

JARRAH: Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp. Join us as our crew of four women Star Trek fans boldly go on our biweekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name's Jarrah Hodge and thanks for tuning in to our very first show. So this podcast was the idea of our co-host Andi, also known as the First Time Trekker. And so I'm going to turn it over to Andi to talk about why she wanted to start this podcast.

ANDI: Yeah I mean basically I just kept running into you ladies all over the interweb talking about Star Trek and being awesome.

GRACE: We're inescapable.

ANDI: Yeah. And it was just kind of like hmm, all of these women are super interested in the same kind of things I'm interested in. Maybe we should sit down together and talk about that a little bit more. And then I kind of reached out to all of you and we all got very excited and now we're here recording our very first show, which is super exciting.

JARRAH: Yeah. Thanks Andi. I definitely noticed when I was listening to podcasts - there's a lot of great Star Trek podcasts out there, but there don't seem to really be a lot of women like acting as the main hosts, and it's kind of weird because Star Trek was so much a vision of a future where women at least theoretically were equals, so I thought it would be cool to get in on this project and have more women's voices heard in the fandom.

GRACE: I'm Grace Moore, from All Things Trek previously, and I started on All Things Trek because they needed a female perspective because they didn't have one and they couldn't think of another podcast that really had one. So honestly getting to be a part of a podcast that would be all female perspectives is a really exciting concept to me and I can't wait to see what we do.

SUE: I'm Sue from Anomaly and Anomaly is a female podcast. It's hosted by four women, we basically split it up into two groups, but we kind of cover all of geek culture so there is Firefly and Lord Of The Rings and fantasy and Sci-Fi and costuming and everything. And I was really excited after doing some guest spots on All Things Trek with Grace and Andi to be able to really focus on Star Trek, which is really my first love in the fandom. So even though I kind of have this, this woman sci-fi outlet already I'm excited to have a very specific Star Trek one.

ANDI: Yeah, just like dive into it, dive into a Star Trek and what it means to be a female Star Trek fan and what it means to have women be portrayed on this epic sci-fi show and the good and the bad and the ugly and the great of it all. I think it's a really rich topic that doesn't get enough attention.

JARRAH: Totally. And I'm looking forward to some of the episodes that we're going to have coming up. But, Sue, you talked a little bit about what you're doing with the Anomaly podcast, but I'm wondering if maybe Andi and Grace could tell us a little bit about the projects they're working on now.

ANDI: Well I'm doing a live tweet of my first time seeing Star Trek. So I've always been a total geek. But for whatever reason I always held off on Star Trek until finally when I did, it I was like wow, I've got to make it big. I've been waiting so long. So I just started live tweeting it and I didn't really think that people would respond to it but they seemed to really enjoy seeing somebody seeing Star Trek for the first time. And like ooh and ah and gasp as I flipped out at big moments and got angry when fans usually get angry and just kind of see a fresh perspective on it, and it really took off in a way I was not expecting at all. So that's been really fun. It's going to be interesting being on this broadcast because I've only seen The Next Generation and the first two seasons of The Original Series so hopefully I can catch up to you guys and start diving into you know DS9 and Voyager and Enterprise and all that good stuff. I promise I will continue to go until there's no Star Trek left.

GRACE: Don't say that - that's so grim sounding, like a finite amount of it that we're working towards.

ANDI: Yes. Until the next series starts, right?

GRACE: Optimism!

SUE: Just, until you're caught up, that's as far as it needs to go. Just go until you're caught up.

JARRAH: Yes.

GRACE: Until we're all on the same page.

SUE: And then you'll have the novels through comics too.

ANDI: Ooh! Are there comics too?

SUE: Oh yeah. Yeah there are comics to.

ANDI: There's like there's like an infinite Star Trek universe for me to first time track. So I think it'll be OK.

GRACE: We have no shortage of material for you.

JARRAH: I would say the novels are better for women but maybe we will have a show at some point where we just talk about novels or comics and dissect some of the highs and lows.

ANDI: You guys can be my mentors in the whole Star Trek experience.

GRACE: Aww. We're going to take you under our little ship wings.

SUE: The thing about the novels just really quickly is that even though they are professional published authors. The quality of the novels and the Star Trek universe range from really fantastic to worse than the worst fanfiction you can read for free.

JARRAH: Yes.

SUE: So you just have to be aware of what you're getting yourself into.

GRACE: It's really going to be varied and you're really going to run the gamut between good and bad in every direction.

ANDI: Well to be honest so far that's been my experience with Star Trek in general especially The Original Series...

GRACE: So it's just part of the overall experience then.

JARRAH: Does anyone else have anything they want to say in this intro section about, like the Star Trek fandom?

GRACE: I would, actually. Another reason I was really interested in doing this was because recently All Things Trek, which was the podcast I was working on, has come to its sad conclusion and I found even though the podcast stopped, I didn't stop having opinions and things to say about Star Trek. So I guess it's good that this outlet comes along. Otherwise I'm probably just going to end up standing on a street corner just yelling at people: "Deep Space Nine was underrated! What's wrong with you people?!" I'm going to be like a street-side preacher or something. Spreading the gospel of Roddenberry.

ANDI: I picture you more on a bus.

GRACE: I'm just afraid that if we don't put together some kind of outlet for this, that's how I end up on the 11 o'clock news. And I don't think anyone wants that. So really this is like a community service thing for me. Also my writing can also be read on the Mythcreants blog doing pop culture analysis, especially when it comes to horror writing and the roles of women in horror.

JARRAH: Awesome. I also don't think I mentioned that I blog at trekkiefeminist.tumblr.com. And basically because I am a huge Star Trek geek and I'm a feminist, so I mostly do episode-by-episode analysis in no particular order whatsoever. But sometimes I want to talk about a theme that's happening, like crazy costumes for ladies on the show and it's too long to write a post about, so I'm looking forward to discussing some of that stuff more with you guys.

ANDI: We're going to discuss the Duras Sisters' like Power Girl boob armor right?

GRACE: Oh yeah, the Klingon Boob window is a staple of Klingon culture. We gotta analyze that. So much boob based analysis.

JARRAH: Did you know that when - so the first time that Barbara March and Gwynyth Walsh, who played Lursa and B'etor, were on the set for TNG, Gene Roddenberry this time was like...he was not doing so well health-wise, but he was up in his office watching the dailies and basically saw the sisters in this costume and told his assistant guy: "We got to go down to the set." Yes this was a story that Gwynyth Walsh and the...I forget his name...Richard [Arnold]. His assistant was telling it at Star Trek Las Vegas last year and they said that he comes down to the set and Barbara March is there and he basically pokes her right in the boob window and says, "Are those things real?" Yeah it's pretty gross, but I'm sure we will talk a lot about the things Roddenberry did do for women.

ANDI: Well I mean I've heard stories about that from as early as The Original Series and he had some very strong opinions on what the women were wearing.

GRACE: No kidding.

ANDI: So I think that will be a very deep topic for us to explore.

JARRAH: Yeah absolutely I think that there's kind of a myth that goes around in the fandom that if Roddenberry had had his way everything would be amazing and progressive and feminist and there would be gay characters and everything, but the more you look behind the scenes the more that you realize it was complicated and it wasn't just the networks getting in the way. There were just these attitudes of the time permeating the whole thing.

GRACE: People may have been progressive but they were still just people and by products at time they were in or they were just dudes who really liked boobs.

SUE: Exactly.

ANDI: One of the two.

GRACE: Yep. Or...they're not mutually exclusive.

SUE: I think we can agree that it probably would have been a bit better, but it by no means would have been perfect, and some things may have even been worse.

JARRAH: But we didn't want to spend this whole episode, you know, thinking about the ways that Star Trek hasn't done so well. I'm sure we'll do plenty of that to come. We wanted to start out by talking about some of our favorite women characters so you can get to know us a little bit better and because honestly we all love this show and we would not be able to spend so much time talking about it if we didn't. So I'm going to start with Andi, because she's seen the least she has the least characters to pick from. So who is your favorite female character so far?

ANDI: I have so many names just flowing through my mind at this moment. I'm going to go with Guinan. I just really just really dig Guinan because not only is she really calm and zen sometimes, other times she's got a big gun and is like ready to just tear things up. And I've always thought that she's very mysterious and I always wanted to know more about her. And just in general I think Whoopi Goldberg's a really great actress. And they actually gave her some of my favorite moments on The Next Generation, especially my favorite scene so far of Star Trek ever. And bear in mind I still have three series and like a million movies to go. But when Guinan and Picard are talking in "The Measure of

a Man' at the bar or about what it means to be human. That is my favorite scene of all time. And she is so beautiful in that scene that I'm going to...yeah I'm I'm sticking with Guinan and we'll see if that changes. Might be an evolving opinion.

JARRAH: I think Guinan's a great choice.

GRACE: I think everyone's got a little love for her.

ANDI: Plus she had really cool hats, let's face it, right?

JARRAH: Oh yeah, the best.

GRACE: Right? The future of millinery - It's going so far and I'm already excited.

JARRAH: When I was little I used to wrap my towel - I had like this huge, huge, huge bath towel and I used to like wrap it around my head so that it made like the red one with the ruffles around the edges and I used walk around and pretend I was Guinan. I was super, super popular at school, let's just say.

GRACE: Weren't we all?

ANDI: Absolutely. I was homecoming queen.

GRACE: So you were the coolest one there then.

ANDI: Oh yes.

JARRAH: So Grace, how about you go next with your favorite character?

GRACE: I am going to definitely have to say Major Kira from Deep Space Nine, because I really I got to hand it to and I got to love any female character who makes it very clear from day one that she does not have to change her attitude to make you comfortable, she's not going to let you walk over her. She is not going to let you push her around. And I really appreciate getting to see that in a female character, because the majority of the time if you see the trait of being bull-headed or just really straightforward or bossy in a female character, you get the B-word bandied around a lot, but I really love getting to see those in a female character, because not all women are pushovers and that's just something. It's great to see a woman who is assertive who is not just played off as being nasty or rude. And I really appreciate seeing that in her character and also she was tough as nails and who doesn't love that? She was awesome. She just kicked some ass and took some names and led part of a resistance. I mean what's not to admire there? Also she rocked a red jumpsuit, just sayin'

JARRAH: I wanted to ask you guys - I'm stealing this question from another podcast that I was on called Subspace Transmissions. Someone wrote into that podcast and asked: "Who do you think is more about badass, Kira or Ensign Ro?"

GRACE: Kira, totally!

JARRAH: Explain.

GRACE: But that's probably, not to like you know pooh-pooh Ensign Ro or anything, but we definitely get to see more of Kira and not only do we get to see the hardship she has overcome, we also get to see the hardships she has to endure in order to grow as a character, to get from a point where she's just pretty much hardened ex-rebel stuck in an administrative job, going to someone who is part of an active, who is an active member of a team of people from various different backgrounds but all working towards the exact same goal. Even at one point being comfortable working with people who she used to be in a literal war against. We see a level of forgiveness and character growth from Major Kira that I don't think we would have ever seen with Ro. Again, not to pooh-pooh on Roe or her straight-forward and brashness. I admire that. Like I said, I love seeing that actually portrayed in a female character, but at the same time I think we saw Kira have to learn to forgive. Which is very hard to see, to get a character to do in a way that you will actually buy, and just as says so much about her growth as a

character.

SUE: I think Roe was written in a very stereotypical way and it could just be because of the tone of The Next Generation, but to me she comes off as like the broken, whiny teenage girl that you kind of get in a lot of different stories. And Kira was able to move beyond that and she didn't have the same trappings that that role did as a character, and that is nothing against the portrayal of the role but it's really how it was written and how it fit in with the tone of the rest of the crew.

GRACE: If Ro was the angry, disgruntled teenager then Kira was the grownup who was having to grow out of being that teenager.

JARRAH: Andi, I know you haven't seen major Kira yet, but do you have thoughts on Ensign Ro?

ANDI: I do. I liked her as a character. I thought she was one of the stronger characters on TNG for women, just because, although they do go into kind of the Picard fatherly relationship, so much of her story is not driven by male relationships, which is a flaw that a lot of the other female characters had. So it was nice to see her...the main thrust of her story is basically her people in the war and you know all these things that she is going through because of that, and prejudice against her for her race and stuff like that. That's not stuff we got to see from any of our major female characters from TNG, just because they were so defined by their relationships to the men on the ship, which...they are still great characters but it was nice to see her kind of be a little more independent than that.

JARRAH: Yeah definitely. I think I'm I'm surprised both you, Sue, and Grace immediately jumped to Kira, because that's also where I went but I didn't think we were necessarily all going to land on the same page. I love Michelle Forbes, and I really like Ensign Ro and I think her episodes are some of the best episodes of TNG. But I think that it's badass to adapt to a situation and to, you know, muddle through these problems about you know are you going to sacrifice various principles for the greater good of your people. And it is interesting that, you know, Ro really does sort of gravitate towards father figures like Captain Picard. And in her final episode the Maquis guy that she's going to make hasperat for, whereas Kira, we get to see a bit more of her I mean she definitely has father figures but we also get to see her connecting with her mother.

So Sue who's your favorite character?

SUE: Well I actually wanted to add one more thing to the Ro/Kira debate

GRACE: Ooh, go for it.

SUE: Which is that, I don't know if you guys know this, but the role of Kira originally was supposed to be Ro.

GRACE: Yeah that's right.

SUE: You know, it's supposed to be the first officer on Deep Space Nine. And Michelle Forbes turned down the offer. So they wound up basing Kira on what they had done in Ro. And I think my feelings about Ro would be different had it been her through Deep Space Nine.

GRACE: Definitely, we definitely got to see more of Kira than Ro. So we don't know what could've been. But it is interesting to wonder.

SUE: But to actually answer the question that was posed to me, my favorite woman on Star Trek is Beverly Crusher.

JARRAH: Yes.

GRACE: Nice.

SUE: I can't really put it completely into words. I mean, I literally started watching The Next Generation when it first started airing. I have been watching it almost my entire life and I, just there's something I

love about that character. And you know as I grew up and looked at it more and tried to figure out why, you've got this, you've got a woman who is at the top of her field, but she has other stuff going on in her life. She's not a one-dimensional character. She is creative and she's writing plays and she's directing theater troupes and she dances and she has different types of relationships with the different characters, with the other characters on the ship. And there's just so much more, so that she's not just one thing. And I think that that's a lot of it for me. And I don't even know what else to add, other than that I have been dying my hair red since the seventh grade because of Gates McFadden. So there you go.

GRACE: Yay.

ANDI: Gates McFadden is so talented and so beautiful. Sometimes it's literally hard to look at her face. She's so gorgeous and then just to have so much talent. And I think that kind of really comes through in the character. Crusher is just, just the spirit of the woman that's playing her kind of shines through

SUE: And she's snarky. She does not back down if they want her to do something. I always think of that scene in "The High Ground" where there's the terrorist explosion and she doesn't want to beam up and Picard and Riker exchange glances on the bridge and Riker says, "Well, I don't want to be the one to meet her in the transporter room." Yup that's about it.

ANDI: You run, Riker.

JARRAH: That's awesome. So Grace took mine, but I kind of thought that was going to happen. And I think, you know, I'm going to put in a plug here for the person who used to be my favorite Star Trek character as a kid, who was Captain Janeway.

SUE: Janeway is awesome.

JARRAH: She is. I think that in some ways, like, it's become kind of cool to hate on her in some groups, because I think there are some reasonable arguments that she wasn't written terribly consistently. But that said, I think that a lot of that was that the writers were so incredibly conscious of the fact that she was the first woman captain, that if you go back and you read about their processes, they're talking about like, well we had to make sure she wasn't too soft, but she also wasn't too cold and she also wasn't too this and that. So they were trying so hard to avoid fitting stereotypes that I think that came across as inconsistency in terms of her decision-making sometimes.

GRACE: It is definitely challenging to work, not so much on writing a character as just a general ideal.

SUE: I was on a panel at Dragon Con this year and somebody asked the question or said, made the comment that they didn't like Janeway because she never really broke down. And I said wait a minute. Time out. I understand what you're saying as an overall thing, but remember that this is like the mid to late 90s. This is the first woman Captain. If she broke down when her ship got lost in the Delta Quadrant or when they encountered the Borg or whatever, you're immediately going to lose all your viewers. Maybe not all your viewers but what they considered their main demographic, because you're a woman in charge is suddenly having an emotional crisis. So they literally could not do that because of the societal temperament at the time that would be too big a risk to have the person who's leading have a breakdown if that person is a woman, because of the stereotypes surrounding women in leadership positions.

JARRAH: Yeah I absolutely agree.

SUE: And that's that's kind of cyclical. But you know what I'm talking about,

JARRAH: Yeah, I was reading an interview with Kate Mulgrew I think around Season One and she said like I am envisioning Janeway getting to do all these things. I want to see her being really angry. I want to see her crying. I want to see her doing all these things, but it just became really clear like you said that they couldn't. I mean they had the one episode where she's basically suffering from – it seems like depression and she was refusing to talk to people. And that is something people will cite as evidence that she was the worst captain ever. It's like, just having the human response to something.

GRACE: How dare you feel things?

JARRAH: Yeah it's like the saying that Ginger Rogers did everything Fred Astaire did but she did it backwards and in high heels - the expectations on women are so much higher. So I really I think though that there's so much to be grateful for in Captain Janeway and how she got to be a scientist and she got to geek out with B'Elanna all the time. We got to see her picking up her phaser rifle and killing crazy flying viruses. And it was, she was super important to me as a kid.

ANDI: I think she was super important to a lot of people. I was at the Chicago Star Trek convention, which was my first Star Trek convention – First Time Trek - and Kate Mulgrew was there. And first of all she was awesome, because William Shatner – bless him - was way over his hour and he was just going and going and going. More stories to tell, you know. And Kate Mulgrew literally barges onto the stage and is like, “No, I’m here now.” So she did not she does not let him run into her time and she definitely held her own against him. And I was fun for me because I haven't seen Janeway yet, but it was just this strong actress. And she was talking so much about, oh my gosh, the pressure she got for her hair, like oh what kind of hairstyle? She's like, just let me act! I just want to act. Stop talking about my hair. Stop changing my hair. I don't care about my hair.

GRACE: Yeah.

ANDI: And then you know it was I guess I wasn't so surprised about this but it was kind of striking to me how many women came up to the mic when it was her question and answer time and just basically said thank you. Thank you for portraying that role. It meant so much to me growing up and thank you for being the female Star Trek captain and doing it great. And just thank you. And it was at least five people and it was really, really nice to see, and one reason why I think these sorts of things are important. And I know sometimes we get pushback on our critiques of these sort of gender roles in Star Trek, but they really do make a difference in how people see women in general and how they see themselves and why diversity matters in fiction. And it's not trivial. So this is why we like to talk about this kind of stuff is because it does matter in the overall world how these things are portrayed. So I am super excited to see Janeway. Not gonna lie.

SUE: Voyager started airing around the time that I entered high school and that is when a lot of women and a lot of girls start dropping out of the maths and the sciences. So there was this captain who was a scientist who was sciencing all over the place, with her engineer who was also a woman, and they figured out the problems together. It wasn't like Kirk or Picard just calling down to engineering and saying, “Fix it.” It was Janeway saying, “What's the problem? Ok here is how you fix it.” And I had these two really strong women working together, not against each other, every week on my TV and now I have a degree in chaotic dynamics. So thank you, Kate Mulgrew.

ANDI: I mean it's not just her, right? It's like, there's generations of astronauts who cite Star Trek as an influence of why they did what they did. And how would little girls feel growing up and never seeing any women doing it on Star Trek? I mean you get discouraged even if you're not aware of the discouragement even if it's just subconscious having those kind of role models to look up to makes the difference.

GRACE: Yeah.

JARRAH: We're not going to take too much time today. But before we wrap up I wanted to take a look at some of the episodes that we're looking at doing over the next little while and if you have ideas for future episodes you want to see us do, you can e-mail us at crew@womenatwarp.com, So Andi or Grace, do one of you want to tell the audience a bit about some of the shows you are planning?

ANDI: I'm super excited to talk about the way violence is portrayed against women in Star Trek, and Star Trek in general but also The Original Series, the series that I'm watching right now. And there have been some super egregious episodes in which violence against women is portrayed very badly and I really, really want to dive into that.

GRACE: I am personally really looking forward to discussing some of the character trait double standards, like the sort of thing where if you see this characteristic on a male character it's OK, he's

just being a dude, but if you see it on a girl, it's like like what a bitch! Why do we think that automatically? And what are the examples that we have of that peppered throughout Star Trek, which we really do?

JARRAH: What about you Sue?

SUE: I'm really excited to talk about the Ferengi feminist revolution, because I think it's interesting to see the development of not only other cultures in Star Trek, but changes within those cultures and how they react to it amongst themselves and how the cultures from the outside react to what's going on internally.

JARRAH: Totally. You know we had, like that moment in the Space Nine where where Rom quotes from the Communist Manifesto. And I'm kind of sad that we didn't ever have Ishka, like actually quoting Earth feminist texts because that would have just been so amazing.

SUE; Just have some bell hooks appear in Star Trek.

JARRAH: I have seen an Ishka Rosie the Riveter Ferengi shirt that says "We can do it. We've got the lobes." I'm looking forward to talking about the most awesome lady captains other than Janeway. I'm sure we'll talk more about Janeway too later, but there's actually a fair number of some pretty cool women captains in Star Trek, so I'm excited to talk about people like Rachel Garrett and Erika Hernandez. So yeah.

GRACE: I'm excited. Are you guys excited?

JARRAH: Yeah.

ANDI: I'm super excited.

ANDI: Well it's time for us to sign off but you can find more Women at Warp at our website, womenatwarp.com, and also on Twitter [@womenatwarp](https://twitter.com/womenatwarp). And if you're interested in finding out more about our podcast's upcoming topics and just us in general that is the place to go. My name's Andi., You can find me [@FirstTimeTrek](https://twitter.com/FirstTimeTrek) Twitter and also my archive project for all of my life tweeting is firsttimetrek.tumblr.com

GRACE: I'm Grace Moore and you can find me on Twitter or at the All Things Trek archives on trekradio.com.

SUE: I'm Sue and you can find more from me on the Anomaly Podcast at anomalypodcast.com.

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