

## Women at Warp Episode 128: Trek Toys, Collectibles & Memorabilia

SUE:

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 Sue and thanks for tuning in. This week I am on a solo mission from the crew, but I have two wonderful guests with me today. There is Holly

HOLLY:

Hi!

SUE:

And Jonathan.

JONATHAN:

Hey everyone.

SUE:

And we are going to be talking about Star Trek merchandise slash collectibles. So I couldn't have two more perfect people here with me today to talk about this topic. Very quickly first, I do want to remind you that our show is entirely supported by our patrons on Patreon. If you'd like to become a patron you can do so for as little as one dollar per month and get some awesome rewards from thanks on social media up to silly watchalong commentaries, and you can join us by visiting [Patreon.com/womenatwarp](https://Patreon.com/womenatwarp). You can also support the show by leaving a rating or review on Apple Podcasts or wherever you get your podcasts. And with that out of the way, we always like to have our guests introduce themselves a little bit. Give us some of your history with Star Trek, anything you'd like to share, and we'll start with Holly.

HOLLY:

Hi, my name's Holly Amos. I worked for licensing for Star Trek for the brand at CBS for five years between 2012 and 2017. I then went on to be an executive producer on an officially licensed game, and I now actually work consulting with Roddenberry on their archives. So that's my experience with the Star Trek brand. I've been a fan my whole life and I've worked for the brand in one capacity or another for about seven years now.

SUE:

Fantastic. And Jonathan you've joined us a few times before, but why don't you remind everybody about yourself.

JONATHAN:

Sure. Hi everyone. Once again my name is Jonathan Alexandratos, and apologies for my voice today. I'm getting over a cold. So that is why you're also getting a little Eddie Vedder and all this. Basically I am here because I have been on the other side of Holly's work for my entire life. I've

been buying the merch. I've been collecting it. I have a collection that numbers certainly into the thousands of Star Trek merch, and that even makes me a *small fry* in the world of Star Trek collectors because we all know how extreme it can be. I'm here also because I've written a lot of academic scholarship on the importance of collecting and specifically toys and action figures. I edited the first academic collection of essays on action figures. It's called *Articulating The Action Figure* and it's out now from McFarland. So I'm here for all of that. \*Sue laughs\* Oh! And pronouns are they/them, I should just- always like to say that.

HOLLY:

Good to know.

SUE:

So this topic is a very long topic. I think this is the most notes I've ever written going into an episode, clocking in at six pages for anyone who cares. \*laughs\* This was suggested to us by one of our patrons. Jason wrote in "How much Star Trek March do you have or want? Given that licensing appears to be on the rise with a new series? How much is too much? A Bat'leth over the fireplace?" Of course, we're gonna use this as a jumping-off point going all through the merchandise, but are there any of Jason's questions that you would like to answer before we get started?

JONATHAN:

They're very easy questions. I mean, the answer is all of the to all of it. \*all laugh\* Holly you could probably be more specific than I am.

HOLLY:

I mean, here's the thing is having that on the side of actually licensing it, there's so much of it. And you know, I mean there's always been a whole bunch of merchandise even when the franchise was sort of in a lull, there was a lot of merchandise. And I genuinely feel like there are collectors like you that want *everything*, but I feel like for me it was always I kind of picked my battles. I know that there's a lot of people that are foaming at the mouth over like the Christmas ornaments, and I mean that's good to mention because we're getting into the Christmas season, and that's what they choose to be really passionate about. So I feel like in terms of kind of not going crazy and not running myself into debt \*laughs\* that I would probably choose a couple of things like the Funko pops or something that I would be really excited to collect. So yeah that's how I would say do it. There's a couple of things that I collect that are specific to Star Trek but I don't collect everything. I just don't have the space or the money for it. \*laughs\*

JONATHAN:

Well and what Holly says is true. I mean I did after all buy the *smallest* storage unit that they had. So therefore this is *my night*. \*Sue laughs\* So her call should be heeded, but I think that to me, to refine my answer a little bit more, Star Trek merch for me personally has always been at its most charming when it has been at its least expected. So, for example, you go into the 7-Eleven and you see the cup, and there's Star Trek on the cup you're like "Oh my God I just

wanted a Slurpee but now I have this Star Trek thing” and it's so cool. There are plenty of collectors who are like “No no, I want to drop the five hundred dollars to get the pendant or whatever.” That's great. But I much prefer the days where Star Trek just hits me kind of out of nowhere. So the Happy Meal toys, the mail away offers, those charming little things that I think have somewhat maybe sort of gotten lost a little bit now, because they were kind of perhaps kitschy, but I love them. I mean that that's the kind of thing that I will like buy it now on eBay faster than you know Quick Draw McGraw. So that's me.

SUE:

Yeah. Me personally, as a kid I wanted everything. I did not know how much everything was. \*all laugh\* Like tcost-wise or volume-wise.

HOLLY:

I mean you know over the course of it's not just like what was out *then*. It's what has been out in the past. I mean we're at 50 years at this point, and if you start now and you're like “I want everything” literally impossible. Like you're not gonna be able to find everything. \*all laugh\*

SUE:

Yeah but at some point, I started paring down my collectibles and toys and tchotchkes. There's still a lot of them, but I feel like you know being a New Yorker, knowing space is at a premium sort of helps me on that. And I try and limit myself to things I really love, or characters I really love-

HOLLY:

Things that spark joy!

SUE:

Yes. \*laughs\* I would say my favorite piece actually, in the last couple of years anyway, was the Star Trek Rock Love jewelry collaboration. And I have the Vulcan script pendant and it is just really beautiful and doesn't necessarily scream Star Trek.

HOLLY:

Oh yeah! That's something that we got into when I worked there, is what we call “the secret handshake” as opposed to kind of “slap a logo syndrome.” There's been a lot of licensees that literally just slapped logos onto existing products, like Remco back in the day. But you know we really discussed, when I was working at CBS and I'm sure that this is something that I know that this is something that they're sticking to, is that we want more things that are a little bit more subtle. And so the Rock Love collection is a really good example of that. It looks like a beautiful piece of jewelry. But if you're a Star Trek fan and you see somebody wearing that you're like “Oh my God that's Star Trek!”

JONATHAN:

To me, what's cool about that is it points out, at least from my point of view, that when you study a text like Star Trek there's sort of these two histories running parallel. There's the history of Star Trek the show, and then there's the history that the merch tells, that you learn through the material culture and that history is really cool because you get to participate in that. Unless you've acted in Star Trek, in which case I love you. But if you are a fan then the merch is the thing that you have. It's sort of like you can tell the history of the Great Depression through history or you can tell it through depression glass, the stuff that came with you know oatmeal back in the 30s and you can kind of see what people had. The merch brings us the joy of finding something first, of finding *out about* something first, and then you know telling all our friends about it, and really being able to be that sort of main character in your own Star Trek. So anything that enables *that* is something I'm going to love. The visitor pins for instance that came out with Picard show, I love that! Because now I can put that on my jacket and be a Starfleet visitor, which is let's face it the highest rank I would ever achieve in Starfleet. So I love that. I think that that's just so much fun and I love participating in that.

SUE:

So should we get into some of the history?

JONATHAN:

Yeah!

HOLLY:

Sure can!

SUE:

This *giant topic* of history. Now before we even start, I just want to say there is *no way* we can possibly touch on everything. *\*all laugh\** So if we leave out your favorite I'm sorry. *\*Johnathan laughs\** Pre-sorry. OK? So it all starts, right, with Aluminum Model Toys. Aluminum Model Toys basically got the license to produce Star Trek model kits *before* the show premiered. It got it in August 1966, a month before the series debuted. And basically the exchange was "Hey Gene Roddenberry, we'll build you a shuttlecraft to use on your show in exchange for the rights to produce models of the ships on the show."

HOLLY:

Yep, *\*laughs\** that's exactly what happened.

JONATHAN:

*\*laughs\** And they're cool models.

HOLLY:

Yeah, they're still they're actually being reproduced- well they *were* being reproduced quite recently. So those were still- not AMT themselves, but they were being reproduced by another company and you know for the nostalgia factor. *\*laughs\**

JONATHAN:

With my dad, that's actually something he remembers having.

HOLLY:

So does my dad. I asked my dad the other day "What was your first piece of merchandise?" and he said "it was the models." My first piece of merchandise was actually folders. \*laughs\* Like school supplies. But yeah my dad had several model kits when he was a kid.

JONATHAN:

Yeah. Yeah, same here. And has since tried to track them down on eBay again and all that.

SUE:

Yes. So they produced the Galileo, of course, which is the shuttle they built, a Bird Of Prey, a space Station. Of course, the Enterprise was the most popular. And the AMT Enterprise model was actually used on-screen in the show twice. So they distressed one of the models for The Doomsday Machine as the USS Constellation, and then used one again in The Ultimate Computer as the USS Excalibur.

JONATHAN:

So then after that, is that Lincoln Enterprises after that? Sort of came out with the- so they came out with the pendant right? And that was the big sort of mail away, the pendant.

SUE:

When Lincoln enterprises started it was formed by Bjo and John Trimble under the hand of Gene Roddenberry. And it seems to have started- there are lots of different origin stories for Lincoln Enterprises, but one of the most widely accepted explanations is that it started to handle fan mail after a letter from Isaac Asimov was directed to the wrong department and received a signed cast photo. \*laughs\* So good job everybody, on that. It was essentially a mail-order catalog, and it started selling anything that was flat. Scripts, copies of the original Star Trek pitch, copies of the show bible, bumper stickers, film cells, Inside Star Trek the newsletter. So anything that could be sent in a flat rate envelope. And then eventually got to larger things.

JONATHAN:

What I think is cool about that, is how that really did impact the show in the sense of the Vulcan IDIC symbol is sort of made to be sold in that catalog. And you often sort of study merch going the other direction. It's the show creates the thing, and then the merch sort of spins off into whatever. In this case, you sort of see the merch being like "Hey we have a need for a thing" and this show is like "Oh I got you. Here's this pendant you can totally sell."

SUE:

Yes. So Inside Star Trek number one, the very first catalog slash Magazine whatever you want to define it as, had a piece on a Vulcan pendant and that was- that magazine issue came out in July 1968. We didn't see an IDIC on-screen until October of that year. And then by May of the

following year we see the first actual ad in Inside Star Trek Issue 11 to purchase your IDIC pendant, for seven dollars and fifty cents by the way. \*Holly laughs\*

JONATHAN:

Right. And those are really tough to find now too. I think like the original you know once I looked for them on eBay to no avail.

HOLLY:

I do like that they kind of went back and forth on you know one inspiring the other and then going back and inspiring it back. So I like that about really Star Trek.

JONATHAN:

In a way it's a precursor to now. Because from the 80s onward it was always like that, you know, Hasbro is in the room to advise on the Transformers thing because Hasbro is like "We need to sell this product. I don't really care what your show is." Obviously it's not that cynical for Star Trek, but it's sort of a great ahead of its time sort of sales marketing technique.

SUE:

Growing up in the 80s I mean, our Saturday morning cartoons were essentially half hour-long commercials for the toys.

JONATHAN:

Oh yeah yeah. You can thank Reagan for that, for deregulating the FCC. And you know I say that sarcastically in case \*Sue laughs\* that's not coming through my sick voice. It's yeah. I mean we did. We got sold a lot of stuff.

SUE:

So there's this really neat quote from a paper about the Australian Star Trek fan community. The quote is from a fan named Stone, or calling themselves Stone, who says "Lincoln Enterprises was the one source at the time for devotees like myself to get real juicy Star Trek merchandise. Not model kits and books that you could buy in stores. But even cooler stuff you couldn't get anywhere else like pins, medallions, belt buckles. The original Star Trek concordance, and its third season supplement, and scripts, and writers guides."

HOLLY:

Yeah. I mean that was- I feel like that is... interestingly enough, I think if you're outside the Star Trek fandom you might not understand that but it's stuff like that that fans get crazy about. That they feel like they're part of the process if they're able to get their hands on say a script, or one of the bibles. So I understand why back in the day that was a big deal, because I feel like it's even a big deal now. I mean we all get very excited over, you know, these memos and stuff that get released into the fandom, via Roddenberry usually, because they have all of that stuff in their archives. The fans get really excited about that stuff and I understand why.

JONATHAN:

Yeah. I feel like it happens sort of in two different ways maybe for different people. It's either you're building your own avatar in the Star Trek universe, you are sort of deciding like "OK this character is who I am, so I'm going to surround myself with that" or you are sort of building your own universe around yourself. So by having the scripts and the stuff you are constructing your own holodeck in a way, except it's not holographic. It's real and you're sort of living in it, and I say what more fun could you have than that?

SUE:

So really quickly on the changing hands of Lincoln enterprises. So started by John and Bjo Trimble. They were only around for about nine months before they were fired slash let go. There is still even some like controversy around that. So we're not going to get into a lot of detail, but their immediate replacement was Stephen Whitfield who was a marketing executive with AMT, and then Majel Barrett took over in the 1980s, and eventually what was Lincoln Enterprises became the merchandising arm of Roddenberry.com, which slowed up merchandising production and eventually shut down the Roddenberry shop within the last year. But after Majel took over in the 80s the product range was increased to like props, and technical documents, the Tribbles used in Trials and Tribblations were purchased from Lincoln enterprises. But by the time we reach 1993 the merchandising part of Lincoln Enterprises was down to Majel and two staff members. And even then she was saying, she gave an interview in Strange New Worlds the interview is titled Lincoln Enterprises: a little piece of Star Trek. She said "I'd like to go in for the dolls, and the plates, and the games, and the electronic parts and so forth. In other words not just memorabilia but merchandise."

HOLLY:

Right. And I think that part of the issue with that, obviously, was that Viacom was the overbearing situation there. That they didn't fully own the rights to be making merchandise. But Majel was very creative, in her whole time being in charge of it. She came up with some really good ideas that couldn't always be executed, unfortunately.

JONATHAN:

Well, and I mean if that data is by 1993 then she- I mean there was just so much stuff in 1993 that you could get your hands on for Star Trek. So that comment of hers I think rings really true.

SUE:

Well, we could spend all day on Lincoln Enterprises but we're going to keep moving. Go back to the 60s. And I think we have to talk about Remco.

HOLLY:

Yeah. \*all laugh\*

SUE:

And Holly, you were mentioning "label slapping" before. \*Johnathan laughs\*

HOLLY:

Remco and Enco are the two- I mean they rhyme with each other so I always have to remember who did what. Yeah Remco was a company that had existing products and when they got the Star Trek license they literally just put Star Trek stickers onto existing product and it absolutely a hundred percent does not make sense when we look back on it today because they had things that had nothing to do- that were not made for anything that appeared onscreen. So they had this ridiculous Astro helmet, and everybody is thinking of Spock helmet right now, but this is actually this bug-eyed yellow helmet. They had trains, they had tanks, and they just started calling everything "Astro whatever" and put Star Trek on it. And that was the way that they kind of got away with not having to actually put in a lot of money to the brand. I mean that was really what they were trying to do, is not have huge expenses on top of picking up this new license. And it's just the \*laughs\* product is hilarious to look back on.

JONATHAN:

So I want to push back a little bit because I love this stuff and, to me, it *totally* makes sense.

HOLLY:

Oh no, I love it! But ironically because I think it's ridiculous.

JONATHAN:

I mean and I- that makes sense. I mean it's, if you look at the history of Rack toys which is really what these things are. Rack toys, the word rack toys comes from basically selling toys on pharmacy racks for very cheap instead of toy stores which was huge in the 70s. Huge in the 80s. And it basically happened like that. This is why you have a pair of handcuffs that are branded with the incredible hulk, I don't know why. \*Sue laughs\* You have the same motorcycle that's used for Ghost Rider and Chips, I don't know why. But then like you get into that area with Star Trek too, where this was a whole movement that was going on where companies realized "Look we have this product. If we could put a million stickers on it. If a handful of people buy them in pharmacies we'll make a profit." You know kids are running around pharmacies all the time grabbing toys off the shelves and all of a sudden it becomes "Yo Mommy, can you buy this?" or "Daddy can you buy this for me?" or whoever you know that the company is making these things feel like well you know "Who's going to resist that?" And they were pretty much right. Most of the time, yeah. So to me that move makes complete sense. Especially surrounded by the history of Rock toys, which was *huge* at this time. So I- yeah I can't stop tracking this stuff down.

HOLLY:

Do you have? Can I ask? Because like 10 years later and Enco is the company that came up with the infamous what everybody calls "the Spock helmet" because that's what's on the box. But I mean really it wasn't a Spock helmet, it was a Star Trek helmet and you could personalize



it with the stickers that came in it. And so you know you could even write your own name on it. Do you have a Spock helmet?

JONATHAN:

So I don't. That's too rich for my blood, honestly. \*Holly laughs\* That's not to say I haven't looked at many an auction of them. But you know, but that is one that has eluded me.

HOLLY:

Yeah, first of all I don't think that they would fit on any of our heads because they are literally child-sized. Although one of the guys from Star Trek Online at Cryptic made his own and it's adult-sized and I got to wear it and it was very exciting.

SUE:

Yeah, that would be Nick.

HOLLY:

But yeah, actually, the Star Trek archive at CBS doesn't have one either. So every now and again I would go on eBay and see if there was one at a reasonable price that we could obtain and then you know integrate into the archive and as far as- I never got one. So as far as I know the Star Trek archive at CBS does not have one of these. But it is the most infamous ridiculous thing that I think exists.

JONATHAN:

But I know what I'm hunting for tonight. \*all laugh\*

SUE:

So that puts us mid-70s, which means we have to talk about Mego.

JONATHAN:

Marty Abrams.

HOLLY:

Oh man, he's uh... he's-

JONATHAN:

He's a character.

JONATHAN:

He's interesting. He's had an interesting journey.

JONATHAN:

Yeah yeah.

SUE:

So the first wave of Mego figures that was released in 1974 with Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scotty and an anonymous Klingon who a lot of people think is Koloth from Trouble with Tribbles. Uhura followed later because in the words of Marty Abrams "Barbie was popular." \*laughs\* So sure. But there were a couple different waves of aliens, there was the Gamma 6 playset, just lots of great classic stuff came out of Mego though in the 70s.

HOLLY:

Stuff that was actually made to look like what was in the show itself. Not just stuff that they had existing and started putting labels on.

JONATHAN:

But sort of, because some of those Klingons are part of the Lizard-

HOLLY:

I mean, yeah. Yeah. The Lizard from what was it Spider-Man? So yeah I mean sure. But they were actually producing I mean you know, Kirk and Spock were nonexistent toys.

JONATHAN:

That is true. You're absolutely right.

SUE:

The head sculpts for the actual characters were definitely the best that anybody had seen up to that point. They actually looked like the characters.

JONATHAN:

Yeah.

HOLLY:

Except for Gorn.

JONATHAN:

\*laughs\* Right. Yes exactly because that was the-

HOLLY:

Yeah. Gorn was The Lizard head on top of a Klingon body. And it was- he wasn't green \*Johnathan laughs\* and you know that's disappointing. But I mean also I feel like that's one of the most collectible items. These weird things are the ones that people really \*laughs\* want. It's like getting you know a mistake. \*laughs\* And then being like "Oh this is worth a lot of money because they didn't mean to do this."

JONATHAN:

Right. "Oh Boba Fetts name is upside down? That's going to be worth a million dollars." It's true.

Well and you mentioned Sue, just now the Gamma 6 playset, which what a cool playset! I mean that was one where that never really sort of appeared on the show, but I think was taken from some like unproduced script or something and they made this sort of playset out of it. With many many many liberties, obviously. But the monster in the playset, that was a glove that you put your hand in, so your hand became the monster. And it was just “Ah!” so cool.

HOLLY:

Remember the commercials for those?

JONATHAN:

Yes! \*laughs\*

HOLLY:

\*Pitchman voice\* “ He disappears in the transport chamber!” The commercials are real fun.

JONATHAN:

They're great. Yeah. Mego I think, really had something there that they learned kind of with Planet Of The Apes which they had done before that, and they kind of saw how that licensing really could make a product take off. Because that's an important sort of transition to talk about too, in the bigger scope of toy history. The transition from sort of “We're going to make this rando toy” to “No, this toy is branded from, you know, this property”. And you saw that in the 60s with Mark suing Marvel, and he saw that you know in other places. But that was actually a lesson that had to be learned to make products from a show or from a movie. And Mego was part of that.

SUE:

Well, Star Trek was pretty successful for them to the point that they were offered Star Wars before the film was released and said “No.” \*Holly laughs\* So great job, again. To quote Marty Abrams and this is in The Toys That Made Us, the Star Trek episode of The Toys That Made Us on Netflix. He said that “Mego controlled 75 percent of *male action*” excellent phrasing “before Star Wars. And then with Star Wars licensed to Kenner after 1977, for Mego that percentage dropped down to 30 percent.”

HOLLY:

Yup!

JONATHAN:

Yup. I mean here is the thing, like I know Marty Abrams personally, I've interviewed him in the past and I mean he's a lovely lovely lovely person. And I think that he's good at the toy business as sort of an interesting character overall and is now- I mean is now part of the revival too. Because Mego toys are back on shelves. I know I'm jumping ahead a little bit but, just to sort of say that stuff landed so *well* that now you could bring it back and it still works.

HOLLY:

Yeah, and they're not like recreations by another company. Like, he's involved with it. Which is *wild* to me.

SUE:

I have a Mego over on my shelf right now.

HOLLY:

Yeah. So it's not like recreation by an entirely different company kind of pretending to be this nostalgia company back in the day that was successful. Like, he's involved.

JONATHAN:

Oh yeah. Oh yeah. He's involved and other people who are involved are people who are like making the accessories all throughout the period of time where Mego was no longer a thing. So he basically pulled together all of these people who had been Mego fans all this time to just sort of remake Mego with him. And it's really cool yeah.

SUE:

So the first run of the Mego toys, unfortunately, came to a close around 1982 when the company filed for bankruptcy. But before that, we had The Motion Picture in 1979 and there was a paramount merchandising executive Dawn Steel who struck as many licensing deals as she possibly could for Star Trek The Motion Picture. Unfortunately it seems they did not know if they wanted to market to adult collectors or kids for toys.

HOLLY:

No yeah, that got lost in translation. \*all laugh\*

SUE:

But we did get one of the very first movie-themed McDonald's Happy Meals.

JONATHAN:

The first! The absolute first, yeah. And I'm actually looking at the box right now. So the thing is before we started this \*Sue laughs\* I pulled a bunch of Star Trek merch out from the collection and that Happy Meal box along with the Happy Meal toys is right in front of me as we speak. And I can tell you just by looking that this box is fantastic. On one of the flaps the Enterprise refit is burping for example, it has a little word bubble that says "burp" \*Sue laughs\* and you can connect the dots to make the Enterprise. And on the back there is a comic that is about Mr. Spock and he goes on- there's a maze. It's a cool box with some cool merch. I'm looking at my mint in-bag Star Trek watch right now. Obviously, it's not an actual watch. It's basically just this a strip of plastic that you can kind of put these stickers on of the Star Trek cast and stuff. But yeah, I mean this is great. And imagine what it was like right before that? In Happy Meal history, you got the toys that were just sort of the generic kind of school supplies. That was kind of their first Happy Meal, and then you get this? I mean this is pretty big. I would have been excited.

HOLLY:

I mean it also set a precedent for you know doing future- so the fact that Star Trek can kind of take credit for that is wild to me. Every time I see like a new McDonald's Happy Meal toy or whatever, which actually I don't see a lot of that anymore. But when I was a kid and I saw them I'd be like "Star Trek started that."

JONATHAN:

Yeah yeah.

SUE:

They just brought back some of the classic toys didn't they?

JONATHAN:

Yeah. Well so, I have two full sets of the McDonald's fortieth Happy Meal anniversary sets, one mint in-bag, one loose. And they're cool, but you know it does say something about nostalgia because I'm looking at them and they're not the old toys, they're sort of remade versions of the old toys and you look at them and all I can kind of think is like "Oh that hamburger that changes into a robot. Yeah it's cool, but it's not the one that I had." And then I go into my collection and I find the vintage one and I'm much happier.

SUE:

I 100 percent had that hamburger that turns into a robot.

HOLLY:

But I mean, the nostalgia factor of all this is because the people that are running the show now or the ones that were kids then. So this is like an entire generation of people who have grown up and now we're running the show and they're like "I want that because that's what I liked as a kid."

JONATHAN:

Well and to get back to Sue's point earlier, we were sold stuff all the time as kids. That was our programming. So the fact that it has created these adults that are obsessed with understanding merch, I think makes total sense because that was our childhood. Our childhood was defined by *stuff*. You know, I study it for that very reason.

SUE:

We had our happy meal. We had also in 1979 Milton Bradley got into the Star Trek game, with a literal Star Trek game. \*laughs\* They also- their electronic side had a battery-operated phaser. Which like, had lasers in it right?

HOLLY:

Yeah.

\*laughs\*

Yeah.

SUE:

Like, a laser pointer type lasers. Which seems a way ahead of its time for 1979.

JONATHAN:

Well, they had to compete with the Star Wars game, which is pretty cool but also kind of low tech compared to that. Yeah, it was. It was awesome. Also in 79, by the way, with that movie a company called Knickerbocker released some pretty cool plushes. And I'm holding the Captain Kirk plush right now from that.

HOLLY:

\*laughs\* With the- it's got like a squishy head right? Yeah like that it's rubber? \*Sue laughs\*

JONATHAN:

Yeah!

HOLLY:

There's one yes in the Star Trek archive too. Those are actually really cool.

JONATHAN:

Oh they're great.

HOLLY:

And he's wearing his Admiral's uniform yeah?

JONATHAN:

He sure is. And he's got little- he's got a little Velcro on his hands so you can like Velcro him to something or to himself.

HOLLY:

Or to himself right? So he can hold his own hand?

JONATHAN:

Right. But I don't really know like how many things you can Velcro him to unless you're doing it to your shirt, because there aren't too many other Velcro sensitive places you know? But I guess you could drag him along with your shoes if you have shoes that are Velcro. I don't know. But he's cool. Like it also speaks to what we were saying before of like "Yes, you clearly did not know what to do with this property because *this exists* alongside the game, alongside everything else we're talking about." And there is a question of like "OK, who is this *for*?" Well you know now it's for me, but at the time I don't know. But it is a cool little odd piece. I do like it.

HOLLY:

And they made a Spock? They made Kirk and Spock.

JONATHAN:

They made Kirk and Spock.

HOLLY:

Did they make anything more than that? I didn't think that they did, because no I mean those are the two that the CBS archive has. So yeah I didn't think that there was any more. I liked those. I thought those were cute little guys so..\*laughs\*

JONATHAN:

Same here. Well, so I think that if we're talking about the 70s we should probably talk about the Star Trek comics that came with the record.

HOLLY:

Oh, I have some of those!

JONATHAN:

So, me too. Right?

SUE:

You can find these a lot of places. I've seen them in Vegas a lot.

JONATHAN:

So here's the deal with that. Like, they're cool as a concept, as a product. And the idea of sort of learning to read through these things is cool. But if you know the Star Trek comics that came with the record you know that Uhura is replaced by a white blonde woman in those comics. And so for talking about sort of merch decisions that were made that fundamentally change the source text, there was one big one in the 70s and it was *that*. And I think that we sort of have to acknowledge that and say like, yeah merch certainly doesn't always get it quite right in ways that are not exactly funny. Like I wouldn't point to that, and be like "Oh ha ha." It's like no it's a serious kind of oversight.

HOLLY:

Yeah. That's actually- I would have really loved to have been a fly on the wall in the conversation that led to them doing that, just to see what their thought process was. I mean *obviously* I kind of know what their thought process was. But yeah that is definitely problematic.

JONATHAN:

Yeah.

SUE:

The story that I have heard is that the colorist had never seen the show. So they were just guessing. But I don't know how true that is.

HOLLY:

That's the same argument that they had for the animated series back in the day, the reason why you know Tribbles were pink and all of that stuff was that the colorist was *colorblind*.

JONATHAN:

Right, or racist.

HOLLY:

*\*laughs\** I mean the same, but I feel like that's a weak argument.

SUE:

Yeah. And sorry, the animated series book by you know friend of the show Aaron Harvey *debunks* that. And that was just- that pink-purple thing? Was just that guy's color scheme. That's what he liked. That was his like color theory.

HOLLY:

So that whole thing is like completely untrue. Which is why I think that, you know, them saying that about those comics is probably also untrue.

JONATHAN:

I agree. I mean, because if I'm assigned to make something out of something I've never seen, at the very least I will ask somebody "Hey what does this person look like?" And they will tell me.

HOLLY:

I mean I feel like that's what you do as a professional, you do your due diligence so that you can do your job. *\*laughs\** That's incorrect. *\*laughs\**

JONATHAN:

Fun times in the 70s with Star Trek. In terms of interesting mistakes though, the next item that I'm holding from this era is the collection of paper party plates from the *\*all laugh\** time in which the USS Enterprise is listed as NCC 1311. *\*all laugh\** McCoy is wearing yellow. Kirk is wearing red. They are branded as "fast color plastic-coated plates for hot or cold food." This is the eight to six and three quarters inch plate variety. I don't see an exact date on them but they are from Party Creations. I'm assuming late 60s early 70s as you might guess on those.

SUE:

I think I was with you when you found those.

JONATHAN:

You might have been. Yeah well- yeah *\*Sue laughs\** that's possible actually.



HOLLY:

If I remember correctly they also had napkins and cups. I think there's a Mylar balloon that was part of that collection as well.

SUE:

Oh my.

JONATHAN:

Yes.

HOLLY:

And yeah they were also ridiculous. \*laughs\*

SUE:

I do think we need to jump into the 80's.

JONATHAN:

Yeah, probably should.

SUE:

This is where some stuff really started picking up, because of course at the end of the decade you have Next Generation.

HOLLY:

But the beginning of the decade was so sad.

SUE:

It was, because of what happened with the motion picture. Nobody really wanted to license Star Trek movies. Wrath of Khan had almost no licensing in 1982, although there was a digital wristwatch that was label slapped. It was basically like a Space Invaders game. And the one I think is really cool, the Hamilton collection plates started in 1983.

HOLLY:

\*groans/all laugh\*

JONATHAN:

Holly summed it up well.

HOLLY:

Those are another thing that I see and just ironically love, because yikes.

SUE:

I mean those were, just I remember those everywhere in my childhood. Not necessarily the Star Trek ones, but like decorative collector's plates were everywhere. \*laughs\*

HOLLY:

Yeah. Those were like- I mean I just feel like I would see them hanging on the wall at my grandmother's house like that was- \*laughs\* I have to be honest, I don't know what their target market was for that. Like moms, I guess? \*all laugh\*

SPEAKER: M1

It's yeah- I mean it's a "Hey you know a little so and so likes Star Trek. I don't really know what Star Trek is. But hey! I saw this ad for a plate in this magazine I was reading so-"

HOLLY:

I mean, if it's a kid are you giving a breakable plate \*Johnathan laughs\* that you can't eat off of them?

JONATHAN:

Was that just my family? \*Sue laughs\* I don't know. \*laughs\*

HOLLY:

Why would you keep that to a child?

JONATHAN:

Good question.

SUE:

I had one. It was after Voyager started, so I am just trying to think what age I was. I had to be 15 or 16 \*laughs\* and I had on my wall in my teenage bedroom a Hamilton collection plate of the four doctors.

HOLLY/JONATHAN:

Nice.

SUE:

\*laughs\* And I thought it was the coolest thing.

HOLLY:

Those are- if you ever go to the Star Trek convention in Las Vegas, there is one vendor in the vendor's room that always has a ton of those and they're just so fun to look at to see what little vignettes Hamilton thought to put together. Especially when you got into like the mid-90s.

JONATHAN:

Whenever enough of them- like isn't that the apex of like collectors? They're like "You know I don't even care. I just eat off of mine."

HOLLY:

But they literally say "don't eat off of them"

JONATHAN:

\*through laughter\* I know but-

HOLLY:

You can poison yourself with the paint! \*Sue laughs\*

JONATHAN:

Whatever, I need to put my taquitos *somewhere*.

SUE:

Oh my gosh. \*Johnathan laughs\*

HOLLY:

Do you use your paper plates man?

JONATHAN:

I know, but you're right. \*laughs\* They do come up like just in *en masse* in these conventions, and I love it every time I see them.

SUE:

All right. So 1984 we get ten point articulated action figures for Star Trek three, from \*pause\* Ertl?

HOLLY:

Yeah.

JONATHAN:

I like Ertl, yeah. I like Ertls stuff. I think that often they're an overlooked kind of contributor to that. Their three and three quarter inch figures are, I think, quite wonderful. I mean they've got the monster Maroons on and they're cool. I have some in box and I really like them.

SUE:

And while we're on the original series movies, we have to mention the 1989 Kraft marshmallow dispenser for Star Trek Five. \*all exclaim in excitement\*

HOLLY:

I had one!

JONATHAN:

Me too!

HOLLY:

I have one and I take it camping with me and I actually-

JONATHAN:

Do you really?

HOLLY:

I actually use it. Yeah. My friends and I go camping every September and-

SUE:

Do you call them marshmallons?

HOLLY:

Yes, we do! And it doesn't really work. \*laughs\*

JONATHAN:

Yeah. I can't bring myself to open mine. I'm so glad you've opened yours.

HOLLY:

Yeah. I mean I still have the original box that it got like mailed in, or whatever. And it has like all the little slips inside that say-

JONATHAN:

You got the coupons?

HOLLY:

Yeah, I have all of that. But we actually tried it one year, I still take it camping as a nostalgia thing but we don't use it. The first year I had it we tried using it and the marshmallows-marshmallons, excuse me. They just like stick to the side, like it doesn't actually dispense. So yeah, it's so fun. It's such a fun little thing.

JONATHAN:

It's a great product and I am so glad that this podcast has now turned into the marshmallow dispenser appreciation club, because I also love that \*Sue laughs\* and it's really cool. Well and I mean it does bring up sort of an interesting side of Trek merch too, which is the mail-away. And the mail-aways have kind of been there, as we point out, really since the beginning but this is like sort of tying in Kraft and then other things would tie-in. Like Kellogg's, T.W.A. not with the mail-aways, but to just backtrack a little bit to 86 they- on their flights gave out playing card packs if we all remember it. You know the days where you could get playing cards on airplanes. I actually never asked for- I don't remember those days. But I'm sure someone does. And the playing card packs were branded with Star Trek for the Voyage Home on video cassette. It was like the first videocassette tie-in product, and it was for that. I have it right here in front of me. So just the stuff that you got from other companies that just decided "Oh we'll do Star Trek" I think is pretty cool. And the marshmallow dispensers in that category.

HOLLY:

The last time I brought this marshmallow dispenser out I was in Yosemite too.

JONATHAN:

\*sighs\* Perfect. \*Holly laughs\* Did you sing? Did you do the-

HOLLY:

We did! We did the row row row your boat thing. I was with a bunch of people that work at JPL actually. \*laughs\* Those are the people I go camping with, a bunch of people that work for NASA.

JONATHAN:

I admire your life deeply. \*all laugh\* I just want to say that, you have an awesome life.

SUE:

Well, as we get to the late 80s we have to talk about Next Gen merchandise. And that brings us to Galoob.

HOLLY:

Yep. Their action figures.

SUE:

And they apparently, I did not know this until this week, produced a four-inch Enterprise toy that was a prize in honey nut cheerios.

JONATHAN:

So I have that. I have that toy. The thing is with that toy, that's part of the story. The whole story is that, yes, you could get it that way. Or you could get it by buying one of the larger model kits that sometimes, you know, in a very very limited edition way would have that thrown in. And it was actually technically like kind of a small model, you did have to put it together a little bit. But

what was cool about it was it came with this booklet that showcased all of the Galoob action figures in it, and that I have that as well. And it's really cool because they were never really advertised *that way*. I mean it's such a dramatic kind of booklet. It's really a cool piece and it was the first sort of announcement that "The new Trek is now stepping into the world of toys" and you know if I were getting that at the time I would have thought "Oh cool. This is really exciting." And the Galoob figures are great. Galoob is a company that I- and I voiced this before, I have my issues with mainly because of their treatment of the female characters in Star Trek. AKA: not really producing them outside of Tasha Yar, and then kind of when asked about it *years later* a couple of the former executives from Galoob were sort of like "Yeah we would have. We were totally going to do that if there was another wave. We would have produced the women and other aliens." And that's a direct quote from them. And I'm like "So that's kind of how we're lumping you know people like Crusher and Troi?" It's like- that doesn't- that's not fair. That's not fair to who they were on the show and just to female characters in general. And so that's really what disappoints me the most about Galoob.

SUE:

That is unfortunately a trend with Next Gen merchandise, specifically for Crusher. And I mean, everybody who listens to Women At Warp knows, I'm biased. \*laughs\* But typically if, going after the first season after the departure of Tasha Yar, if a line was going to include one of the women characters they were going to pick Troi. And so there is a significant lack, in my opinion, of crusher merchandise throughout the TNG era. And in fact I have every single licensed Beverly Crusher figure, and they all fit on one shelf.

HOLLY:

Yeah. And I think that the part of the reason why that's unfortunate is you think back to the original series and how the trio was Kirk, Spock, and McCoy. McCoy being the doctor, and the doctor is an important part of the way that they would set up a cast is that you had to have a doctor. Every series has a doctor. And the fact that not only is she a woman but she's the doctor in this scenario gets left out of the merchandising is disappointing.

JONATHAN:

Yeah I mean, she's a doctor, she's a single mom, I mean she's an incredible character. And I agree with everything you said. It's "disappointing" is the word.

SUE:

All right. So there is still so much more, we got to start powering through some of this stuff.  
\*Johnathan laughs\*

HOLLY:

Playmates!

SUE:

We'll be here all day.

JONATHAN:  
Playmates!

SUE:  
Playmates is ninety-two, but first Hallmark ornaments started in 91.

HOLLY:  
They did, and this is one of the things that I think that, you know, people kind of choose to focus on. And I understand why. They're still producing product up to this day.

SUE:  
I feel like it's easy to be a completionist if what you're doing is Hallmark ornaments.

HOLLY:  
Right! Which is why I think it's a good thing to choose to collect.

SUE:  
There's a couple a year, there is plenty of notice, its the same time every year. They're not ridiculously expensive.

HOLLY:  
I mean, unless you get something like- I feel like the toughest one to find if you started collecting today is the original Enterprise that they made. And I believe that was the first one.

SUE:  
Yeah that was the first one.

JONATHAN:  
Well, and the convention exclusives and stuff, like they always have something for New York Comic Con or something like that. Right?

HOLLY:  
They do. They usually have one for San Diego and that one is sometimes difficult to find. I think they had a gold plated one when I was working for CBS. Yeah, it was kind of difficult to find cause it was an exclusive. I mean yeah. If you're a completionist that's a pretty easy thing to go with.

JONATHAN:  
Right. Right. And they were the first really to make animated series merch. I mean, because they just did the ornaments for a couple of them from the animated series. I think they made a M'ress and-

HOLLY:

Arex yeah. I love Arex. I love him.

SUE:

Back to Playmates in 92.

HOLLY:

Which were- those are the action figures that I grew up with.

SUE:

Oh yeah. And that first license- the first time they were licensed, only lasted six years. It was ninety-two to ninety-eight which is kind of astonishing for the amount of action figures they produced.

HOLLY:

Right. Because I mean, there were so many like little one-offs that they produced. You know, this character wearing just this specific outfit. \*laughs\*

JONATHAN:

Right. And some of those are quite sought after. I mean, Data in the red tunic is really really sought after. And obviously, you know, the more common ones are frequently in the dollar bins at some of these toy shows and conventions, but the rare ones I mean still are pretty looked after. The Thomas Riker one, you know dropped in price recently, but when I was a kid that was all the rage. And also that, you know, Tapestry Picard, and more mail-aways with those and you know more of those included with other things. Like the VHS that came with the Worf action figure, that was Playmates. So a lot more sort of intermingling of figures with other stuff there.

HOLLY:

Remember the Tom Paris as like the mutation of himself from Threshold?

JONATHAN:

I've given that as a gift so many times. \*all laugh\* Yes.

HOLLY:

\*laughs\* Worst episode.

SUE:

I do want to note that Jonathan, you and Jarrah did an entire episode of Women At Warp on these action figures. That is this episode S5 released back in March 2016. Can you believe it? \*laughs\* So for *a lot* more detail on playmates in particular go listen to that episode, because we don't have time to do it here.



JONATHAN:

But it does say something like, once you drop that name it opens up all of this. And I think that that says something just about the power of that figure line, that we all are just so invested in.

Something that I love, and I had right from the start was the 1996 30th Anniversary Star Trek Barbie.

HOLLY:

I have a set too.

JONATHAN:

Yes, same.

SUE:

I could have sworn that there was- that somebody told me that Barbie made a Star Trek set a lot earlier. Like in the 60s and that this wasn't the original but I can't find evidence of that.

HOLLY:

No I think 96 was the first time Barbie was- I mean we did as the 30th and then we did the 50th which I was part of that. That was an interesting process. \*laughs\* Yes especially the Vina Barbie doll was interesting to do. But yeah I think 96 was a first time Barbie was directly involved.

JONATHAN:

I really doubt Mattel would have done that in the 60s. They were marketing, you know, in a pretty traditional way to a girls market. I don't know that that's something they would have even taken the risk on then.

SUE:

So 2001 we had Art Asylum and Diamond Select come onto the scene. They started with the Enterprise figures, and even one of their TOS era phasers was used on-screen in Enterprises mirror episodes. And now that phaser is sought after as a screen used prop. So that's pretty cool. I'm just gonna power through til 2009. We had a burger king toy tie in- sorry, McDonald's for Star Trek 2009.

JONATHAN:

Yeah, with cups.

HOLLY:

Yeah, I have a couple of those cups.

SUE:

I have the weirdly shaped Spock on my dresser. 2008- 2009 playmates came back on the scene for part two. That's also when we got Qmx was licensed for Star Trek 2009. They got a fuller license for everything in 2012. 2012 also got us Eagle Moss and they started their ship replicas. 2013 Hasbro was licensed for Star Trek Into Darkness, and we got the Kre-o. The sort of block Lego-esque Enterprise.

HOLLY:

Yeah.

JONATHAN:

Yeah, pre-Funkos.

SUE:

2013 brought us Funko Pop. I have- I'm going to spend a little more time here because I have some Funko Pop issues. Which includes, that the original line the TOS line was Kirk, Spock, and Scotty. Not even McCoy, Scotty, a generic Andorian, and a generic Klingon, and an Orion slave girl.

HOLLY:

The reason that they did Scotty was so that they would have a redshirt. Yeah. So that they would have all three colors and then they did.

SUE:

I suppose that makes sense. But the one woman character released is literally a slave. \*Bitterly\* Which is great. The Next Gen figures were Picard, Riker, Worf, Geordi, Troi, Data, Locutus, and a generic Klingon which looks exactly like Worf. \*Holly laughs\* So-

HOLLY:

No Beverly.

SUE:

No Beverly, no Uhura, no really anybody in any of the woman characters except for Troi at this point. And for the Star Trek Beyond line they did release Uhura- Sorry Uhura, Bones, and Jaylah. So it was a much fuller cast for Star Trek Beyond figures. There were nine of them but they had not released any more; there were no DS9 or Voyager figures. And it appears that Funko no longer has the Star Trek license, if you search their website.

JONATHAN:

Yeah. I don't think they do. Everything you say is spot on, and it's something I've written about with Funko too. It's because there are other sort of ways in which they do this. When they released their Jurassic Park cause there were no human female characters in that line except for Ellie who is not independently sold. She was sold as part of the gas jeep, which was branded

as “Gas jeep” and you just sort of got it and there was Ellie in it. So I don't know what's going on. It's really troubling though, and I think you're right to call attention to it.

SUE:

But moving on from Funko, we'll jump to the fiftieth anniversary.

HOLLY:

Yaaay!

SUE:

We've got more Barbies, we got Build-A-Bear, we got Mac Cosmetics. Mega Bloks, the Wooden Pin Mates I think came out of the 50th anniversary collection. I'm sure there's more that I'm missing.

HOLLY:

Yeah the Barbie I mentioned before I was involved in that, Mattel would come up to the Star Trek archive with little heads of the Vina character, which was San Diego Comic non-exclusive I believe. And several different versions of the green, and I remember on two different occasions them coming up and us having hours long conversation about this shade of green and whether it should be a blue undertone, which is what I was fighting for, a yellow undertone, which I thought was more Enterprise-esque and so I was fighting kind of against that. But yeah I have \*laughs\* many fond memories of talking about that shade of green.

JONATHAN:

Right. And by the way alongside this stuff, maybe a little bit before, the Kellogg's mail-aways continued right? So you've got 2009 shirt through the Kellogg's mail-away for the 2009 movies, and the communicator badge, and so it feels like along with this there's the constant kind of simmering of merch outside of toys or surrounding toys.

HOLLY:

The 2009 film had waffles too.

JONATHAN:

Yeah yeah yeah yeah right!

HOLLY:

Ridiculous. Yeah the Mac cosmetics was fun to work on too. I mean they built that huge situation for \*Sue laughs\* selling it at conventions, and it started at San Diego Comic-Con and it was outdoors and stuff and then when they wanted to bring it to the Star Trek convention in Las Vegas, which doesn't really have an outdoor space and even if it did you wouldn't want to be out there in the middle of August. They ended up being able to put it inside in the vendors' room but

it *just* came in under the ceiling. But yeah Mac did a really good job investing in that line and then the marketing for it. So I have a lot of friends that still have some of that product.

SUE:

Oh, I definitely do. \*laughs\* So since 2016 anything new? I couldn't think of anything that has really been released as a line. I know we've gotten some Titan minis for Discovery. We've gotten the Gentle Giant Saru bust. We've got Picard wine and wine glasses.

JONATHAN:

Diamond select has done- they did the Kirk and Spock from the Abrams movies, plus a Borg which was actually really cool. A Borg where you can replace eye pieces and arm pieces and stuff like that.

HOLLY:

There's been a lot of books. They've done a lot of interesting books. They got into doing a lot of autobiographies of the captains. They got into doing some parody books like Fun with Kirk and Spock and stuff like that. So I feel like they're- and then obviously like the alcohol that they've gone into, the spirits, and the wine, and there's actually a beer licensee as well. So I feel like yeah they're getting into more and again, this is a result of you know when we were kids and now we're adults and we want more things that pertain to our age. Now one of my favorite things that's out right now that started when I was working for CBS was the line of bags and purses that A Crowded Coop did. They've since renamed themselves The Coop, but when they started they had bags that they were just putting the logo on, again. I have this purse that's a black bowling style bag and it was, you know black, and it had the three colors on it. It was really nice and then across the top it has a Star Trek logo in gold and it's very big and very gaudy and I recall having conversations with Marion Corddry at CBS who is my co-worker and is now in charge of the licensing arm of things like, "It should be like a lot more subtle" and they really took that to heart and they still to this day are producing items that are more like, again I used to call it a secret handshake, and my favorite thing that they have produced is the Klingon bags. There's a messenger bag that you can carry around a laptop in and there's a purse. The messenger bag has a Bat'Leth on it, but it doesn't say Star Trek. It's got a Bat'Leth, the strap on the messenger bag is a Klingon Baldrick like Worf's, that's not on the purse. The purse is just a black strap and then you open it up and the lining inside is a bunch of Klingon weapons, but the only thing that says Star Trek on it is this little thing on the inside, a little tag on the inside. So if you're walking down the street with that it just looks like an ordinary purse. But if you're a Star Trek fan you know "Oh my god that's a Bat'Leth. That's a Klingon purse!" which is- so that's one of my favorite licensees right now producing stuff that is not only a secret handshake but also either unisex or specific to women. Which was also not a thing when I started working for the brand. They didn't even have women's cut T-shirts, which for Marion and I was like "There are two women that work in the licensing department and one guy and we don't even get product that fits us properly."

SUE:

We have, you know on the show, we've talked about the driving force in fandom being the women for a long time. Creating the fanzines, creating the conventions, starting the letter-writing campaign. But it seems like merchandise when marketed in such a way, has mostly been marketed towards men.

HOLLY:

Right. Which is unfortunate. And I'm glad that I kind of had a hand in the five years that I was with the franchise to be like "The licensing office is three people. John Van Citters, Marion Corrdry, and me. And two of the three people that work out of that office are women and we don't have stuff that fits us properly" and I was like, I just wanted women's cut T-shirt. \*Sue laughs\* I'm also only 4 10 and under 100 pounds so there was never any extra smalls either. So I really kind of fought for that as well. So I mean women being a driving force is still a thing to this day.

SUE:

And Jonathan, you can probably speak to this more directly, but as far as I understand it like gendered marketing of toys started around the late 70s.

JONATHAN:

No, earlier than that. It really started with Hasbro doing G.I. Joe and the idea was that there's no way a boy would want to play with a *doll*. So they made an *action figure*. And that's kind of how G.I. Joe was marketed, and monetarily speaking it works. I mean I think one of the things sort of capitalism has taught us throughout the 20th century is that once you start splitting into girls and boys companies start to make more off of their stuff. And the impact on society though, I mean that's a completely different issue. So they started to market things that way really since you know 64, 65, and then that kind of just amped up and up and up. I think that now we're entering into an era that kind of is starting to make me feel a little better. Like, I like that companies like Hasbro and Mattel are trying to address like "OK you know what? How can we maybe blow up those categories a little bit by making you know Star Wars Forces Of Destiny, by making DC Super Girls, by you know combining sort of these areas on toy aisles for both you know girl and boy toys." Now obviously I mean there are plenty of us kind of in the middle of all of this in this kind of gender space that maybe doesn't get quite summed up by girl or boy, and you know I think the question of "What about toys for us?" is you know, still kind of only starting to get addressed. But yeah. I mean, it's just really sad to kind of point out the fact, and it is a fact, that women were absolutely and are not given you know what they're deserved by this pantheon of merch. And like Holly said, I'm glad that she's a part of fixing that.

HOLLY:

Now it's Marion Corrdry that's fixing that. So, she's still there and she's still doing that. So yes she is the head of the merchandising line. John Van Citters, who many fans know of, he was promoted into the global franchise management group. They have an entire division around Star

Trek now, which they didn't before. But he was promoted into that. And I'm sure he still has input on the product, but Marian is in charge of it now. She is the person that is looking over everything and basically being- the way that I described it, what my job was there and what Marion's job is is you know when a submission comes in from a licensee we're kind of quality control. So like this isn't the right color, there's the wrong rank on this, and so that's what we were there to do. And to kind of give insight, especially with the slap-a-logo. Marion and I were both like "Can we not? Can we- Like, I know that you guys are paying for the name. I get it, but you don't understand like people. Fans want to be able to like wear stuff to work, or carry a bag to work and to not be completely inappropriate. To be more subtle so that they can you know kind of flaunt their fandom on a lower scale and still be appropriate in the real world."

JONATHAN:

In some ways, the enamel pin movement is doing us some favors. I think that the Fan Sets stuff-

HOLLY:

And fan sets, they're such a great company in terms of working with the fans. They're so good with fans.

JONATHAN:

And I like collectibles like that, where you know you're not really going to direct a pin toward a gender. I mean anybody can you know enjoy those. And so I really like kind of the stuff that they've managed to do with that.

HOLLY:

Yeah, I think there is. There was also a miss when I worked there that I was that I still to this day I'm so sad about is that Her Universe, which is ran by Ashley Eckstein, she's lovely. I was actually a huge fan of her husband when he was a baseball player and then became friendly with him before they even met. But her company you know that made this Troi dress that's based on her purple jumpsuit and it was adorable, but they embroidered the badge on it. And I was really disappointed and really wanted them to be talked out of having that. Like if you want to wear it as a costume you can add a badge, but this is the type of thing that women want to be able to wear to work. And that badge being included and non-removable I really wanted them to not include that and they ended up including it which it was a bummer in my opinion.

SUE:

Yeah. I love Her Universe.

HOLLY:

Yeah she's a wonderful person, they do good work, but they're- that was the one miss that I was like "Hmm."

JONATHAN:

And can I just say to the point about Her Universe. Thank you for it for mentioning that company, because as somebody who's nonbinary in a masculine body I actually wear Her Universe stuff and I'm wearing it right now and I love it. I mean, it really makes me feel great to get to wear something that is, you know, designed from you know from this woman company to you know it's marketed to women but I mean as a nonbinary person like I just love that you know there's stuff there that I can wear and I really it really makes me feel great.

SUE:

That's awesome. I know that I've interviewed actually a few times about Her Universe and she said that it started because she just wanted to have a T-shirt that fit right.

HOLLY:

Right! Which is part of the reason why when she signed with Star Trek, which I think she signed with Star Trek before I was there, it was right around the same time. And I just remember being excited about women's cut T-shirts. And that was *her* thing too. And so I'm glad that you know show me, her, and Marion also I on that, I was like "I just want a women's cut t-shirt." The first couple years of Her Universe it was Fan Wear. Right, it was hoodies, and it was like skater dresses, and T-shirts and I don't think they got the workwear message until they no longer had the Star Trek license. Yeah because they did release some Star Wars workwear that sold out in an instant.

HOLLY:

She made a Star Trek blazer, actually that was pretty cool. She made a-

SUE:

That was a fiftieth-anniversary collection, and they made a few things.

HOLLY:

Yeah. And I really liked that. She made the little shirt and then the shirt- the material that they used, which was this really lovely logo printed silk that was sort of clever in the way that it was designed was the lining of the jacket and the only time that you would see is if you opened the jacket or if you folded the sleeves a certain way.

JONATHAN:

Oh I've seen that. That's beautiful yeah.

HOLLY:

Yeah, it was a really lovely little blazer.

SUE:

Speaking of all of this in total, I would venture to say that I don't think the demographics of Star Trek fandom has changed. I think that marketers, that product lines are finally paying attention-

HOLLY:

That's absolutely true.

SUE:

-to those demographics.

HOLLY:

And I think that's partly because the licensees are having better conversation with the licensor, that being at this point CBS. You know, through the years it's been you know all of these different variations of the companies you know, Viacom consumer products back in the 90s, and stuff like that. But CBS has, and I mean maybe I'm biased because I worked with them- for them, but they have really good conversations with the licensees about that type of thing.

JONATHAN:

And I think it's important too that, you know, now it seems like there's much more awareness of the message behind the product. So when you're you know taking a pair of generic handcuffs or whatever and slapping a sticker on them in the 1970s that's kind of- I mean a fairly kind of lazy thing to do. Now the idea of talking about "Well who's not represented on this? Who is? and maybe we can make something to fill some gaps." I mean I think that that's a way more positive way to start to approach this.

SUE:

And I found a- I guess statistic you can call it that, that had no outside source, but it's on a post called Demographics Of A Trekkie from 2013 by an author named Jackie Murray who wrote that "The average Star Trek fan spends 400 dollars a year on Star Trek merchandise. Next Generation has made over 500 million in syndication and merchandising. The Star Trek products have elicited over a billion dollars in retail sales in the last five years." So Trekkies spend a lot of money. \*laughs\*

HOLLY:

Yeah. I mean you see people at like I, again, I go to the Star Trek convention in Las Vegas every year and there are fans there that save up all year so that they have a budget to buy more new merchandise while they're there. Or, I mean in the case of some hardcore collectors, to hunt for that one special thing that they are looking for. Speaking of which, I have a story from last night that I had mentioned before we started recording. That there's something that I've been trying to hunt down for many years. In 2008 Kirkus Adler had a license, the company and they made a bunch of little figurines, Christmas figurines, and stuff like that. They made a pair of Kirk and Spock nutcrackers, and I've been collecting nutcrackers since I was a child, and all of my holiday decor is based around nutcrackers. I have somewhere in the neighborhood of between 40 and 50 nutcrackers. I have, you know, printed pillows that are nothing but nutcrackers that I searched high and low for a print that I liked. But I don't own the nutcrackers. The Star Trek ones, and I've been looking for years to find one that is at a price that I deem



appropriate to spend money on. And I happened to look last night and there was a Kirk one on eBay and I went to buy it and in the time it took me to log into eBay somebody bought it. And I was like \*noise of rage\*. My mother was in the other room because I'm at my parents' house for the holiday. And my mother was in the other room and was like "Are you OK?" I was like \*anguished noise\* I like just the most agonizing wail came from the next room. I ended up finding the Spock one a few minutes later and spending a ridiculous amount of money to get that. So now I have the Spock but I still don't have Kirk. \*Sue laughs\*

JONATHAN:

And I feel like just based on things I've said during this podcast, I need to tell you it wasn't me who did it. \*all laugh\* But I've actually I've seen those nutcrackers. They are really cool. And I think that your sort of quest for them is awesome.

HOLLY:

And I mean again, that goes back to like choosing something and being like "This is what I'm going to collect for my holiday decor I cause like nutcrackers." That's my thing like, that's gonna be my thing. And the fact that these Star Trek nutcrackers exist and I don't own them is ridiculous. \*laughs\* So I have *one* though. I have one though. It should be coming in the mail next week and I'm very excited to get Spock.

SUE:

So I know we need to wrap up. I just want to ask you both what do you think people should be looking forward to in Star Trek merch.? Answer any of these questions or all of them. What do you think is missing? What are we waiting for, and what do you think needs to be better as we go forward?

JONATHAN:

Yeah well, I can answer that just for myself. I think there's two things happening right now. There's the sort of traditional march of merch that is going on, and then there's customization that's taking off on Instagram and it's taking off on other social media. And I think that some companies are starting to realize how best to maybe start to merge those two things. So like, I'm thinking about specifically Mattel's Creatable World dolls, where you kind of get a doll and you can make it into anything and any gender and any one that you want. Star Trek, I think for me, one of my favorite things about it has always been the inclusivity of the universe and the sort of utopian future that it hopes for. I would personally love it if toys started reflecting that in creative ways. So like right now there is an Instagram post circulating of somebody who made these really cool Klingon dolls, and I kind of want to know like OK what does that look like if we start to make that into actual license stuff? Like, give me sort of the tunic and maybe some other options and kind of a generic doll that I can customize. And let me continue to build my Star Trek Avatar because at the end of the day that's the universe that I want to participate in. Something that is inclusive, and utopian, and wonderful. And I think toys have the power to do that. So that's my hope.

HOLLY:

I'm really looking forward to merchandise from Picard, from the standpoint of again them understanding that as we are adults now having grown up with the Next Generation series and this character and so stuff like the wine that they've created is coming directly from the show, I'm I'm super excited about this kind of nostalgia but in a more adult fashion. Because I mean not to knock you Jonathan, but I don't really collect toys anymore unfortunately. You know, so I'm looking for stuff that I can kind of work into my everyday life. Like, that's why I really like the bags that the Coop has made. And I love that the franchise has alcohol licensed in every incarnation. They have spirits, they have wine, and they have beer. And so I'm really looking forward to seeing where kind of the more adult side of this is going to go. Especially in terms of the nostalgia factor from existing characters that we grew up with.

JONATHAN:

Shall we say like our favorite Star Trek merch thing? I guess we did that, with the Nutcracker.

HOLLY:

No, that's not actually- when people would come into the Star Trek archive and we be like giving them a tour and showing them around, which was mostly licensees because the archive is actually a secret location. But I would show them my favorite thing in the archive was a pool float shaped like the Enterprise D.

SUE:

Oh my gosh.

HOLLY:

I *loved* it. I loved it. And Marion would show these molds, like popsicle molds, from I think the late 60s or early 70s and they were not well-made at all and the faces were all *\*laughs\** contorted and stuff and these little molds. But yeah. The pool float is probably my favorite piece of merchandise that has existed because it's just so well-made.

SUE:

What's your favorite piece of merchandise that you at one point owned? How about that? I can tell you mine right now. It was given to me by my high school librarian. It was a giant cardboard Enterprise D that I guess they got to like hang above the science fiction books in the library or something? But we couldn't for some reason in my school, so my school librarian was like "Hey I have something for you" and this thing had to be like 4 feet long. So I just like on the bus one day get off the bus and go home and I've got this giant cardboard Enterprise. And my parents are like "What- what did you do?" And I had that thing for years and I think it finally got like dry rot or something. *\*noises of sadness\** Said it doesn't exist anymore.

HOLLY:

I don't know if I have- I mean when I was a kid most of the merchandise I had was like office supplies. So they're like folders that have I mean long been thrown away. I think my favorite

piece of merchandise that I own right now is the Warp Core charger that goes in your car. I have one, I gave my dad one, and they're just- again it doesn't say Star Trek on it. It's something that is functional. It looks cool. It does something but if somebody were to get in your car and not be a Star Trek fan they wouldn't know the difference, but if they were it'd be like "Oh my God. That's the warp core from the Enterprise D!" So I really love things that have kind of a function. So I think that's actually my favorite piece. I use that every day. That's my favorite piece merchandise right now.

JONATHAN:

So I have two answers, one we've already talked about which is the marshmallow dispenser. That actually legit is my favorite Star Trek thing because where did that come from? Oh, I don't know but I love that it exists. But the other thing is sort of this first piece of Star Trek merch that I ever remember owning, and it was that Galoob die cast metal Enterprise D that they for some reason sold to children and the paint chipped like crazy. \*laughs\* And the thing weighed a ton, and you could legitimately kill someone with it. \*Sue laughs\* I still have it. Like by the bedside I don't have a baseball bat. I have that Enterprise D. And if anyone breaks into my house I'll chuck it at you, it'll kill you, because it is that heavy and I love it. I just I remember spending hours as a kid trying to get the saucer section to fit right with the battle bridge and because it did the separation thing I remember so much fun surrounding that toy. And so I think, you know, even though there are other sort of quirky answers, when I actually think back and remember those times playing with that I'm the happiest.

SUE:

Oh that's fantastic. Well, thank you both so much for having this conversation with me. I know it is longer than the standard episode but I think this was a ton of fun. Holly if people want to find you on the interwebs where can they do such a thing?

HOLLY:

I am super active on Twitter especially about all things Star Trek, and my adventures kind of working for the franchise. So you can find me on Twitter @HollyAmos22

SUE:

and Jonathan?

JONATHAN:

So Twitter @Jalexan, J A L E X A N. Facebook Jonathan Alexandratos, Twitter @toy\_circus. So all of those are places to find me. I'm also starting a podcast this month called My Plastic Life. Available wherever you go.

HOLLY:

That's a clever title!

SUE:

And for @toy\_circus you mean Instagram right?

JONATHAN:

Yeah, what I say?

SUE:

Twitter.

JONATHAN:

Oh! Yes, well thank you.

SUE:

And I am Sue, you can find me on Twitter @spaltor. That's S P A L T O R. And to learn more about our show or contact us visit [WomenAtWarp.com](http://WomenAtWarp.com) or find us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram @WomenAtWarp. You can also email us at [crew@WomenAtWarp.com](mailto:crew@WomenAtWarp.com). And for more from the Roddenberry podcast network visit [podcasts.Roddenberry.com](http://podcasts.Roddenberry.com). Thanks so much for joining us.