

Women at Warp Episode 12: Ready, Set, Ro!

RO:

You're not like any bartender I ever met before.

GUINAN:

And you're not like any Starfleet officer I've ever met before. But that sounds like the beginning of a very interesting friendship.

RO:

I don't stay anywhere long enough to make friends.

GUINAN:

Too late. You just did. Excuse me.

ANDI:

Hi and welcome to Women at Warp. Join us as our crew of four women Star Trek fans boldly go on our biweekly mission to explore a favorite franchise. My name is Andi and thanks for tuning in. Today on the show we have Sue.

SUE:

Hi there.

ANDI:

And Jarrah.

JARRAH:

Salutations.

ANDI:

And we are joined with a special guest Amy.

AMY:

Hi everybody.

JARRAH:

I think I first met Amy at Star Trek Las Vegas a couple years ago and we did a panel together, and she blogs about pop culture, travel, and fashion at Shoes and Starships. And she and I will be appearing on another panel on women in Star Trek Voyager at Star Trek Las Vegas. It's August, so if you're down at that convention on the Saturday be sure to stop by our panel.

AMY:

I'm really excited to be doing that panel again with you guys. *Jarrah cheers* And also I'm doing a panel with another friend of mine "Engaging: Literature in Star Trek" and that is on Friday of the convention.

ANDI:

Yes, and Sue and I will also be at Dragon Con doing a panel on Star Trek. So that's going to be really exciting as well. It's my first time at Dragon Con. Sue's an expert, but I'm a newbie so that should be fun.

SUE:

That's Labor Day weekend in Atlanta. So it's the very beginning of September. Women At Warp will have a panel on the Trek track. Schedules get moved around, so I don't want to say right now exactly when we're scheduled but I'd say check your app or your program.

JARRAH:

Basically, we are spreading the message of women in Star Trek, the love for women in star trek, from coast to almost coast. *all laugh* From coast to Nevada.

SUE:

They consider themselves the West Coast. They have streets like Ocean View lane. They're just waiting for California to fall in.

JARRAH:

laughs Yeah pretty much. *all laugh*

ANDI:

So Sue, would you like to read our first fan mail? It's from Vicki via Patreon.

SUE:

“Dear Women At Warp crew, thanks so much for the Coffee Black show. Loved it. It really reminded me how much I loved Captain Janeway and how much she influenced the early part of my career. As an introverted person moving up in the ranks of management in the corporate world, I often turn to Janeway for inspiration. My “what would Janeway do?” mug sitting on my desk got me through a lot of tough situations that I would have preferred not facing. As for the folks who wrote in that Janeway was too emotional, not vulnerable enough, too masculine, too feminine etc. I think that Janeway would not care one whit about what they thought of her. which is probably the biggest impact on me, not worrying about defining myself based on what men in the workplace think of me. I also think that many of those folks did not perhaps watch Voyager all the way through and their opinions might be based on what they've heard about her from others. Anyway I plan to re watch Voyager after I get back from Las Vegas con. I'm finishing up

a rewatch of DS9 now. Thanks again for all your great work and I hope to see you in Las Vegas.
From, Vicky.”

ANDI:

I can't wait to see Janeway. It's the one thing that I'm so looking forward to in the future for my watching.

AMY:

Oh, you're gonna love it. It was the best. Especially being like 12 or 13 and seeing her, that's when I saw her for the first time. It was awesome.

ANDI:

Yeah, I really like Kate Mulgrew so I'm just really looking forward to it. And then I can, you know, dive into this whole Janeway discussion with, you know, a background and actually seeing Janeway instead sort of just like my impressions of her.

SUE:

Yeah. I do think we should clarify though that those comments, the anti-Janeway comments if you want to call them that, were not sent in directly to us. Those are the common things that you basically find if you search the internet for people talking about her. So those- a lot of those I think came from what? Star Trek.com?

JARRAH:

The Trek BBS forums and things like that. Yeah. But thanks so much Vicki for that mail, and also thanks for supporting us on Patreon. If you want to support our work then you can head over to patron.com/womenatwarp. That's P A T R E O N/womenatwarp. It helps us do things like upgrade our equipment, and get materials produced, and share the love of women in Star Trek to more people.

ANDI:

Yeah. So today we're gonna be talking about Ensign Ro. *crew cheers* Which I think is one of the more interesting characters that we got from TNG, and I really think that people responded strongly to her one way or the other. Which definitely means that she is not bland. And we actually posted on both our Facebook and our Twitter for people to write in about what they thought about the character, and I have to say we got *a lot* of comments about her. Which I think goes to show that even though Ro was only in eight episodes, people felt strongly about her. Both good and bad I think, which is fair and we'll talk about that. So some of the comments that we got from our Twitter were pretty straightforward. One of them was "My favorite TNG character by several light years" from Tim. And then a little more critical, but I think fair which is "I like her. But she walked the line of being overdeveloped compared to the main characters" and that was from Granola Girl. Meghan commented that "I felt they didn't develop her enough, and her brashness came across as mean. They did a much better job with Kira." Which I think the brashness part of it is pretty accurate, that that was one thing that came across to people about her character.

AMY:

I do think she softened when we got a little bit further in the series, and I think when she just first came on the ship she was right out of jail. *laughs* So I think she might have, you know, that was kind of appropriate considering she was like "You people threw me in jail. Now you want a favor?"

ANDI:

Yeah. And I mean, I think her position in Starfleet is really interesting and it kind of goes to that one comment that I really liked from our Facebook from Rachel that "At times she seems like a good stand in for a cynical member of the audience questioning TNG's overly optimistic crew and exposing them to ugly realities. Those were my favorite moments with her." And I think that kind of goes to that whole brash part of her character, because I mean they really do a good job

of showing how her background might conflict with Starfleet. Because most of the the main crew on TNG were very optimistic kind of fit in with that whole idealistic side of of things, which I think is great for Star Trek, but it's also cool to see a different side of that. And have her challenge our characters to kind of define what Starfleet means to them and, you know, the values of the Federation basically.

AMY:

No, I think it was a good stepping stone to the difference of Deep Space Nine also.

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean we- the Bajoran and Cardassian conflict starts out being introduced in Ensign Ro, and then really being developed a lot further in the other series as well.

JARRAH:

Yeah totally. And I mean it makes sense. The reason that she was brought in was basically to introduce conflict. She was introduced to contrast against the TNG main cast. Rick Berman has said "The other characters in the cast are relatively homogeneous. Some might even say Bland. So we wanted a character with the strength and dignity of a Starfleet officer but with a troubled past, an edge. And I think we got it."

ANDI:

Yeah, I think that's basically exactly what Ro is.

SUE:

But it's also setting up, essentially, the next two series of Star Trek.

AMY:

Yeah I agree

SUE:

Right? You're introduced to the Bajorans and the Bajoran occupation through Ro, and two seasons later, because it's in season seven, Pre-emptive Strike that we're introduced really to the Maquis.

AMY:

And that's like the second to last episode of the entire series.

SUE:

Right. So you've got the very beginning of your basis for Deep Space Nine and the very beginning of your basis for Voyager because of one character, and that's *pretty impressive*. That makes her- even though she's in eight episodes, she really only does something in like three or four of them. But because of what happens in her episodes, that makes her really import.

ANDI:

Yeah. I was thinking about this with the whole eight episodes of TNG. So we do only get eight episodes with her, and yet I would say that we know more about her and have a clearer sense of her character than we did for say Tasha Yar in the first season altogether.

JARRAH:

Yeah I'd agree with that. It feels like more. Like when you said eight episodes I was like "Really?"

AMY:

I also thought it was more. And I looked back to watch, I was like "That's it?!" *laughs*

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean, when I actually counted em up I was surprised. Because she feels like more a part of the crew than that. And it really goes to show like how especially in the first two seasons I would say Troi and Yar especially got very little characterisation. And it just goes to show how *quickly* you can build a strong character with very understandable motivations and make her have an impact if you're doing it right. To the point where I guess they were going to also have her be on DS9 as- basically as Kira.

JARRAH:

Yeah. I mean, obviously they thought she worked and people responded well to her.

AMY:

Plus, that like freedom fighter aspect and like being born into slavery essentially, that's very Kira obviously.

ANDI:

Yeah. And I think that's one reason why when we talk about Ro almost always people bring up Kira too. Because they kind of filled the same role, and just were executed a bit differently. And then obviously Kira got seven seasons and Ro got eight episodes. We still mentioned them in the same breath.

AMY:

I also feel like Kira, she's very obviously not Starfleet. You know, she doesn't wear the uniform and I don't think she would ever join Starfleet. And I think they took that aspect of Ro, and you know she's not really a Starfleet officer at heart, but she tried.

ANDI:

I would agree with that. So, let's start from the beginning then and then kind of work our way through her journey. And then we can kind of tackle the differences and between her and Kira later on. But so, we're introduced to her in one of, I would say, the best standalone episodes for women that we got in TNG. Which is Ensign Ro. It's cool that they had a character introduction that was, I mean they called her episode after her character. I mean it's very much an episode about this character particularly.

AMY:

They very infrequently use the name of a character in an episode title. I can only think of like Data's Day, or like Menage a Troi.

JARRAH:

The Outrageous Okana? *laughs*

AMY:

The main character, the Starfleet character.

SUE:

Q gets a couple. *all laugh*

ANDI:

It's kind of like an episode about her that's set around the crew almost. Which I think is really interesting and a really strong introduction to this character, and probably why she made such

an impact. Does anybody want to kind of give us a quick synopsis of Ensign Ro in case people haven't seen in a while?

JARRAH:

Well I just wanted to mention a quick note on the makeup before we get into that. Which is-

ANDI:

Oh, cause this-

JARRAH:

-this is basically the first Bajoran situation. So apparently, according to a DS9 DVD feature on Michael Westmore the makeup artist, Rick Berman told Michael Westmore "We've hired a pretty girl and I want to keep her that way. Think of something that we can take and make her look a little alien and still get the idea she's from another planet, but she's still gorgeous." And this is a similar thing that happened to Dax in DS9, because they had this trill makeup from TNG that was kind of like this bulbous forehead piece. And they went you know "We're like *wrecking* this pretty actress. So we have to make it something more feminine." And they came up with the spots. So I don't have any problem with how it ended up, it's just like kind of a frustrating behind the scenes look at how, you know, even though she was the super tough character who is, you know, in many ways like in conflict and abrasive with the main crew, it was like she started to be hot.

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean, and I think that that's what a lot of the makeup decisions say. I mean we were talking about Star Trek 5 and the Catwoman, and how she still had to look enough like a human woman that people might think she was hot. And that's just- I think that that's a pretty common sci-fi thing in general. It's like "Let's not forget she may be alien, but you still want to bang her." As always Jarrah your behind the scenes stuff makes me feel sad. *laughs* Not *always*, but it's like sometimes when some of the stuff is like laid out so clearly it just- it makes me sad.

Because although Michelle Forbes is gorgeous, she's also just a good actress, and her character is so interesting. It's sad to me that, you know, they made whole decisions based on her looks rather than her character.

AMY:

Feels like a common problem.

ANDI:

So going back to the episode Ensign Ro, is there anybody that watched recently that wants to give us a synopsis?

JARRAH:

Well basically, Ro is busted out of jail in order to help Picard settle a Bajoran Cardassian border dispute. And at first she basically irks everyone. Like Riker really takes offense to her. I can remember Geordi does in the first episode as well. But people are basically offended that, you know, they all thought it was the biggest honor of their lives to serve on the Enterprise and she doesn't even want to be there. And she's just like "It's better than prison." But then Guinan befriends her, and is generally awesome and Guinan-y, and sort of convinces Picard to give her another chance and he ends up letting her stay on the Enterprise.

ANDI:

Yeah, I think there's a couple of things here. It's like, Geordi does react badly to her by the way. There's a scene where Geordi talks about how she shouldn't be in Starfleet basically because of her background. Which, the reason she's in jail is because of an away mission that went wrong and she disobeyed orders, a direct order, and you know most of the landing party that she was with died and she ended up going to jail for it. And so there's that. There's this background of "she doesn't follow orders" "she gets people killed." Putting your life on the line in Starfleet everyday, you need to be able to trust everybody around you. And I think it's pretty clearly set up that in general the people in Starfleet don't trust her. And part of it is because of this- part of it I think is because she's kind of got this defensive brusque personality, which doesn't endear her

to people. And then what you're talking about how "She's not excited to be on the Enterprise, and *obviously* she should be *excited* to be on the Enterprise." I think that there's a little bit of pushback there. And then lastly, I think there is a racial element there. She's Bajoran, she's you know, she's part of a race that has basically been marginalized and forgotten in the rest of the world. And so I do feel like there's probably a fair amount of that as well. It's probably not specifically stated.

SUE:

She's discriminated against from the instant that she walks on that ship. In the sense that Riker tells her to take her earring off.

AMY:

Riker in particular. Riker in particular is very like "What is wrong with you? Why do I have to deal with you?"

SUE:

But that's religious persecution essentially. Because a Bajorans earring is not only a religious statement, but it's a statement about their place in their society. And he says to her something like "You have to follow uniform code on this ship" but-

AMY:

He doesn't even say it nicely. I just watched it like two days ago, he said something like **aggressively** "You will follow uniform regulations while on this vessel" Very very rough.

SUE:

Well when's the last time you saw Troi in an actual uniform?

JARRAH:

Or Worf?

SUE:

Worf can wear his Baldrick all the time. It's complete ridiculousness.

ANDI:

Yeah. I would say that that's a pretty clear example of what I'm talking about, like her being you know marginalized in that way. But also I feel like at that point Riker is just- he's set up to be- to dislike her. Like before she even transports. He's angry and resentful that Starfleet has forced her upon them. So I feel like, and I'm sure that you know the earring thing was not cool and the way he handled it was not cool, but I'm pretty sure like it was just the first thing that he latched on to because he was resentful of the situation. That's the sense I got.

AMY:

Yeah, he was angry before she got there.

ANDI:

Exactly. And they kind of reacted to each other badly right off the bat because of the situation. And he uses that as an excuse to give her an order right away to kind of cut her down. Which you know, is not cool I would say.

AMY:

Yeah it's very "I must assert my authority over you. I must show you that I have domination over your very basic decisions."

ANDI:

Yes! Exactly. It's like "I'm in charge here, you are not." That's definitely the vibe right off the bat. And I mean, it kind of continues. Like she- her whole demeanor is not respectful in the way that they want her to be respectful, if that makes sense. Like she's-

AMY:

Yeah. They're sitting in that staff meeting, like the first thing she's like "Y'all are wasting your time." *laughs*

ANDI:

She's just got her arms crossed. She's like leaning backwards. Her whole body language is very- Yeah. I mean you can see from like, from her head to her toes like she is not happy to be there. She thinks that this mission is worthless. She doesn't trust anybody. Like all of that is being telegraphed very clearly. And I think it's pretty understandable that a crew would react poorly to that.

SUE:

But you get that, right?

ANDI:

Oh yeah! I totally understand why.

AMY:

Oh yeah. Especially this crew. This crew is very- this crew is much more by-the-book than the Deep Space 9 or Voyager crew.

SUE:

I'm sure all of us have been in meetings though, where it's the thing you specialize in and they're not listening to you.

ANDI:

Oh yeah.

SUE:

I have definitely had the Ro reaction in more than one real life meeting. "I know this. That's why I'm here. And yet you still aren't listening to me."

ANDI:

Yeah. And like I love too that *because* they're going so by-the-book from the beginning, they're like "Well, let's bring this guy to this meeting that has diplomatic background and everything" and he's the exact wrong choice but he's the safe choice and the obvious choice. And if Ro wasn't there, how they would have proceeded. It's a good example of how bringing someone with a specific background in can be so helpful. Like they know how people react and they know how that situation is going to play out. And if you are not- don't have that background you can try and understand, but you're probably going to make mistakes. Like, I don't think anybody thinks that Troi or- because in that scene that we're talking about, this meeting scene where they have like basically a staff meeting about how to proceed in this mission, Crushers the one that suggests or talks about this choice for a possible negotiator. And there were reasons for including him are very logical, they're just wrong.

AMY:

And they wouldn't know that, because they don't have any inside information. And that's why Ro is there. So I think Picard is actually a lot more willing to listen to her than everybody else on the senior staff.

ANDI:

Yeah. And I think that's just Picard's overall style. Yeah. He listens to people, he takes all of the information, then he makes his decision.

JARRAH:

But he wasn't going to listen to her before Guinan sort of convinced him.

AMY:

I like how it took Guinan, who really isn't a tactical officer- I mean obviously we know she is very very intelligent, and she has a friendship with Picard, and he trusts her implicitly. But it's funny that somebody who doesn't have knowledge of the situation or really of Starfleet tactics is the one who has to tell him "Listen to this person so you can succeed in your Starfleet tactical mission."

ANDI:

That first meeting though, Picard does listen to her. That's why they end up where they do, and why they meet Keev Falor. Because it's based on Ro's recommendation. It is later that Guinan kind of has to step in after Ro has, from Picard's perspective-

AMY:

Oh, she's confined to quarters. That's right. She beamed down to the planet without their permission to talk to someone. So he confines her to quarters.

ANDI:

Yes. So the problem here is, if you're looking at it from Picard's view he doesn't know everything that she knows. He doesn't have the full story. So what he's seeing is somebody who is not listening to him and not obeying orders, which is what she got thrown in jail for. And he dismisses her after that. He puts her in the quarters. And that's when Guinan comes in. And I have to say like, when we first started this podcast and we had to talk about who our favorite

female characters were this episode is basically why I chose Guinan. Like, not just this episode, but her strengths are highlighted so well in this episode. Which is, she sees beneath the surface and she takes the time to get to know people. And she's just got this great intuition about people and her relationship with the Picard. Like, he trusts her. And I love that.

AMY:

Yeah. I also like when she was talking to Ensign Ro in Ten Forward, and she's like "I don't stay anywhere long enough to make friends" and Guinan's like "Too late." *laughs* It's just such a Guinan thing to say.

ANDI:

Yeah, that whole first scene is pretty great. She's like "I want to be alone." She's like "No you don't. Like if you wanted to be alone you'd be in your quarters. You're in the middle of Ten Forward."

JARRAH:

I really appreciate this scene where Guinan takes her to talk to Picard and she, you know, she tells about her past and like seeing her father tortured by the Cardassians. And says "You know I served the federation, but I am a Bajoran." And you know, it really forces Picard to empathize with that situation and understand that, you know, her goal isn't to piss everyone off. But that when you are raised in a situation of racial persecution and genocide that it affects how you deal with everything for the rest of your life.

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean that's my favorite thing about Ro is her backstory makes sense, and her backstory brings things to the table from a story perspective that are very very interesting. And that's the kind of extra you want to write for someone to make them a complex character.

AMY:

They really did a good job with her falling outside of the prescribed realm of Next Generation officers, like we mentioned earlier. Just by, you know, well by you saying that that's her background I mean she has such a very different upbringing from everybody else. And it's nice that they finally get to showcase that as like kind of a strength for her. Especially in the later episodes too.

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean about her overcoming, you know, the terrible things that have happened to her. I think that's a really resonant arc. And I think people can really respond to that because-

AMY:

And she *thinks* differently. She thinks differently from someone with like a Riker upbringing or a Geordi upbringing.

ANDI:

Absolutely.

SUE:

We touched on it at least once before, that the TNG Characters if you actually look at the main characters backstories there is tragedy in *all* of them. But it's never really explored. And it was you know sort of Gene Roddenberry's thing, that like mental illness and stress over these situations wouldn't be a problem in the future. So they're glanced over, they're talked about every now and then. But they're never really taken on.

ANDI:

Which is too bad, because I feel like that's a really cool way to characterize. Like if you take somebody who goes through something tragic, like say Riker and all of his dad issues, and then have that be a part of who they are throughout the whole story, that I just think is a deeper character. But the way that they actually do it is like we have these extremely well adjusted people. And then for an episode they will tackle their past and then they'll move on. Whereas it doesn't inform like every decision they make or- and it doesn't have to be every decision but you'd like to kind of see it. And I think with Ro we do, we do see that.

SUE:

Yeah yeah. The one I always think about in that sense is Crusher, because they talk at one point that there was some disaster on whatever colony she was living on, but it's never specified what it was. Both her parents died. She was raised by her grandmother, got married, and then her husband died five or six years after they got married. And she is raising a son alone. And none of that is ever explored in her character. And there's so much there. It's all just kind of said. And she's still this, you know, happy caring doctor.

AMY:

She's still super badass. *laughs*

SUE:

Right. And all of them have something like that. So I'm glad that *one* of the tragic backstories finally informed a character.

ANDI:

I think maybe that's because they brought Ro on very specifically, and she was designed to basically to be linked to the story in that way. It's too bad that we couldn't see that further because as we go through the rest of her episodes sometimes she's just kind of there. But often

you can kind of see why she is the way she is playing out in episodes that are not specifically about her character.

AMY:

No, I agree. Even though she's not specifically- it's not specifically about her in Rascals either, but I think she has the most poignant child to adult- that adult to child and then back again kind of, you know. Even when I was a kid I thought "Oh how sad. She doesn't know what it's like to be a kid or to the draw." You know? I think that that's a great thing, that even like a little kid could understand and feel for her character, like that.

ANDI:

Yeah, absolutely. Is there anything more we want to say about Ensign Ro, the episode?

JARRAH:

I just briefly want to say, I think that it lays down some of the groundwork for what we see in her last episode in terms of her relationship with Picard as a father figure. And that is something that- I mean it's a really interesting relationship to explore. But I think it's a little disappointing. Because we learn about her father in Ensign Ro, and we see her start to, you know, she's accepted by Picard, and Picard talks about how he wants to mold her into a Starfleet officer, and she awesomely is basically like "I always thought that Starfleet had a lot to learn from me."

AMY:

Which is such a great line. *all laugh*

JARRAH:

Yeah, such a perfect lie. And he's basically like "That's an attitude that makes great officers" and that's really cool. And then, you know, we'll eventually see that sort of come back. Her respect for Picard, and her need for a father figure. And it's- I think it's interesting that, you know, in

Rascals we get to see her drawing a picture of her mother, and we never really get more than that about her mother.

AMY:

That would have been a rich storyline to tap also. To see what, you know, what her mother would have done in this situation that Ro is put in. You know, maybe as someone she could have turned to for advice.

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean, this is one of the things that makes me wish we had gotten to see more of her. Just because I feel like there's a lot of potential there for larger stories. And the Picard thing I do like the relationship because it's kind of this thing like we're in Ensign Ro she doesn't know who to trust and Guinan is the first person that she trusts. And it's basically like it's then like you can trust him. And she does, and it turns out well because she's very lost in that episode. She doesn't know what to do. And I think this is the beginning of what we see with Ro, with when she's feeling out of control is when she is reacting the worst. You know? Like, she has lived her whole life basically not in control. And so when control is taken from her is when she gets the most angry, and I think we can see that anger in Ensign Ro. And then like being able to take control of her destiny is what softens her character moving forward.

AMY:

I like that assessment. I think that's very accurate way of looking.

ANDI:

Well the next episode we get with her in it is Disaster. And that's not really- I wouldn't even say that's really a character driven episode, it's more like- so Disaster they run into a quantum filament. I dunno. Science. Maybe Sue knows more about it. *Sue laughs* But the- so that basically we get all of our main characters are like, split off from each other. Which I think is

pretty cool. And you get to see some characters interact with each other that you wouldn't normally see. I'm thinking specifically of Geordi and Crusher. That was pretty cool.

AMY:

And also from Keiko and Worf, which is one of my favorites. *all laugh* Forever.

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean, I think it's just a cool concept and it's a really straightforward one. But it works really really well in that the Enterprise is in danger, we've split everybody up, and they're all working towards the same goal, but they can't communicate with each other. And Ro has a fairly large part in this episode I would say. She is stuck on the bridge with Troi, and Miles O'Brien, and some rando, I don't even remember his name.

AMY:

Very memorable.

SUE:

laughs Yes, very memorable. And it's mostly the three of them working together to take over the bridge and bring them through this disaster. But Troi and Ro are in conflict, and I think that's really interesting.

JARRAH:

Yeah. I think that this is the only episode where I agree with the commentor about her brashness turning into mean-ness. I love the like, I love Picard and the kids. I love Keiko and Worf. I love- well sort of, the Geordi and Crusher stuff. Except for it's totally unrealistic that they're just like not quite getting sucked out into space.

AMY:

Oh no, they would die. *all laugh* They would be dead.

JARRAH:

They would be totally dead. But I'm not really a fan of the like Ro basically being like "No Troi, you totally can't handle this. You're just a counselor." And I mean, it makes sense given her background, but I don't love watching it.

SUE:

And it feels like the episode is intended to say that Troi can't handle this.

JARRAH:

Yeah.

SUE:

That feels like the whole point of Ro's meanness even, is so that later Troi can stand up to her. It's not about Ro it's all about Troi.

JARRAH:

Yeah exactly. But then at the end, you know, Ro apologizes and it's like "I was wrong" and Troi is like "Well you could have been right." *laughs* It's like, she's like "I'm 50-50 chance I might not have done it."

AMY:

I think that was very nice of Deanna to say "Well, it could very easily have gone very badly for us." *laughs*

JARRAH:

Yeah like a lot of other characters would not have been that kind about it.

AMY:

laughs No, they would not have been. I can't imagine Riker saying that, ever.

SUE:

While that's true, that doesn't excuse how you spoke to her. Because she is a lieutenant commander at that point.

ANDI:

I totally see where you're coming from Sue, and I agree. It's just that I kind of identify with that. It's not about Troi so much for me. It's like, I also have that thing where if I think I'm right and everyone else is wrong I cannot, *I can not*, pretend that somebody else is right. It's like, physically impossible for me. It's like I sometimes have a problem with, you know, I have- we have bosses in life right? And if I think that someone in authority over me is making the wrong decision, it is really really hard for me to not say anything. So I think that situation sets that up. I'm just glad that in the end Troi takes command, you know, and after that episode she goes out of her way to advance her career. Like she realized that she hadn't been as equipped as she wanted to be during that disaster. And now she wants to further her training. I like that aspect of it a lot.

AMY:

Yeah I think if Ro brought that out in her then that's definitely a positive character growth.

ANDI:

And I also would have to throw a shout out to Miles O'Brien here, because he's like "Troi is Lieutenant Commander, she is the senior officer" and after that he is completely respectful of her, and her position as being the authority figure on that bridge.

AMY:

Yeah I think he does a great job.

ANDI:

Even there's this cringe worthy moment where, and again I know nothing about science so I am completely with Troi on this, as he's explaining to her what a quantum filament is and I'm like "no idea." And then she says something like "So it's like a cosmic string?" And he's like ",No that's a completely different phenomenon." But I don't know if it's just the way that it's acted or what, but that line could have been *super* patronizing and he somehow walks the line of just being like "No I'm sorry, that's not right" without treating her like she's a moron. If that makes sense.

AMY:

No, I agree. I think that's really a good characterization of that moment.

SUE:

Well, he definitely does a good job there. But it is still- it still makes me uncomfortable.

ANDI:

Yeah. The line itself, and the way that she doesn't understand is cringe-worthy to me. I just like the way he *delivers* it. And I think we have to give that to the actor rather than the writing.

AMY:

Agreed.

ANDI:

But I really like that episode. I think that's a really great episode and Ro's part in it, I can see the problems with it but I think that it makes sense why she's there, which is good.

AMY:

At least we know that episode passes the Bechdel test, because they're yelling at each other about what to do with the bridge.

ANDI:

I re-watched four episodes, and I noticed very specifically that all four passed it.

AMY:

That's awesome.

ANDI:

Ensign Ro with Guinan and Ro, and Disaster with Troi and Ro. Very clear passes there.

AMY:

Preemptive Strike passes pretty very well.

JARRAH:

Rascals obviously too, with Guinan and Ro.

ANDI:

Next up that we were going to talk about was Conundrum. *Jarrah cheers* We actually had this discussion, I was like "Can we skip Conundrum? And pretend that it didn't happen?" *Sue

laughs* and Jarrah was like “No, no we can't do that” and I’m like “Dangit.” *Jarrah laughs* So who forced themselves to watch Conundrum, and wants to tell us about Conundrum.?

JARRAH:

defensive I did. I liked it. *all laugh*

SUE:

I mean, I liked the *episode*. I don't love the *pause* Riker. *all laugh*

ANDI:

The “Riker” of it all?

SUE:

I'm sorry, is there an Enterprise lady, a regular Enterprise lady that Riker does not bone?

ANDI:

Yar?

SUE:

Yar? Is she the only one-

AMY:

Crusher? He does not bone Crusher.

SUE:

Rikers *body* bones crusher in The Host. You can argue about whether he was actually in control or not. But I'm pretty sure it's only Ro-Yar.

JARRAH:

Raawr. *all laugh*

SUE:

That's how I feel about it! *upset* Rawr.

AMY:

I think she'd be ok with being called Rawr. *all laugh*

ANDI:

Tell us about conundrum, the "Riker" of it all.

SUE:

Conundrum. This is the one where they're just kind of going about their business, and then the Enterprise is being swept by like an energy beam or something? And they all wake up and have forgotten who they are. And there's this extra guy around, and basically his race has this like psychic-beam thing, and he's trying to convince the Enterprise to go and basically end their war for them. Because the Enterprise is so much better armed than either of their entire societies, and one photon torpedo will end the war and destroy this planet. And they have wiped the computer banks too so they can't get all the information about who they are. So they think that this guy this Kieran is- oh it's McDuff right?

ANDI:

Yeah. Kieran MacDuff.

JARRAH:

Boring MacDuff. That's what I call him. Boring MacDuff.

AMY:

MacDuff is such a Shakespeare thing. That is such a Macbeth thing though because MacDuff is like-

SUE:

I was thinking like "Is this Macbeth reference? Is this yet another Shakespeare reference?"

AMY:

I've been doing my studying for my panel. It is hilarious. Yeah but it also reminds me of MacGuffin, which is like the faux plot. You know, just the McGuffin of the plot so.

SUE:

So Picard is his- even though he doesn't remember everything, his like morality takes over. Because he's like "These people are unarmed. Our capabilities are nothing near, you know, equivalent with them." So he refuses to destroy this planet, this outpost that Macduff is trying to convince him is his mortal enemy.

ANDI:

And I would say that it's a pretty good Troi episode, in the fact that she is the first one that brings this up. She's like "If, you know, so many lives depend on this, we need to wait until we have all of the information." She's the one that doesn't quite trust the situation, which I like.

AMY:

Doesn't she say they should call Starfleet Command? I think that's a good call.

ANDI:

Yeah.

JARRAH:

Yeah. Well and the very first scene is Troi beating Data at chess. And she says that basically "Logic isn't everything, you need intuition as well." And so that's kind of the theme that goes through with her, is she has this intuition that something isn't right, and she's passionately arguing for the lives of the defenseless aliens that MacDuff is trying to make them attack. Because inexplicably he decided to masquerade as the first officer instead of the captain.*all laugh*

AMY:

I think we just uncovered the whole entire problem with his plan.

ANDI:

laughs I never thought about that, but you're absolutely right. That's ludicrous. *laughs*

JARRAH:

But the reason that we're talking about this episode is that Riker and Ro, because they don't remember that they hate each other, decide to sleep together. And I understand that a couple of you are maybe not so much fans of that.

ANDI:

The thing I don't like about Riker Ro is that they make it feel like that whole love-hate rom com trope. Like the reason that they're arguing is just because of this sexual tension. And I just don't buy that at all. They're in very very understandable conflict, you know?

JARRAH:

So, I re-watched this yesterday and I actually had zero problem with it, because I didn't really see it as a love triangle so much as that Deanna and Will like had a possible love relationship. But Deanna through this whole thing is very like "I don't have all the information, I'm going to be super cautious." Ro seems to really just want sex, and she is really the one in the driver's seat for this thing. So it doesn't feel to me like, you know, Riker's always just wanted to bone her and- but it's like that now that she doesn't have this baggage of her past she's still like really aggressive. But she's more fun loving and pleasure seeking. And we almost never see women on TNG seek sexual pleasure who don't end up being the villains or don't end up getting punished for it at the end, like Troi after all of her horrible boyfriends. So I thought it was like refreshing to see Ro being like "This is what I want. You're consenting as well. Let's go for it." And there was no promises, there was no like "We're going to be-" I mean, she does say like "Maybe we're going to be married, and we wouldn't be married" but I didn't get the sense that this was about them wanting to have a long term love relationship. So I actually- it didn't bother me really at all. I didn't think that- I thought like everyone knew what the risks were. And then at the end Riker gets to be super super awkward and uncomfortable and that was pretty funny.

ANDI:

I mean, I do like that it's definitely Ro that is the aggressor, like the sexual aggressor. And that was awesome to see. Like, she just kind of shows up and- she shows up in his quarters and is like "Hey." *all laugh*

AMY:

"Let's do it."

ANDI:

"I like it."

SUE:

I have no problem with the- If they wanted to explore that, and Jarrah you make an excellent point. I think where it got weird for me is that they then brought Troi into it, and like Riker knew about this possible love relationship. But by the time that you then saw Ro again like he had spoken to Troi about this, and then he immediately went to Ro presumably to have more sex. And that's where I'm a little like "Riker can be a little bit of a jerk." *laughs*

JARRAH:

Well Ro actually barges in on Troi and Riker as they're about to kiss, and Troi's like "Nothing's going on here, I'm going to leave." So she's like- Troi actually kind of leaves the situation. So I don't know. I don't know that it's really reasonable to say like "Riker should have held off just in case him and Troi were married in the other world" or whatever. I mean like Troi didn't have to be like "Nothing's happening. I'm leaving."

AMY:

I'm just thinking about it right now. I think it might have been that- kind of an analogy for Riker and Troi like whole relationship? Really like, "Should we do this? We're not sure." "Well I don't know" it's a lot of thinking, whereas him and Ro was just really "I think you're hot" "And I think you're hot, so let's get it on." *laughs*

JARRAH:

Yeah. I do think it is problematic like at the very end where Ro and Troi are saying, like you said that Ro is like “Oh the counsellor was just telling me that, you know, sometimes people in these situations do what they've always wanted to do.” So like implying that they've subconsciously wanted to have sex for a long time. And that's problematic. But the way that they do it it almost seems like they're just messing with him. So I don't know. In my head I'm just like “They're just messing with him. That's not a thing.” And it lets us go on without seeing Ro as like someone who's repressed- in conflict with Riker because she secretly wants him.

ANDI:

Yeah. That was the only thing that I didn't like about the idea, is just like *of course* that's not why they're in conflict. They're in conflict for understandable reasons. Anything else to say about Conundrum? I think it's a good episode, I like it.

JARRAH:

I just think MacDuff is super boring and that plot doesn't like work for me. But that's not Ensign Ro related. *Andi laughs* Like, you didn't make yourself the captain, there's all these- like you couldn't destroy these people that are totally defenseless, and yet you get the ability to wipe the minds and change the computer files of the flagship of the Federation.

ANDI:

I liked anyway that they actually legitimately say that, like they bring that up. They're like “Why do they have *this* technology but not photon torpedoes?” *laughs*

JARRAH:

Yeah exactly.

AMY:

Get some torpedoes, don't bring us into it.

JARRAH:

It does make it a bit better.

ANDI:

OK. Well, the next one that we have on our list to discuss is Powerplay.

AMY:

Oh, I love that episode.

JARRAH:

I do too, but I don't have a lot to say about Ro.

SUE:

Yeah. The next two that Ro's in, Power Play and Cause And Effect, she's in them but she's just kind of *there*. I don't think there's much that comes out of her character in either of those episodes.

JARRAH:

I have a really funny quote from Michelle Forbes when she got this script for Cause And Effect, which was the one where they're in the temporal loop. "So they sent me the script and I thought the Xerox machine had screwed up. I was just about to say 'look there's a problem with the

script” She remembers like “Thank God I realized that was the whole show before I went in embarrassed myself.”

AMY:

Understandable though. *Jarrah laughs*

ANDI:

And then so Power Play, Cause And Effect, The Next Phase?

JARRAH:

Yeah. I just watched this one as well. I had a quote from Michelle Forbes saying “When they asked me to return as Ro for The Next Phase” So I guess that’s about halfway through her run. “I said I had no interest in playing this character if she was going to be homogenised. If she was going to go from people thinking she was too outspoken to being turned into a soft belly piece of jello. The fans always said ‘we love how true to herself she is.’ Some people told me at conventions they thought she was becoming too soft. But I guess it’s a natural progression. That episode forced her to ask questions about ‘why we’re here, how much we miss out in life, what would happen if it were all taken away tomorrow.’ It was an interesting way to soften her up not in a needless way but in a growth way.”

AMY:

I agree. I think that's true.

JARRAH:

Yeah. That's the one where her and Geordi are like out of phase with the rest of the crew after a transporter accident, and they have to find a way to become visible to warn everyone about a Romulan plot.

ANDI:

Yeah. And I like that episode too, and I think it's cool to have Geordi and her have- I mean he has a very specific line that she basically doesn't even belong in Starfleet, so it's cool to kind of throw them together and have him change his mind.

AMY:

Yeah.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And she basically thinks they're dead. And so it causes this a bit of a crisis of, you know, what do you believe about the afterlife? But also at the end they're sitting in Ten Forward and she says that she feels like she's been kind of arrogant. And I- kind of mixed feelings about Geordi has a line you know "Well, we should develop our own one of these phase devices. Because if it can teach Ro Laren humility, it can do anything." And she laughs at it and she sort of acknowledges like "I think I know better than other people." I cringed a little bit, because I'm like "I can't imagine ever saying that to someone *laughs* who had been what she had been through."

ANDI:

But it is an aspect of her character.

JARRAH:

Yeah. They share a moment. I guess it was like an incisive comment. It wasn't meanly intended.

AMY:

No. I mean like he's just like, you know, teasing.

ANDI:

Yeah, I don't think he would say that to her without-

AMY:

His delivery does not sound nasty.

JARRAH:

No, exactly. It was more like-

ANDI:

Inside joke.

JARRAH:

Yeah, I guess she is- she's acknowledging, yeah, something that other people have probably thought but have been too afraid to talk to her about it.

ANDI:

I like that they develop that a little more. And as kind of, you know, science-y shenanigans go I think it's a stronger setup than a lot of the TNG episodes. Next up on our list to talk about is Rascals. Which is one of my favorite favorite favorite episodes. *Jarrah cheers* And I know that I am not alone in that. But like, I know that there are people who do not love it as much as I do.

SUE:

I am one of those people who doesn't really like this episode. *laughs*

ANDI:

I know! I was actually thinking of you specifically Sue, because one of the first times Sue and I went on a podcast together was for All Things Trek and we had to choose our favorite episodes for each season. And my season six pick was rascals. *laughs* And I had to explain why I loved it so much. And Sue is like “*noncommittal noise* kay”. *Sue laughs*

AMY:

I'm on your side. I really like this episode as well.

ANDI:

Well I'm glad I'm not totally alone.

SUE:

No, I think I'm the one that's alone in general. *laughs*

JARRAH:

Oh no, I know people who hate this episode as well. I am not really a fan of kids, but I really love kid Picard. He totally makes this episode for me. And the part about-

AMY:

It's hilarious!

JARRAH:

“He's my number one dad!” *all laugh* It's my favorite moment.

ANDI:

That hug. Where it's like- when Riker smiles like that, I can't help but laugh. *laughs* Like that huge cheesy smile and like that twinkle. And then they're like so being so weird and the Ferengi is just like "Okay."*laughs*

SUE:

Those are pretty much the only redeeming scenes for me.*laughs*

ANDI:

laughs No, I love this episode right from the beginning. Because right from the beginning Picard is in this shuttle and he's just like geeking out about archaeology, and I just think it's so adorable. The other three, especially Guinan, and Ro are like giving each other these looks. Like *laughs* "Oh look, what a nerd." And I just think it's so adorable. Well, we should say- I'm pretty sure everyone knows which one Rascals is. It's kind of an infamous episode, but Ro, Keiko, Picard, and Guinan are coming back on a shuttle and they run into weird energy and then when they're transported onto the Enterprise they're transported as I would say probably about twelve? Twelve years old versions of themselves.

AMY:

Around there.

ANDI:

And I think it's adorable. Others might not think so. That's totally cool. But in regards to Ro, I think it's a good episode for her characterization.

JARRAH:

Yeah I agree. There are parts of the episode I think are problematic, but they're not Ro related, so I'll leave them for another day. But I do like the Ro Guinan stuff. The whole thing about how crayons can take you about anywhere you want to go or *laughs* whatever Guinan's quote is. I think the actors are really great. I just wish they'd left Alexander out of the whole thing. *Andi laughs*

AMY:

Yeah. He's so much younger than they are like, I think, as a kid. Even the like actors who played the kids, he seemed a lot less mature and able to handle the subject matter than they did.

ANDI:

You know, I feel like part of that episode is about how we dismiss children. Like we have this whole scene where Picard is trying to get the child's computer to give him the schematics of the Enterprise. And they'll only give him *Sue laughs* like "Would you like to see pictures of plants?" he's like "No, no I don't." And then like the way the Ferengi leaves the kids to basically be by themselves, because they don't think they could possibly do anything. I do think that's a part of the episode, and why it's necessary to have an actual kid involved.

JARRAH:

Yeah that's true. I think just Alexander is so *meh*.

ANDI:

I've always liked Alexander, but not because of his character so much as every time I'm like *delighted voice* "Tiny Klingon! Oh my God!" But I don't think you're alone in disliking his character.

SUE:

I will give you that. That the kids they cast for this episode were really good. Especially Guinan.

ANDI:

The young Guinan is actually also the child version of Whoopi Goldberg for Sister Act.

AMY:

Oh, I didn't know that!

ANDI:

I don't know if you guys are like me and loving Sister Act, but the beginning of Sister Act is that same actress, I'm afraid I don't know her name, but she's doing the opening scene which is like can you name the apostles-

AMY:

The apostles John, Paul, George, and Ringo! *laughs*

ANDI:

and she puts Ringo on and underlines it, and then it cuts to, you know, modern day whatever her name is.

SUE:

Dolores.

AMY:

Sister Mary Clarence, I don't remember her real name.

ALL TOGETHER:

Dolores.

ANDI:

Yeah, because that's what I was thinking. It was like the first thing I was like "Sister Mary Clarence obviously" but that's not her real name. So anyway.

AMY:

I like this one.

ANDI:

Yeah. I mean I just think that's funny, and it looks like her, and she's good. She kind of nails that whole Zen wise but also joyful aspect of Guinan, which I think is important specifically because that's basically what she's trying to get Ro to see. The joy of being a child, which has been taken from Ro in the most brutal way. I think it's very understandable that she would have such complicated feelings towards her childhood.

AMY:

I think they definitely portrayed that accurately. And that actress, the little girl is like "Childhood was made of suffering and I wanted it to be over as soon as possible." And it seems- you see things so sad. You know? You just get so- you like look at her little face and you're like "Aw."

ANDI:

Yeah. And just the idea of Ro not being able to- I mean we've talked a little bit about how she feels about control. When she was a kid she had no control whatsoever. So you can kind of see

like where that comes from. And I like that they give her the moment to at the end to be vulnerable and be like “Maybe I want this feeling a little more. This feeling of innocence, and a kid, and not have terrible things happening to me, I can jump on the bed, and draw pictures.” I just- I think it's really sweet and really sad.

AMY:

Yeah. I think it was a good episode. I think she was a good choice to go through the transporter and have that moment, you know? They could have done anybody really.

ANDI:

Well. The next episode we're going to talk about is Preemptive Strike. Which I think Jarrah you're right, that this is kind of like the bookend. Ensign Ro and Preemptive Strike kind of go together really well. And it's her last episode and the last time we see her. Does anybody want to give us a synopsis?

AMY:

I can give you a synopsis, I just watched it last night. It's about the Maquis. There is a Maquis attack against a Cardassian vessel along the demilitarized zone, and the Enterprise is shocked to realize that they're federation ships, but they are not run by Starfleet officers, they're run by the Maquis. And Ensign Ro comes back from a tactical training, not a seminar I guess more like a course that she took, and Picards like “Oh half of the people who enter this tactical course wash out. So it's really awesome that you completed it” and he congratulates her. And then they jump right into putting her on a mission to infiltrate the Maquis, and kind of gain their trust in order to betray them to Starfleet. And he's like “Are you okay with this?” And she's like “I can do it. I'm gonna prove you right. I'm going to make sure that your faith in me is not misplaced.” But, as with Ensign Ro, it's really hard for her to see fellow Bajorans that have been displaced for so long and are fighting for their home and for their culture. So she ultimately decides to join the Maquis.

JARRAH:

Part of that is that she meets another father figure who is-

AMY:

Macias.

JARRAH:

Is he Bajoran as well? Or does he just make Bajoran food?

AMY:

I don't think he's Bajoran. I think he's human, but he had a friend who was Bajoran who would cook for him and he really likes this one particular dish that Ro said she-

JARRAH:

Hasperat.

AMY:

Hasperat! That she knows how to make, and he said "I really would love for you to make it for me sometime" and she agrees.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And then he is killed. So part of that is her feeling that she can't betray his memory.

AMY:

Especially when his *dying breath*- he says "When an old leader like me dies, a new one will take their place." and you're like, "Oh no"

JARRAH:

Little on-the-nose there Mr.

AMY:

Right as he dies, he says it.

JARRAH:

She also meets another woman in the resistance. And she sort of has to earn her trust.

AMY:

Yeah. I think she has a great moment when she's on the shuttle craft. She's trying to prove her worth and she's able to quote get past the Enterprise shields and sensors. And beam up some medical supplies. It's a good moment, because Picard obviously lets it happen, because he realizes she is probably part of her mission. But also just, the woman is really impressed with her and she goes back to tell the Maquis "And then she did this and we were right inside their shields and it was crazy."

JARRAH:

Yeah, and it bookends things with Riker too. Because Riker gets disguised as a Bajoran to go on this mission with her at the end, and she ends up basically pulling a phaser on him and telling him she's going to go join the Maquis.

AMY:

Yeah I like that. Because he didn't even really try to stop her. He was like "Good luck, and I wish you the best and all that. Take care of yourself." That kind of thing.

SUE:

And I think it makes a lot of sense for her. Bajor was not- and I think maybe still is not, I'm not positive on that, a member of the Federation. So you get the impression from Ro that she joined Starfleet, and she would have had to have a sponsor to join Starfleet since Bajor wasn't a member world, they were occupied, to essentially because she wants to do something good and she wants to help. But the Federation is not working for the interests of her people. So when she finds a group that *is* and she's sympathetic to their plight and she wants to to fight really for what has been oppressing her for so long, it makes a lot of sense for her character. And I think that, you know, the crew of the Enterprise, who at this point knows her really well, can see that and is not going to stop her.

JARRAH:

Yeah. And then, you know, the last thing that we learn, Riker goes back and says that "She seemed very sure she was making the right choice. I think her only real regret was that she let *you* down." Meaning Picard. I don't know. I found that- I mean I guess they're saying that she only had one regret. So I guess that's good.

AMY:

I see what you're saying. And I think that she really did want to do right by Picard. If that makes sense.

JARRAH:

Yeah, it totally makes sense. And I don't think there's anything wrong with her like having this traumatic childhood, and looking for a figure, whether it be a man or a woman or whatever gender, to be someone who would have faith in her and encourage her to succeed. I just like, that I guess I kind of wish that there had been more exploration of mother figures as well.

AMY:

Yeah. The mother figure thing again, you know, when she was drawing a picture of her mom or whatever, that kind of, you know, I think that's part of the- she just seemed to really crave the father figure more.

JARRAH:

Yeah. I mean, I think if we had more women characters on Star Trek, and in TV more generally, it wouldn't even be a thing. Like it's not like there's a negative associated with like the desire to have parental figures. But we just, you know, Ro is really the first I guess- I mean we had Yar, but like we said Yar wasn't really very well defined. And so she was really the first like tough woman who really, you know, made it known what she wanted. So it felt a bit like it was- I don't know, *tempering* that by having her want to defer to a male authority figure?

JARRAH:

I see your point, yeah. And I wouldn't say *defer*. I think maybe more- she doesn't seem like she wouldn't be up for deferring to anybody.

JARRAH:

Yeah totally. Yeah. And like I said, I mean it's more just I think pressure on her to embody a lot of things because there weren't a lot of women characters that were tough in the same way as her, and complex, and interesting.

AMY:

No, I know she definitely stands alone in the Next Generation world at least.

JARRAH:

Because I was gonna say that we were gonna talk just a little bit about Ro versus Kira. And that's one thing that makes them distinct is partly because we got seven seasons of Kira. That we did get to see her connections with friends in the resistance but also people who sort of act as father figures as well as her actually meeting her own mother. And that is really interesting.

We won't spoil it too much for Andi. *laughs* I think that's one benefit that we got from having more time with Kira.

AMY:

Yeah. I feel like they really use Ro as a test for Kira to see how people would have responded.

SUE:

Did we already talk about how she was basically offered that role?

JARRAH:

We did a little bit. That, you know, basically they wanted to have Ro and they actually started drafting the Bible, the character bible with Ro as the character, to be played by Michelle Forbes. But Michelle Forbes wasn't interested in a regular series. And so they changed it a little bit and we ended up with Kira.

SUE:

I said previously on the podcast that I felt like Ro sometimes got a little whiny teenager, but I do still like the character in a lot of ways. But that is why I'm glad that it's a different character. Because Kira is a little bit older and I think, at least by the time she gets to DS9 yeah she's still angry, but I feel like she's a little bit well adjusted. So her regular character I think she definitely works better than Ro would have in that situation.

JARRAH:

Well and she's in a situation where she's an outsider to the Federation like Ro. But she also has some people that she trusts like Odo right from the get go. So it positions her a little bit differently where she's not really oppositional to *everyone*. She is constantly balancing her loyalties to her government, to her religion, to her friends, to the federation, and all of that

around her upbringing about being a Bajoran and being raised in resistance and oppression and war.

AMY:

I think the reason that Ro is so successful as a character is that, you know, she's very like Kira. And I have read a lot of scholarship on the women of Star Trek. And if you analyze them in terms of who has the greatest feminist agency out of all the characters, even more so than Janeway, Kira has the most feminist agency because she has the ability to have relationships and she's like she's not constrained by Starfleet necessarily the way Janeway kind of was. Kira is just like she's like the top character for women in Star Trek. And the fact that Ro is her actual predecessor, and she was originally written as Ro, is really encouraging. And she really speaks to the way Ro was originally written.

JARRAH:

Yeah I think that makes sense. If, for people who are interested in the novels, there's a Terok Nor trilogy that's a prequel, that goes through the Cardassian Occupation of Bajor and there's a lot of really interesting stuff to read on young Ro and young Kira in the resistance. And they don't interact with each other, but you get to see Ro like falling in love for the first time and like how that works out during wartime, and developing sort of her identity as a fighter. And so I would recommend that trilogy of novels.

AMY:

Cool. I'll have to read it.

SUE:

Yeah. And there are a few set afterwards, that have Ro eventually returning to Deep Space 9 *laughs* in Fancy Rules.

AMY:

laughs In Fancy Rules.

JARRAH:

So yeah. I mean, she gets those promotions that she was- that Picard was encouraging her to try for.

AMY:

That's good.

JARRAH:

Yeah.

ANDI:

Is there anything else anybody wants to add to the wrap up?

AMY:

I would just like to say thank you for having me on the show today, and I really enjoyed it.

laughs

ANDI:

Yes, thanks Amy so much for joining us. It was a great discussion. So Amy Where can people find you elsewhere on the Internet?

AMY:

So you guys can all find me on ShoesandStarships.com and also my twitter handle is @lightstar1013 and you can also find me on pinterest and Tumblr also with lightstar1013 and Shoes and Starships.

ANDI:

I'll definitely have to follow you on Pinterest then.

AMY:

I love my Pinterest. I have a geek love board that I think is very popular. I get a lot of followers on that one so

ANDI:

That's awesome. And Jarrah, where can people find you?

JARRAH:

You can find me at Trekkiefeminist.Tumblr.com.

ANDI:

And Sue?

SUE:

My Twitter handle is Spaltor, S P A L T O R or you can find more blogs and podcasts over at anomalypodcast.com.

ANDI:

And I'm Andi. Easiest way to find me is on my Twitter [@firsttimetrek](#) where I am livetweeting my first time through Star Trek. I currently am almost finished with the first season of Deep Space Nine, so hopefully I'll have a lot more to say about Kira soon. Thanks for listening.