans who have, uh, you know, definitely, uh, more stuff to analyze in there. Um, but, uh, maybe it was harder for us to, like, wholeheartedly enjoy it.

Um, but how about you, Sue?

06:41 | Sue

Ugh, I have so many comments to make about that. I-

06:47 | Jarrah

Did you see it when it first came out?

06:49 | Sue

Yes, yes. I saw this, I think opening weekend. I'm pretty positive I saw it opening weekend. But I do remember following the development of it, having already been a *Star Trek* fan when this was all happening and, and reading the news and learning about what was going on. And I thought, I think I thought it was fine.

You know, like, people keep saying, you hear it all over the fandom, that *Star Trek* belongs on TV not in the movies. So already, I think, going into a new *Star Trek* movie, my expectations weren't super high. I was hoping for a lot of things that I didn't necessarily get, like expanded roles for Uhura and maybe Christine Chapel, who is still absent from the movies, and just *Star Trek*.

And it's been said over and over again, you can say that I'm flinging vitriol, but this just didn't, it doesn't feel right for me. And I left... I'm pretty sure I left 2009, that movie, feeling like it was fun. It's definitely a sci-fi film, it's definitely, like, an action-adventure film, but it doesn't say *Star Trek* to me. And when I watch it now, it even more doesn't say *Star Trek* to me.

You know, every time I... I hate to be that person, but every time I watch it, I find more things that just get on my nerves or rub me the wrong way. And I really do try and keep

that attitude of maybe this is the gateway for people, maybe people who don't know *Star Trek* are gonna come into this and wanna see more. But then with all of the differences that there are between this new universe and what I grew up with as *Star Trek*, I really wonder if people who really, really love these two movies will even like *Star Trek* as I know it, the TV *Star Trek*.

08:45 | Jarrah

Yeah. I saw it in theaters as well when it first came out, and I had been, I hadn't been avidly watching *Star Trek* in the years leading up to that. Like, um, I, I took a bit of a hiatus from, you know, my childhood rewatching, or watching, um, after *Voyager* ended and I just occasionally watched *Enterprise* here and there, and then I started, uh, rewatching *TNG* casually.

Um, so I remember I went with some board gaming friends who I would say were at the same level of *Star Trek* fandom as I was, um, and we all thought it was really fun. I remember I went to see it twice in the theater. Um, but for me, what I was mostly looking for in that movie the first time was I was worried that the characters would be, uh, that they wouldn't be able to capture the essence of the original characters, and I think that they actually did that pretty well. Like, I especially, um, I think that, uh, Zachary Quinto, um, as Spock and, uh, Karl Urban as McCoy, um, did a really good job, uh, capturing the essence of what made those characters great in *The Original Series*.

But, uh, yeah, I mean, certainly upon rewatch I would agree that I appreciate it slightly less and, um, so neither of you have seen *Star Wars*, the new *Star Wars*, right, yet?

10:03 | Andi

Yup.

10:03 | Sue

I have not.

10:04 | Jarrah

Okay, so I'm not gonna spoil anything, but something I've heard from a lot of people coming out of that, and I would certainly, certainly agree is, it makes these movies even more disappointing because it does truly, truly feel like a love letter to the *Star Wars* franchise from J.J. Abrams and, uh, the metaphor that, uh, I heard was, "It's like J.J. gave *Star Wars* fans steak and he gave *Star Trek* fans McRib."

10:28 | Sue

Oof.

10:29 | Jarrah

It doesn't feel like he really, really loved *Star Trek*.

10:32 | Andi

He straight up says that he doesn't like *Star Trek*.

10:35 | Sue

Yeah, he admitted that. I'm not sure if it was after the first movie or the second movie, I don't remember, but he, yeah, he came straight out and he said he was not a fan of *Star Trek*, he was a fan of *Star Wars*.

10:47 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

10:47 | Sue

And it was well known if he wasn't already signed to direct the, *Episode VII*, that he was going after it-

10:56 | Jarrah

Yeah.

10:56 | Sue

... you know, in the Disney deal. So, it was kind of a true joke, I guess-

11:02 | Jarrah

Yeah.

11:03 | Sue

... that, that *Star Trek* was his audition for *Star Wars*.

11:07 | Jarrah

Yeah, I think that's super unfortunate. I mean, I'm not saying that he didn't do good things for the movie. I think that, um, you know, as much as his style is maligned in terms of the lens flares and things, he definitely did create a distinct visual style, um, that-

11:21 | Sue

Lens flare.

11:23 | Jarrah

I, I don't think that, like, I think it's, you can't just reduce it to that. Um, and-

11:28 | Sue

No, but it is headache inducing.

11:29 | Jarrah

... yeah, and I think he got some good performances, uh, for sure, but yeah, I mean, but certainly it just, I feel like it lacks that heart of *Star Trek* and maybe we can talk more about that once we've talked about both the movies.

11:41 | Andi

So, regarding the whole J.J. doesn't like *Star Trek* thing-

11:46 | Jarrah

Yep.

11:47 | Andi

... one of the funniest things Jon Stewart has ever done, and that is saying something, is, J.J. Abrams went on *The Daily Show* and told Jon Stewart he didn't like *Star Trek* and then he was, like, explaining why and he was talking and, uh, at the very end, Jon Stewart was like, "I'm sorry. I stopped listening after you said you didn't like *Star Trek*, and I assumed that everything else you were saying was just an apology." And-It was amazing and, um, I love it and bless Jon Stewart for saying what we were thinking.

12:22 | Jarrah

Yeah. That's something we've seen in the pro- production the whole time is, you know, various people, J.J. and Kurtzman and Orci and, uh, Simon Pegg sort of in different ways distancing themselves from being, like, too *Star Trek*-y. Um, so as obviously fans who are... have... see nothing wrong with being too *Star Trek*-y, um, it makes you feel, I don't know, a little bit, like, betrayed.

12:47 | Sue

I would admit that there's possibly some resentment- ... towards that in the way I watch these movies.

12:54 | Jarrah

Yeah. Yeah. Absolutely. Um, but, uh, I certainly will say that I thought it was fun and, uh, I, I wanted to talk a bit about Uhura because she's basically the only woman in this movie. There's that... We talked briefly about the Romulan Martial Arts person who basically got cut from the movie. Um, and then there's, uh, Uhura's Orion roommate. So, weirdly and ironically enough, *Star Trek (2009)* is one of two *Star Trek* movies that passes the Bechdel Test and it's because Uhura talks to her lab partner/roommate while Kirk is under the bed watching Uhura get changed.

13:33 | Andi

They're both in their underwear?

13:35 | Jarrah

Yeah. Well, yeah, 'cause he had been sleeping with the roommate, so yeah. Good stuff. Um, but, uh, what did you guys think about the portrayal of Uhura in this film?

13:44 | Andi

I like Zoe Saldaña. I should say that. I think she's a good actress. I don't really get Uhura from her, to be honest.

13:54 | Sue

Yeah.

13:54 | Andi

Sh- she's just... For whatever reason, she kinda updated her to be more, uh, I don't know, feisty, I guess. Um, more snappy, which is fine except for Uhura wasn't really. She was very gentle and-

14:10 | Sue

I remember reading something from her that she did get to sit down and speak to Nichelle Nichols about the character of Uhura, but then she said, "I wish I'd gotten a chance to do that sooner." Because when that happened for her, she was essentially done. She only had a few more scenes to shoot, and she said that if she had had the chance to have that conversation sooner, she would've changed how she played the character.

14:36 | Andi

Yeah, I mean, she, she does a lot of, like, eye-rolling.

14:40 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

14:40 | Andi

And i- it's not even that I don't like the character. It's just that it doesn't, it doesn't feel like Uhura to me because Uhura to me was... is always a really, like, calm and gentle presence. Um-

14:53 | Jarrah

And dignified.

14:54 | Andi

And yeah, really, like, serene almost. And I... The... I, I just didn't... I don't know what to say more than that except for I... It's not that I didn't like the character and it's not that I didn't think she did a good job. It's just she didn't feel like Uhura to me.

15:09 | Sue

I did like that she stood up for herself, that she was not shy about her intelligence and her abilities.

15:17 | Andi

Yeah. I think that's the best update they did-

15:20 | Sue

Yeah.

15:20 | Andi

... is they make it very clear that she is an extraordinary student and then, you know, moving on, like, she actually takes the place of a apparently seasoned communications officer because she's just simply better. Um, and that's really cool.

15:37 | Sue

Yeah, which was great. I'm very conflicted about the whole Uhura-Spock relationship.

15:42 | Jarrah

Yeah.

15:43 | Sue

Um, I kind of love it in *TOS*. I really think it's kinda fun that she's so into him, but to put that relationship front and center, to make it more than just implied and in a lot of ways make it central to several scenes of these movies, no.

16:02 | Jarrah

Yeah. I remember when I saw *Star Trek (2009)*, I really liked that because, uh, well, she shuts down Kirk's hitting on her so impressively, um, and I thought that was really fun and that it... You know, I was trying to put myself in the shoes of, like, a young adult or teenager watching this for the first time and seeing *Star Trek* and seeing that the woman doesn't necessarily go with, like, the protagonist, uh, who is, like, the most forward, but instead goes for someone who more, you know, is smart and respects her. Um, s- I... And I have mixed feelings because, you know, I've seen some people say they a- object to the fact that, that, that a lot of y-... Like you said, her scenes are defined by her relationship with Spock. Um, and I think that's certainly a problem.

16:54 | Sue

Well, also, she's having a relationship with her professor.

16:57 | Jarrah

Yeah. For sure.

16:59 | Sue

'Cause she's still a cadet.

17:00 | Jarrah

Yeah. And I've also seen people... Like, I had one person say w-... Or this is actually a good thing because women of color don't usually get to, quote-unquote, "have it all". Like, they don't usually get to, in media, um, or, like, in real life, um, they're not told, like, you can, um, have this amazing job and have a relationship. And, um, so they said, like, that was something they always wanted to see for Uhura, that they felt like white women were more often able to, uh... were more often depicted having that ability to have both a career and a relationship.

17:35 | Andi

I like their chemistry, and I even like their, like, relationship vibe, if you could put it that way.

17:43 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

17:44 | Andi

The problem I have with it is that they basically... That's the s- the arc they gave her and the arc they gave her was basically to, to make Spock seem more human and to get Spock to be-

17:58 | Sue

Yep.

17:58 | Andi

... more emotional and to be like a mirror for Spock's emotions. So-

18:02 | Sue

That is 200% accurate.

18:05 | Andi

Yeah, i- it... So that's my problem with it. Like, I think it... I think that they're a... make a good couple. I really do. And I can see what would draw each other, but I need something other than that for her. I need her to be doing, you know, I need her to have an arc of her own that's not based on this relationship with Spock.

18:25 | Jarrah

Yeah, and we definitely don't get that.

18:27 | Andi

In at least one of the movies.

18:28 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

18:28 | Andi

Yeah, I mean it- it- it- it-

18:29 | Jarrah

We could still, but...

18:31 | Andi

Yeah, I mean, that's the thing is, like, there's, there's numerous movies now, we're gonna have a third. So, there's a lot to fit into these movies, a lot. I can understand if you don't have room for a really great arc for every single one of the characters in every movie. But I need her to have a good resonant arc for herself before this thing is over, because she deserves it.

18:55 | Jarrah

Yeah. So, do you have any other thoughts about *Star Trek (2009)*, um, such as how you feel the S- the Spock/Kirk bromance was portrayed?

19:04 | Andi

I really... You know my favorite thing about *2009*?

19:08 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

19:08 | Andi

Is the way they parallel Kirk and Spock.

19:11 | Jarrah

Yeah.

19:11 | Andi

That's my favorite thing. The way we get to see young Kirk and young Spock and both of them kind of rebelling in their different ways, and kind of getting at why these two characters that see the world so differently might be drawn to each other and might work together so well.

My favorite moment in *2009* is when Spock is talking to the, the Vulcan Academy people, and they're like, "Welcome to the Science Academy. You're so lucky to be here despite, you know, your thing." He's like, "What are you talking about?" "Well, you know, you're half human and your human mother." And he's just like, "Ugh." And troll Spock comes out. I always love it when troll Spock comes out. But when, the way he says, "Live long and, live long and prosper," and then turns on his heel is my favorite moment from that movie.

I, and I just like how it's paralleled with Kirk doing similar rebellious things, but just in a totally different form.

20:10 | Sue

I really like this Spock, and I really like these choices that, I'm not sure if it was, uh, Quinto himself or, or the direction, in this case I would give props to J.J. if it was him, but I, I really like these choices to make this Spock embrace his, his human side, his emotions a little bit more.

20:31 | Andi

Mm-hmm.

20:31 | Sue

Um, he's much more sarcastic. You could even use the word sassy, but it's, it's kind of fun because he is still this logical, trained, controlled character, but he, he just like, he's more in on the joke, right?

20:47 | Jarrah

Yeah.

20:47 | Sue

And it's just fun. But still, the best part of these movies, both of them, for me, is Karl Urban.

20:52 | Jarrah

Yeah.

20:52 | Andi

Uh, yeah.

20:53 | Sue

There is, there is no doubt in my mind. Like, you can just give me an hour and a half of Bones snark and that will be the best new *Star Trek* movie that they could possibly make.

21:03 | Andi

He is just, like, every time he's on screen it's delightful.

21:07 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm, and he's one of the few of them to regularly do *Star Trek* conventions. And he really does love *Star Trek* and I- uh, he really took time to inhabit the character of Bones. He even, uh, wore, uh, like a ring, like DeForest Kelley wore as Bones, i- he wears that in the movies. Um, and, uh, I think that that really comes through.

21:28 | Andi

Yes, I learned that fun fact from Diane Duane-

21:31 | Jarrah

Oh, right.

21:31 | Andi

... who also, who also really, really loves Karl Urban as McCoy. Like she, she brought it up during our interview how much she thinks he, he nails McCoy's voice and his cadence really, really well and I have to agree.

21:43 | Jarrah

Right.

21:44 | Sue

I also really like, um, Chekov.

21:46 | Jarrah

Yeah.

21:46 | Sue

But not because he's like Walter Koenig, but just because he does so well.

21:52 | Andi

Mm-hmm.

21:52 | Sue

He's, he is definitely your comic relief character. He's a lot of fun. I like, I, I even like Simon Pegg as Scotty.

21:59 | Andi

Mm-hmm.

21:59 | Sue

Right? And it, it worries me a little bit that I like the side characters so much more than the main characters.

22:08 | Andi

Mm-hmm.

22:08 | Jarrah

So, I actually don't have a problem with Chris Pine as Kirk. I think he does a pretty good job, you know, capturing Kirk's, I guess, self-confidence and swagger without feeling like he's doing an impression of William Shatner.

I think that the problem with Kirk is more about how he is really written as... I would say this Kirk is written as more of a womanizer than *TOS* Kirk. Um, you know, we talked in our Kirk love interests about how, uh, being a womanizer, uh, is, like there's sort of an element of, I guess like skeeviness or deception or creepitude versus... A- or, and like valuing women purely for their role or first and foremost for their role as potential sexual partners. Um, and I think that in *TOS*, uh, we get to s- we see Kirk is, or treating women with like a little bit more respect up front, versus just like, "Hey, are you sexy? Awesome, you can be on my ship."

23:09 | Andi

Yeah, um, I don't have a problem with Chris Pine's performance. Um, there's even a handful of times when he'll do the Kirk smirk. Is how I think-

23:20 | Jarrah

Yeah.

23:20 | Andi

... of it and I'm just like, "Dang, that was perfect." But, I have a problem with the, the... I have a small problem I should say, with the way they have written him to be way more brash-

23:33 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

23:33 | Andi

... and way less thoughtful. Because when I started *TOS* this is the only version of Kirk I had ever seen and I was, braced myself for like, a really stereotypical hypermasculine bro.

23:48 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

23:48 | Andi

And I was expecting not to like him as a character. And then it turns out that they actually give Kirk a lot of depth and a lot of thoughtfulness.

Now, every once in a while, the, the writing veers because, you know, we have inconsistent writing over three seasons, but overall, the core of that character, he's an explorer and he is, y- you know, he's not somebody who just, you know, shoots first just for the heck of it. Which is, I feel—

And I remember when I was retweet... And when I finally went back and live tweeted 2009, years later after I'd seen it the first time, I was like, "I- is there..... is this a character choice they made? Like, without his father and because he's younger, this is like, a different version of Kirk, uh, a brasher version, or did they just like, have this idea of Kirk that's like, this mythos that sprung up around him that doesn't actually get borne out in *The Original Series*?

I mean, think about some of the – the moments in *The Motion Picture* where Kirk is like, watching the Enterprise and he has all of these quiet moments. I can't picture this version of Kirk doing that and I can't tell if it's 'cause he's younger or if they just have written him to be different. I – I don't know.

25:09 | Jarrah

I feel like th- they... Er, I always interpreted it as they wrote him assuming he w- was... Like, what would Kirk be like when he was younger? Knowing, um, you know, that he rigged the Kobayashi Maru so that he could win a no-win scenario and that it was really about e- you know, youthful arrogance. And *Star Trek: Into Darkness* gets that a lot more as like, a, one of Kirk's character flaws, um, is that, uh, that sort of hubris he has, um, that presumably by the time we got to like, the *TOS* era of Kirk, uh, would've

been, you know, sort of tempered by experience. But that's giving them credit that maybe you're right and maybe it was just like, they myth... Mis- misinterpreted the mythos of Kirk.

25:55 | Andi

Right. I mean, that's what I was saying. Like, I can't tell really if it's a character- uh, a significant conscious character choice. Like, what would Kirk be like if he had grown up without a father and was, you know, 15 years younger?

26:08 | Sue

I think if that had been part of it, if it had been this is Kirk without male influence, you know, that without a father figure, I feel like it would've been mentioned more.

26:22 | Jarrah

Doesn't he have like, a bad stepfather figure?

26:24 | Sue

Yeah. He, he steals the car, and he says, "You're under my house." Err. Whatever.

26:29 | Jarrah

Yeah.

26:29 | Sue

But like, that's it and then it's gone, and it's not really mentioned again.

I think that there's just for people who are not *Star Trek* fans, there's this idea of who Captain Kirk is as that, you know, womanizer, shoot first, ask questions later, but when

you watch *TOS* that's not who Kirk is. Kirk is a lot more intelligent and thoughtful than, you know, the, the mythos surrounding *Star Trek* for non-fans would have you believe.

And these movies tell you how intelligent Kirk is, but they don't show it to you, right? It's *TOS* and even the original six movies that show you how intelligent and thoughtful he is.

27:12 | Andi

Yeah. And, uh, this is where, uh, I wanna talk a little bit about the pacing. We have a lot of, I would say extraneous action sequences, especially in the middle. Um, we have like, I don't know, a yeti. I don't even know what would that be like. Space yeti chasing Kirk. We have Scotty getting t- trapped in the water tubes. Like, this is unnecessary filler to me.

I would've much rather taken, you know, an extra 20 minutes at the beginning and actually explored Kirk's childhood more so we could get a better sense of who he was as a person before we get to him reacting in this crisis.

27:51 | Jarrah

Yeah, absolutely.

So, um, before we move on to *Star Trek: Into Darkness*, do you have any other final thoughts about *Star Trek*(2009)?

28:00 | Andi

Spock forever. I don't know. I love it when he do- when... The first time Zachary Quinto does the eyebrow raise.

28:06 | Jarrah

Yeah.

28:06 | Andi

I'm just like, "Yes." He does it so perfectly. I love Zachary Quinto.

28:11 | Jarrah

I was in airport security at Dallas once and, uh, the woman, uh, who was, uh, one of the security officers, I guess TSA agents, saw my, uh, Vulcan tattoo and she asked what it was and I – I told her. And she goes, "Oh, isn't that fun? You must like *The Original Series*. Have you seen the movies? What do you think of that Zachary Kinto [sic]? I just love him." I was like, "This is my best airport security experience ever."

28:42 | Andi

I just, uh, I just adore Zachary Quinto in general and I think he makes such a lovely Spock, especially... The other thing I wanna say before we move on is seeing Leonard Nimoy and Zachary Quinto together was lovely.

28:58 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

28:58 | Andi

And their scene together is lovely.

29:00 | Jarrah

Yeah, agreed. I, uh... And I mean like, their other sort of friendship things that they did before, uh, Leonard Nimoy passed away were really sweet.

29:10 | Andi

Yeah. Uh, it was pretty cool to see, uh, those... Uh, I feel like... It felt like they actually bonded as people which I think is s- is quite nice.

29:21 | Jarrah

Yeah, absolutely. My, uh... One of my final thoughts about *Star Trek (2009)*, and this isn't particularly to do with women particularly, but I was so annoyed by wha- by what I felt was really cringe-worthy and obvious product placement. Um, there's the, uh, Nokia thing on the phone or like, music thing-

29:40 | Andi

Uh-huh.

29:40 | Jarrah

... in the car. Um, and then what annoys me even more is when Uhura is in the cadet bar ordering Budweisers and I'm like-

29:50 | Andi

Mm-hmm.

29:50 | Jarrah

... "No one's gonna drink Budweisers in the future. This is a utopia." So... Just saying.

29:56 | Andi

Jarrah's a beer snob. Who knew? Who knew?

30:02 | Sue

My final thought on *Star Trek (2009)* is something I'm sure we're gonna talk more about and that is that none of the women have ranks.

30:10 | Jarrah

Oh, right.

30:11 | Andi

Oh, yes.

30:13 | Sue

These uniforms are completely without any kind of rank insignia.

30:16 | Andi

I'll be the first to admit I did not notice.... but once it was pointed out to me, that's just, uh, seems like a really strange omission.

30:24 | Sue

I mean, I have no problem with short sleeves. I prefer them personally. But, I would also... Like, if I'm a lieutenant, I want you to know that I'm a lieutenant.

30:32 | Jarrah

Yeah. A lot of people, uh, with military background pointed out that in a crisis that would actually be really dangerous because if the, you know, men at the top of the

command structure died, then how would you imme- Like, you need to immediately recognize the highest ranking person in a room and, uh, if the women don't have ranks on their uniforms, that's actually a really serious problem that could cause chaos in a crisis.

30:55 | Sue

Well, obviously the woman is not going to be the highest-ranking person in the room, Jarrah.

30:59 | Andi

Ugh. Ah. I know, I know.

31:02 | Jarrah

Yes. Nor will there be any gay characters which-

31:06 | Andi

Because everybody is straight in the future.

31:08 | Jarrah

So, yeah. I mean, this is sort of... I mean, this is kinda connected to both the movies, but when it was announced they were doing *Star Trek (2009)* there were a lot of fans who were saying like, "Hey, yay, we can finally get an openly gay character." And, uh, Rod Roddenberry was basically like, "Well, this is the future, we aren't gonna have people waving pride flags. Like, it'll just be equal, so we don't need this."

31:30 | Andi

Well, if that was true then we should've seen two dudes making out in their underwear.

31:34 | Jarrah

Exactly.

31:36 | Andi

I don't know, it's just really even more glaring to me because, first of all, we're being left behind by other franchises in sci-fi.

31:44 | Jarrah

Big time.

31:44 | Andi

Second of all, I, I mean Kirk and Spock have such a, such a huge place in, like, the LGBTQ community. They are like the granddaddies of slash shipping.

31:59 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

32:00 | Sue

They are pretty much the foundation of slash shipping.

32:03 | Jarrah

Yeah.

32:03 | Andi

Yeah. It's, it's... And, I mean, they are... There was slash fan fiction in magazines in the late '60s, early '70s because of Kirk and Spock, and we still can't get a canon gay character on screen? Please.

32:18 | Jarrah

Yup. Totally bogus.

32:20 | Andi

The best part about that Kirk/Spock thing is, I actually was doing a little bit of research into it because shipping and, and fan fiction and all of that is really super interesting to me, um, and it looks as if Leonard Nimoy never really openly talked about it, but William Shatner was much more nudge-nudge, wink-wink about it.

32:39 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

32:40 | Andi

And I feel like there is a lot of ways that you can take Kirk and Spock's relationship, but it was definitely very special for the gay community because if they wanted to, they could portray them in their minds as gay characters.

32:58 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

32:58 | Andi

And that meant a lot at that time when you, you had no representation. Now that we've actually gotten to the point where we should be able to see some representation without a huge backlash, it feels like a huge missed opportunity especially with how important this franchise has been to these fans.

33:16 | Jarrah

Word.

33:16 | Sue

And to be honest we've been... We talked about it a little bit when we talked about, uh, on the T'Pol episode, "Fusion" and "Stigma," that *Star Trek* has actually been kind of behind the times since at least *Enterprise*.

33:30 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

33:31 | Sue

If not even some later seasons of *Voyager*.

33:33 | Jarrah

Yeah.

33:34 | Sue

Which is just disappointing.

33:35 | Andi

They are really good at allegory. They are really good at taking, like, parallels and doing what ifs, but at that, at this point, like, that's not enough.

33:45 | Jarrah

Yeah. Totally agree.

All right, so let's move on to *Star Trek: Into Darkness*.

33:50 | Sue

Ugh.

33:51 | Jarrah

Yeah, let's go with Sue's first impression, unless you already just expressed it.

33:56 | Andi

Sue's first impression is just a wordless disgruntled groan.

34:00 | Sue

That was pretty much it.

34:02 | Andi

Okay. Well, I will say that I did not like it.

34:05 | Jarrah

Okay.

34:06 | Andi

Maybe not... Uh, I, maybe I didn't dislike it as much as Sue, but...

34:10 | Sue

How do you take the best *Star Trek* movie and turn it into the worst *Star Trek* movie?

34:15 | Andi

Yeah, this is the thing.

34:16 | Sue

I'll tell you how.

34:17 | Andi

I...

34:18 | Sue

You cast a blue-eyed, white English man as Khan and you let J.J. Abrams, a non-*Star Trek* fan, direct it.

34:26 | Jarrah

And you let people who hate *Star Trek* and *Star Trek* fans write it.

34:30 | Sue

Ugh.

34:30 | Andi

Yeah. All the way up until the last, I don't know, half hour of that movie I was like, "Okay, this isn't great. The pacing is off, a lot of the character moments are off, the plot doesn't make very much sense, it's super obvious who the villain is." Like, these are all things that I'm thinking, but I didn't hate it.

34:49 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

34:50 | Andi

You know? I was just, like, kinda coasting along, and then I was like, "Wait a second."

And I'll never forget the moment that I realized that they were redoing the end of *Wrath of Khan* and I kid you not, I stood up off my couch and, like, just screamed "No!" to the heavens. It was just... And, and then watching the rest of it was like wro- watching, like, a slow-motion train wreck.

And then I... I had literally watched *Wrath of Khan* maybe a week or two earlier, so my emotional reaction to *Wrath of Khan* was still very much with me and after *Wrath of Khan* I literally curled up into a ball and, like, sobbed like a little girl. Like, it meant so much to me and this was two weeks, you know? Like, h- h- how much more does that scene mean to people who have been holding it in their hearts for decades?

And then I almost see how it could've worked, especially I, I think it's kind of clever that they flip Kirk and Spock. I almost see it, but the execution just felt so soulless. It just felt so manipulative and so, like, "Oh, here. We'll put this in, and all the *Star Trek* fans will be interested in that." But they didn't actually, like, make it feel like anything, and I

especially hate that they made Zachary Quinto recreate, you know, William Shatner's famous “Khaaan” moment.

36:19 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

36:20 | Andi

Because...First of all, don't make Zachary Quinto try and be William Shatner. Don't try and make anybody try and be William Shatner. He is a very unique actor.

Second of all, that's not what Spock would do. That's not how Spock would, would react to extreme grief. I mean, we even saw that in the first film.

36:39 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

36:40 | Andi

He got cold.

36:41 | Jarrah

Yeah.

36:42 | Andi

That is what Spock does when he is overwhelmed with emotion. He shuts down.

And Zachary Quinto is a skilled-as-hell actor, he could've played that so beautifully, and instead they were like, "Let's go with this cheap throwback." And lat- Lazy, it just

feels lazy. And then that's when I was like, "Nope, I, I... This, this movie is a train wreck." And, um, I get more angry every time I think about it.

37:09 | Jarrah

I feel like when I first saw it, I didn't mind that part so much, except for then I was like, "Why isn't the movie over?" Like, I felt like the whole movie just felt kind of a little incoherent, and that then the end was kind of anticlimactic. Uh, I was like, okay, I was ready for that to be over but it's still going.

And I think that a lot of the problems you could foresee as soon as the marketing started. They had this whole thing that like, "Oh, he's definitely not Khan. Benedict Cumberbatch is in it, but he's definitely not Khan, he's John Harrison." I'm like, they could've just left him as John Harrison.

37:43 | Sue

I would've hated it less.

37:45 | Jarrah

Yeah. Um, but like, what, what was the message of this movie? Like, I still don't 100% know what the message of this movie was.

37:52 | Sue

Okay, so I, believe it or not I re-watched this last night.

37:57 | Jarrah

Okay.

37:58 | Sue

Somewhat voluntarily. And the whole thing-

38:02 | Jarrah

There was peer pressure, but we didn't like handcuff you to the couch or anything.

38:05 | Sue

Right, right. The, the theme that I think that they're, they're getting at, right, or trying to get at, is sacrifice. Right, 'cause-

38:15 | Jarrah

Oh.

38:15 | Sue

... that's that whole like volcano thing, and like sacrificing yourself for others, the needs of the, the many outweigh the needs of the one or the few. I think I got that backwards. But okay, if the consequences stick.

38:29 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

38:30 | Sue

Right? If Kirk sacrifices himself, i- i- if these characters keep trying to sacrifice themselves for the good of the crew, for the good of the universe, whatever, if Kirk does it, he is immediately brought back to life by super blood.

38:44 | Jarrah

Yeah, tribble-

38:44 | Sue

Right? I-

38:45 | Jarrah

... power tribble. Khan, Khan tribble.

38:47 | Andi

I believe I described it as five minutes and a magic tribble.

38:52 | Sue

But part of the impact of *Wrath of Khan* is that, as far as you know, Spock's dead.

38:59 | Jarrah

Yeah.

39:00 | Sue

Like, by the end of this movie, Kirk's alive again.

39:00 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

39:04 | Sue

No big deal. Doesn't matter. Like, there have to be consequences if there is a sacrifice. This is... I, I get worked up about this and the whole showrunner/producer lying thing.

39:17 | Jarrah

Yeah.

39:17 | Sue

Lying about who's playing who, because it happens in Doctor Who too. All the time.

39:21 | Jarrah

Yes.

39:22 | Sue

And I, I am starting to get really, really angry about it. Don't lie to me.

39:26 | Jarrah

Yeah, like just say, "We aren't telling."

39:28 | Sue

Yeah, just say, "I'm not gonna tell you." Don't, don't make things not have consequences, because they lose their meaning when they don't have consequences. Yeah, I'll give up my life for you, but I'll be alive five seconds later, so it doesn't matter. Like, it-

39:43 | Jarrah

Yeah.

39:44 | Sue

It's really frustrating and it loses so much of what it could mean because it's just a throwaway.

39:51 | Jarrah

Yeah. I mean, another thing I thought- I felt like felt really forced in this was the Leonard Nimoy cameo. Like, you talked about the one in the first movie, which I think worked really well. I think in this movie it was like, whoa, you can just phone up old Spock and ask him to explain all the things you're gonna face? And he doesn't have any ethical concerns about that and like timelines and shit?

40:12 | Sue

Well, he promised himself he wouldn't tell them.

40:15 | Jarrah

Yeah.

40:15 | Sue

But then he tells them.

40:16 | Jarrah

Yeah, he tells them pre- And like literally they can just phone him up. Like, it's... It felt so like deus ex Leonard Nimoy and in a way that like didn't feel true to Spock as a character, um, or a good use of Leonard Nimoy as an actor. So, I was not really a fan of that.

40:33 | Andi

There are a lot of shortcuts in this movie. You've got your magic tribble. You've got Spock on speed dial. You've apparently got some sort of technology that can warp you to Klingon space without any star travel.

40:48 | Sue

Right, and they try and make it seem like that's the same equation that Spock gives Scotty in the first movie, but that was for beaming somebody onto a ship that was in warp, not for beaming across star systems.

41:01 | Andi

Without a, any sort of... Like he didn't even have like a capsule.

41:06 | Jarrah

Yeah.

41:06 | Sue

Right, so the fake technology doesn't even make sense movie to movie.

41:11 | Jarrah

It kinda reminded me of in *Galaxy Quest* when they go in those goo pods and get shot into space.

41:15 | Andi

Except for that was cooler.

41:17 | Jarrah

Yes. Um, I did however, uh, I did think it was kind of cool the whole Enterprise going underwater and the, uh, like wetsuits they have.

41:25 | Sue

No!

41:26 | Jarrah

I liked it.

41:27 | Sue

Terrible.

41:27 | Andi

Very angry at you.

41:28 | Jarrah

I, uh-

41:29 | Andi

No, the science.

41:30 | Jarrah

I mean, I just was like, "That looks cool." However, I mean, and I think the visuals in the opening scenes are outstanding as much as I think it is horribly problematic to be like, "Hey, let's go screw up an indigenous culture," and then all of us be like, "Phew, we got away close on that one."

41:45 | Andi

Yeah, yeah.

41:47 | Sue

They just... In, in 2009 they show the Enterprise being built presumably on Earth.

41:52 | Jarrah

Yeah.

41:53 | Sue

Right? 'Cause that's where they start. And then it's in space, and then it's underwater? That's not possible. I'm really trying not to yell because it's late and I have neighbors.

42:05 | Jarrah

That's okay, sometimes people say we agree too much, so yay we disagree.

42:09 | Sue

Oh, I hate it.

42:11 | Jarrah

I'm totally down with the wetsuits. I'm just saying. Um, and, uh, um, yeah, in this we still do not have our rank stripes.

Another... Uh, so let's, uh, go back to the whole Uhura/Spock thing, 'cause in this movie, uh, we get a little bit more of that and, uh, we have a comment from listener Martina from Facebook and she says, "I appreciate the fact that reboot Uhura manages to be both tough and feminine at the same time and is portrayed as being fluent in Klingon and several other languages instead of needing a dictionary to put together a few pathetically broken sentences. But the love story with Spock, while it didn't come as a shock to me or strike me as wrong, was a risky move. It could end up diminishing her if they don't write her as 200% professional. The fact that she literally interrupted the captain in the middle of a mission to ask for two seconds to finish discussing their situation, for example, could be seen as a sign that as a, quote unquote, frail woman, she is unable to keep her personal life separate from her duty."

So, um, I guess, you know, Martina, I'm assuming, is referring to the scene where they're going down to the planet and Uhura is basically fighting with Spock about their relationship in the middle of an intense away mission and is, like, very upset about it. So, what did you guys think about...

43:24 | Andi

Well, I was also very upset about it. I was like, "Really? Really? Now is the time? Now is the time that you wanna have, like-

43:32 | Jarrah

Right.

43:32 | Andi

... a big relationship moment?" It, it, mmm, mmm, mmm...

43:36 | Sue

But then also, Kirk is, like, super into knowing what's going on, like eavesdropping. Even previously when he's in the, the turbo lift with Uhura, he's like, "Wait, are you two fighting?"

43:47 | Jarrah

Yep.

43:47 | Sue

"Tell me all about it." Like, he's a huge gossip.

43:50 | Jarrah

I took it that he was still, like, he wanted to be the bigger m- or, like, more manly than Spock, so he was sort of... It was like schadenfreude. Like, "Uhura rejected me for Spock, so I'm happy that they're fighting."

44:01 | Sue

But that whole scene, the whole reason for that fight, right? She's like, "You don't care," and, "What would that have done to me?" and, "Ugh," and his reaction is not, "It's not that I don't care, it's that I care too much."

44:15 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

44:15 | Sue

It's just, really?

44:17 | Jarrah

Yeah.

44:18 | Sue

Really?

44:19 | Andi

Yet again, something that I think could've worked with better writing and better execution. Like, you can almost kind of like th- s- see it on the horizon. For instance, in the first movie, they have a lovely moment in the, the lift where she's like-

44:34 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

44:34 | Andi

... "What do you need?" And she comforts him, but just enough and then when he kinda pushes her away, she seems to accept that. Like, she's like, "This is Spock. This is the man I love. This is how he reacts to, to extreme emotion. I'm not gonna take it personally. I'm gonna do what he needs."

44:52 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

44:52 | Andi

And then you have this flipped in this where she's... It's all about, "Why aren't you..." Basically, "Why aren't you acting like a human would?"

45:01 | Sue

Mm-hmm.

45:01 | Andi

You know what I mean? Like, "Why aren't you reacting like a normal human boyfriend? Why are you being all Vulcan-y?" As if she hasn't been in a relationship with this man and known what he's like for years now.

45:13 | Sue

And I think what he says in that situation is really powerful, that, you know, "I don't wanna feel this again, so I want to shut down."

45:20 | Andi

Mm-hmm.

45:20 | Sue

But it doesn't necessarily have to be said to a girlfriend. Like, Kirk could have confronted him about wanting, not wanting to come up from the volcano and he

could've said that to Kirk because they are... Have a very close friendship. Like, it's not necessary for it to be, you know, a relationship fight.

45:40 | Andi

Mm-hmm. Yep.

45:41 | Jarrah

Any other thoughts about Uhura in this movie? And she gets to kick some butt at s- kinda near the end of the movie, um, but I still felt like she was a bit underused.

45:50 | Andi

It really bothered me that when she went to, to, to speak Klingon, they let her speak Klingon and then basically fail.

45:57 | Sue

Yeah.

45:58 | Andi

I mean, like, I wanted, I wanted her to have this moment where she actually... She used her skills, and she got them out of, like, a tough-

46:06 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

46:06 | Andi

... jam, and instead they're like, "Here's Uhura. She's speaking Klingon. That's awesome. You know what's even more awesome? Benedict Cumberbatch coming outta nowhere and blasting 20 Klingons in one epic action move." And I was just like, "No." They undercut that moment so hard.

46:23 | Jarrah

Yeah. That is very true.

46:25 | Andi

Sad face.

46:26 | Sue

And when she beams down at the end, she's mostly just shooting a phaser.

46:29 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

46:29 | Sue

Isn't she?

46:30 | Jarrah

It's been a while since I watched it. I thought I remembered her kicking and stuff, but I would say she's assisting. She's not the primary person in the fight.

46:38 | Sue

Yeah. I just feel like if you were to show this movie to somebody who doesn't know *Star Trek* and you said afterwards, like, "Tell me about who, who Uhura is. Who is Uhura?" The answer would be, "Spock's girlfriend."

46:49 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

46:49 | Sue

And not, "The communications officer."

46:51 | Andi

Yeah.

46:51 | Sue

And I feel like those two descriptions should be reversed. She's the communications officer first. She can be Spock's girlfriend second.

46:59 | Jarrah

So, how do you think people would respond if you said, "Describe who Carol Marcus is," after seeing this movie?

47:05 | Andi

"Uh, she looks nice in her bra."

47:09 | Sue

Eye candy. That's who she is.

47:11 | Jarrah

Yeah.

47:13 | Sue

It's, uh, so disappointing. So disappointing.

47:16 | Jarrah

For sure. So, I mean, obviously the whole Carol Marcus bra thing was the... Probably the most controversial thing about *Star Trek: Into Darkness*, at least that I saw. There was a lot of people upset about it. This was one of the other issues I had in the marketing 'cause that bra shot was in all of the trailers, even though it didn't explain itself at all. It was, like, very clearly just saying, like, "Straight guys, come see this movie 'cause there's a lady with her bra in it."

47:39 | Sue

"There are boobs!"

47:41 | Jarrah

Yeah.

47:42 | Andi

We are pro-boob here. I wanna make sure-

47:44 | Jarrah

Absolutely.

47:45 | Andi

... that's clear. Boobs are awesome. But there has to be a reason.

47:48 | Jarrah

Yeah. There has to be a reason to show it and that this is supposed to be one of your... It's one of your two women characters that is really, you know, has any role in the plot whatsoever. Um, don't reduce her function to her boobs.

Uh, you know, and I think that the problem actually starts from literally her very first scene. She gives Kirk her credentials, which are super impressive. Spock is like, "You requested an additional science officer?" He's all, like-... defensive kind of, and Kirk reads it and says, you know, "Doctor of applied physics, specializing in advanced weaponry." And then Spock goes, "Impressive credentials, but redundant now that I'm back aboard the Enterprise."

And then Kirk basically is like wink, wink, nudge, nudge, like, "She's super hot. Let her on the ship." Like, he- he says, "And yet the more the merrier." Like, clearly that is what is happening is Spock says, "I can do all this shit myself. You don't actually need her," but Kirk is like, "Oh, whatever. She's hot."

So right- right away, like, her importance and her awesome credentials are like totally undermined by us being told she isn't needed on this mission.

48:52 | Sue

And that happens more than once.

48:53 | Andi

Yes. The other thing is that her being, uh, what is it? Admiral Marcus'...

49:00 | Jarrah

Daughter.

49:01 | Andi

Yeah, being Admiral Marcus's daughter adds an extra layer of her being defined by her male relationships.

49:08 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

49:08 | Andi

And so, at one point she's emotional blackmail, uh, at another point she's a damsel. You know, like I wanna see her science more. It was pretty cool that she, you know, like disarmed a huge missile. That was awesome. Like I wanna see more of that. I love that she's sciencing. I also love that McCoy is, uh, fruitlessly hitting on her 'cause it's one of my favorite weird things about McCoy that whenever he tries to hit on someone, he gets super creepy.

49:39 | Jarrah

Ha.

49:39 | Andi

He like starts talking about his hands.

49:42 | Jarrah

The arguments that J.J. [inaudible] and, uh, Damon Lindelof and other folks from the movie put out as to why the bra scene was okay was that, "Well, it's okay because we see Kirk with his shirt off in bed with ladies at the beginning, so, like, we're seeing Kirk partly naked, and we also filmed this Benedict Cumberbatch shower scene, but it didn't end up in the movie."

50:05 | Andi

Okay, but no, because Kirk and Khan both have other things that they do. They're not just being reduced to eye candy.

50:14 | Jarrah

Yeah. I mean, I think it's also important to note that, like, our society attaches really different baggage to male versus female sexuality. Kirk would totally be bragging, like, "Hey, I slept with twin cat girls," whereas, like, Carol Marcus said, "Hey, don't watch me change," and then he watches her change.

You know, so basically society says, like, guys who, um, are sexually promiscuous are studs and women are sluts. And so, I'm not saying that, like, you know, we should have prudish women characters to play into that, but you need to show that, like, women having sexual empowerment is a positive and okay thing, and she is not empowered at all in that scene.

50:52 | Sue

No, and he's clearly not respecting her.

50:55 | Jarrah

No.

50:55 | Sue

Y- she says, "Don't look," and he turns around, and it's not like... You know, you have those times where you just turn to talk to somebody and it doesn't even cross your mind, and he doesn't, you know, turn back and say, "I'm sorry." He just keeps watching.

51:07 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

51:07 | Sue

And they have her standing there basically posing for him and saying, "Don't watch," like it's supposed to be flirty.

51:13 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

51:14 | Sue

But it's just really uncomfortable.

51:16 | Jarrah

Yeah. Like, I mean, this still would've been semi-problematic, but even just, like, a super small tweak that would've put her in more of a position of power is she could've just straight up started changing right in front of him just to, like, make him uncomfortable. Um, I'm not saying that would've been totally unproblematic, uh, but that would've at least shown that, like, she was in control of the situation and, you know, didn't feel violated in any way.

51:45 | Sue

And the other response I've heard to this from some fans is, "Well, it's not a problem because, you know, he, h- Kirk has a son with her in, in the other timeline." I'm like-

51:56 | Jarrah

What? No.

51:57 | Sue

... but that's not this timeline. That's not these characters. I just, I don't understand that defense at all.

52:02 | Jarrah

I know, and I'm actually kind of disappointed that she's not coming back for the next movie because I feel like they owed that character a bit more. You know, she does have these incredible qualifications in the, you know, the prime universe. She builds the Genesis device, and it would've been cool to see her do something incredible on that scale.

Yeah, no, no, no qualms with the boobs, um, on, as a thing on their own. Just you need to have a reason, and you can't make that the only thing that one of your main character-women characters do.

52:34 | Sue

Totally. Yeah.

52:35 | Jarrah

Um, so we have Benedict Cumberbatch's Khan. This was obviously, like, a big controversy, not just about, like, people lying about it, but then this whole, um, issue of

you whitewashed this character. I mean, of course Ricardo Montalban was also not South Asian, and Khan is supposed to be, I believe, from India or of Indian descent.

But, uh, in this day and age there is a lot more, like, public discussion and awareness of the fact that, you know, casting white people as people of color is maybe not necessarily a cool thing, but, uh, we also... I mean, we do need to see people of color in all kinds of roles, and Khan is, like, one of the most, I mean, o- maybe the most epic *Star Trek* villain of all time, so possibly, it could've possibly been very cool.

And certainly, there are a lot of actors to choose from, and many people put together lists because there was an argument that, like, "Well, we just picked the best person for the job," and like, "We could only find talented white actors," was basically the argument.

53:31 | Sue

The thing about the character of Khan is that he is created, right, genetically engineered as the best. He is the smartest and the strongest and the most charming, and, you know, in the 1960s, even today, a minority.

53:52 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

53:53 | Sue

And before he even becomes a villain, when he's on the episode of *TOS*, before we know of his intentions, he is being described as this supreme human, this ultimate goal that people wanted to achieve with this genetic engineering, and he's not white.

54:12 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

54:12 | Sue

And that's huge.

54:15 | Jarrah

Yeah.

54:15 | Sue

And then you're casting... I mean-Really, no disrespect to Benedict Cumberbatch, but you're casting a pasty British man as this.

54:25 | Jarrah

Um, so the one other thing I f- feel like we have to talk about in this movie before we move on to the new trailer and then wrap things up is, um, this whole depiction of women in Starfleet Command, because we get a bunch of scenes, uh, and shots of Starfleet headquarters and there's really not a lot of women.

So, there's, you know, a big boardroom scene where there's, you know, a big room full of people, and I think women make up about a third of the people at the table, but, like, none of them get to talk. You only really see the fact that there are a third, uh, in this, like, super, super quick flash shot of the entire room, and then when it's, you know, moving around to shots of people's faces, you know, none of them really even have interesting reactions or anything.

Um, and there's a smaller meeting scene, kind of, uh, it feels like it's, like, in a hallway and there's a table with about, like, 10 people at it and one of them is a woman and the only time you see that is, like, they all stand up and you see the woman's back as she's leaving the room. So it, it kind of implies that, like, you get all the most important people in the Federation together and there's, like, not even close to gender equality.

55:32 | Sue

And there's no reason not to have more of them.

55:35 | Jarrah

Yeah.

55:35 | Sue

They have so many opportunities, even when, um, Spock is reassigned.

55:40 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

55:41 | Sue

That character is a Black man, which is great. He's not white, the new captain, but why not a Black woman?

55:47 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

55:48 | Sue

You know, you... There were so many opportunities. All these extra admirals and captains who are talking in this meeting, why do they all have to be men?

55:54 | Jarrah

Yeah, like the Geena Davis Institute put out a thing, and they said that b- one of the number one things that you can do is when you're writing a script and you say, you

know, "A crowd of people assembles," write in your script, "Half of whom are women." And then it might seem like that that would just happen naturally, but it just doesn't, and s- you know, so they actually wrote, um, a very positive response to the new *Star Wars* because that actually happens and, like, every background scene has a s- really strong number of women in it.

But do we think it's going to get better in the new movie? So, the new trailer just, uh, dropped, I guess, it'll be a few weeks ago whence this episode comes out. Uh, this is the very action-packed, Beastie Boys accompanied trailer.

Um, so what did you guys think about that? Let's maybe start with Sue.

56:40 | Sue

Oh, boy. My first reaction to it was that I didn't wanna watch it, to be honest with you. I... And when I did, it was kind of a sigh and an eye roll, like I guess I didn't really expect anything different 'cause it's just loud music and action and explosions and okay, great, that sounds like a summer blockbuster, but it doesn't sound like a *Star Trek* movie. And I know a lot of people feel differently and I know it's just a trailer, so I'm trying to be positive, and the thing that has actually given me the- the most hope since watching it is actually a clip of Simon Pegg, and it might've even been at the *Star Wars* premiere where he's talking about the trailer and says that it doesn't represent what they did for the movie. Um, and he doesn't say the words, but it almost feels like he wants to apologize for the trailer.

So, seeing that reaction to it, seeing that, you know, one of the writers was also not pleased with the trailer made me feel a little bit better.

57:43 | Jarrah

And I mean, just to be clear, technically this third movie is... Debatably we can't really call it the J.J.-verse anymore 'cause J.J. has gone on to *Star Wars*. So, we have, uh, Simon Pegg as the writer and, and we have Justin Lin as the director who, of course, is most well-known for *Fast and Furious*, but I've been told by people on my Tumblr on Trekkie Feminist, uh, to give him a chance because he has shown in previous work to

be particularly sensitive to racial depictions. So, I am trying not to be like, "Oh, it's the *Fast and Furious* guy." So, not thinking that right away, but certainly it felt like they were marketing this as *Fast and Furious* in space.

What did you think, Andi?

58:24 | Andi

I mean, it's not like it's a bad trailer. It's just... It feels very generic. I, I mean, I don't really feel anything special from it, anything that really says, "This is a *Star Trek* movie for me."

58:39 | Jarrah

Yeah. So, we had a c- a comment from Michelle on the trailer, um, who said, "Maybe Sofia Boutella's alien character..." And that's the, uh, the woman who's, you know, she's very, like, white skin, white hair with, like, sort of strange markings on her face, looks kind of *Star Wars*-y. Um, she says, "Maybe Sofia Boutella's c- alien character will get to have a conversation with Uhura about something that's not a male character. That's as high as I'm setting my hopes, really. That character may be an awesome fighter, but that doesn't make a good female character."

Um, so I th- yeah, I mean, I don't think we could tell a whole lot about her from the trailer. Um, I'm maintaining cautious optimism generally. Uh, one thing we could tell, and we knew this, uh, from some pictures from the, the thing is that they have finally given the women sleeves so that they can have rank braids, and some of them have pants now too, it appears, so, uh, that's kinda cool.

59:27 | Andi

I've never had a problem-

59:28 | Sue

Pants are a great option.

59:29 | Andi

... with the skirts.

59:29 | Sue

But I just wanna make it clear that the miniskirts are not the problem.

59:32 | Jarrah

No, no, absolutely.

59:33 | Andi

Yes.

59:34 | Jarrah

Um, but I, I have, like, the *TOS* mini dress, um, but I've always been a fan of functional uniforms. It... Like, that you should have a uniform that fits the situation you're in. So, if you're going down on an away mission, it probably makes sense for you to have pants, um, especially if you're gonna be, like, running and doing stunts and things like that. So, um, for me it's more about, like, you shouldn't actually make the situation more dangerous for your women characters by, like, forcing them to go out forever in miniskirts.

01:00:02 | Sue

Good point.

01:00:04 | Andi

Yeah. I was just gonna say that I have read some analysis of what the executives here, not the creators, not the, you know... The suits. What the suits want is they want a Marvel movie.

01:00:17 | Jarrah

Mm-hmm.

01:00:17 | Andi

And they want a Marvel franchise.

01:00:19 | Jarrah

Yeah.

01:00:19 | Andi

And then when...

01:00:20 | Sue

Yeah, well who doesn't?

01:00:21 | Andi

Well, so in that vein you have a movie like *Guardians of the Galaxy* getting a lot of attention from them. They're like, "Cool, we should replicate this." And I feel like that that's what they're trying to portray with this trailer just, like, "Hey, if you liked this awesome movie that made a ton of money, come see our movie and give us your money." You know it feels very suitsy.

01:00:43 | Jarrah

Yeah, I feel like they mashed up the marketing of *Guardians of the Galaxy* and *Star Wars*. But I like, I wanted to just circle around to this idea that, you know, we've all said a few times, is like, this doesn't feel like *Star Trek* to us. So, what is it about it that is not *Star Trek* and what would make it like *Star Trek*?

01:01:01 | Andi

Now what *Star Trek* means for me in general is space politics and exploration and new species and final frontiers, that kind of thing, where the emphasis is not on action, the emphasis is on learning more about the galaxy and about humanity. Sisko says it really well when he calls them explorers not just of, you know, planets but of humanity. That idea is *Star Trek* to me.

01:01:30 | Jarrah

Um, what about you Sue, what do you think?

01:01:33 | Sue

I mean I think that is pretty accurate. *Star Trek* for me is at its best when it makes us look at something in a different way. You know, I think it was talked about a lot in uh the Guinan episode that you guys did recently.

Like the scene that exemplifies *Star Trek* is that scene in “A Measure of a Man.” Really it’s the episode “A Measure of a Man,” but specifically the scene between Guinan and Picard, right? It’s— you’re in this situation, look at it this way. Or, what if we change it and do this to it. And it makes you think.

You know, *Star Trek*— I think people often put it down as trying to be too intelligent and I don't see that as a put-down at all. I want my science fiction to make me think and to make me question things.

01:02:24 | Jarrah

Yeah, I agree, um, but I think the other thing that was lacking particularly in *Into Darkness* is the vision of a better future and how if we come together, we can overcome the problems and the differences that we have today and, uh, become better together. And I think that that is like both of those things are part of the reason that *Star Trek* has maintained such an enduring following for so long even without having a regular series on the air and I think that was lost with the, the fact the whole J.J. not loving *Star Trek* and the suits feeling like the way to financial success is to emulate these other franchises rather than embracing the strengths of *Star Trek*.

01:03:04 | Andi

Word.

01:03:04 | Sue

But those strengths, the, the strengths of *Star Trek* don't do well as movies. They don't 'cause movies are meant it at least the way I see it, these, the really successful *Star Wars* movies, the really successful action movies, the franchises that are making tons at the theaters, are those action-packed romps. And that's not necessarily what *Star Trek* is.

I mean, I know we're getting a series next year, but *Star Trek* for me will always belong on television and I think that's where it does its best and I think that's where it has the opportunity and the time—'cause you have so much more time in a series—to really explore those issues and, and building that future that we want to work towards.

01:03:54 | Jarrah

I'm not totally willing to say that you couldn't make it work as a movie. I don't think that's what you're saying either but-

01:03:58 | Sue

It's not going to be that kind of financially successful.

01:04:03 | Jarrah

Possibly not.

01:04:03 | Sue

I'm not gonna– I'm not saying you're not gonna get a good movie, but if you want to have the kind of success you have with *Guardians of the Galaxy* or *The Force Awakens*, I really don't think you're gonna get that from *Star Trek* 'cause that's not what *Star Trek* is.

01:04:17 | Jarrah

Thanks so much for joining us today to talk about the J.J.-verse this is just one of the many topics being discussed on the Trek FM network recently, so here's a quick look at some of the other things you may have with missed elsewhere on the network.

01:04:28 | [Promotional content for other Trek F.M. shows]

01:07:14 | Jarrah

We also wanted to let you know about the Trek.FM Patreon. Trek.FM is a listener supported network. You can help us keep the *Star Trek* discussion coming by pledging a donation at patreon.com/trekfm. That's P-A-T-R-E-O-N.com/trekfm.

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Um, another thing you can do, which is super helpful, is to hop on over to iTunes and leave us a rating and review. Um, it's a good way for us to get feedback on how we're doing, and it really does help, um, other people discover our podcast through iTunes.

So, uh, thanks again. Um, Andi, where can people find you on the internet?

01:08:04 | Andi

Easiest place is my Twitter, uh, @firsttimetrek. Um, I'm currently on *DS9*, um, which I am enjoying immensely.

01:08:13 | Jarrah

And how about you, Sue? Where can people find you?

01:08:14 | Sue

You can find me, um, doing more podcasts and writing some blogs over at anomalypodcast.com.

01:08:21 | Jarrah

And I'm Jarrah, and you can find me at trekkiefeminist.tumblr.com or on Twitter @jarapenguin. Thanks a lot for listening.