

161 Autism and Trek

Voiceover: You're listening to a Roddenberry podcast.

Grace: Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp: a Roddenberry Star Trek podcast. Join us on our continuing mission to explore intersectional diversity in infinite combinations. My name is Grace, and thanks for tuning in. With me this week I have Andi

Andi: Woo!

Grace: We have our guests Jesse,

Jesse: Hi!

Grace: And Claire!

Claire: Hello!

Grace: Now before we get into our main topic, we have a little bit of housekeeping to do first, as per use. Our show is made possible by our patrons on Patreon. We love you guys. We've revamped our Patreon tiers for the new year bringing in some new rewards like exclusive Women at Warp merch. So if you've ever thought about checking our Patreon, now's the perfect time. We really appreciate the support, and you can find us at Patreon.com/womenatwarp. Also, you can check out our Teepublic store for t-shirts hoodies, mugs, masks, and more at Teepublic.com/stores/womenatwarp. We're regularly curating new designs, and we've got- we're finding new stuff all the time. So check it out. Cause there's always something new. All of these links also are available on our website at womenatwarp.com, which is a pretty self-explanatory website title. *laughter*

Andi: We weren't trying to fool people

Jesse: Wo-womenatwarp.*pause*.com? Um, so it's very confusing. Very confusing.

Grace: We got into a fight with women@warp.gov. That was a whole thing. *all laugh* So before we get into our topic, let's introduce our guests a little more. Jessie, would you like to introduce yourself to our guests who maybe don't know what you do?

Jesse: No, no, I don't want to introduce myself at all. *Andi laughs* Obviously. I'll just-

Grace: Okay. That's fair.

Jesse: No. Uh, many people may know me as a Jessie Gender over on YouTube. I do videos on Star Trek and then pop culture and science fiction in general, but let's face it mostly Star Trek. And how it intersects with social issues, political issues, and LGBTQ issues. And lately I've been talking about autism as well, considering I am on the autism spectrum myself. So I've been doing a few videos on that, both within Star Trek and other places. So yeah, that's the main sort of thing that I do.

Grace: Awesome. And Claire, would you like to tell us a little bit about yourself?

Claire: You know, I don't have a YouTube channel I'm sorry to say.

Jesse: *gasp* For shame, *Grace laughs* for shame.

Claire: So, I started watching Star Trek on whatever day it was in 1987 that Encounter At Farpoint aired.

Grace: Oh my gosh!

Claire: I actually remember watching it. *impressed noises* Grew up in a very much a Star Trek and science fiction and just generally nerd things friendly family. So yeah, I have watched- since TNG I've watched all Star Trek as it aired, forever. Even when I didn't think it was very good. *all laugh*

Grace: How cool to be there for the full experience though.

Claire: Yeah, as close as I could. I think I was like 12 when I first watched the original series.

Jesse: Hey, it's better than my- my entry point to Star Trek was the Star Trek Nemesis audio book. *all laugh* so really I could only go-

Grace: Oh my god!

Jesse: Oh yeah, my dad played that for me on a car ride home. And I got enraptured by it. And he was like, "If you like this- *all laugh*

Grace: Wow!

Claire: You've got to be the only person who was not only like, who was drawn into Star Trek by Nemesis. That's incredible! *all laugh*

Jesse: It is A place to start. I won't say it's a good one. *laughs*

Grace: But we won't say good or bad. All entries into the fandom are valid, but that is one very very niche means. I will say, definitely. *Andi laughs* Speaking of niches, for our topic today we want to talk about autistic coded characters in Star Trek or characters that just read to us as autistic. Now, when we're talking about autism, we are talking about a very broad blanket statement of the spectrum. Autism spectrum disorder, or ASD, is a developmental condition. We call it being "non neuro-typical", that's the phrase-ology I go for there. It can show up in a lot of different ways for a lot of different people. It's important to note that a lot of it- a lot of the time it is more highly diagnosed in males and females. Which is makes sense looking at our list that we've got a lot more male characters to talk about than female characters. *sarcastic* Wonder why that is. Anyhow, there are a bunch of different traits associated with this. And if you've been watching the news lately, entertainment news specifically, there are a lot of ideas that not autistic people seem to have about how it works to be autistic.

Jesse: Oh yes.

Grace: So this felt like an especially good time to dive into that. So, what are some things we typically think of when we're thinking about how people expect an autistic character to behave?

Claire: Well, I think especially if we're looking at the time period in which a lot of Star Trek was produced, it's very much kind of the Rain Man archetype.

Grace: Yep.

Claire: Unfortunately, the entertainment news you're talking about that was produced, you know, a month ago also that archetype. Nothing has changed.

Grace: Yeah. It's almost as if the neurotypicals have learned nothing in 30 years.

Claire: *laughs* Yeah.

Grace: So what we have here, this idea that we have from Rain Man, is this idea of like the quote unquote "idiot savant". Someone who doesn't know how to function in the way that a lot of people think of as normal, but it has some kind of secret super human brain ability, which we see a lot with autistic coded characters in media.

Jesse: Yeah. With Sheldon from Big Bang Theory being like a relatively recent example of that.

Claire: Yeah.

Grace: Yeah. Or them having the BBC Sherlock and then kind of offhandedly make Asperger's jokes about it.

Jesse: Oh yes.

Grace: And then we got all kinds of fun comments from the actors about how it's cruel to give autistic people a role model like that. Charming.

Claire: Wee.

Grace: But yeah, we have these kind of general ideas as of what autism entails from the pop culture that is widely distributed of autistic people or people on the spectrum as being kind of cold, kind of socially oblivious and callous, and having really intense hyper fixations on specific topics, being very formal in speaking. And again like we said, both with the diagnoses and with the list of characters we've got, it's a lot more men than women. Which is fun because then you get to ask yourself, is this a by-product of this being thought of as a male condition? Or a by-product of just they're not putting a lot of work into writing complicated women characters?

Jesse: Probably a little bit of A, a little bit of B. And also like, just reflecting also in like the diagnoses as well as sort of like, not recognizing any sort of women's issues in general. Like, "oh, women have like health issues and have their own ways of processing the world in unique ways? That's so weird."

Claire: Yeah, and the socializing. The way that children who present as female are socialized very differently than children who are presenting as male. You know, the idea of like "As long as you're academically doing okay, or you're just sort of not acting out in ways that are seen as destructive or overly kind of disruptive, you're fine." Like you're just quiet or you're just weird. Or you're just- you know, like you can be a horse girl and it's fine. If you're a train boy, then you probably should see someone about that. *laughs*

Jesse: Yeah. Yeah. No, I mean it's probably no coincidence like- for your listeners may not know I'm trans and I was diagnosed on the spectrum when I was really really young. And one of the things that the person who diagnosed me said was like, "Well, you're probably doing really well in school because you're on the spectrum." Which is like, basically something that they like talked to my parents about. He literally said like, "Oh, your autism will be insurance policy for going to college because you'll know you'll do well."

Grace: *sarcastic* That's so fun when your mental condition is treated as a commodity and only, you know, worth having if it's helpful in some way.

Jesse: Yup. *sarcastic* It was fun.

Grace: Goody gumdrops.

Jesse: But obviously complimenting me for being smart because I was seen as a boy too, when I was younger as well. So there's that aspect of it.

Grace: Yeah.

Andi: I think that, Jesse, you made a good point about just doctors and women in general as well in that doctors just don't listen to women in the same way that they listen to men when it comes to them trying to describe anything about what's actually happening to them. I find that doctors tend to be less receptive to that.

Jesse: Yeah. I do wonder. I mean, there's no way to know for sure, but I mean I do wonder if like if I had been understood to be a woman, as I was at a young age, instead of being seen as a boy, whether my diagnoses would have been portrayed in such a positive way. Or even if I would have been diagnosed at all.

Claire: Well, I'll say I'm not formally diagnosed. I'm like halfway diagnosed in that I got to the point that a professional was like, "Yeah, you probably definitely would- like this sounds right. And you should probably pursue that." And I just sort of stopped there for a variety of reasons, but that wasn't until like probably seven or eight years ago at this point. I grew up as the sort of, yeah, academically successful, quirky, you know, whatever kind of pleasant stereotypes you want to apply to it. The weird girl, whatever. And it was fine, but there was so much more to it than that. And I think if a variety of circumstances had been different, I don't know, if maybe I would've gone in for diagnosis earlier and actually gotten the diagnosis as a younger person. I don't know. But for me very much I grew up in a family where it was totally cool for me to be weird or have weird interests. My parents didn't care. They

were supportive. They were like, "Whatever. You do you. As long as you seem to be doing okay." But I think for people who grew up in different types of households, where they get pressured to perform differently than is natural for them, then-

Grace: [00:10:18] Yeah, I- I'm also didn't get a diagnosis until later in life. Not till my early twenties. Even though I had very clear symptoms and behavioral patterns as a kid. Most of the time when it was brought up to my parents as being a possibility it was just kind of brushed off with, "Oh, she's just shy. She's just a nervous kid." And so there was a lot of having to be like, "Well, I guess any behavioral problems I'm having or communication issues are my fault. So I got to work extra hard to make up for them."

Claire: Yeah.

Grace: And that was kind of part of the narrative I got growing up. So if I'm- the-bleh-bleh- I'm sorry. I'm word tumbling again.

Jesse: Word tumb- oh my gosh. That might be one of my favorite descriptions ever. Word tumbling. I am going to use that.

Grace: I have the problem where my mouth works faster than my brain sometimes. And then I have to go "Wait, did that actually make sense?" Which is funny because that actually can relate into my communication issues. I have *laughs* it's topical!

Jesse: No, it's interesting. Cause I think,- I mean, I do the same exact thing. And it's interesting that all of us have kind of like to a degree of -display that. Even the past few minutes of like the self-consciousness of our own words. About like oh, we'll talk talk talk and then we're like, "Wait, am I saying the right thing? Am I doing the right thing?" And you like get in your head about it, because you're trying to analyze your own sort of social interactions with other people. And so because you're getting so self-conscious in your head, it starts to tumble out in the ways you interact with other people. Being like, "Oh, I'm sorry- let me- let me apologize for what I'm saying" So like, it's kind of exemplary of that. Cause I do the exact same thing all the time.

Andi: One thing that I found really interesting, Jessie, I had the pleasure of watching the video that you did on autistic characters in Star Trek, which was very well done and people should definitely check it out.

Jesse: Thank you.

Andi: One thing that struck me is in the comments how many people who are saying, you know, "I haven't been diagnosed with autistic, but so much of this applies to me. I wonder if I'm on the spectrum." Like, it was like comment after comment of people who are like, "Maybe I'm not technically on the spectrum or I definitely don't have a diagnosis, but I'm still like feeling represented by these characters and by these like phenomena that you're describing that are related to autism."

Jesse: Yeah. I mean it was super- I mean, that was one of the coolest things about doing that video is just like seeing like- that's one of my most popular videos and I did not expect it.

Grace: It's great stuff. And that's how we knew we had to have you on this episode.

Jesse: Aw! Thank you. Yeah. But it was just so cool to just see like how many people are drawn, to kind of segue into the topic I guess, it would be like how many people are- find themselves in Star Trek and are drawn to Star Trek because of this specific representation that they see. You see sort of autistic coding in a lot of the characters in the franchise. And it was just- it was just really really cool to just see that community, that not really talked about, sort of come out of the woodwork a little bit in the comment section of that video. So I was really surprised and honored by that.

Grace: And I love that I'm now about to segue from us talking about emotional response to the least emotional presenting people with the Vulcans. Spock is the big character, or at least one of them, that we think about when we talk about this sort of relationship to what we have considered the stereotypical idea of autism and the characters in Star Trek. And we do see a lot of autistic or autistic coded characters kind of based off of him and sort of this Vulcan idea of logic before emotion, because a lot of us have issues with either expressing emotion or feeling empathy or portraying it the way that a lot of other people expect us to. But let's talk Vulcans, let's talk Vulcans and autism. Most importantly, let's talk Spock. Cause that's what y'all came here for.

Claire: The fact that Spock has become a code word in other non Star Trek pop culture properties to point out if there's a character who seems autistic coded, or who maybe even is canonically autistic. People will call that character Spock at least once. It's inevitable.

Grace: It's true. It's become such a pop culture permeation that shows up so much.

Jesse: Yeah. And what I find interesting- I mean, there's the interesting sort of distinguisher between Spock and other Vulcans, quote unquote other Vulcans, is like the acknowledgement that while he is very cold aloof and logical based, which is sort of the stereotype of autistic people and autistic coding, there's an acknowledgement with his character that like there is emotion under the surface that is actually there. Which can be its own problematic tropes. Sort of like being like, "Oh, there's a normal person, quote unquote normal, there underneath the surface." But it's also sort of- kind of nice to just sort of see a character sort of taken as like, "Oh, there is someone who is like profoundly emotional underneath the surface." So there's both good and bad in that sort of like understanding of his character.

Grace: Yeah, or that there are emotions there, they're just not expressed the same way you would expect to see with most other people.

Jesse: Yeah.

Grace: It still does kind of warm my heart though that we've got this figure who is like that, who is one of the main characters on this incredibly influential show. That's just kind of nice to think of every now and then.

Jesse: I mean, one of the things that I- one of the moments, I think I called it out in my video on Star Trek, but it's a really sort of- I think it's a really great way to understand how the stigma against autistic people gets perpetuated in that they're cold and aloof is there's a scene in Court Martial, I believe is the name of the episode, where Kirk's on trial. And Spock is sort of like looking at it logically and not understanding. And McCoy comes in and starts berating Spock saying like, "Oh, how can you forget your friend? You're just sitting here playing chess, playing a game against the computer." And Spock says like "Well look I'm trying to test the computer right now in order to see if the computer got something wrong in terms of what the evidence is showing against Kirk" and McCoy sort of realized like "Oh, this is him actually like doing something to help Kirk" and sort of not realizing that this was his way of showing care and wanting to do something to help his friend in his own unique way. So I liked that sort of like McCoy's prejudice against Spock is proven wrong in that moment. Which is sort of like what happens with a lot of stigma towards autistic people, where they sort of see where people will come in and be like, "Oh, you're being cold and aloof." When really just autistic people will often just portray their caring in ways that are not seen as quote unquote normal by the larger community.

Claire: Yeah. You see something similar to that in Galileo Seven where like Spock is fully just trying to get to the core of like, "What will help these people?" Like, "What is the most immediately helpful and useful thing that I can do in a command position to get as many people off this planet surface and alive at the same time?" and like, yeah, he seems cold when he says, you know, "We can't bury the dead crew member." Like *laughs*I dunno. I've always watched that episode and been like, "I don't get what everyone's deal is. Spock is right." *all laugh/make noises of agreement* I mean, it's not a great decision to have to make. But between- you know, it's the right one to me. But you know, again, he's just being pleasant or being kind of soft, I guess, is not his priority in that moment because that's not what's important to him. That's not how he thinks he can care for his crew the best.

Grace: And for some of us, that's not our strong point. *all laugh*

Claire: Yeah. His crew actually thinks that he doesn't care at all. And he's, in fact, just sort of like only caring. In his own way.

Jesse: No, and that's actually a great point because one of the things I love about that episode, that I feel like I've mentioned before in other things, but I just think it's so cool. It's like he is called out for being un-empathetic, but actually he's the most empathetic person there. Because there's even a scene where he talks about wanting to try and preserve the lives of the aliens that are attacking them. Like he is so empathetic in that moment that he's trying to care about both his crew and the people that are ostensibly killing them, even though he's not necessarily displaying it in a sort of like "Aw. Let me like, go and like care for you and display it in like the gestures that people are more accustomed to." But he is showing the most empathy out of all of them, to be honest.

Claire: And I have to say McCoy- I like McCoy as a character but-

Grace: We were going to get into this. Absolutely.

Claire: *laughs* He frustrates me a lot.

Grace: He's so frustrating! Yeah!

Claire: The way he behaves towards Spock and the way he talks to and about Spock, it's very much Spock can't win a lot of times. Spock is either too cold, or Spock's not thinking about the right thing at the right time, or he cares too much in one instance or not enough in another. Like, I think it's- is it The Tholian Web, I think. Where Spock's like, "No, I don't care if we're supposed to, you know, flee from danger. I'm not abandoning Kirk." And McCoy yells at him for that. But then you see in things like Galileo Seven where McCoy's like, "Oh, Spock, you're too cold. You need to think more about your crew." And I just feel like Spock can't win when it comes to McCoy. So, damn you McCoy. *laughs*

Grace: Just want them to have that blow up on the bridge in front of everyone of *angrily* "There's just no pleasing you is there doctor?" *all laugh*

Claire: Exactly.

Andi: I think something that kinda comes at play with that dynamic too, is that Spock is very much a character who says exactly what he means and McCoy isn't. McCoy is one of those characters where you have to look at what he's doing and not what he's saying. Because he like is performatively gruff and pretends like he doesn't care all the time. So like, I feel like that would cause a lot of communication problems between them just on that. And like, not even getting into the stressful situations that they find themselves into all the time.

Claire: That's a really good point. I think McCoy probably doesn't- I think he has to remind himself or he forgets, that Spock is not performative the same way that McCoy is. I think from McCoy's perspective he's just looking at life through his own eyes, which- everybody does that. And I think he genuinely forgets at times. Like, the Spock that you see in front of you is exactly what's like- that's what's there. It's not Spock performing Spock-ness *laughs* the way McCoy performs the McCoy country doctor thing.

Grace: Yeah. That's one thing I wanted to bring up. You know, that McCoy absolutely thinks of himself as a completely straightforward to the point guy. But at the same time he has this level of performance he does and is kind of ignoring.

Andi: Well I mean, you know when McCoy is really like showing his love is when he's yelling at you. You know what I mean?

Claire: *laughs* Yeah. Because he cares.

Andi: Oh yeah, exactly. One of my favorite McCoy moments is "Shut up Spock. We're saving you." You know? *all laugh* Where he's basically like, "No, I love you. You're my bro. I'm going to come save you and your dumb ass." *all laugh* But like, the way that comes out is him yelling at Spock.

Grace: Him angrily regrowing a random woman's kidney and some stuff like that.

Andi: Yeah, exactly. *Claire laughs* That's my point. This is exactly my point. He's one of those characters, in that you can't take his tone at face value. You have to see what is he actually doing. And

those characters can be incredibly hard to read if you are a literal person. Who thinks that, like, what you're saying is the same thing as what you're meaning.

Grace: So how do we think this changes up between the different versions of Spock we've seen throughout the Star Trek franchise? Like, we've got Kelvin Spock, we've got original OG Leonard Nimoy Spock. We have Disco Spock now. Do we think that changes very much, or do we think that's one of the main consistencies?

Jesse: I think the one that like interests me the most is Disco Spock, in the showing that like he has those scenes early on in season two of Discovery where he is basically like displaying emotion much more volitively. Like, he has that sort of like knocking over the chess set. But even that kind of to a degree, the way that Ethan Peck performs it, I think is so nuanced. In the sense that like, even that kind of feels performative and perfunctory. That he's like doing it in order to sort of try to portray this inner emotion and turmoil that's going on inside of him. But it's not necessarily something that he wants to do. Like, I watched that scene of him knocking over the chess set, and maybe I'm projecting my own self onto it, but there's many moments in that where like, I will feel anger or upset or frustration, and I don't really know how to display it. So I'll do like sort of an over the top gesture of like knocking over something, or- especially when I was younger. I would do sort of those things just to be like, "This is how I display this right?" This is how I do this. Yeah. That's really interesting.

Grace: [00:23:02] It's always strange when you're going through like an intense emotional thing and you have to explain to someone "You're not seeing how upset this is making me right now. And I need you to acknowledge that this is really really upsetting me."

Jesse: [00:23:13] Yeah. Yeah. It's the same. It's why many people- like, when people see- people who are, you know, autistic sort of display emotions. It's generally really heightened just because we, at least for me is like, we don't know how to display that properly. So like, it may- the emotion that we're feeling may not be equivalent to the way we display the emotion. Cause we don't necessarily know how to equate one to the other and match one to the other in the- exactly the same ways.

Grace: Yeah. You can be like me where you just come off as being super manic to people, because you go from kind of cold and sarcastic to just, *hyper* "I'm so excited!"

Claire: Yeah. I don't have a lot of middle.

Grace: *laughs* Me either.

Claire: Which kind of neither does Spock. I think about like, in Amok Time the one time we see a non sex plants induced Spock smile. *Grace laughs* Although he does have some, like I guess, Pon-Farr hormones going around going on. But still like he- you actually see him smile huge and it's jarring and shocking, but it's also really cool.

Grace: Yeah. He's just so happy to see Kirk's okay.

Claire: Yeah! But just that, on a different character, that would just be a smile. It gets a big smile, but it's not like a bizarre smile. Yeah. But for Spock, it is a bizarre smile.

Grace: It's bizarre, but it's very meaningful in that this is something Spock isn't containing, or will try to, but can't hold onto for a second there. And it's very sweet.

Claire: Yeah.

Andi: Kind of going back to what you're talking about, Jesse, on like, you know, your inner emotions not showing, I'm thinking of another Vulcan, Tuvok who has a really great line where he's like "Do not mistake composure for ease."

Grace: Ooh. Yeah.

Andi: And that's what that makes me think of. Is like, "Don't mistake the fact that I'm calm right now for like- like I'm not comfortable. I just like outwardly calm."

Claire: Yeah. I think a lot of autistic people have learned that if they let themselves show their discomfort, it can come across as unpleasantly jarring for other people around them. Or it can be downright dangerous depending on who they are and where they are, and if they appear to be, you know, someone might think, "Oh, they're being violent." But they're not, they're just, you know, having a meltdown or something. But you have to learn to not just do that at any old time, any old place, or in front of random people.

Andi: Yeah. Kind of plays into something that I think of when all people are showing lots of emotion is there's always the risk of like upsetting the person that you're showing emotion to. And then you're put in the uncomfortable situation of like apologizing for and comforting the other person because you had emotion.

Grace: Oh my gosh! Yes! I never know how to fully explain to neuro-typical people that with a lot of expressing emotion and interacting, there's a heavy level of, for me for it to be natural, a level of monkey see monkey do. In that I'm having to go with what- I'm working sometimes against what feels natural for me. That I'm kind of flying without the right radar of someone trying to do a natural social interaction. So I've been told that sometimes when I'm trying to be genuine, they're like, "Well, that just didn't seem very real to me." It's like, "Yes, because I don't have reactions the same way as you. I'm doing my best here." If we can actually use that as a segue into our next character, someone who does a lot of stuff with trying to learn unlearnable behavior, we have Data. Who's kind of the followup character to Spock, really. Someone who doesn't understand human emotion and is trying to constantly copy what he sees around him and trying to learn emotion basically.

Jesse: Yeah. I think it's so fascinating whenever I watch. Like I in fact- what was the episode I watched last night? It was Eye of the Beholder, which isn't a great episode. But there's a wonderful little scene in that episode where Geordi- they're talking about the one character, the guest character of the week who committed suicide. And Data admits that like, "Oh, I felt something very similar" and Geordi crosses his arms in that moment. And Data does the same in that same moment. He just crosses his arms too, to

match Geordi. And it's just such a like, "Oh, he's- you can tell that he's mimicking the body movements." Cause he thinks that that's how you sort of have this type of conversation. Cause he doesn't really know how to talk about suicide and what it feels like to have those types of feelings and emotions. Even if that's not how he would talk about his own sort of feelings and dealing with suicidal thoughts. So he's sort of like trying to talk about such a- something that is a very hard issue for other people, and not necessarily having the same emotional weight that other people would have about something so hard to talk about. And so trying to mimic what someone else is doing in that moment in order to try to come across as giving the same weight and compassion to something that's really difficult to talk about. I think it was like a very subtle choice for Brent Spiner to do that. To sort of be like, "All right, I'm going to mimic this other person. Cause I don't know the right sensitivity to have in this sort of conversation about suicide."

Claire: I think they do- number one, Data's my boy. *noises of agreement* Like, growing up watching TNG as a little kid, like my parents like literally used Data as a teaching tool *laughs* for me as a child. Like, "Remember when Data did this? Okay. Here's why you should or should not do that. This is why the captain was surprised." I was watching Hero Worship a couple of days ago, which is the episode where the little boy decides he's going to be an Android because he doesn't want to deal with the grief of losing his mother. Data is trying to figure out how best to help this boy. And at one point they're in engineering, they're doing- Data and Geordi are doing work and he just like casually asks Geordi "Hey, did you ever experience severe trauma as a child?" *all laugh*

Grace: You know, just the stuff you go into without a lead.

Claire: Yeah. It's not an appropriate topic of conversation, but it's a complete- to me, a very understandable- he's basically Googling this stuff and I get that. And to Geordi's credit and to the credit of the whole show, the fact that, maybe with the exception of early Pulaski, the only time people are kind of bothered or put off by Data it's some random guest of the week and they're wrong.

Grace: Yeah.

Claire: To Geordi's credit he just doesn't really think twice. He thinks about his answer and he answers Data, but he doesn't say he's bothered by the question. He doesn't try to correct like "Data, you shouldn't ask people that yeah." He understands why Data is asking that question and just doesn't take it personally. Although he would have totally been within his rights to not answer the question if he didn't want- feel comfortable with it. The fact that Data just like casually *laughs* at work asks that question is kind of funny.

Grace: *laughs* "Hey Geordi, did you ever see someone die in front of you as a kid?" *all laugh*

Claire: That is- yeah. I mean, it's like "Okay."

Grace: "Hey. Hey Geordi, did you ever witness a mass catastrophe?" *all laugh*

Claire: Well, that's the thing is Geordi's like, "Yeah. I nearly died in a house fire when I was five." *all laugh* Like, damn dude.

Grace: "Now I gotta get back to work with that on my mind." *all laugh*

Jesse: "I'll just be thinking about this the rest of the day. Thanks Data." But the thing too, that I really always appreciate about all the characters towards Data, is that they always treat his sense of discovery and his sort of explaining himself as, for lack of a better word, as human. They take it as sort of like, "Oh, this is who he is." They never go like, "Oh, well he's the droid. So we can just sort of like discount it", or like take it with less weight or seriousness. I go back to like the Eye of the Beholder moment that I just really really love, cause it's so recently in my brain. That like Data just quick mentions, like, "Yeah, I had very similar-" he's like, "I don't understand why someone would want to kill themselves." and then Geordi explains why that might have happened. Like, "Oh, some- he might've felt something was wrong." And Data's like, "Oh yeah, I had similar thoughts" and Geordi immediately, instead of just being like, "Oh yeah, that's interesting. Whatever." And just sort of like discounting his saying this just like, "Oh, that's just something that an Android would say" he turns and he stops what he's doing. And he turns to looks at Data and says, "Oh really?" And he just gives the weight and seriousness to that revelation from Data. Even if Data himself doesn't give that weight to it. And I just- and that continually happens throughout the show. Like Picard and all of these other characters will constantly like, when Data makes mention of these things, that for other people would be much more profound than it would necessarily be for Data, they treat it with the weight that it deserves. Even if Data himself may not understand it.

Claire: Data is the one who always tells other people that he doesn't have emotion. Other people don't tell Data that he doesn't have emotion.

Grace: Except for Pulaski, and she's being a jerk. Pulaski, what is your deal?

Claire: But Data's always the one who's like excusing himself as you know, "I'm sorry, I can't experience fear" or "Sorry Guinan, I can't tell you if this drink tastes good or not, but I can tell you that the fructose content is high." *Grace laughs* You know, he's always discounting himself. Also, I am firmly of the camp that Data absolutely does have emotions. He may not have emotions the same way that an organic being would, but I mean, you know, he's got that line "My neural pathways have grown accustomed to your input." That is so meaningful!

Grace: It's so sweet!

Claire: Yeah, it sounds kind of funny. But I mean, he totally has emotions. And I think the fact that once he gets his emotion chip, which I have like a laundry list of problems with that. But anyway, the fact that he really becomes a different character, as he gets the emotion chip. But it doesn't feel like, to me, the line is not emotion-less and emotion-full. It's just like different? I don't know. Like, what I'm saying is Data has emotions. Pre emotion chip.

Grace: Let's talk about that emotion chip for a minute, though. Because I know someone put it down in the notes, wanting to talk about that as a metaphor for the quote unquote "cure" for autism. Let's talk about that and how it's just kind of, after seasons of Data learning and slowly making progress on emotion, then they're suddenly like, "Oh, there's an on/off switch." What? How bizarre that is of an idea.

Claire: Yeah. I doubt that they intentionally had that as like, as a deliberate metaphor. Realistically, I think they probably were just like, "What else can we do with this character after seven seasons?"

Grace: *laughs* We need Brent to be funny for this movie. What do we do?"

Claire: Yeah. And like, the fact that when we do you see Brent emote, he's usually either Lore or he's Data being like his body taken over by a, you know, crazy old scientist or whatever. So it's- number one, it's already- I'm kind of already uncomfortable seeing a Data looking character emote. Cause usually it's a bad thing. *laughs*

Grace: That usually means somethings gone horribly wrong.

Claire: Yeah. So it's already kind of weird to me. But I think the fact that after Generations like, starting with First Contact and on, the fact that they really pulled back on how emotional Data was shows that I think they recognize that like taking autism entirely out of the conversation, just from a purely a character perspective, they kind of like- they changed the core fundamental like, thing that made Data.

Grace: Yes.

Claire: Then they were like, "Oh crap. Well, that-"

Grace: "Oh, people didn't like this? *Claire laughs* What?"

Claire: Like, "Maybe we should change that."

Jesse: Yeah.

Claire: "Change it back as much as we can."

Jesse: And it perpetuates this idea that there's like a quote unquote "normal person" underneath all of this stuff. That is a constant thing that you see with with autism. Like, "Oh, if you could just cure autism" or whatever else, instead of just taking the person as who they are in the totality of who they are, is really problematic. I will say, I do have two not defenses of the emotion chip, but two sort of moments with the emotion chip that I liked overall. I think it's a really bad idea, but there's two moments that I like. One is in Generations where he gets overwhelmed by his new emotions. Like, he feels fear. I actually really really liked that moment. Cause it talks about like when autistic people do feel sort of overwhelmed by an emotion they sometimes get paralyzed by that. And can't really react in any way cause they're just so overwhelmed by it. So I thought that that scene was, I think, portrayed- like that scene is very horrific. And I think sometimes accurately represents what that feels like, but I actually kind of really appreciate that scene. And then the other one too, sort of as a side trip, is I actually really liked where the emotion chip first shows up way, way, way back in TNG with Lore and Data. Because Lore wants the emotion chip, because he's seen as less than Data by his creator. And that sort of goes to this idea of like, "Oh, You know, autistic people-" cause Lore is kind of similar in that way. He just doesn't portray the quote unquote "good" version of autistic traits that his creator would want. And sort of the devaluation by parents and caregivers of autistic people for certain specific autistic traits.

Grace: What is there to say really about this character, when we're talking about this character and this specific set of traits, and there is a good version that is working with everyone and that is like inhumanly patient. And then there is what is seen as a bad one that's, you know, nasty and rude and bitchy to everyone. I feel like there's something further to dig into there.

Claire: Yeah. I mean, Data is not- he's not a problem child. He would be the good kid in the classroom who gets his homework done. And you know, maybe it has to sit like at a different table because maybe he's gonna pepper the other kids with, you know, naive gentle questions. But he's not going to hit the kid next to him.

Grace: As opposed to the kid who like intensely wants and needs answers and doesn't behave in the way that the teacher feels like they can control.

Claire: Right. Yeah.

Grace: Definitely some further *Claire laughs* analogy to be dug into there. But if we could- moving forward, what do we think about the fact that Data while presenting as an adult and while, you know, thinking mostly as an adult is treated as being very childlike. Which is something that, I don't know about you guys's experience, but I've had a lot of experience with people who, after finding out that I am on the autism spectrum, will kind of infantilize me and talk down to me a little bit. And that that's just a general sort of way that we see people approaching talking to autistic people in terms of, you know, kind of "child-ing" them.

Claire: Yeah. I think Data's wonder and sort of awe at the things around him, even really mundane things, I think it's really unfortunate that just in general, as a society, we see that as something that should be left in childhood.

Grace: Yeah!

Claire: Like, what's wrong with being awestruck by something as an adult? That- nothing. But because we apparently have decided that, you know, maybe internally you might be really awestruck by something, but you're not supposed to express it or express it as enthusiastically. I guess?

Grace: "Where's your veneer of cynicism? You're doing it wrong."

Claire: Yeah, exactly! Or you're just like, "You should be bored by this by now." Like, or "It's just one of these, like, why are you so excited by this?" Like, "I don't know. Cuz it's neat?"

Grace: "Hey. Hey, you. Stop taking wonder in everyday life, *Claire laughs* its freaking us out!"

Claire: What's wrong with that? But, you know, like it's okay to think about being an astronaut if you're a kid, but if you're an adult and you think about being an astronaut, unless you actually are an astronaut, that's wierd. So I think the fact that Data takes very open and unapologetic awe in things, encourages that- he's not deliberately encouraging it, but I think it is sort of he codes his himself, or it gets coded, as sort of childlike a little bit.

Andi: I think There's also an element of people are trying to be supportive or understanding, and it actually like walks the line or crosses the line into being condescending. So if you ask them like, "Okay, what was your intent in saying this or doing this?" and they thought about it, they would say, "Well, I was just trying to show empathy and show that I support you." But then the way that you're perceiving it or the way that it's coming off is they don't think you're capable. And I think that that can be a really common misunderstanding. That's really frustrating for a lot of people where it's like, No, actually what you're doing is you're othering me."

Grace: Yeah. The best part is when people think you can't tell the difference between them being empathetic and them very clearly being condescending to you.

Claire: Yeah, definitely.

Grace: Also an experience I have had. *Claire laughs* I'm not bitter.

Jesse: No, I have definitely had the same. I've had very similar experiences.

Grace: Yes. Have you ever had it happen where, and this is me going on a tangent here, but have you ever had it happen where someone realizes within a group of people, either through you telling them or them figuring out that you are on the autism spectrum, so they decide you're the child of the group? Because I've had that happen also.

Jesse: *all make empathetic noises* Oh gosh.

Claire: I have this thing, since we're going on this tangent I'm going to go with you.

Grace: Follow me on this journey.

Andi: *laughs* Walk the path.

Claire: I attract- it tends to be- happen at work, but I attract friends who are women who are about 10 years older than me and have young children.

Grace: My gosh.

Claire: And they definitely see me as kind of on par with their kids. Not that they actually think I'm 12. But it's very much this like, "Oh, you need some help figuring out how to dress better." *laughs*

Grace: *condescending voice* "Hey there slugger, do you need a hand?"

Claire: It is a little bit like- yeah. They also tend to- I'm 36. They almost always think I'm like a couple of years out of college. It's just weird. And I'm like generally 10 years younger than the women who do this. And I know they mean well. It's not- they don't cross the line into being actually rude, but it's like, "I am getting these vibes and I'm aware of them and I know what you're doing." And it's, you know, it's just odd.

Grace: I- it's unfortunate that as far as I know, there's no polite way to say "I see what you're doing here. Dial it back. *Claire laughs* Dial it the hell back."

Claire: Yeah. Because honestly, what would I really be able to tell them? Like, "I take issue with how friendly you are." Like, that's not a thing you can- *Andi laughs* I mean it doesn't- there's no way to express it that doesn't actually just sort of make me look bad or make them feel bad. And I don't want them to feel bad for liking me enough to be friends with me. It's just, I don't know. There's like, it's like a flavor. It's just not right.

Jesse: It's so interesting that you bring that up for two reasons. Because one, I have so experienced that and I've never actually thought about it. But like in almost every workplace that I'm in, I always end up being like the "youngest person in the group", quote unquote, or the youngest seeming person in the group because of that dynamic that, even if it's unintentional, but it's also- to bring it back to our conversation at hand. I think that there's like interesting shades of that dynamic in both two other autistically coded characters with both Tilly and Seven of Nine.

Grace: *excited* Oh excellent.

Jesse: Cause they do have- like Seven of Nine is treated like a child by captain Janeway, and same thing with Tilly with Burnham and really all of the crew. Now, they're probably a little bit more justified given the specific situations with both Tilly and Seven, but that dynamic is definitely present.

Grace: Absolutely.

Claire: Yeah. I feel like Seven is definitely- she's the like rebellious 15 year old. That's where she fits. Yeah.

Grace: Let's talk about Seven then. I appreciate the fact that Jeri Ryan, the actress who plays Seven, has really kind of glommed onto this idea that autistic people see Seven as a character they identify with. I really appreciate that she's supported and leaned into that. And especially considering the fact that we see Seven as a character evolve. We don't see her become quote unquote "fixed." We see her learn and adapt. Which I really appreciate.

Jesse: I agree. I adore listening to interviews with Jeri about her appearance in Star Trek: Picard, because she displays like that exact sort of feeling. Like, she said she was having so such a hard time finding Seven of Nine's voice in the way that the dialogue was written for her in Picard. And the way that she said she eventually figured out was that she's just like, "Oh, this is Seven portraying what she feels she needs to portray in this world." but it's just sort of like a little bit of performance on her part to- this character's part, not on Jeri Ryan's part, to sort of display her interactions with this world. Which is exactly what we were talking about before, of like sort of play acting what you think the emotions are in the moment, because that's what other people expect of you in that scene. And I just- I'm so glad that Jeri glommed onto that as a performance idea.

Grace: Yeah, we've got, "This is Jeri as Seven as how she thinks natural human interaction goes." Which is great. Cause it's like she's the same person, she's just learned how to say her lines more clearly. *Andi laughs*

Jesse: And yeah- I mean, going back to the dynamic we were talking about earlier, I think it's interesting that like Janeway takes on the quote unquote "project" of teaching Seven to be more human. I mean, obviously there's a sense of responsibility because there is sort of Janeways, you know, it's because of Janeway that Seven of Nine is there. But there is this interesting thing sort of like matriarchal figure coming in and trying to like teach someone how to be more human and show them how to be more human in an interesting way.

Grace: Definitely. True.

Claire: I do think it's interesting how Seven, she does not get the benefit of the- I don't know. I guess support that Data does. Like thinking about Seven's interactions with B'Ellana. B'Ellana does not like Seven *laughs* and that's okay. Not everyone has to like everyone. But there's like zero attempts at empathy towards Seven. And I- like, I get that Seven herself is very prickly too. I mean, honestly, B'Ellana and Seven are really similar in a lot of ways and that's probably why they got on each other's nerves. So I understand that. But there is very little- like maybe except for the Doctor and Naomi Wildman. The fact that Seven's like best friend is an eight year old girl is interesting. Other than the Doctor really, people either are interested in working with Seven because she's hot.

Grace: Yeah. That's a whole level of "What?"

Claire: Yeah. Which I mean, she is. But I know-

Grace: But Data didn't have to deal with being sexualized straight out the gate the way Seven did.

Claire: Yeah. Oh, I have issues with the one episode where Data is overtly sexualized anyway.

Grace: Yeah.

Claire: *laughs* That's like a whole other topic. Yeah. So people either interact with Seven because she's hot or because she, you know, a brainiac. Like she's useful as a, basically, a walking diagnostic tool. And even then, people like B'ellana don't really want to have to work with her. But they just, you know, grin and bear it because Seven is good at her job.

Jesse: Yeah. And like, the prejudice that comes with a sort of having autistic people in professional situations. In any situation, too. Yeah. The other thing with Seven that I find- that I see myself so much in, in her character that I think is kind of unique to her, is social anxiety but also kind of being an extrovert as well. Because Seven puts off this veneer of being very isolationist and wants to sort of be away from everybody. But there's that wonderful episode, One, that I really really liked. There's some problems with the episode overall, but I think- I really like the idea of like, she's isolated and alone, and that causes her intense anxiety to the point of like, she has a breakdown at the end of that episode. Kind of coming out of like, she's never used to being alone, having been in the collective for so long. And yet when she is

in social situations she's very like, hesitant to go near people. And I feel that so much too, because I am an extrovert. Like I get a lot of energy from being around people and being social. But also being in social situations causes me intense anxiety. Cause I always feel like I have to overthink what I have to do to be in those situations.

Claire: Yeah.

Grace: It is a very real, and very uncomfortable phenomena. I do- I do just so much like the fact that we get to see Seven pre and post sort of growth. And one of the things I appreciate in contrast about a character like Tilly's arc, is that we're watching her in the process of that sort of learning arc. And that's one of the things I really appreciate about her as a character. In learning and adjust- adapting, and becoming the person she wants

Claire: Yeah, definitely. One of the things I really like about Tilly, and this is going to sound backwards, is the fact that I don't actually see myself really in her much at all. And I like that because it means that Star Trek is exploring beyond the Spock and Data sort of version of an autistic character. Because it is a spectrum and autistic people are different from one another.

Grace: It's almost like there isn't one universal mold!

Claire: Yeah, exactly. *laughs* Yeah. And I know a lot of viewers are saying that they see themselves in Tilly, and maybe they didn't- don't see themselves as strongly in Data or Spock or some of the other kind of previous characters. I think it's really- it's cool. It's good to have broader representation.

Grace: Especially, in terms of broader representation, through women characters. Because we had such a stagnant idea of what needed to be a priority for women characters for such a long time.

Claire: Yeah, absolutely.

Andi: I also find it interesting that the dynamic of Burnham and Tilly in the first season of Discovery, because Burnham is supposedly Vulcan, and it's actually Tilly that's teaching her emotion. And I find that to be an interesting dynamic. And I find them interesting anyway, because we don't have very many female friendships that are explored on Star Trek. It's mostly male friendships that are explored on Star Trek. So I found them to be cool to watch and an interesting dynamic that I hadn't quite seen before on Star Trek.

Claire: I appreciated that the moment of them sort of figuring each other out and like, "I don't know if I really want to room with this person." I liked the fact that that moment was very short. It got over it really quickly and it just sort of was like, "Or we could just be friends. Cool. Let's do that."

Grace: Great. They're not going to try and play up this odd couple situation in a way that pits them against each other.

Jesse: Yeah.

Claire: Exactly. It's not adversarial. It's like, "We're in the situation, and ho actually you're pretty cool. And I'm pretty cool too. All right."

Grace: *singing* "We're aaaall in thiiiiis together." *Claire laughs*

Jesse: They subtly reinforced that, because I even see some people being like "Burnham still rooms with Tilly even after she's promoted to first officer? Or science officer?" Or whatever point she becomes that. And I'm like, "I love that." I love that they choose to be roommates still when clearly- I'm sure Burnham could have requested her own solo quarters at that point. I think that's really really cool that they just like being roommates.

Claire: Yeah.

Grace: Their's is also a friendship based in grounding each other in a way, I think. And that's really cool.

Andi: Yeah. And it kind of goes back to what we were talking about about like the power dynamics of sometimes one character being, you know, childlike or infantilized. In this case, Burnham is a mentor to Tilly, but they're still equals and they're still learning from each other. Their dynamic is balanced.

Grace: They're definitely on equal footing.

Andi: Exactly. So it's not a maternal vibe from Burnham at all. It's very much, "We are both professional women on this ship and I can help you with your dreams on becoming a part of command. And you can push me into talking to the snack." *all laugh* My favorite Discovery episode is Magic to Make the Sanest Man go Mad. And it's basically one of the huge reasons is because of the two relationships in that episode that get highlighted, which is Burnham and Tilly, and then also Burnham and Stamets, who come to an understanding in that episode that they had not come to before.

Grace: Yeah. And also we just get some great character moments in that episode.

Andi: Yeah. To me, that's the closest thing we get to a standalone episode in Discovery and I missed them.

Grace: It's true, yeah.

Claire: Yeah. Yeah. I agree.

Grace: It's kind of nonstop action otherwise. So, if you had a final character- let's go around the group. If you have a final character you want to address or talk about who would that character be? And let's start with you, Claire.

Claire: I would like to maybe talk about Tam Elbrun really quickly.

Grace: Let's do it.

Claire: He is the Betazoid who merges with Gomtuu, and goes off and lives with him in Tin Man. I don't know that I would say that Tam Elbrun is necessarily coded as autistic, but he's definitely neurodivergent.

And probably one of the few times that we see Star Trek talking about kind of neurological differences, I guess. What I think is fascinating about him is actually his dynamic with Data and the fact that the way Tam's set up, he basically is just like extremely telepathic, so he is bombarded by everybody's mind constantly. So it's very distracting. It's, you know, maybe a good sort of metaphor for sensory issues.

Grace: Oh, absolutely.

Claire: Yeah, but the one person that he can't actually get anything from is Data. And Tam very easily could have written Data off as less than- I'll say human or less than alive. But he doesn't at all. In fact, he sees Data as his equal and as exciting and refreshingly different, and in a way that is not fetishized, but he's just excited about it. And Data sort of does his Data thing, and tries to downplay his own status as a living being and all this stuff. And Tam is like, "No, I'm not having any of that. Like you paint, and you've set up your quarters to be special for you and sort of work for the way you work. And it's really amazing that you have this space for yourself and that you like live a whole complete life" and I'm kind of making it sound a little bit condescending. And- but that's not at all how Tam Elbrun makes it sound. But I just think they have a really cool dynamic together. And neither of them really- like, both of them seem to appreciate in the other things that other people find frustrating or sad, or like neither of them see each other as deficient or like a case to be pitied. They see each other as just like different, and complete, and good. I also just want to point out one thing really quick: T'Pol has a heightened sense of smell. I guess all Vulcans do, but we don't really hear about it until T'Pol. So there. Sensory differences.

Grace: Yes. Jesse, do you have a character you'd like to touch on?

Jesse: Yeah, just briefly. I think one interesting one that kind of gets overlooked is Bashir and the idea of sort of the cure for autism in his sort of resentment of that. We could also talk about the augments too, but the augments are much more explicitly meant to be sort of neurodivergent representations. But there's the wonderful scene in the episode where we learned that Bashir is genetically enhanced, and how Bashir sort of feels that the person that he was was killed by his parents. That he- they never actually got to know who that Bashir was because they didn't appreciate him for him. And went about trying to cure his quote unquote "deficiencies." The way it sounds, to be very honest I mean, we can't really know for sure, but it sounds as if like the Bashir that existed before the genic enhancements was autistic and his parents found that too overwhelming to deal with and decided to try and cure him. Now, obviously there's like problems with like the idea that there is a cure for autism *laughs* in the Star Trek world. So that is itself problematic. But Bashir's reaction to it and resentment towards his parents for that I think is very very understandable and very very real. And I think that that's super interesting. So, I just find Bashir to be such an interesting discussion because there's a lot of problems with that portrayal, but also a lot of like interesting dynamics that I think read as very true as well.

Grace: The dynamic with his parents after that whole conversation also is very interesting when you compare it to the dynamic that, at least I've encountered, in families where someone didn't get an autism diagnosis until they were an adult or were like denied treatment or consultation as a kid because their parents were just kind of in denial about it and how there is a really difficult level of resentment to let go of there. What about you, Andi? Do you have anyone you'd like to touch on?

Andi: Yeah. I'd like to just briefly bring up Barclay, and-

Grace: Yeeeah. *laughs*

Andi: We've done a whole episode on Barclay. So if people want to hear us take a deeper dive into his character, we have one. But in general, I feel like he has become one of the characters people think of, specifically, when it comes to anxiety. And his anxiety to me is super relatable. He has a moment where he's describing his social anxiety, which is very much just, mood. Like, *laughter/sounds of agreement* you know?

Claire: Yeah.

Grace: Big Barclay mood.

Andi: Yeah, exactly. So it's like, there are times where I have issues with his writing and his portrayal, but occasionally it's just like, "Oh, yeah. That's that. I have felt that. I relate so hard to this." And I relate so hard to that discomfort and that feeling of you actually are annoying everybody. And they actually do don't like you, and that like fear. And how sometimes people will act like it's irrational, but it's not. Because if Picard can call someone Broccoli, *Claire laughs* you know? And I also found his- especially his first episode very interesting. Because he actually- that episode actually sets us up to root for him and against the main group, which doesn't happen very often.

Claire: Yeah. And it's fascinating that it's specifically Geordi, who we've seen be a really good friend to somebody like Data, just- like he really craps the bed honestly, with Barclay.

Grace: Somebody just flipped his judgmental switch.

Claire: Yeah!

Grace: Like, what the hell?

Claire: He's unpleasant. And Guinan is absolutely right. She's like, "If you thought nobody liked being around you, you probably- like, it would affect the way you acted"

Grace: And it's true!

Claire: Yeah. Geordi, you got to own this. Like this- some of this is on you. Yeah.

Andi: This is bad leadership. This is bad leadership all the way up to Picard. Which we really do not see very often.

Claire: Yeah.

Grace: I've just got so many feelings about Barclay. I really do.

Claire: I know. I do too.

Andi: We'll have to do a Barclay part two.

Grace: *laughs* I know. "The Barclay-ening"

Andi: Basically all of our episodes we end and we're like, "Okay. Well, we didn't get to everything. So I guess we'll have to have a part two." *all laugh*

Grace: Yeah. I have one that I want to bring up really quickly, and that is Phlox, for two very specific reasons. One is just because someone has learned to make you comfortable with them doesn't mean that they are always comfortable with you. It's it's a two-way street. And just because someone is smiling doesn't mean they are completely comfortable. And don't mistake being genial for being completely and totally a thousand percent cool with the situation that you are in. And also, because I find that neuro-typical people get so weird when you call them out on weird neuro-typical stuff *Claire laughs* the way Phlox does with "You humans are so weird!" *Andi laughs*

Claire: They haven't thought about it. And we have only thought about it. *all laugh*

Grace: It's like, "So wait wait wait, someone asks how you're doing and you just say fine, no matter what? Even if you're having a completely crap day? That's so weird, dude. That's so passive aggressive."

Claire: It's like, if you don't care, then you also shouldn't care if I don't ask how you're doing. But you care a lot if I don't ask how you're doing. No, you don't actually want to tell me and I'm not supposed to actually want to know.

Grace: Yeah. "Okay. Yeah, sure. Whatever. *laughs* Look at these weirdos." But yeah, that's a big part of my experience there too. Well, I think that that's about all the time we have for this week. Again, we had many more characters we'd like to touch on. We didn't intentionally leave them off the list.

Andi: Oh no, we did. We specifically got together, all four of us, and we thought that person in our audience, we really want to make that person specifically mad. So we're going to ignore their favorite character.

Grace: You're right. It was a conspiracy *Andi laughs* all along just to annoy you specifically. But that's the time we've got for the time being as it t'were. So Jesse, where can people hear more from you on the internet?

Jesse: Well, if you want to hear more from me, which heaven knows why you would, but if you do, I have a YouTube channel called, like I said earlier, JesseGender. You can find that by searching on the YouTube's. And then I also have my own podcast where I'm doing a Farscape rewatch with Council of Geeks, who was another LGBTQ youtuber, and I've never seen Farscape before. So it's me watching it for the very first time. And that podcast called "What the Frell" so, and you can also find me on all the social medias @Jessiegender.

Grace: Claire, where can people find you?

Claire: I'm on Twitter. You can find me @Isolinearchick, that's C H I C K, not C H I P. And that's it.

Grace: And what about you Andi?

Andi: Easiest place to find me is on Twitter @firsttimetrek.

Grace: And I'm Grace. And you can find me on Twitter @bonecrusherjenk, or at the party in the corner pretending to be interested in a potted plant. *Claire laughs*

Andi: Or the dog or the cat.

Grace: Or, you know, just rifling through the piles of coats, looking for loose change. *Claire laughs* Let's be real, the bus ain't gonna pay for itself. To learn more about our show or to contact us visit women@warp.com or find us on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram @womenatwarp. You can also email us at crew@womenatwarp.com. And for more from Roddenberry podcasts, visit podcasts.rodnenberry.com. Thanks so much for joining us.

Voiceover: this is a Roddenberry podcast for more great podcasts. Visit podcasts.rodnenberry.com.