

Women at Warp Episode 138: Unpopular Opinions

GRACE:

Hi and welcome to Women at Warp: A Roddenberry Star Trek podcast. Join us as our crew of four women Star Trek fans boldly go on our biweekly mission to explore our favorite franchise. My name is Grace and thanks for tuning in. This week we've got with us Sue.

SUE:

Hi everybody.

GRACE:

And we've got Jarrah.

JARRAH:

All your favorite things are problematic. *crew laughs* Oh geez.

GRACE:

Aww no! I've been *called out*.

SUE:

Everything is problematic.

GRACE:

Everything is problematic forever. *singing to the tune of Everything is Awesome* Everything's problematic. *crew laughs* Before we get into our main topic we have a little bit of housekeeping to do first. This episode is brought to you by Text Expander. More on that a little later, but our show is also made possible by our patrons on Patreon. If you'd like to become a patron you can do so for as little as a dollar a month and get awesome rewards from our thanks on social media, up to our homemade watch-along commentaries. Visit us at w.w.patreon.com/womenatwarp. You can also support us by leaving a rating or review on Apple podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. I know that sounds little, but it means a lot to us. We love getting your feedback. So as you may have guessed we've got a topic today. It's a main topic and it might not be the most popular topic. Kids we're talking about unpopular opinions.

JARRAH:

And when we originally were brainstorming this idea and someone else came up with it I was like "How is this not just *our show*?" *Sue laughs*

GRACE:

I *mean*, it's not totally wrong.

JARRAH:

By definition, we do try to come at Star Trek from a bit of a different perspective than a lot of other Star Trek fan discussions. And I think we have come up with some maybe unpopular opinions in the past. *Sue laughs* For example, our episode on The Inner Light. But we reached out to listeners and we had *unprecedented* engagement.

GRACE:

Oh my gosh you guys have so many opinions! We love it!

JARRAH:

Sue, do you want to give some background on some of the trends?

SUE:

Well sure, but I just think I want to note, a little inside baseball, that back when we first started even brainstorming our show, not this episode but the show Women at Warp, we started a brainstorming document that we called "Female trek opinions." *crew laughs*

GRACE:

Memories.

JARRAH:

Trek opinions by fee-males.

GRACE:

witchy voice Feeeeee-males.

SUE:

Obviously a joke title, yes. Something that I love about us. So we got sooo many comments and more so than like what the opinions we got back *were*, what interested me was that we got a lot of comments that directly contradicted each other. *Grace laughs* So I just- very basic because I mean this was probably expected. We got a lot of "I hate Pulaski" and "I like Polanski" like well those can't *both* be unpopular. So then that gets me thinking like well what makes someone think that *that* opinion is unpopular?

JARRAH:

I mean maybe someone has *only* listened to our back catalogue *Sue laughs* and no other part of fandom and they're like "Everyone loves Pulaski guys right?"

SUE:

No, I think more people like Pulaski than we realized.

GRACE:

But there's still *a lot* of people who don't.

SUE:

But it wasn't *just* Pulaski, it was like *anything*. There was you know “Voyager is just TNG 2.0!” and “Voyager is absolutely not TNG 2.0!” and they weren't like even fighting with each other. These were comments that were like at different places in the reply thread and it just it struck me as kind of funny and interesting.

GRACE:

Opinions are like warp cores, every ship's got em.

SUE:

Except if you're Romulan and you've got a singularity.

GRACE:A

We don't talk to Romulans. *Sue laughs*

JARRAH:

Unpopular opinion: singularities are dumb.*crew laughs* I did love that, I think a lot of people felt like you know “*This* is a place I could share my unpopular opinion” because Star Trek fandom on the Internet, while maybe not the *most* toxic fandom, has elements of challenging areas especially on Twitter.

GRACE:

Things can get a little sticky out there. We will acknowledge that.

JARRAH:

So it's nice that people were like “I feel like this is a safe space to share in this.”

SUE:

I was a little bit worried when we put out the call *crew giggles* that we'd get fights in the comments, or like people coming after each other, that I considered like reminding people of our comment policy in the initial post and I am very happy to say that that was unnecessary.

GRACE:

Thank goodness. Thanks for being cool everybody.

SUE:

And I don't think I saw anybody like fighting in the comment thread on any of the social media platforms. So that's super great. But it was interesting to see that it seems anyway that when you ask people for their unpopular opinions they read that ask as “Tell me what you don't like” which is not the same thing.

GRACE:

laughs We seem to get that a lot. Just asking for people's opinions and getting responses of just what people don't like. And I'm starting to think that's just the nature of the beast, isn't it? With being on the Internet.

JARRAH:

Yeah it could be. And we received so many comments that we had to narrow them down somewhat. I mean, certainly when I was picking ones I tried to pick ones that had a little bit of context, like it's really hard for us to, you know, if you say something- if someone says something like "Voyager is the best Star Trek" but like no reasons I don't really know how to judge that opinion other than like "Yes I subjectively agree with that." So we tried to pick things that had a reason or that the reason was like self-evident in the argument.

SUE:

Let's maybe say *discuss* rather than judge. *crew laughs*

JARRAH:

Yeah. Exactly.

SUE:

we're not going to *judge* anybody's opinion today, except each others. But seriously I mean, this episode, this topic it's all in good fun. You know nobody is wrong or the worst for their opinion.

JARRAH:

We shall not be hating on any real living humans.

GRACE:

In truth we leave the judging to Judy.

JARRAH:

And Q. Although if you're not into Q, That's cool and we'll talk about that's.

GRACE:

That's ok man! This is all easy breezy beautiful my covergirls!

SUE:

As is our wont, we are using a lot of these as a jumping off point for discussion so let's put it that way.

JARRAH:

Oh and I'll also say that, il found it a little bit challenging to evaluate some of the Picard ones. And so we're gonna keep it pretty minimal on Picard, because first of all it's hard to say what is a

popular opinion when we've had less than a year to you know for opinions to foment in the fandom. And also that we just spent the last two podcast episodes on Picard so-

GRACE:

We're Picard-ed out.

SUE:

So much Picard.

JARRAH:

- understanding that we're gonna focus more on the other series. A Picard one may slip in here and there, but it's hard at this point to say like what whether there's a fan consensus.

SUE:

And we've generally tried to group them. So hopefully there will be a thread. So why don't we start, before we get to to dishing through our comments, with some of ours. And I will bite the bullet. I'll go first and I will say that I am not a fan of Klingon culture. Don't hate it, but like it doesn't do anything for me. I've seen it all. It's everywhere and it's just- I mean when I say I've seen it all I mean like I've watched every episode, I don't ignore them. I don't like skip them if I'm doing your re-watch, it just doesn't strike a chord with me. And I much prefer the sneaky devious *struggles for word* devious deceit, there we go *laughs* of the Romulans. That's where I go, says the Slytherin.

JARRAH:

So you're not saying like "I have been to my share of Klingon bachelor parties and I am all over it." *Grace laughs*

GRACE:

"Pain sticks? Uuugh!"

SUE:

I think what it is for me is like, the machismo that the culture is built on and I just like- I don't care. Sorry. It doesn't mean I don't like individual Klingons. But like, meh.

JARRAH:

I mean I think it helps that Klingon has the most developed language. So even from like, a nerdy linguistic side of things I can sort of appreciate that. And language is tied to culture. There's a 100 percent Orientalist elements, especially if we go all the way back to the original series and the brown face is not cool. *chorus of 'no!'s* But overall I mean it's- I think it can be cheesy at times but I super love it.

GRACE:

So Jarrah, do you have an unpopular opinion to share?

JARRAH:

My unpopular opinion is **embarrassed** I actually really like the TNG Romulan uniform.

SUE:

laughing I *love* the TNG Romulan uniforms. Give me a strong shoulder pad any day.

JARRAH:

Exactly! I mean nothing to me says "Power" like your uniforms making you look like a linebacker with a bowl haircut. **Sue laughs**

SUE:

I think my favorite part though is the cropped pants. I was watching an episode recently where a Romulan beams onto the Enterprise D, and like the way that he's like twisted when he beams on and like because his back is facing the camera and then he turns around before he moves his feet, I would have to describe it that way because you could see the boot is twisted when he turns **Grace laughs** and because of that movement like it is very clear that those are rubber rain boots. **crew laughs** Which was the entire point of that story, is that they're wearing rubber rainboots.

JARRAH:

Well I just think that they're under appreciated fashion icons.

GRACE:

OK you know what? We accept that and we love you, still.

JARRAH:

But I'm not into blonde Romulans

GRACE:

Blondulans?

JARRAH:

That's a step- a bridge too far.

GRACE:

Yeah. Yeah it does kind of clash.

SUE:

It's part of the uniform. It comes with some boxed dye.

GRACE:

It's like becoming Robin. You have to look exactly like the previous Robin to be a member of the Romulan community.

SUE:

What about you Grace?

GRACE:

I know I need to fall on this sword and all I can really say *groans with discomfort* TNG is not my favorite series.

SUE:

OK. That's fine!

GRACE:

I have gotten grief for that before. I will say I like it. There are things about it I love about it but it's not my favorite. And for some reason people seem to assume with my age group that that is impossible. So.

JARRAH:

Well if it makes you feel better, we have a category that I started by titling "TNG is problematic" 'cause a lot of people had quibbles with TNG.

GRACE:

Quibbles and Tribbles you see.

JARRAH:

Yeah, so I don't think you're alone on that one and I also think it would be OK even if you were. Just like it's okay to like Enterprise, even though it's not *my* favorite. OK if it's *your* favorite.

GRACE:

Not that we're here to judge! Not that we're here to judge.

SUE:

I feel like I've been saying this a lot lately, but everybody's favorite is somebody else's least favorite. And it's *all* OK.

GRACE:

You know what? It's all OK. It's all part of life's rich pageant. Life's rich space pageant on TV.

SUE:

And to that point, I'm going to start jumping into some of our listener comments.

GRACE:

Oh heck yes.

SUE

And I mean I think this just reinforces what we were just talking about, Rachel on Twitter said "You don't need to watch every episode of every show."

JARRAH:

Yeah.

GRACE:

I absolutely agree with that unpopular opinion. Yeah sometimes it's just a matter of "I don't have the time for this" or "I don't have the patience to watch 50 years of television before getting kind of worn out on it."

JARRAH:

Yeah we had a few arguments along these lines, or around like how you should introduce someone to Star Trek. But I would certainly agree. First of all that life is too short to waste watching TV you're not interested in. But also that it's OK, I think, to introduce someone to Star Trek by watching episodes that you know that they're going to like. And hoping that they get hooked before you introduce them to Code of Honor. *crew laughs*

SUE:

So this was not my experience with Star Trek, obviously, but it was my experience with Doctor Who. Where I didn't- I had maybe seen some like Tom Baker PBS episodes when I was real little but like I wasn't a Doctor Who fan and somebody sat me down and showed me Blink. And after that I went back and I watched all of new Who. And then I went back and I watched whatever I could find of Classic Who. And I think that is because like my personality type is a completist, like I want to watch everything even if I don't enjoy it. But not everybody is like that.

GRACE:

Its true. And I know I try to be like, I try to be a completionist but there are some things I just do not have the energy for. And again sitting down and watching 50 years of TV in one go? That'll make my brain melt out my ears. I can't do it. Jarrah do you have one that you'd like to share with us?

JARRAH:

Well this isn't my opinion, but I'm going to validate it. So we had an opinion from Karen who said "Q episodes are boring and annoying." And we had a couple other people second to the general

“I don't care for Q” sentiment. And you know I was like “No that's not true” and then I thought about it and I was like “Actually the majority of Q episodes I would probably agree.”

GRACE:

Yeah there's a lot of boring ones. There's a lot of “We didn't know what to do. Uuuuh. Q shenanigans! Haha byeeee!”

JARRAH:

I like the idea of Q, I like John DeLancie as Q. I really *dislike* Q2, and the Q And The Grey, and the DS9 one, and the one with Amanda Rogers, and so **laughs** then I'm like “which ones?” But I really like the one where Q is a human, and I like the idea of Q as a judge, and particularly in the Best of Both Worlds. And we have to do an episode on all the Q episodes at some point, but I think that that is totally fair to not not care for Q.

SUE:

Do you mean Encounter at Farpoint?

JARRAH:

No I'm sorry, I meant All Good Things.

GRACE:

That is pretty much Q at his best I'd say.

SUE:

My gut reaction to this is that I like Q, but when I think about that more I think I like Q In seasons 4 through 7 of TNG. **laughs**

GRACE:

There's a certain time and place for Q, **Sue laughs** and that is seasons four through six of TNG.

JARRAH:

I mean you can also just question the idea of, you know, having omnipotent aliens at all. And I mean we also have the proto-Q In Squire Of Gothos, but it definitely presents some challenges just in terms of like what is your world view if there are aliens with godlike powers? So fair thought! I will say um I'm about 50/50 on the Q episodes, and I like John DeLancie, I like Suzie Plakson, I like the Q that's in death wish, that's also a well done Q episode. But also why are they all white?

GRACE:

Why are they all white and why are they all human? Like there's a lot of questions there. Do they only appear as white people to white people?

JARRAH:

Well I get that they're always showing themselves as humans to humans but even still, they shouldn't all be showing themselves as white people because all of our characters on these shows are not all white people.

GRACE:

We see your shenanigans there, and we acknowledge them Karen. And we've got one here from Avi that I'd like to share and that is "Any time any federation crew eats actual non-replicated meat I find it incongruous with supposed Federation ideals, in that it interferes with the natural development of another life form. I find it strange that basically only Vulcans are called out as plant eaters" which is a fair point. Especially the Vulcan part. I mean you'd think in the wide wide universe there are a fair amount of species that would say "We don't do that" just in terms of the cultural crapshoot out there there's gotta be a bunch of them.

SUE:

Well it's interesting to me that Avi is using like the Prime Directive in this case because this, I mean in my brain, that refers to like sentient pre-warp civilizations. Right? That method of noninterference. So I'm not sure how much that applies to non-replicated meat. However, I do think this is a decent point that like if you don't need to raise animals for slaughter, why are you? There *is* an episode, again because it was on recently, of Deep Space Nine where Keiko and Miles are having dinner and Miles is talking about like his mother cooking and Keiko makes- like is shocked that she would cook and handle real meat. So I mean, I think they do touch on it a little bit but not as much as they could have.

GRACE:

Does make you wonder though if like cows gained warp capacity, a culture of them, would that change the willingness to eat them? Like on another planet, would that change the willingness to keep eating beef on earth? Would that make it illegal because we know that it's a species that's capable of it? There's many questions I have, none of them really makes sense but I have them.

JARRAH:

We talked about this a bit in our episode, Magneto Was Right, on environmentalism and Star Trek in terms of animal rights feminism and the idea that when you are in a culture that views it as OK to exploit animals, including for meat, that there tends to be similarities between narratives of that and narratives that legitimate exploiting women. But I thought this was an interesting take on that argument and certainly agree that the way that Vulcan vegetarianism is presented is that it's rational and logical, but not that much fun. But that's also maybe a good segue into another one that we had, which is "I like Keiko and I thought her relationship with O'Brien wasn't completely terrible and was a pretty decent portrayal of a regular somewhat messy but ultimately loving long term relationship." And that was from Julia. And I will say we did have one that was almost diametrically opposed. Which was not- the person did not have any issue with Keiko but did see O'Brien as a bad husband to Keiko.

GRACE:

Do we want to share that one here?

JARRAH:

Yes. So how about we do the Miles and Keiko block? So if you want to read Malina's...

GRACE:

OK. Malina on Twitter says "I don't like Miles O'Brien, at the best of times he is very hetero-normative and worst of times straight up prejudiced" which is not wrong.

SUE:

And Eleanor also said in a similar way "One of mine is not liking Chief O'Brien and genuinely not understanding his popularity with fans. I find him at best dull, a poor replacement for Garak in the laterDS9 seasons and at worst problematic, a bad husband to Keiko."

GRACE:

It's really amazing how polarizing, not just the characters, this specific relationship between characters seems to be amongst fans. 'Cause there are people who like them, there are people who hate them, and it's weird to see that single character dynamic hit so many different people in so many ways. Which is funny because it is kind of an old school like TV and media dynamic of the bitter husband and the nagging wife, but how it plays differently in this environment.

SUE:

Yeah and we have a piece on our Women at Warp blog by Michelle that is called "Is Keiko O'Brien the worst? A discourse analysis." And Michelle looked at the way the language is coded, the discussions that these characters had together, and like I think this is the most commented upon blog piece that we have.

GRACE:

Like I said, it gets a lot of opinions.

SUE:

It gets a *lot* of opinions and every now and then, this piece gets picked up and posted on some forum or Reddit or something somewhere and there is like a new onslaught of comments.*crew laughs*

JARRAH:

I will say, I think that the "I like Keiko" is definitely an unpopular opinion. That there is definitely a big group of fans who really dislike Keiko and I think that a lot of that has at least sexist and racist undertones. I think there are reasons to say like "this was not the best written relationship and that Miles was not a super great husband." It feels like a sitcom marriage in a lot of ways where it's like "Oh he can't clean the house." *Grace makes sad trombone noises* "Oh they lie to each other constantly because they can't have an honest conversation."

SUE:

Well and every conversation is focused on how different they are. You know culturally, work wise, just how they want to interact with the world.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And it's OK to not like one character or the other, but people should definitely just take like a question of "To what extent is this because I have maybe some problems with this character or with the way that this plays into kind of gender tropes?" and sometimes that's totally fine sometimes it's not. Like if it's like "I don't like Keiko because she's such a nag"

GRACE:

What do you think quantifies being a nag, is a question you should ask yourself.

SUE:

And also you know, do you have any problem with Miles? Because I feel like in that discourse analysis argument it shows that they *both* have some issues. *laughs* So you know, are you like "Is Miles getting let off the hook for a problematic relationship on both sides?"

SUE:

There is one more one that we put in our general category that I want to bring up that is like, one that I very much agree with and like is a pet opinion *laughs* in some ways. This is from, I'm going to say Drogin? on Twitter who wrote "The best Star Trek episodes often provide a twist on or outright oppose what people think of as Gene's vision, and that's a good thing." And I am 100 percent in for this. In my brain, when I hear people use the phrase "Gene's vision" or like "This doesn't match up with Gene's vision." It's like a dog whistle to me.

GRACE:

Yeah definitely.

SUE:

But like, when you stop and you look back at the history of like when Gene Roddenberry was the most involved with the stories that were in Star Trek, it's not as much as you think. So it's very interesting that like, people are calling things like Deep Space Nine "Gene's vision" and the Trek that's being produced now "Not Gene's vision" when like the writers themselves say that "Gene would have hated Deep Space Nine" you know? *laughs*

GRACE:

Yeah, that's especially funny when- if you get a group of five different people together and ask them what Gene's vision is you will get five different answers. Because it's this amorphous concept that there is no strict definition of. But that for some reason seems to change with whoever is talking about it.

SUE:

laughing "Gene's vision is the kind of Star Trek *I like*."

GRACE:

Exactly. Yes.

JARRAH:

I think that there are recurring themes, and that it's good to use some of those themes as touchstones around like so you know valuing diversity, and striving to better ourselves, and the rest of humanity questioning kind of simplistic narratives as social narratives. I think that some of those things are good touchstones but they shouldn't be used as straitjackets. And I think that you know, we saw some examples of how that could have been really *over* applied in some of the discussions around the Next Generation and I guess it's the episode where the boy's mother dies that apparently like Gene hadn't felt that kids would grieve the loss of their parents on these Starfleet missions in the future. And this was an argument that he lost, and I think most people today would agree like that was probably an argument that was reasonable to lose, because if we remove human emotions from all of these stories we're going to have some really dry stories going forward.

GRACE:

It'd be weird if we did act like that, but then still made fun of the Vulcans for being dry. That would be super weird.

JARRAH:

We should also remember that, you know, as important as Gene was to the legacy of Star Trek there were a lot of other players behind the scenes on the original series as well that shaped it. And that we shouldn't, I don't think, reduce the legacy of Star Trek to one person over time ever. Like we should just take a look at those touch points that we value collectively. But when you start seeing it as like a dog whistle that's just used to put down what you don't like. That's when it's a problem.

SUE:

Here here.

GRACE:

And one really incredibly important thing to remember is that acknowledging other people's accomplishments does not *diminish* the accomplishments made by the people you admire. You are allowed to acknowledge multiple accomplishments. If you guys don't mind I'd like to take a bit of a jump to another opinion here that we've got on TNG and it's one that I definitely have some agreement on. Sara on Facebook says "Geordi should have been played more as a sex symbol."

JARRAH:

This is my favorite of all of the feedback we got.

GRACE:

I absolutely agree. I have a lot of opinions about the fact that Geordi is seen as kind of a nerdy character but he is seen as totally kind of inept when it comes to the opposite sex. But we get to see these other characters have like these beautiful romantic plots and these sexy plots but not for Geordi. Not for Geordi. And it's not fair. It's not fair to Geordi and it's not fair to, you know, the fact that- and this is a soap box I will get on as many minutes as the day is long. There is more than one type of person that's allowed to be sexy and to be a sex symbol. And the fact is that we see a specific type of person get to be that type of sex symbol or someone who is gets to have romantic relationships or sexual relationships. And there's a big group of people who we just don't get to see have those on TV. So I am firmly for widening the range of people who we allow to be, you know, have happy healthy sexual relationships on TV.

JARRAH:

It's also certainly not fair to the women that he creeps on.

GRACE:

No! No! Just give Geordi *one* functioning relationship so we can all stop being creeped out.

JARRAH:

Yeah but you make a good point in terms of, you know, having a character with a disability with a functional sexuality that would be interesting. And yeah I agree that I'm not the biggest fan of the way Geordi's relationships were portrayed. I mean also would've been fine for him to be a queer character.

GRACE:

We're just saying that we need to widen that width and breadth of people who we allow to be considered sexual characters or get to be sex symbols. Because when you make it only a specific group of people you're telling the rest of the group of people that "Nobody sees you as sexy. You don't get to feel sexy like they do." And that's bullshit.

SUE:

Speaking of queerness, there was a comment from someone going by "Dubious" on Twitter that was a little bit of a thread. I'm just going to go through the whole thing. They wrote "In the outcast when Picard put the rules over saving a queer person from being subjected to forced conversion because "Well we tried the legal channels and it didn't work. So what can you do?" Always sits in my heart as the defining moment of him as a cowardly moral centrist. Related, Star Trek Discovery having the gay and lesbian characters might have been groundbreaking 15 years ago, but only mentioning bisexuality to make mirror Georgiou look sexually predatory and refusing to include a single trans or non binary actor in the entire cast is regressive and cowardly."

GRACE:

Well you're not wrong. Not wrong Dubious.

JARRAH:

I feel like we've gone into, particularly the second piece, during women villains part 3 and our Discovery episodes, the point about Georgiou.

SUE:

Yeah and that that is a point that I have made on the podcast, and on panels, and gotten feedback from people like "Well are you saying you don't like the scene of them saying they're gay?" And I just like "No, that's not it." It's that the bisexuality continues to be an *evil* characteristic. *That's* the issue.

GRACE:

Yeah. It's a *deviancy* and not a *trait*.

GRACE:

Although there, I do want to say, there have been some rumors that there will be a non binary, at least, character. Fingers crossed that also the actor is not binary in Season 3 of Discovery. But yeah, they're at this point, especially on this issue, Star Trek is very much behind the times. I agree with that completely.

SUE:

It's only slightly ahead of Star Wars.

GRACE:

Ooooooooooh!

JARRAH:

But I did think the point about The Outcast and Picard was interesting. And I think- you know I don't want to take away from what it says about the Picards, you know, basically kind of turning his attention away from conversion therapy, but I think it also speaks to a kind of bigger issue around the prime directive and moral relativism and white savior complex slash ignoring things that are convenient for us?

SUE:

Yeah.

GRACE:

Yeah.

JARRAH:

And Everyday Fury on Twitter said “The Prime Directive is an excuse for the Federation to avoid helping any species they can't directly benefit from.” And I put that under TNG because I feel like it is most clear, to me at least, on TNG. That you do kind of have these examples and I think the Outcast is a fair moment to say “why?” In addition to, I think it is not even as bad as Cogenitor where they don't have the Prime Directive but Archer is just super annoyed that he can't justify intervening. Like he's been inconveniently made aware of a non-binary person's oppression. But another one that bugs me is- is it Violations? Where at the end where they figure out that it's the dad of these telepaths that's assaulting Troi?

SUE:

Yeah. The son. it's the son.

JARRAH:

Yeah. Anyway they find out who it is, and it's the son, and they're just like “Well there's no law against this.”

GRACE:

That's the thing though, and I feel like that stands out the most in these examples, the times when they *are* willing to bend the rules, when they *are* willing to say “No! Enough is enough. This is the thing that we have to fight for!” around the prime directive. And when they just say “Well our hands are tied.” That speaks *so much*, that *those* are treated as the non-issues or the inconveniences.

JARRAH:

Like that they're you know they're not *super* OK with it, but they're sort of OK with like, Nikolai Rozhenko just holograming a bunch of people onto a different place? You know? So like there's a bunch of examples of questionable Prime Directive decisions, and I think that it does make you have to judge them a little bit for adhering to it in cases where human rights are are so clearly the- you know the repercussions are going to be, of following a Prime Directive, is going to be that there's going to be oppressed groups that will continue to be oppressed. That said, understanding that you can totally see the flip-side of that, which would be that intervening in these cases would- could also be even more white savior-y area be like “We need to go into these places and save all the oppressed people.” *laughs uncomfortably* Which also kind of happens in TNG.

GRACE:

Like I said, I love it but it's not my favourite. Now let's take a break here for a minute and talk about Text Expander. You may have heard us mention it at the beginning of the episode and we'd like to elaborate on our sponsor a little bit. Save time typing and boost your productivity with Text Expander.

JARRAH:

Yeah it's pretty cool. If you take type something more than three times, you can make it a snippet and you let text expander type it for you in the future. You can also make your own snippets on one computer and use them on all your devices. It works on Mac, and P.C., and on Chrome, and on IOS so that you are more productive *everywhere* you type. And there's like a teams account that, you know for example if we wanted to do one for the podcast as a team we could program in the template for our Facebook posts, for our show, or the template for our tweets, and just save a bit of time typing all that stuff. Or you can do it as an individual, like I mentioned that I have a set of snippets that correct French words where you tend to mistake the accents. So if you type in the word with no accents, it automatically inserts them all in the correct places for you and that is very helpful for me, for my work.

GRACE:

And as people who do a lot of writing up and talking about characters with alien names it can be *really helpful* *laughs* to have that in there.

JARRAH:

There's also pre-programmed sort of sets of public snippets that you can use and there's a Star Trek one and it has things like there's a short code that you can enter, I think it's "wrong with universe" all one word, and then you hit the tab button and it populates the quote from Remember Me "If nothing's wrong with me then maybe there's something wrong with the universe" so very handy.

GRACE:

It's very handy if you, like us, speak mostly in Star Trek quotes.

JARRAH:

So there's a little bit of setup to do when you first get started to think about "Hey what am I going to use this for? What do I do most of the time?" Like I said, there's the thing where if you type things regularly you can sort of get it to prompt to create new snippets, but also thinking about you know "Where can I save time?" And then once you do, these sort of shortcuts help fill in the blanks for you. We have a deal for our listeners which is 20 percent off your first year of Text Expander. You can visit Textexpander.com/podcast to learn more, and select Women at Warp from the drop-down menu to let them know that we sent you. Again that's [Text Expander.com/podcast](http://TextExpander.com/podcast) and select Women at Warp from the drop-down menu.

GRACE:

So we've done some TNG and we've done a little DS9. How do we feel about doing a Voyager one? We've got one a Hess Williams on Twitter "Janeway did the right thing by separating Tuvix back into Tuvok and Neelix."

JARRAH:

And I'm like, "I wish we had been told more." *crew laughs*

GRACE:

Like, elaborate on that! Because we're curious about what the thinking here is.

SUE:

This was another one where we got, you know, the exact opposite. Someone else said "They should have kept Tuvix." *laughs*

GRACE:

Yeah I know we've gotten that *a lot*.

JARRAH:

I feel like I've heard that "Janeway made the wrong decision" more than "Janeway made the right decision."

GRACE:

Yeah that's what I've heard also, I think. But I thought it would be interesting to bring bring up because again, it's a really polarizing episode in terms of there are people who are like "No, that was murder!" and then people like now "That was the right thing" and it is so curious again to see which episodes turn out to be the super polarizing ones like that.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And I mean it's often used as an example of like, Janeway as a bad Captain. *laughs* Which I don't agree with, but I remember when I first watched this episode when I was a kid I thought it was totally the right decision. And going back to watch it, I just see it as based on the conversations that Janeway and Kess have it *does* seem kind of selfish. But maybe it would make more sense if like, his molecules were disintegrating but he still didn't want to go back.

GRACE:

Like he wasn't stable or something.

JARRAH:

Yeah, like he was gonna die but he still didn't want to go back or something. Like that would be interesting and more maybe more ambiguous?

GRACE:

Maybe it's more of a "You guys could have written that better" situation.

SUE:

I think it would have been, I mean this is not how TV shows were done at the time, but I think it could have been it would have been nice if they were able to have Tuvix around for like a couple

episodes. And like, while they tried to figure it out and see him maybe like struggle to fit in or not actually be able to do- I'm tying myself in circles, but like it and then have like a cellular degrade thing happening. Because I think part of why that episode is so like visceral for some people is because it does happen so quickly.

GRACE:

Yeah. And then never addressed again. Like this is the kind of decision that Janeway should be thinking about for the rest of her life after she's made it. And it's just "Nope!" it's one episode.

JARRAH:

Anyway, I would be happy to hear more about why Janeway did the right thing. In case I'm just missing a piece. And either way it's totally cool to have an opinion. I will throw in an Original Series one. I would say we had a fair number of people ranking to us movies type comments. One from ReginaRoadie on Instagram was "Wrath of Khan is not the be-all or end-all of the movies. I think I'm the only Trekker in all this that isn't a fan of that film, and the rationale is I don't think Khan is that great of a villain, Kirk feeling old and out of place is a total 180 from the motion picture. And if I have to hear someone yell Khaaan one more time I'm punching a hole in the wall. *crew laughs* Spock's death and funeral is still powerful but it's undercut retroactively."

SUE:

You are definitely not the only one to have that opinion because I saw it on Facebook, I saw it on Instagram, I saw it on Twitter. But I do hear like why. I do still think that's an unpopular opinion overall like almost every list you see of the ranking the Trek movies will put Wrath of Khan at the top. I think it's sort of like some people said that know "maybe people are picking City On The Edge of Forever as their favorite episode only because they think it's the quote unquote right answer" and I think that we get the wrath of Khan as well. We also got a comment from Sue via Facebook-

SUE:

Not me.

JARRAH:

Said "I think the Voyage Home is overrated and the Final Frontier is hilarious and showcases the relationship between Kirk, Spock, and McCoy." We also had a fair enough number of people think the Voyage Home is overrated.

SUE:

You know it's not me because Voyage Home is my favorite.

JARRAH:

But that was the only person that justified why the Final Frontier is better.

GRACE:

Yes, give us something to back up that opinion with. Give us something to work with here and we will respect your very very different opinion. *Sue laughs*

JARRAH:

I agree that it's a great ensemble showcase for Kirk, Spock, and McCoy. I don't necessarily think it's a better film than Voyage Home, but I think that that's a totally- I think that's my favorite part of the Final Frontier and I do think it's hilarious. Although I'm not sure it was intended to be as hilarious as it is.

SUE:

So I'm gonna pull out a Discovery one here. *Grace Oohs* I know, I feel like this is wading into like more controversial territory because it's current. But Pax Federica on Twitter wrote "As admirable as Discovery's Captain Pike is melding such a flawless officer and a gentleman character with the white male all-American archetype that Pike embodies to a tee makes him arguably the most retrograde character we've seen so far in this new era of Star Trek." That is put *so well* and exactly my hang up with a Pike Spock show.

GRACE:

It's a very good point. Yeah.

JARRAH:

I think that when we talked about season two of Discovery we talked about how maybe one of the most frustrating things is that, as much as I found it was very enjoyable to watch the Enterprise crew, that they weren't actually necessary to the story at all and that it does make me uneasy. As much as like I think Anson Mount is incredible as Pike, I think Ethan Peck does great as Spock, I like Rebecca Romijn as Number One, but you're right away looking at starting off a show with three white leads. After you've, I think, made some really big strides forward with diversity on Discovery. So I have some similar- I would say it makes me uneasy to talk about that. And yeah I mean it's challenging, like I'm not saying you can never have a white male lead again but you also just have Picard and you shouldn't be like "We've checked the box with Discovery and now we can move on."

GRACE:

Just consider the ratio you have.

JARRAH:

Yeah yeah. And consider that you're also kind of making up for 50 years of putting mostly white guys in charge.

SUE:

Right. You're recreating an idea from 1966 when there have been 50 years of change since that time.

JARRAH:

So like I'm cautiously optimistic that if they really cared enough about representation that they could balance it out with characters, like you know the Ensign that we see in the Short Treks, and some of the navigators that they had, they have like a woman of color engineer and stuff that we see in Discovery. But I am just not 100 percent confident that they're really thinking about that *that hard* as a problem.

GRACE:

Hard to disagree with that. Definitely.

JARRAH:

Well I feel like we had a lot about Chakotay and Seven, so I'm gonna throw that out there.

GRACE:

Might as well.

JARRAH:

And even though I think we had a fair number of people defending the Chakotay Seven relationship I do still agree that it qualifies for the topic of this episode.

Liz on Facebook said "Chakotay Seven was a good concept, poorly executed" and we had a very passionate defense by Trekkie Katie on Instagram of how the episode Human Error really sold the relationship for her and then Curator of Twitter says "Chakotay/Seven could have been a beautiful example of maturing beyond fear/prejudice into love. A very trek message." So basically I think and we had a couple other people say you know "I'm also in favor of this relationship" and I do think that most fans including me do not generally speak favorably of it. So validate those opinions.

GRACE:

It's one where I could. I wasn't personally a fan but at the same time there's a lot of arguing you can do on behalf of "If we had a good- the right writer or the right story for this." It could have worked and I do believe it could have been a lot better than it was. And that's something I'd be with- an idea I'd definitely be willing to contemplate. That said, for what it was I didn't enjoy it very much.

JARRAH:

Yeah I think I can get behind the "This could have worked" the idea, but I think it would have had to start right at the beginning and because to me what makes it not work is not just that it seems kind of shoehorned into the end. But it's also that Chakotay starts out saying very paternalistic things about her. So if you go back to the very beginning of when Seven was introduced the conversations Chakotay and Janeway have about Seven are parental, and it is weird to imagine him starting to see her as a love and sex interest going forward after that back ground.

SUE:

Yeah I mean at the same time there is a very strong Janeway/Seven fandom. That I think many members of it find that dynamic appealing.

JARRAH:

Yeah but I think it is, you know, I think it's a little bit different that it's non-canon. And for me like, I think that fans going and creating particularly queer ships outside of canon is a long established tradition. And to me I'm not going to problematize those pieces if it, but if it had been canon that Janeway was with Seven I also would have questioned that because she's and also Chakotay are her commanding officers who also start out seeing her as a parent and I think those dynamics can happen in relationships but whether they should be sanctioned, that type of power dynamic, should be sanctioned in particularly the Voyager era of Star Trek that was trying to be I guess you know trying to set some more clear lines there. I think that's more questionable.

SUE:

The thing about Seven of Nines relationships, for me, is that when we see her on Voyager like discovering her humanity. Yes, she is technically an adult but she has been a Borg since she was what six?

GRACE:

She has a stunted state of adulthood.

SUE:

She is really in adolescence and I think that is often reinforced because she is paired up with Naomi Wildman so much. So that's what makes that relationship much more uncomfortable for me. However like it certainly is something I think I am also behind the idea that it could have been executed better. It could have been done well.

GRACE:

It could have been done less abruptly?

SUE:

Right. But I don't I don't mind it as part of this character's past now that she is also in a new show because like, people explore. That's part of what you do when you're free and you are figuring yourself out. And like if this is like her first relationship I am not bothered that 20 some odd years later Seven is not still with Chakotay.

JARRAH:

I'm also not even as bothered by the fact that they like, date a bit as it is by like the Endgame thing, that like they end up together and then when she dies he can't deal. And like that type of

“and they're together forever” thing. I remember watching this as a teenager and just feeling like “Holy!” That's a lot of pressure to put on someone that's never had an adult relationship.

GRACE:

Yeah it's kind of irresponsible pressure. Also I mean how does she have any definition of what a good relationship would constitute, and just you know decide to be with the first partner she's ever had?

SUE:

When all she knows of humanity is this couple hundred people on this spaceship.

GRACE:

That's messed up. I'm gonna go to the danger zone and pick it to scare every one we got from Tara on Facebook “Edward was right, Tribbles would make an excellent food source”

SUE:

laughs Goes back to that eating meat thing.

GRACE:

Yeah *I mean* we can't say they've got like any kind of sentience can we? Or at least like not much.

JARRAH:

Yeah I mean, if they're not-sentient and especially pre-replicator, I'm here for it.

GRACE:

Yeah, I mean it could definitely save a lot of problems when it comes to the environmental impact we have of you know the current meat industry. So. So think about it. Think about it is what I'm saying.

SUE:

I'll jump to back to DS9 for a minute with a comment from Joseph on Twitter who wrote “I love the Ezri Dax character. Ezri was underdeveloped and had so much potential. Seeing her try to make sense of everything after Jadzia was so together and confident and was refreshing.” I'm here for it. I think it's the same like Seven of Nine situation right where you're trying to figure it all out.

GRACE:

The problem is that with Ezri we only get one season. And I really I really do appreciate the character for what she got to be, but I think we probably would have liked her a lot more if we'd gotten more than one season and if it hadn't been such a sudden change over at the end of the series.

SUE:

Yeah I think a lot of the hate Ezri gets is sadness over losing Jadzia. Which is unfortunate.

JARRAH:

And I think also maybe a bit of resentment that there was a lot- there was so much to cover in that last season. But we had to spend a lot of time on Ezri's stories to get us up to speed with that character. And I think most of it was time well used. But I think some people were hoping to like dig more into what's going on on Cardassia and what's going on in the Dominion and stuff like that.

GRACE:

Also to say nothing about all of the emotional time and energy we've sunk into the character of Jadzia and not getting to see her finish out the show. I'm sure there's a level of resentment there.

SPEAKER: F1

Yeah. I will, also actually, shout out- well this is not necessarily just DS9, Jenny did not comment whether it was DS9 or not, Jenny says "I don't mind Section 31. I kind of like seeing the dark underbelly of the post scarcity utopia." So DS9/Discovery. And I also would say, I think, a fair number of people appreciate the section 31 storyline or they wouldn't have kept bringing it back. But I do hear it scapegoated a lot especially around Discovery as like "this is too dark" and that you know "Starfleet should be above all this." But I agree. I also don't mind section 31. I think that it forces us, even especially in the earlier incarnation in DS9, really forces us to question the tradeoffs that we make for the sense of security and privilege that we have now.

GRACE:

If we aren't questioning that, then we probably don't deserve what we've gotten and that's just kind of a sad truth of humanity that there is always a dark side to things. And ignoring it or pretending it isn't there does not seem to do so good.

JARRAH:

Yeah. I mean, I don't think it's associated with the post-scarcity utopia as much as it is associated with like our world today. But yeah, I think in Discovery it's a little bit different, because it, I feel, it goes so quickly into being this whole thing with control and stuff that we don't really get a good sense of what it looks like other than sort of manipulating the war in the first season? But I think it actually works the best in Deep Space 9. We had it in Enterprise as well and it's OK.

SUE:

Well I have a TNG one that I'll just read. It's from Tricia on Twitter who wrote "I came to hate Data after a while. It was the same storyline over and over with him. Nothing against Brent Spiner, he's awesome. But the other characters deserve more. Geordi, Deanna, Beverly. And it is unfair how they were sidelined in the movie as well. He was always center stage." And this is one I certainly have come around to. Or even came around to in the films. I definitely like, thought of Data as one of my favorite characters while TNG was airing. But like towards the end

of it, especially towards the end of the seventh season, I remember feeling like “Oh it's another Data episode. OK fine.” And even Picard is another Data episode! *crew laughs*

GRACE:

I mean, it is true that Data was definitely one of the characters that they were trying to push as like *main* main. One of the main main characters.

SUE:

For sure that was. And like Brent, Brent was masterful in a lot of the acting work he did on the show, no doubt about that. But TNG is like, one of its failings from a production standpoint, in my opinion this might be unpopular, is that it was not an ensemble cast as much as it could have been. *Cat meows in background*

GRACE:

I hear a cat agreeing with us.

JARRAH:

It's my cat being like *upset voice* “It's dinner time!” *Sue laughs* The cat is saying “my unpopular opinion is that Odo was underrated.” *crew ‘aaww’s*

GRACE

I'm gonna pick one out another TNG one because we got a lot of them. Lucy on Facebook said “Although Wesley Crusher can come across as annoying to some, as a kid watching Star Trek he was a great role model. He taught me it was OK to be clever and in areas where you're not so clever go and ask and learn! Be curious, have confidence. People will knock you down but you will get back up again. And we saw him fail a lot. The boy wonder who actually didn't get into the academy the first time and then who left before graduating.” Seconded by Diana also. And yeah I definitely think if I had watched TNG as a younger kid, Wesley probably would have been my favourite character. You know in terms of there's being a precocious kid, and then there's being a precocious kid around adults. And around children it can be different and if you're in an environment where you're being seen as a precocious kid only in comparison to other kids around you you're probably gonna get called annoying a couple times and that is that is a fact of life right there.

JARRAH:

Well especially if you're the only kid. He's like pretty much the you know, stereotypical like homeschooled kid who is only hanging out with adults and is coming across kind of as perfect all the time.

SUE:

And early on they give him the like “Ugh adults” line. Right? Like literally that is a line he said.

JARRAH:

And also “I feel weird but also good.” Like he gets some really not great lines early on there.

SUE:

There's one where he figures out something and takes it to Beverly and Deanna and they leave to go tell the rest of the crew. And he goes "You're welcome ladies." *crew laughs*

GRACE:

Oh Wesley.

JARRAH:

I think Wesley's fun, but as a kid when I was watching it I didn't notice anything like annoying about it or anything. I just thought he's just a member of the crew like anyone else.

SUE:

And I do really like the point that they did not keep him on this like "Boy Wonder" path. That we did see him fail, we saw him mess up. We saw him release, you know, nanites. And the fact that this thing we see this kid had the desire to do, he wants to go to the academy and be an officer and be just like Captain Picard, and he realizes that's not for him.

GRACE:

Yeah. We could see the character grow a lot.

SUE:

Yeah. We have a supposedly aspirational character who decides that Starfleet is not for him after all.

GRACE:

Yeah well *this* may be an unpopular opinion but I think we're about done for this episode.

SUE:

I mean I could be doing this for ages but we do have to stop at some point.

JARRAH:

We can always have a sequel.

GRACE:

You could hear more of our individual unpopular opinions when you find us online. Jarrah, where can people find you online?

JARRAH:

You can find me on Twitter @J-A-R-R-A-H-Penguin or at Trekkiefeminist.com

GRACE:

And Sue, where can people find you?

SUE:

You can find me on Twitter @Spaltor. S-P-A-L-T-O-R.

GRACE:

And you can find me on Twitter @BoneCrusherjenk. That's B-O-N-E-C-R-U-S-H-E-R-J-E-N-K. I realized recently I never actually spell it out and I should probably do that once or twice.

You can find me there telling my opinions to the ether as I do often.

SUE:

All of our individual Twitter accounts are also listed in the bio for the Women at warp Twitter account.

GRACE:

And to learn more about our show or to contact us to visit Womenatwarp.com or find us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram @womenatwarp. You can also email us at crew@womenatwarp.com and for more from the Roddenberry podcast network visit podcasts.Roddenberry.com.