

(Audio clip from "Wolf in the Fold")

Sybo: Fear, anger, hatred. Anger feeds the flame. Oh! Oh, there is evil here! Monstrous terrible evil!  
Hatred of all that lives, hatred of women! Redjac! (shrill scream)

\*Begin WAW\*

Andi: 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. I'm Andi, your moderator for the week, and I'm joined by our whole crew: Jarrah, Grace and Sue. Hi everyone!

Grace: Hey!

Jarrah: Hi!

Sue: Hey!

Andi: Today we're going to talk about an Original Series episode called "Wolf in the Fold." Now, I don't think we really want to be an "episode reviews" show by any stretch of the imagination, but there are a lot of episodes throughout all of the series that are either extremely great for women or, in this case, extremely terrible for women. And I think that it'd be useful to kind of dive into some of these episodes and really understand what made them work or not work.

Grace: Yeah, this is definitely a squeaky wheel we're giving the grease to.

Andi: (laughs) Exactly! So, for those of you who blessedly do not remember the episode "Wolf in the Fold," basically the summary is: Scotty is accused of killing a belly dancer. And, "goodness gracious what's going on? We must clear Scotty of his belly dancing murder."

Grace: (sarcastically) Well, of course to avenge the woman, right?

Andi: Oh, no, no, no it's all about Scotty. So.

Grace: Oh, oh of course.

Andi: Basically, Scotty gets accused of murder and Kirk and McCoy and Spock have to clear his name. It's kind of the overall--

Grace: This is a literal case of "bros before hoes."

(Laughter)

Andi: That's the overall idea of the episode. Our first scene is actually set in some sort of belly dancing, exotic dancer, I don't know, club I guess you could call it.

Sue: Before we even get into the action of what is happening here, the whole thing is set up with the floor cushions and the colors and the druggy opium atmosphere. It's classic trappings of what people called orientalist which is like, I can't--I hate even saying it. The whole thing is just so racist and Eurocentric that just even looking at the first scene upsets me. Before dialogue is even uttered!

Andi: We have a white woman doing the belly dancing.

Jarrah: Yeah to the same music that they used in "The Cage" for the Orion belly dancing, which is another example of orientalism; of basically this white idea of the "exotic far east."

Grace: Also, it's just lazy! Give us different music, dang it!

Sue: They can only pay for so much music. (Laughs)

Andi: And the belly dancing wasn't good. (sarcastically) I mean if you're going to culturally appropriate and be racist at least make it good dancing, right?

Grace: Yeah!

Andi: Yeah, so, even from the get go the set dressing--you're right, Sue, you can tell what kind of place this is right off the bat.

Jarrah: So, did we even mention yet why they are in this place? Because I think that's important.

Andi: My least favorite "why" for anything? Yeah, so McCoy and Kirk have decided to bring Scotty to this place because, apparently, on some un-aired episode, a female engineer made a mistake that injured Scotty and now he harbors an "irrational hatred of women." And that's literally how they put it.

Grace: Wow. Yeah.

Andi: Yeah, I mean, that's nice. I'd like to think that Scotty would be, you know, logical enough to know that one woman making a mistake doesn't condemn all women, but apparently not.

Sue: I think they use resentment, not hatred. Just before we get hatred (from listeners).

Andi: (sarcastically) So much better.

(Laughter)

Grace: Are they trying to get him off the big horse and onto a little horse from resentment to objectifying? What is their long-term plan here?

Jarrah: (laughing) Yeah definitely.

Andi: Apparently, their long-term plan is to get him laid so he'll remember all of the good things about women and then he won't resent them anymore.

Grace: (laughing) Yes, hopefully we can show Scotty the way to remember: boobs, they're a thing!

(Laughter)

Andi: I mean it's just such a terrible concept. First of all, in what universe is sex with a woman necessarily respect for a woman? I mean, using a woman sexually is a huge part of misogyny.

Grace: Yeah

Andi: The whole concept is very baffling to me, why they think that this would solve a problem and not make it worse.

Grace: Let's just establish right off the bat that this episode is a symphony of poor planning.

Jarrah: Yeah. This first scene strikes me as like the 23rd century equivalent of a business meeting in a Playboy Club today.

Grace: Yeah, pretty much.

Jarrah: You have Kirk, Scotty and McCoy basically leering at these dancers and as soon as one of them goes off with Scotty, Kirk's basically like, "Mission accomplished!" as far as Scotty is concerned. Basically, "We're going to get him laid and then he will be fine again." And then he's like, "Bones, I know a little place across town where the women," and then McCoy interrupts him and goes, "Oh yes! I know the place. Let's go."

Grace: Charming.

Andi: Since when is the captain's responsibility to procure women for his crew?

Grace: I guess his double duty as a captain is morale officer? I couldn't tell you honestly.

Andi: It's just truly disturbing.

Grace: And also do you think he's doing this for the lady crewmen also? I don't.

Sue: No girls allowed.

Andi: I would doubt it.

Grace: Yeah.

Jarrah: Scotty does say, "Now that's what I call a real captain. Always thinking of his men."

Sue: So creepy!

Andi: So, basically this this whole opening scene lasts what, five minutes, four minutes, something? And we already have just egregious both racism and sexism. I also just want to point out that I, myself, in my feminism, I do not have a problem with sex workers. I do not have a problem with strippers.

Grace: Goodness, no.

Andi: I do not have a problem with sex work as an actual job. I don't think it's anti-feminist. I don't think it's immoral. But the way they introduce this dancer is: her sole purpose is to be used by Scotty.

Grace: She is a means to an end, not a person.

Sue: Absolutely.

Andi: Exactly. And that's why I have a problem with it. It's not because she's, apparently, some sort of sex worker, although I don't know if they even explicitly say that so much as it's really heavily implied.

Grace: Well, not on a network show. They're not gonna say it.

Jarrah: It's pretty clear from the context and I think that what happens next shows what makes it even more problematic.

Andi: Yeah, we don't even get to the first murder before we get to a lot of really horrible misogyny. But then, so Scotty and, I don't even know--do they name her?

Jarrah: Kara.

Andi: Okay, so they wander out into the fog, which I guess is creepy.

Grace: Space fog!

Andi: Space fog is always creepy and a sure sign of shenanigans to come. (Laughter) So, they wander out into the fog and suddenly there's a scream and McCoy and Kirk come running out into the space fog and there is Scotty and our lovely Kara is murdered on the ground.

Jarrah: And Scotty is holding the bloody knife.

Grace: (sarcastically) Well this is gonna be totally an open and shut case though, right? I mean that poor woman.

Andi: Obviously he's got the bloody knife, he's standing over the body.

Sue: No, "That poor woman," is never uttered. It's more of "How are we going to get Scotty out of this?!"

Grace: (sarcastically) Priorities!

Andi: Yeah, I think this is the main problem with this episode: throughout the episode there are more murders to come, but the main, biggest problem with this episode is that the priority of Kirk and McCoy is never to protect, or get justice for, or even care very much about these women who are being murdered. Their priority number one is to protect Scotty, even though they are not completely sure that he has not done this.

Grace: It's always charming in any event when you when you see someone being defended purely on the basis of, "Well, we know this guy! He's a good guy! He wouldn't do that," which is a very uncomfortable thing to have to think of if you've seen, sort of, that defense used before in any case of violence against women or just violence in general.

Andi: Yeah, I mean a huge part of rape culture is like, "But he's such a nice guy, he would never do that." Well, okay, he never showed that side of himself to you. That doesn't mean he's not capable of, you know, being violent towards women.

Grace: Exactly, and just the unwillingness of these characters to show any sort of moral empathy or willingness to say "Well, wait a minute here," is just really kind of disturbing and kind of telling of their

leadership skills, isn't it?

Jarrah: Yeah, I mean the people on the planet, the Magistrate, they are very upset about this and they say that Scotty is going to have to face death by torture if they can't prove his innocence. But they're portrayed as overreacting and just taking this way too far in railroading an innocent man, even though they're acting pretty reasonably given the evidence and the seriousness of the crimes committed on their planet.

Grace: Yeah.

Andi: Yeah. So, we start bringing in the actual police or leadership of the planet. You're right, Jarrah, that they start what they consider their justice process and Kirk is very resistant to it. On the one hand, he wants to, you know, respect their laws. On the other hand, he wants to get Scotty out of there without having to have him, you know, face any sort of punishment for this crime that he may have committed. Then we get to starting to dive into their culture, which apparently is supposed to be completely dependent upon pleasure, which I never quite understood as a concept. It's supposed to be some sort of hedonistic society.

Sue: It seems like the pre-Risa, in the sense that they have built their economy on catering to the men. Of course, that stop by for rest and relaxation, if you will.

Jarrah: Yeah. This is actually a great time for me to bring in a quote from Gene Roddenberry. So, this script was written by Robert Bloch, the horror writer who also wrote the awesome episode "Catspaw," and it was heavily revised by Gene Coon. So, Gene Roddenberry at one point wrote a memo to Gene Coon where he said, "Let's establish that the nature of this place keeps women eternally young, beautiful, and remarkably busty. Perhaps hormones work better here. At any rate, let's cast and clothe in that direction with a vengeance. This place is remarkably peaceful because the women are beautiful and they screw a lot. Isn't that logical? Or if we can't be logical let's at least just be provocative."

Grace: Yikes. That's delightful.

Sue: Wow. So, beautiful women who screw a lot means peace.

Grace: Well, if we learned anything from Lysistrata it was that. (laughter) That's your Greek Theater reference for the day folks.

Sue: I appreciate it.

Andi: I just--I'm blown away by that quote, Jarrah. I mean we knew that this element existed, right? Watching the episode, you can see that theme comes through. But to have it so specifically stated as the goal is just really disturbing.

Jarrah: Yeah, it's pretty gross. So, should we go on to the next scene where they bring down Lieutenant Karen Tracy from the ship with this new invention called a "psychic tricorder" that can record someone's memories?

Grace: That's a very convenient invention!

Jarrah: That we never see again because maybe it's a little too convenient.

Grace: Before we move on though can I really quickly bring it back to the writer of this episode, Robert Bloch? And remind everyone of his most famous work that he was, you know, for a while internationally known for: a little movie called "Psycho" based off of a book he wrote.

Jarrah: (sarcastically) Which has no gender issues at all. Totally feminist.

Grace: Oh, absolutely! Absolutely! (laughter) This dude has a great track record here. Also, fun fact, he was considered the protégé of H.P. Lovecraft for a while. They had a long running correspondence from when Bloch was a teenager. I just think that's neat.

Andi: Anything to do with H.P. Lovecraft "fun facts" is pretty neat.

Grace: Also, pretty telling, I'd say. Just putting that out there. And Bloch in turn was, supposedly, the mentor of horror author Jack Ketchum. Supposedly. So, there's this whole cycle of dudes mentoring dudes into writing books about women getting murdered.

Jarrah: With veins of racism and orientalism.

Grace: Oh, but of course. Also, for the record, Bloch has been known in his work to have a certain affinity for a certain historical murder of sex workers that just might play into this later on.

Andi: Yeah, and I think we definitely have to get into that kind of romanticization--is that a word?

Grace: Romanticization. Something like that. The romance-y bits!

Andi: I don't know a better way to put that. The way they romanticize Jack the Ripper in this episode.

Grace: Spoiler.

Jarrah: They approached Robert Bloch because he had written a story called, I think, "Yours Truly Jack the Ripper." And they specifically said, "We want you to write Jack the Ripper in space."

Grace: Which is such a weird priority to have. I mean I want to know who was like, "That's a great idea! We're going to specifically go out of our way to have a Jack the Ripper in space story."

Sue: And I think that's why it doesn't feel like Star Trek. It doesn't feel like a Star Trek episode.

Grace: It definitely has an agenda behind it and that's really obvious.

Sue: Well, yeah.

Grace: And really awkward.

Jarrah: There's also a behind the scenes part where Robert Justman, in his instructions to Bloch is saying, incidentally, "The victims have to be women because Jack the Ripper only preyed on female," he uses the word, "prostitutes." And so again they were very deliberately writing, not just about Jack the Ripper, but about Jack the Ripper killing women.

Grace: (sarcastically) This episode is just after our hearts isn't it.

Andi: It really is. I also like how one of our main characters here is Hengist, who is kind of leading the investigation and is played by the actor who voiced Piglet.

Grace: Yep! Bringing us the glorious after effects of never being able to really hear Piglet the same way again.

Andi: It's a really weird choice for an actor.

Grace: But we'll get to it later. John Fiedler is a very skilled actor though, who did some pretty good work. Look him up. IMDB him. See what you can find.

Andi: And then we also have Jaris, who is kind of the Magistrate, I think is his title, and his wife Sybo. And they're there to remind everyone that the law of Argelius is love and everything to do with love.

Jarrah: And if you break it you will be tortured.

Grace: Goodness, I was afraid for a minute you'd say, "If you break you buy it." But that's actually a relief to hear.

Jarrah: (jokingly) Yeah, the law is love and if you break the law they will kiss you all over!

(laughter)

Grace: Ah looks like someone's going to be tortured to death via cuddles!

(laughter)

Andi: All right. So, Jarrah you were bringing up the next pretty egregious scene in bringing down Lieutenant Tracy.

Jarrah: Yeah, so at this point they're at Jaris's house and Karen Tracy is put in a room, alone with Scotty, with the psycho tricorder and she doesn't have a guard or a weapon or anything.

Grace: They don't even put the dude in handcuffs or anything?

Jarrah: (sarcastically) No because he obviously didn't do it because he's a nice guy!

Sue: He's a nice guy™

Grace: Trademark that, yeah.

(laughter)

Jarrah: So, they kind of leave the room. Then there's a scream and they come in and Karen Tracy is on the floor having been stabbed and her dress is ripped.

Grace: (sarcastically) What?! Who could have foreseen this happening?

Jarrah: Yeah, and Scotty is slumped unconscious with the knife in his hand, which is, apparently, the same knife from the first murder because people are also really terrible at taking care of evidence.

Grace: Olivia Benson is crying somewhere.

Andi: This is a super disturbing scene for a lot of reasons. One of the most visually striking things for me is we really see for the first time how ludicrous and upsetting the miniskirts can be. Before this scene I was always kind of like, "Ha, ha. The short skirts. I mean, whatever. There are worse problems." But you know in this scene, while she's murdered, on the floor, her skirt is hiked up. So, she's sexualized even when she's been murdered, which is really a very visually upsetting thing to see.

Jarrah: Yeah, and she's also dehumanized. You know, McCoy scans her and says, "She's dead Jim. Just like the other one."

Andi: (sarcastically) No names. Names are unimportant.

Grace: They do not get that benefit.

Jarrah: So, I mean, there's no such thing as, you know, a better victim. But Karen Tracy is actually a member of Kirk's crew. He's going to have to tell her parents what happened. And, again, his only concern is getting Scotty off the hook. It's like no one even mentions that this crew person died after this scene.

Andi: Which is actually really out of character for Kirk. The way they portrayed him in the past, he's very clearly a very protective person over the members of his crew. And one of the ways to get him very upset is to harm them in any way. And yet for this one crewmember, in this specific instance, he does not seem to be very upset at all.

Grace: I guess there's just a hierarchy of importance for Kirk.

Andi: Yeah, I mean, Scotty's innocence, at this point, is more and more interesting and more important to him than a murder. Whatever happened to the psycho tricorder, did that actually work?

Grace: Did they do anything with it? I can't remember.

Andi: Because that was the whole reason why she was supposed to go down there, to use this psycho tricorder to do a 24-hour memory, I don't know, reconstruction.

Sue: No, they do. And they use it at the end of the episode. That's the computer voice it's like (robotically) "Accurate." Except it's Majel Barrett.

(laughter)

Andi: And then we move into our séance.

Grace: Because of course there's a séance in this episode.

Andi: Why wouldn't there be a séance?

Sue: At what point--I may have missed this. After she brings down the psycho tricorder that's when they start talking to the people who were playing the music while Kara was dancing.



Jarrah: Oh yeah!

Sue: And one of them is, apparently, her father, which, okay but it just weirds me out. But then he says, "She's been dancing for me since she was a little girl."

(disgusted groans)

Sue: So, at what point is this culture starting to sexualize these women? That's what stuck in my brain from that scene.

Grace: Yeah and how much of a cultural Electra complex are we looking at here?

Andi: More Greek! Just coming out of nowhere with all these Greek references today. I mean, they do some sort of investigation of other suspects to see who else besides Scotty could have been involved and what the motive might be. And one of her boyfriends or her fiancé was one of the suspects because he would have been jealous that she would be going off with Scotty.

Grace: But would that be a moot point in this society where all of the women are beautiful and screwing around and stuff?

Andi: Yeah, from what I can tell, jealousy is not supposed to happen on this planet. Everybody is just supposed to be cool with all sorts of sexual openness.

Sue: Well, he's not a boyfriend, right? Because they say a little bit later, "Well, I was in love with her," and somebody else says, "Well, she wasn't in love with you." So, which leads me to believe he was a jealous, what's the word—is customer the correct word in this case?

Grace: Yeah, might as well be. Gosh, can we just call this "creeper planet?" Can we just rename it that?

Sue: Works for me.

Andi: From now on Creeper Planet is the trademark, canon name for this planet.

Grace: Which, incidentally, is the name of my Planet of the Apes fanfic.

(laughter)

Andi: So, we do get to get a séance. We can't forget the séance.

Sue: But not before we first belittle the culture by calling it "spooky mumbo jumbo."

Grace: Absolutely.

Andi: There's a little bit of--I don't know if we would even call this orientalist.

Grace: There are definitely the trappings of it there. Yeah.

Jarrah: Well, I mean, one of the features of orientalism is that it combines so many different aspects of different cultures into one idea, which is something that you can't get away with when you're examining

Western cultures because Western audiences will immediately spot that as inauthentic. But because it's a white Western view, they can put in aspects of white views of Arabic cultures and Chinese cultures and Japanese cultures. That's what's happening in this. So, even though a séance isn't a part of any specific Eastern culture it's just part of this "otherness" that is shown on this planet that's exoticized.

Grace: Which of course they have to point out is strange and silly and not to be taken all that seriously.

Jarrah: But the séance actually works! ...Sort of.

(laughter)

Andi: So, we have Sybo, who is doing this séance to call the murderer and she starts saying all sorts of really strange things. She starts, I don't know, speaking in tongues almost about, you know, "terrible, terrible evil, hater of lives and killer of women," all these kinds of things and then the lights go off. And shockingly, I'm sure we're all shocked at this point, another offscreen scream.

Grace: (sarcastically) Oh my god. I'm shocked.

Andi: I know. Amazing. And who shall we find when the lights come back on? Well it's Scott. Mr. Scott, Scotty, our beloved Scotty, still right there with the murdered woman and the bloody knife in her back.

Grace: (sarcastically) I can't believe it and I shan't believe it!

Andi: Yeah, I mean, at this point they've set up the same scenario three different times and all Scotty can say is, "I don't remember."

Grace: He could at least show at least a little feigned empathy, couldn't he? He's just like, "Oh! Oh no a dead woman!"

Jarrah: I think there's four women in this episode and three of them end up dead.

Andi: Yeah and the fourth one does get attacked.

Jarrah: Yes.

Andi: So, at this point, Kirk and McCoy are a little at a wall here because the first time, okay, they're really saying, "Scotty hasn't done this." By the time we're at the third time, they are completely flummoxed. They don't know what's going on. The Scotty they know would never do this, but this evidence keeps mounting. And how are they going to prove he's innocent? Which is still the most important thing.

Grace: Because they totally trust him.

Sue: But they still take zero precautions.

Andi: Yeah, I mean, you would think that at least by this third murder they would be thinking, "Hey maybe we should protect these women."

Jarrah: So, this is when they go to the ship to use their space lie detector combined with, I guess, the

readings from the psycho tricorder. They bring the people back from the surface. Plus, there's the Magistrate and Hengist, who we talked a little bit about before, Scotty, they bring back the father and also the boyfriend of the murdered dancer.

Grace: "Boyfriend" being used loosely here, apparently.

Andi: So, we get a scene where basically we get to hear the computer do a lie detector, which is obviously very compelling on screen. They ask Scott questions and he's like, "I don't remember." And the computer is like, "Seems legit."

Grace: Not going to question it.

Andi: If Scotty says and the computer says so, well then. It's just a really awkward way to frame that, I think. I mean, they're basically just sitting around in their room talking, which is never a particularly compelling way to stage something. I'm not sure how they could have done that better.

Sue: They could have just not made the episode.

Grace: Yeah that would have been nice.

Andi: That's true. That would have been an easy way to correct all of these problems. So, the computer backs up Scotty and they start thinking, "Okay, well, maybe something else is wrong. I mean they did just have this super scientific séance and the super scientific, psycho tricorder analysis that says, you know, that Scotty is telling the truth and something is evil happening." So, they start talking it out.

Grace: They really aren't in much of a hurry to solve this murder, are they?

Andi: They're like, "Hmm, what did she say? Let's interpret what she said."

Jarrah: But they do figure out pretty quickly because Sybo had said, before she died, she had shouted out the word "Redjac" and the computer figures out that "Redjac" has something to do with Jack the Ripper and that it's some sort of nickname for Jack the Ripper.

Andi: How many pieces of media are we going to have throughout the years in which Jack the Ripper is this interesting character that we're supposed to care about, even though he was just some random murderer, like many other murderers who just like to kill women?

Jarrah: As a society we do tend to really--our culture plays up the idea of stranger rape and stranger attacks. And so, in media, portraying these things it puts women, in a sense, where they're more afraid of getting attacked by a stranger on the street. But then women are actually a lot more likely to be attacked by acquaintances and they're grilled either way. You know, if you're attacked on the street it's like, "What were you wearing?" And if you're attacked at home then it's really hidden and hard to talk about. But I think that fascination with stranger attacks has been something that has been with us for a really long time.

Grace: Also, you've got to remember that the Jack the Ripper case was one of the first, at least in Western cultures, big, reported on, crime cases that people were actively following. And it was actively being reported. It's kind of the first case that we have historically, again in Western culture, of commercializing a murder and making it something interesting that people were talking about and

wanted to hear more about and were paying to find out more about.

Sue: And not only was it publicized and sensationalized, I think part of the reason it has remained part of our culture for so long is that it went unsolved for so long.

Grace: That, definitely.

Sue: And I think that intrigued a lot of people. There were so many theories including one that, you know, he came to America and continued murdering women. So, the story became pervasive in a way. And when you have a story like that, that is essentially open ended, different authors are going to continue to pick it up and write new stories about it, each putting their own twist on it. And that's really troubling because it's a story all about violence against women.

Grace: Again, I think the violence is why it was one of the first big sensationalized cases and is part of what keeps interesting. The fact that it was one of the first sensationalized crime stories that we can look back on and the fact that it was unsolved for a long time, that automatically gave it a level of cultural romanticism that kept it kind of perpetuated and kept it going in the cultural eye. And they did, actually, recently solve the case, but it's more fun to look into the various theories that developed over the years. It's a list as long as your arm and it really makes you wonder about crime solving back in the day.

Jarrah: So, in this episode though, obviously they hadn't solved it at this point and basically, they figure out that Jack the Ripper is some kind of entity that has been going through time feeding off fear. I don't necessarily have so much of a problem with that part of it. The problem is that Spock says, "I suspect it preys on women because women are more easily and more deeply terrified, generating more sheer horror than the male of the species."

Grace: Oh, bite me Spock.

Jarrah: (laughs) Yeah. So, you're basically saying that women are innately more fearful and therefore easy prey. It's pretty disgusting.

Sue: When I was doing some reading to prep for this episode I actually came across an article on Tor.com that put forth the idea that Kirk is actually the feminist and Spock is the misogynist.

Grace: How the hell did that happen??

Sue: I mean, it's always Spock who has the lines like, "Well, she's just a woman."

Jarrah: Yeah, he does like there's one in "This Side of Paradise" too and it's really disturbing because he's supposed to be the one who's focused on science. And in many cases, he's arguing that science actually backs up women's inferiority. They're more emotional, they're more terrified, they're less logical and that is really a big disappointment to me in The Original Series.

Grace: Yeah, it's kind of just a "WAH WAH" moment for anyone with a semblance of--

Andi: It's always really bothered me whenever Spock is misogynist. It hurts more, for some reason.

Sue: And then you can point to the lines that Kirk has in exchanges like, "A woman? no a crewman!" And it's just strange to think about those characters that way, especially knowing what Leonard Nimoy

believed and how he fought for equal pay for Nichelle Nichols and so on.

Grace: Well, the big problem here is that the lines, when they're given to Spock and presented by Spock, means that those are what you're supposed to see as logical and sort of infallible. But when the lines are given to Kirk, then they're turned to this radical notion, you know? Like it's Kirk being forward thinking in a way beyond what we would consider logical. And it's very silly, but that's how the show works, sadly.

Andi: I don't have a problem so much with the idea of a creature that feeds on fear. What I do have a problem with is the idea that we needed to make up some sort of space monster to explain violence against women. Like, "Jack the Ripper wasn't a murderer. He was an alien that was feeding on fear." And I just think it's kind of a weird way to go about that just. There's this whole thing when they're figuring it out and they're talking about the patterns of murder, as if women being murdered is some noteworthy thing in history. Sadly, it's sadly very common. And it feels really weird to me that they kind of imply that there's these patterns of history of this monster that's been killing women, as if humans are not fully capable of killing women.

Grace: Well, maybe there's an implication there that we're supposed to be looking at a future society where that is just sort of unthinkable. I think that's kind of the implication. That's like another instance of, "Well our culture has evolved past that and it looks barbaric to us." but they don't really do that very well.

Jarrah: If that was the case, I think they would take the murders more seriously. Like we've said from the beginning, it's the people on the planet who were saying, you know, "This is an affront to our way of life," instead of the Starfleet people.

Sue: But then you have the computer that's just rattling off this list of similar incidents on other planets where there's a string of murders of women. And I'm just sitting there watching this and getting sick to my stomach. (sarcastically) But, you know, violence against women isn't a problem.

Grace: I always feel like I've got some kind of moral hangover after I finish watching this show—well, this episode.

Andi: Yeah, I mean, this episode was so upsetting to me that I actually considered stopping watching The Original Series because it upset me on a very strongly, totally emotional level, where it was so hard to watch. And it was so hard to see these crewmembers that I care about, in the show I care about, just treat violence against women in this way.

Grace: And again, like in the same way this episode makes it kind of hard to hear Piglet's voice the same way again, sometimes it makes it kind of hard to watch these characters again, for at least the next few episodes, without remembering this episode and having, sort of, the unpleasant callback always going to it. And just being like, "Oh, hi Scotty." (disappointed groan) Scotty...

Jarrah: So, did you guys have more stuff to say about Hengist? Because this is the part where we find out that he's Jack the Ripper.

Grace: Dun dun dun! Piglet the Ripper!

Sue: The thing that I don't get is that if he feeds on fear why is he straight up killing the women? Wouldn't he want to keep them alive longer to prolong the fear?

Grace: Yeah, it's kind of cutting off his food supply.

Sue: Really! I mean, he just needs to become friends with somebody with anxiety, hang out with them.

Grace: (laughing) Oh, god!

Sue: And I say that as a person with anxiety. (laughs)

Grace: I think we just found a spin off there. Piglet the Ripper goes off into the sunset with just some really anxious people and hangs out with them all the time.

Jarrah: Put me in a room full of 30 other people and (laughter) he can hang out with me.

Grace: It's just him going on anxiety based adventures.

Andi: Or, you know, he could go to places where there's lots of fear naturally... wars, this sort of thing. Because is it actually the murder he needs? Because the way they talk about it, it's not. It's the fear.

Jarrah: Yeah, because at this point he sort of escapes into the computer of the ship and they say, "Well, you know, now he's going to kill us, but he's going to terrorize us first because he needs as much fear as possible." And so, they end up pumping this sedative into the air vents that makes everyone--it's like laughing gas. So, everyone is not fearful, they're just kind of hysterically laughing and it's really, really disturbing to watch. Like when he grabs this yeoman and is threatening to kill her and she's just laughing. I mean, yeah, it's pretty horrific.

Andi: This section of the episode though also brings us our very few dim rays of light in which it's pretty funny to see Sulu be high.

(snickering)

Jarrah: Yes! Yes, it is.

Grace: Let's just establish that George Takei has an amazing high face.

Andi: Yeah, I mean, this is the only part of the episode that I actually enjoyed in any way, watching Sulu just be confused and then just giggle a lot.

(laughter)

Andi: Also, the way Spock solves the problem I think is interesting.

Sue: The way Spock solves the problem is terrible.

Grace: Why don't we remind our listeners?

Jarrah: Can you remind me what I what they do? Because I actually can't remember.

Sue: So, they decide they need to tie up the computers with processing. So, Spock tells the computer to calculate pi to the last digit because it's, quote, "a transcendental value," and that makes zero

sense. Pi is a constant. You can calculate it, but it's just a known value and it's an irrational number. So, it doesn't end, right? There is no last digit. And that's the point that Spock's trying to make. But any computer that is sophisticated enough to be running a starship shouldn't basically fall for that trick. You know it should say, "that's not possible," or, "pi doesn't have a last digit," or simply output like 22 over seven.

Grace: What would've been great is if he'd said that to the computer and the computer just responded with, "Yeah, nice try."

Sue: They could have given the computer an actual logic problem or paradox to tie up its processing and not calculate pi. I mean "beat the computer AI with a logic problem" is a trope that has existed in science fiction pretty much since the beginning of science fiction and it's used in other Star Trek episodes.

Grace: There are many other conundrums you could come up with like: could God create a burrito so hot even he couldn't eat it? (laughter) There's just so much more writing opportunity there that was missed out on.

Sue: There is no reason to not give the computer and the audience, for that matter, a real paradox to think about.

Andi: I love it, Sue. I love that your problem with this is that the math doesn't hold up. (laughter) That's amazing because that's not something that I would ever consider.

Sue: I'm sorry! I have a math degree! It's wrong and it's bothersome. But, I mean, that happens to me a lot in TOS, especially when there is blatantly bad science. I can suspend my disbelief for the warp drive and the transporters and I can get past fiery explosions in space that shouldn't be happening. But when they use the words "galaxy" and "universe" interchangeably, it drives me crazy!

Grace: Well, remember how we were talking earlier about orientalism and the homogenizing of a culture and how if it happens with Western culture instantly a Western audience will notice that and see it as flawed? I guess it's the same thing with math.

Andi: Yeah. I mean, Sue, just have a social science degree like me and it won't bother you anymore.

Sue: (laughs) I'll go back in time and take care of that.

Andi: (laughing) Yeah, go back and study poetry or something and then you can watch Star Trek without going, "Rahh! That math is incorrect!" Please continue to point those things out because I would never have noticed that. And that's just a perspective I don't have and so I find it really interesting.

Jarrah: Yeah, for sure. So, at this point basically they inject the guy with the sedative, because they force him out of the computer, drag him to the transporter room, and beam him into space which is...well, effective, I guess. But then everyone at this point is still high on the sedatives. So, again, this is the point where no one remembers that they lost a fellow crew member. And Spock is basically like, "Okay, everything's done here. Why don't you guys head back to the planet to rest?" And Kirk goes, "That's a splendid idea Mr. Spock. I know a café where the women are so..." and McCoy interrupts, "I know the place, Jim." And Scott goes, "Let's go see!" But then they're too high on the sedatives to go and then they all just laugh and stay on the ship. And that is the end of the episode.

Andi: (sarcastically) Ha ha ha ha! Wasn't that a delightful misadventure? Yeah. So, that's "Wolf in the Fold."

Jarrah: So, did you know that originally the episode was supposed to be focused around Sulu instead of Scotty?

Grace: I can think of a few reasons that wouldn't work. But go on.

Jarrah: Well, the main reason they didn't do it was just that they thought that Jimmy Doohan needed more stuff to do. But I think that, I mean, it's a bad enough episode as it is, but I think it probably would have made it worse because it would have added another dimension of racism. It would reinforce a pretty common Hollywood trope especially in the years heading into the 60's of the "yellow peril," the idea of asian men attacking white women. So, I'm glad that it didn't happen. Although, the episode is pretty terrible anyway.

Grace: The episode has enough problems as it has.

Andi: Was there anything else we wanted to add about maybe the themes or just overall things about the episode?

Sue: I know we talked about Spock's line about women for quite a while earlier, but I think it is worth noting that, you know, that line is essentially placing the blame for this entire situation on the women. (sarcastically) If women weren't so easily scared and so terrified by everything then this wouldn't be happening to them. Then Jack the Ripper wouldn't be preying on them. But they can't help it because it's in their nature.

Grace: On that note can I bring something else into this discussion on the episode? There is a bunch of violence against women and as we said earlier there's that shot of the woman who's been killed and has her skirt hiked up and is, even in a violent sense, being sexualized. But in the opening scene with the belly dancing the actress actually had to cover her navel up for censorship purposes. So, you can kill three of the four women in an episode, have a lot of people sort of saying, "Oh, no the guy who obviously seems like he killed her didn't kill her," and make a whole thing about it. But God forbid you show a belly button on TV. Priorities.

Andi: Yeah, that's a problem I think we still have. We allow a lot of violence to get through when we won't show sex, basically, pleasure.

Grace: Because the bellybutton.

Andi: Pleasure being a more upsetting and more "something that needs to be censored" than horrific violence against women, or violence in general. Or, say, homosexual romance being something that can't be shown without a lot of controversy. But you can have numerous crime shows week after week after week with brutal murders. Do we have anything else we want to add?

Grace: (disgusted groan)

Andi: All right. Well, shall we rate it then?

Jarrah: Yes, we should.



Andi: So, who wants to start? Who wants to give us their first rating?

Sue: Well, having watched Star Trek VI earlier this weekend, I think I will go ahead and set phasers to: "waporize (vaporize)."

(laughter)

Grace: Based on the feelings I get from this episode I'm going to set phasers to: really uncomfortable.

Jarrah: I'm going to have to set phasers to: kill times infinity, which I'm sure is not mathematically accurate, but represents my feelings for this episode.

Andi: I'm going to go very basic and just set my phasers to: terrible. Just terrible. That's the only way I can really describe it. I did also want to bring up that we started our Facebook page, which was really exciting. And it was really cool to see how many people are already on our Facebook page and, you know, having fun discussing some of the episodes we're doing.

Grace: It has been an amazing and encouraging week seeing what's been happening on our page.

Andi: Yeah, I mean, it's really heartening to see that people are interested to hear about this perspective that we have. And just in general is just very cool to have a place where people can talk about some of these issues that we've been talking about on our shows. So, I did post something on our Facebook basically saying, "We're discussing this episode and we think it's one of the worse episodes for women. And would you agree or disagree?" And, for the most, part people seem to agree with us. I did think it was interesting that one of one of our commenters said that she thought that, "Even though it had multiple female murders, it also showed the historical significance of those murders," and then also that, "Kirk and the crew and their determination to clear Scotty actually stops this string of violence, these hundreds of years of murders, and catch that murderer," which is an interesting interpretation that I had never considered.

Jarrah: Well, I think that, you know, there's some point to that, but I think that it would have worked better if it hadn't been men saving the day and if they were doing it more out of a sense of, "We need justice for these women and we need to stop violence against women," as opposed to trying to get their "bro-friend" off the hook.

Grace: Yeah.

Andi: Yeah, I agree. But I still think it's cool that we can have these kinds of discussions on our page and we'll bring them up every once in awhile. So, please feel free to go to that page and disagree with us if you'd like.

Jarrah: Yeah, and I think probably at a future point we should go more into depth about the perspective, you know, about taking the time into consideration. Because I think that there is a lot to talk about, about what we can expect from TV in the 60's. And I think there's a bit of a misconception that shows in the 60's were all terrible and Star Trek was better in every way.

Grace: Goodness, no!

Jarrah: Yeah, when in fact there was there were things that I think that we could, reasonably say, we

could have expected to be better.

Andi: And not only that, just as kind of a general note, just because we are criticizing episodes or sometimes, you know, some characterization or anything, under all of that is our fierce love for this show. And we wouldn't be spending—

Grace: We criticize because we love.

Andi: Yeah, we wouldn't be spending hours of our time putting together these critiques of a show that we didn't love and that we didn't want to be as good as it could possibly be. And especially since now this version of Star Trek is the one that's been rebooted and is having new content. We want to make sure that any problems that we see we bring to the light of day so we can expect better from the future

Jarrah: Totally.

Sue: To that point: one positive note about this episode, that I forgot to mention before, is that Kirk is actually willing to respect and follow the law of this planet if they couldn't clear Scotty, rather than going all, "He's a Starfleet officer!" and, "We shouldn't have to blah blah blah."

Grace: It is pretty progressive.

Sue: It's a really rare thing for Star Trek in general, I think, and for Kirk specifically. And it's a thing that I really appreciate it because we don't see it that often.

Andi: And we will be doing episodes that we think are particularly good for women as well. So, we're not just going to pick all of our least favorite episodes and rip them apart. We're also going to take episodes that we love and talk about why they worked. So, we're not going to try and stay negative on this all the time. But I do think some of these episodes need to be discussed so, hence our episode today. Now is there anything else anybody wanted to add?

Grace: Well, on a side note: today we are recording on William Shatner's birthday.

Andi: Happy Birthday, Kirk.

Grace: Happy Birthday, Kirk, indeed.

Andi: Well, thanks everyone for joining us for our discussion on "Wolf in the Fold." If you are interested in finding out more about Women at Warp you can check us out at our website: [womenatwarp.com](http://womenatwarp.com), or follow us on Twitter: [@womenatwarp](https://twitter.com/womenatwarp). If you have any questions or suggestions for upcoming episodes feel free to email us at [crew@womenatwarp.com](mailto:crew@womenatwarp.com). And lastly, now you can feel free to join our discussion page on Facebook titled, you guessed it, Women at Warp. And you can talk with other fans about Star Trek in general and any thoughts you have on our show or episodes we're doing, or just, you know, share your opinions in any way. Now, Grace, where can listeners track you down on the interwebs?

Grace: They can find me at Twitter actually on [@bonecrusherjenk](https://twitter.com/bonecrusherjenk). And you can also read my writing on The Miscreant's blog, where there will hopefully be more of it soon!

Andi: And, Jarrah, where can people find more of your work?

Jarrah: People can find me over at [trekkiefeminist.tumblr.com](http://trekkiefeminist.tumblr.com)

Andi: And, Sue, you're last. Where, where?

Sue: I am podcasting and blogging over at [anomalypodcast.com](http://anomalypodcast.com).

Andi: Alrighty. I'm Andi. You can follow my live tweeting of Star Trek on Twitter under [@firsttimetrek](https://twitter.com/firsttimetrek). Or you can check out my archive project on Tumblr at [firsttimetrek.tumblr.com](http://firsttimetrek.tumblr.com). Thanks so much for listening!

\*End WAW\*

(Audio clip from "Wolf in the Fold")

Jaris: How could any man do such monstrous things?

Scotty: I swear to you I did not kill your wife or the other lady!