

## Women at Warp Episode 230: Trek References in Other Media

[Women at Warp theme]

**Andi:** Hi, and welcome to Women at Warp: A Star Trek Podcast. Join us on our continuing mission to explore intersectional diversity and infinite combinations. My name is Andi and thanks for tuning in. With me today is Kennedy.

**Kennedy:** Hello.

**Andi:** Hello.

**Kennedy:** [unintelligible [00:00:31]

[laughter]

**Andi:** Before we get into our main topic, we have a little bit of housekeeping to do first. Our show is made possible by our patrons on Patreon. If you'd like to become a patron, you can do so for as little as a dollar per month and get awesome rewards, from thanks on social media up to silly watch-along commentaries. Visit [www.patreon.com/womenatwarp](http://www.patreon.com/womenatwarp).

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Okay, today's topic, I think is really fun and I'm hoping you all have fun with it. It's been in my mind for a long time actually, and it's Trek references in other media. So, like our favorite instances of seeing a Trek actor pop up, our favorite instances of references to something from *Star Trek*, all those sorts of things. And then just overall, maybe a general conversation about the impact *Star Trek* has had on the wider media landscape because when you have a show that has been going for-- how many years now? 55? I don't even know.

**Kennedy:** Older than me. Let's say that.

[laughter]

**Kennedy:** This is a generational fan base.

**Andi:** Yes. And just so wide ranging and for so many different generations, obviously that's going to filter out and have impact on the wider media universe. The reference that made me think of doing this topic is the *Star Trek* reference in *Zodiac*, which really made me laugh because it's just kind of like in there for no reason, just because David Fincher is a big nerd and a big Trekkie, and that made me laugh because there's so many examples of this throughout media, and I thought, "Wow, I bet other people have their favorites, I would like to talk about that." And so, Kennedy showed up, and here we are. Huzzah.

**Kennedy:** Huzzah.

**Andi:** Huzzah. So, I figured what we could do is start with-- we'll go back and forth and just kind of talk through some of our favorites just for fun, and then we can talk a little bit more about the overall impact that *Star Trek* has had on media. So, I'm going to kick things off and apologies for folks that don't always know all of these references, but just take it as a sign that maybe you need to explore some of these other shows that we're going to talk about, other shows and other movies and songs and stuff.

So, my first one is not really a reference, a single reference, although there are a lot of them. It's the fact that Dean Winchester from *Supernatural* is a big, huge Trekkie, which is really funny to me and got me thinking about what does it say about a character, like what is the shortcut trope-y thing about making your character a Trekkie?

**Kennedy:** They like space communism.

**Andi:** They like space communism? I love that.

**Kennedy:** [laughs]

**Andi:** In the case of Dean Winchester, the reason I think this is so interesting is because for those of you who have blessedly not watched *Supernatural*--

**Kennedy:** Like me. [laughs]

**Andi:** Look, I love *Supernatural*, I'm not going to pretend. It will torture you, but some of the seasons are good. And Dean Winchester is my fav, as anyone who follows my Twitter knows.

**Kennedy:** That's now-- just for my own clarity, that actors, what's his name?

**Andi:** Jensen Ackles.

**Kennedy:** Oh, I know him from *The Boys*.

**Andi:** *Boys*. And he's amazing in the *Boys*. And Eric Kripke, who is the creator of *Supernatural*, is the showrunner and creator of *The Boys*.

**Kennedy:** Gotcha.

**Andi:** So, the second Jensen Ackles *Supernatural* ended, Kripke was like, "Hey, yoink. I'm going to take my favorite leading guy from my other show that I started," and then left and watched in horror as it descended into a hellscape of terrible.

**Kennedy:** Madness.

**Andi:** But we're not here to talk about *Supernatural* so much, although I could definitely do that for many, many hours. I have several PowerPoints.

**Kennedy:** Gotcha.

**Andi:** But the thing about Dean Winchester is he is very much-- and for those who don't know the basic plot of *Supernatural*, it's two hot brothers going across the country in their cool car fighting monsters. And it's about a lot more than that but at the heart of the show, it's about these two brothers, and Dean Winchester plays the eldest brother. And he is very much, especially in the beginning of the show, a gruff, macho, hypermasculine stereotype almost. And he's very much like, "Oh, you're a nerd." "Oh, you're a girl." Very performative with his masculinity which, as you watch the show, you realize why he is like that. And going underneath, why he is like that is super fascinating. And so, one of the things that makes me laugh about Dean being a Trekkie is you would not expect that. And the more you get to know him as a character, the more you're like, "Oh, yes, Dean is absolutely a Trekkie."

He loves sci-fi, he loves TV. And he was basically raised by television. So, he spent all these formative years watching TV, Scooby Doo. Basically raised Dean Winchester. And the

number of times in the middle of a really hardcore plot involving demons, he'll be like, "Let's *Star Trek* for this." Meaning he's going to go time travel to get something at a time when it didn't exist in the present. He's going to go back in the past and get it there. At one point, he really wants to go see the *Star Trek* Experience in Vegas. Like, this is how much of a Trekkie he is.

And also, he really identifies with Kirk, which makes sense because they are similar character archetypes. And honestly, I think this is one reason why I think he's such a good example of this, is because I feel like those character archetypes have sort of expanded throughout the media landscape. So, like a Kirk archetype, a Spock archetype, people know what that means, even if they haven't watched the original series.

**Kennedy:** That's true. Interesting. Andi, that was impressive, I have to say. I'm sitting here like, "What is happening? Andy knows so very much about this," and I'm just so delighted to hear [both chuckle] your joy in this. It's just very pure. I don't know if you all can hear it coming through, but I certainly could. So, I genuinely love this for you.

**Andi:** I'm glad because I'm sitting here, I'm like, "Oh, God, stop talking about Dean Winchester." Although the whole Kirk-Spock archetype thing is funny because his main love interest in that show is basically a Spock archetype. And so, they have the Kirk-Spock thing going on, which I'm not going to get too far into because this is about *Star Trek*, not *Supernatural*, but it really does show kind of like how-- especially in genre shows, this kind of love of big formative sci-fi genre shows like *Star Trek*, like *Doctor Who*, they have influenced a new generation of creators more than once. And you can just kind of see it trickle through the atmosphere, if that makes sense.

**Kennedy:** For sure.

**Andi:** Do we want to take a complete 180 and go for your favorite?

**Kennedy:** [chuckles] Alternate? We can alternate because it looks like we have the same amount of favorites here.

**Andi:** Otherwise, I'm going to spend 20 more minutes talking about Dean Winchester. So, we've really got to change the subject, for everyone's sake.

[laughter]

**Kennedy:** [laughs] Oh, my God, I love this for you.

**Andi:** I just like that you're backing me up here and making it seem like I'm not just rambling about an entire [crosstalk] show.

**Kennedy:** No, you're not crazy, because I have a deep cut in my selection here that most folks probably know nothing about. So, it's going to be my turn in moments.

**Andi:** I can't wait. I'm very excited.

**Kennedy:** So, I'm not even worried about it. Before we get to that deep cut, I'm going to mention my first real time witnessing of a *Star Trek* reference in a completely different type of show. It was Season 1, Episode 2 of, wait for it, *In Living Color*, a sketch entitled *Wrath of Farrakhan*. If you have not seen this, pause this, run to YouTube, watch for the most glorious five minutes of your life, and then come back. Okay, ready, break. This episode-- or rather, this sketch, is poignant for me as a black American for a number of reasons, not only was *In Living Color* groundbreaking in its time for being a predominantly black casted, directed,

written show on primetime television, but also that in the second episode of the very first season, they've gone on to have multiple seasons after this, they make a *Star Trek* reference.

So, kind of what you were saying, Andi. If you're a Trek fan and you're creating your own content, if you're a creative in any way, it's going to weasel its way in some way [crosstalk] out. And I don't know who was actually responsible for writing this episode, but it really gave Jim Carrey an opportunity at that point to shine. Might have been one of his earliest moments where he gets to play this hyperexaggerated version of Kirk to kind of piggy-- like you said, complete 180, and what we were talking about. [mimics Jim Carrey voice] It's very over the top and rubbery in the same way that we know Jim Carrey to be.

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** And it's such a strong caricature of Shatner's, sometimes very amazing in depth, like profound performances that if you're not a Trekker, this is goofy, right?

**Andi:** Mm-hmm.

**Kennedy:** But if you are a Trekker, this is profound. Like, this is transcendent to be-- because first of all, if you're a person watching *In Living Color* in the 90s, in that moment, you're 9 times out of 10 going to be in a marginalized community. You're either Puerto Rican from the Bronx and you're watching this, or you're a black person from wherever watching this, because it was really all we had back then. So, you're already in an underrepresented intersection. Then, you smash a niche sci-fi reference like this on top of it, and it's like, what, mind blown. I was maybe, I don't know, seven, maybe like eight or years old when this came out, and my mind was friggin' blown.

Now, there's other elements to this sketch that if you're not within a certain intersection, you might not be able to relate to but it's still funny. There's two moments when, gosh, I don't want to give away the whole sketch, but, well, you've already paused it and have watched it and come back, so it's not a spoiler. [laughs]

**Andi:** They listened to you, and they were like, "Kennedy has given me homework. I'm going to go do that homework right now."

**Kennedy:** Yeah. So, if you haven't watched it, spoiler alert, go do your homework, then come back.

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** And basically, it's a Kirk on the bridge going through some things, and they get intruders, and it's Minister Farrakhan and two of his-- I don't know, I don't want to say henchmen, because that's disrespectful, but attendants, let's say [Andi laughs] step on the bridge, and he's there to criticize literally everything. And he points out how Uhura is this Nubian queen, and all we see is the back of her wig. And I was just, "Oh, wait a minute." As a child, I remember saying, "Now, wait a minute, we see her back because she's at work. She is a communications engineer on a starship. You are not going to degrade what she does or reduce what she does."

**Andi:** Mm-hmm.

**Kennedy:** Then there's like a Sulu archetype that's super hyper sexualized and not at all, I would say, an accurate representation or even caricature of Sulu that we know and love. But just the critique of how Asian men are depicted in media. So, it did kind of represent it for

another group as well, their woes in media representation. So, is it like Sulu? No. But does it address a very understated yet rampant problem in representation in media for Asian communities? Yes. The thing that gets me is, we have another kind of moment of Carrey being this incredible-- Oh. This is the Kirk I hear in my mind when I think [crosstalk] [Andi laughing] when I'm watching *TOS* or one of the original series films and Shatner is talking at me, all I hear is--

[laughter]

**Kennedy:** It's too late. I can't unhear it. But the third most powerful point for me in this sketch is they get to Spock, who is David Alan Grier, he's essentially in whiteface. They don't have him in literal white makeup, but his skin is lightened, and he's the best hands-on out of all of them in terms of mimicking the source material. And it was Kirk that was like, [in Carrey's voice] "Spock, please, you're my friend. Please help me regain control of what's going on."

[laughter]

**Andi:** Your imitation of Jim Carrey imitating Kirk is really funny. [laughs]

**Kennedy:** Oh, man. It's so-- Oh, it's just--

**Andi:** The layers of imitation at this point, you're not imitating Shatner, you're imitating Jim Carrey imitating Shatner. Amazing.

**Kennedy:** "Oh, God. Well, Spock goes well, logically speaking, I am the most powerful and the most intelligent on this bridge, and yet I am second in command." And Uhura was like, "Mm-hmm. [crosstalk] -sent me." She said, "Mm-hmm." She was just so like-- [laughs]

**Andi:** That's really funny. And I think it's really interesting. There have been sketches on *Star Trek* before, and I know I've seen it, but I don't really remember it. I know Shatner got in trouble with the Trekkies for a sketch that he did on *SNL*, but I think it's interesting that, as you said, it's like right at the beginning of this show, and having such a deep cut sci-fi reference is an interesting way to kick off your show and kind of show that this was not going to be your typical sketch show.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, for sure. And also, at the same time, it was a masterclass in sketch writing. The joke was made three times. Boom, boom, boom. "Here's three holes in why this ship should not be run this way." So, Kirk runs off, and it's spectacular. [laughs] And Farrakhan sits in the captain's chair and proceeds to go to Sylvia's in Harlem. So, it's like a perfect button on what otherwise could have been really, really messy. And like you said, Andi, done in really poor ways, because *SNL* has done Trek-esque sketches before, and none of them, not a single solitary one, can hold a candle to this. And it's cheesy. Like, they're all wearing the primary color shirts to indicate uniforms, but it doesn't look like a uniform. It's just so, so well done.

And I would be remiss if I didn't mention that *In Living Color* was in a consistent battle with the censors and network dudes at the time because of all of the things that was going into their writing. They're talking about real people issues and real perspectives through an undeniably hilarious lens, that it was constantly putting me on a point, like, "You can be mad at this if you want to, but look at these numbers. Everybody's watching. Everybody's talking about it." Because before the internet, before X or Twitter or whatever the frick it's called now, you had to be talking about it in order for that stuff to matter. And everybody was talking about *In Living Color*. So, it was, like I said, undeniable the impact that this show had overall,

and I think incredibly courageous, and I want to say convicted of their own brilliance of them, to have this be a sketch in their second episode of all time.

**Andi:** Very cool. I love that. Thank you for going through that one with me, Kennedy, because I was vaguely aware of this, but now I'm going to do my homework and watch it again.

**Kennedy:** It's so funny.

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** It's so funny. It's just like, "Oh, oh," like, just bam, bam, bam. Before you get a chance to be offended, it's just funny.

**Andi:** Yeah, well, that's the thing about satire in general, is that I was actually having a conversation about this the other day, and it's funny to me how the number one thing that satire needs to be successful and not offensive is it needs to be funny because as soon as it's not funny, you can't make it work. It automatically becomes offensive. You know what I mean? That's why satire is so hard, and that's why it always is in danger of aging poorly because humor is so subjective, and it changes and people's taste in humor changes over time. So, if you do a really biting satire that totally works in the early 90s, the odds that it's going to hold up 30 years later are actually pretty low.

**Kennedy:** And look at it.

**Andi:** Impressive.

**Kennedy:** It's just, oof.

**Andi:** Awesome.

**Kennedy:** All right, your turn.

**Andi:** It is my turn. Woohoo. Okay, so the thing is too is while you were talking through that, I thought of like five more references I'd love to talk about. So genuinely, this is one of those episodes where we really could talk forever. But the next one I want to go for is another show that is really good, although it was a wee bit messy. And I do absolutely recommend folks to watch this show because I can't in good conscience recommend *Supernatural* unless you want to spend like 360 episodes of your life being disappointed for like two-thirds of it.

**Kennedy:** No, thank you.

**Andi:** Yeah, I mean, if you did watch the first five seasons, I think people would like them, but then you're trapped. It's horrible. Anyway, this next show, *Community*, I actually do recommend Trekkies watch because I think a lot of them would like it. It's a really weird show in some ways. It starts off kind of like a typical sitcom set in a community college with like, "Here's all these kind of stereotypical, hilariously diverse characters." They very specifically were like, "Look at all of the diversity. Wow." They put them on brochures and it's like a joke throughout the show. But it's also one of those shows that does a lot of referential humor to the wider nerd landscape and plays around with not only the tropes and character tropes, but like structures of some of our favorite kind of sci-fi and genre things. So, people have probably heard of the "paintball" episodes where they do western-themed paintball, and then they do like action montage, pastiche of paintball.

**Kennedy:** Wait a minute, I'm sorry. western-themed paintball?

**Andi:** Yeah, yeah. That's not even the best one. The best one is definitely the action-themed one, but it's basically, like, not only lots of jokes about famous westerns or action movies, but also just, like, the lighting and camera choices. There's a whole John Woo moment in the action, stuff like that. And it's one of those things that your average human being is not going to respond to it as much as, let's face it, nerds are, because they're speaking in a language that a lot of people don't speak. You know what I mean?

**Kennedy:** Yeah, for sure.

**Andi:** So, one thing that *Community* does regularly is they have characters, one named Troy, played by Donald Glover, and one named Abed, played by Danny Pudi, and they play best friends. And one of them is kind of cool, but surprisingly nerdy black guy, and the other one is like a very rigid, socially unaware nerd, basically. And they play off each other, and it is very obviously and often a play on Data and Geordi. And they had all sorts of really-- so, like, a lot of the times, the last scene of the show would just be Troy and Abed doing something. They have a fake TV show that they have called *Troy & Abed in the Morning*, and they're not even recording it. They're just like sitting around pretending that they're on a fake morning tv show and interviewing people. It's just silly.

And half the time it's improvised, but it very much plays with those trope-y character dynamics that we were talking about when we were talking about Kirk and Spock. And then, it's just really charming and funny throughout the show. And it's kind of also brought back by the fact that Troy is a huge LeVar Burton fan, and they actually bring LeVar Burton in to cameo a couple times with him. And the first time that Troy meets LeVar Burton is one of the funniest things I've ever seen on TV. And that's my homework for people. If you don't watch all of *Community*, go on YouTube and look know Troy meets LeVar Burton because he absolutely loses his mind, and it's so funny. He's just like, "I never wanted to meet him. I just wanted a picture. You can't disappoint a picture," and him just being terrified of LeVar Burton. [laughs]

**Kennedy:** I know what you're talking about. I've seen this clip. It is hilarious.

**Andi:** [laughs] He's like, "I never wanted to meet him in person." And then, he just at one point, he literally-- and LeVar Burton, bless him, is so good in this, where he's just like, "Hey, guy." And then, he's just like increasingly taken aback by Troy's outsized reactions to him. And then at the end of the episode, he starts singing the *Reading Rainbow* theme song, and Troy literally starts crying and screaming and runs away. [laughs] And it's just the whole thing is very, very funny. And then, they have LeVar Burton be like an actual influence on Troy's character arc.

So, I won't spoil it all, because I do hope that people will watch *Community*, but just not only having the character tropes play out with Troy and Abed and their cool kind of relationship, where Troy is basically Abed's translator in a lot of ways, and Troy is the one that's helping guide Abed into understanding human behavior a little bit more. But also, just like they literally brought in a cast member to play himself, himself as LeVar Burton and influence these characters. And I just think it's delightful. And that is a show that's fairly easy to watch, [chuckles] quickly.

**Kennedy:** Too funny.

**Andi:** It won't be 15 seasons worth of investment.

**Kennedy:** Okay. [laughs] Most people will probably be like, "Oh, my God, what's going on? 15 seasons? That's a lot." We've watched *Star Trek*.

**Andi:** Yeah.

**Kennedy:** That's hours. It's years. It's 50 years of-- I can't-- [crosstalk]

**Andi:** It's fair.

**Kennedy:** That is a drop in the bucket, all things considered. My next one is a deep cut, the deepest of deep cuts, I feel, because no one I've ever spoken to in real life or on the internet has ever heard of this show, but I definitely remember watching it. And that is *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys*. It's American science fiction comedy animated television series. Premiered in August of '96 in the UK and the day before Star Trek Day, September 7th '96 in the United States. It ended after only 26 episodes. So, it was not very long lived, so I'm not surprised people don't remember it. However--

**Andi:** However, it had an impact on young Kennedy, and that's why we're bringing it back today.

**Kennedy:** I am shocked that more people, more-- and I've met some big nerds. Like, I consider myself a big nerd, but I met some big nerds, and these nerds have never heard of this show, and I am shocked.

**Andi:** You're going to bring about a *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys* revolution, the resurgence.

**Kennedy:** I hope so. It is a goofy Saturday morning over a bowl of cereal cartoon show for the sci-fi-loving child and their parent. And I say that specifically because going back-- I remember watching it as a kid and being into it, because it was really what it sounds like. It's monkeys in space. There was a space chimpanzee, an astronaut chimpanzee that got lost in the void of space and time in an accident during a mission. And is now--

**Andi:** You said accident, like it was really an accident?

**Kennedy:** Yeah, it was during the monkey man spaceflights in the 60s. [Andi laughs] Veered off course. They send a chimp named Charles out into space. And years and years later, Charles' craft was discovered by the most intelligent-- God, it's so many-- it's so many, it's so, so heavy. I'm trying to be mindful of my time to explain this. Craft gets discovered by the "most intelligent species" in the known universe. And the gag was, their name was-- so when people were like, "I don't understand who you're talking about," you'd be like, "You know, the-- they'd be like, "You're not saying anything." And I'm like, "No, it's the--" "It's like what?" So, it's that kind of--

**Andi:** That's a high-level bit, I've got to say.

**Kennedy:** It's super. You don't see too, too much of them, thank goodness, but they do exist. Anyway, he gets all of the things, hyper intelligence, weapons, [Andi giggles] suit. He gets all types of stuff. And he's given the charge of protecting the universe from the nefarious Lord Nebula, who was a half human, half black hole. It was a whole lot.

**Andi:** Damn, this is conceptual for a Saturday morning cartoon.

**Kennedy:** I think that's why it didn't really stick, because it was very cut and dry, but it was also very cerebral as well. Michael Dorn was Lord Nebula.

**Andi:** Oh, wow.



**Kennedy:** So, here's the Trek tie-in, at least the immediate one. We've got other people that we may or may not recognize. Jerry Doyle was the lead, Captain Simian. We've got Karen Maruyama as Shao Lin. She was the Chinese spider monkey who grew up in a monk-- who grew up in a monastery, and who was raised to believe that her heavenly destiny was to protect the golden one. But then, gets wrapped up on this mission, so she's bitter the whole time.

**Andi:** Damn, Kennedy, the lore on this show is deep.

**Kennedy:** It's super deep, and they give it to you so quickly. I think over the first two or three episodes, we're introduced to this crew because it's a basic ship-captain-crew mission type of situation. You've got Maurice LaMarche as Dr. Splitz/Splitzy. It's somebody with a--They categorize it as a split personality. I'm not sure what the proper terminology for his condition would be, but he is literally two different people. Half of it is Fraser. The other half is, I don't know, Mater from *Cars*, I guess, is the closest thing I can go.

**Andi:** That's a really common thing for the mid 90s, is doing the whole "split personality" thing because it was like something that became kind of-- like the general public became super fascinated by. And so, you saw a lot of it in TV even though it's extremely rare. It's called dissociative identity disorder now, I guess.

**Kennedy:** Thank you.

**Andi:** But yeah, I'm not surprised to hear it because especially in that-- when was this aired, in the 90s?

**Kennedy:** '96.

**Andi:** Yeah. I would say late 80s to mid-90s was, like the height of that. Even though they were still doing those kinds of stories later, that was like when people were super fascinated by it. It was in the news. Yeah.

**Kennedy:** Right. So, then we've got Dom Irrera as Spydor. Spydor was a spider monkey that grew up in Brooklyn because he was basically trafficked. And-

**Andi:** Oh, my God.

**Kennedy:** -was performing. He was a street monkey and also got snatched up into this somehow. You have James Avery, may he rest in peace, as Gore-illa/Gore, who was this gorilla who had, like, a brain injury, and unless he was all powered up, couldn't really think straight. And when he was all powered up, he definitely couldn't think straight, but he was a real sweetheart. So, it was another kind of parallel archetype in the same person. And then you had Jeff Bennett as Orbitron. He was like the AI on the ship that was just a wise ass, just always had something smart to say. They were already like a wise cracking crew, but he always-- Ooh, just when you thought it couldn't get any funnier, like, there he is. And then, of course, Michael Dorn as the villain. And then as another Trek reference, we have Malcolm McDowell as Rhesus 2, which is like this weird cyborg brain character that hated them.

**Andi:** This cast is stacked. What's going on? This is like a showbiz--

**Kennedy:** It was intense. And they had these little holoboons. They were holographic baboons created by Dr. Splitz to test out the atmosphere of unknown planets. So instead of them risking their lives by going that he created these little, like, it says, like, holo kind of droid things to just go to perilous conditions to test it out. And each and every single one of

them had a different personality. They all looked the same. It's all the same face. But they all had parodied voices of popular actors at the time. So, there was a *Beavis and Butthead* one. There was Jerry Lewis, pretty ladies. [laughs]

**Andi:** Oh, my God.

**Kennedy:** There was a Woody Allen one. There was Stooges. And so, you know there was definitely Trek references. I distinctly remember being early on there like a three-dollar Kirk one. [mimicking Jeff Bennett's Kirk] "I can't believe you'd send me these--" [crosstalk]

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** And it immediately get killed.

**Andi:** Now you're doing an imitation of--

**Kennedy:** Jeff Bennett's Kirk.

[laughter]

**Andi:** The depth of imitations on the episode, I don't think I was expecting it, but I'm loving it. You're really selling this show to me, Kennedy. It sounds fully, like--

**Kennedy:** It's so complex and so simple and hilarious. I can understand why it didn't take because it probably-- it's for free on Freevee and Tubi as of this month. So, go forth. This is my gift to you, and I will even tie it into Black History Month because the late, great James Avery is in it and Michael Dorn is in it. So, Happy Black History Month. Here is *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys*. Have fun.

**Andi:** So, to recap, we have told people not to watch *Supernatural*, [Kennedy laughs] but to watch *Community*, *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys*. And you should have already done your homework of *In Living Color*.

**Kennedy:** Yes. This is completely absurd.

[chuckles]

**Kennedy:** Just heads-up. And it might even be slightly dated in an odd way for the 90s. But I've gone back and tried to find episodes on YouTube before, apparently it was available, so I'm going to go back and watch it. And it's just like, there's a couple tropes that are a little weird.

**Andi:** Well, I think kind of like how we were talking about with satire, things can sometimes be so of their time. I was watching *Clueless* with my Gen Z cousin, and she asked me before we watched it, she was like, "Is this movie good?" And I was like, "I don't know how to answer that question." Because on the one hand, yes, and on the other hand, it's so specific to a specific time and place, and it's so tied to my adolescence. And then, does it age well? I don't know. Some things do not age well [chuckles] in that movie.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, I mean, there are certain elements of this. I think probably the quality of the animation is definitely an indicator of the time it was produced. But in the instances that I remember going back and trying to peek at it, I remember being like, "Damn, I was watching this? No wonder I was by myself all the time. Nobody could keep up with this. I could barely keep up with this." Every time you think you're on board with the shits with the show, they throw another curve-- those Holoboons, oh, man.

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** Heads up. Just a heads up. Because that curveball, you will be in stitches. Do not take a sip when you see a Holoboon, I promise.

**Andi:** That's really funny.

**Kennedy:** I did some checking. They did release action figures. I don't remember seeing any of them. If you happen to come across any of the *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys* toys and want to pay tribute to your favorite Women at Warp person-- Kidding. You don't have to pick favorites, but you can email me, and I can send you details and we can go from there. Thanks.

**Andi:** Awesome. We're going back to mine, and yet another complete 180. I'm actually really enjoying the very different things that we picked. I think that's fun. So, I kind of went in a totally different direction on this one and went for a song. And I do think that there are lots of throwaway Trek references that you can kind of talk about. And in this case, it's literally just a line *Intergalactic* by the Beastie Boys in which they say, "A pinch on the neck from Mr. Spock." And I brought up *Intergalactic* for a couple of reasons. One, I just really like the Beastie Boys. Talk about nostalgia and adolescence, I was so into the Beastie Boys when I was, like, 14 to 17, and I was very proud of the fact that I could rap the entirety of *Intergalactic*.

And then the music video is just basically, like, weird, old timey sci-fi special effects and stuff, and it's really cool. And it just reminds me of kind of what I was referencing earlier with the character trope of Spock, you see all over the place without it being like them being an alien or anything. It's just really just a hypercerebral person who at least seems emotionless, right?

**Kennedy:** Right.

**Andi:** But Kirk and Spock in general, but Spock especially, I think, is like THE enduring reference that everyone gets even if they've never seen *Star Trek*. They're like, "Oh, yeah, Spock, he's the one with the ear, right?" Like, he just endures in a way that I don't think any other character does in the popular consciousness. I feel like I'm in a special place to speak on this because I wasn't a Trekkie until I was an adult, and I can tell you I couldn't have told you much about Kirk, but I could tell you who Spock was. I could tell you that it was Leonard Nimoy, and he had ears, and he was a Vulcan, and he did the "live long and pro--" and I could have told you all of that without seeing a single episode of the show. And I think this is a good example of why. They just use Spock as a shorthand to make it a little bit spacey and a little bit sci-fi. Also, shoutout to the Beastie Boys, because Spock is really easy to put in when you're trying to find something to rhyme [laughs] in a rap, which is pretty smart.

And then, I just also thought it was cute to talk about this one, because as a tie back to the fact that the Beastie Boys kind of became an unofficial theme song of the JJ Abrams new Spock movies. New Spock-- new Trek movies with *Sabotage*.

**Kennedy:** You're not wrong. [chuckles]

**Andi:** Yeah, but, like, *Sabotage*-- Okay, so this is the another thing that the first. I don't know that people know this. The first *Star Trek* media I ever, ever, ever watched was the 2009 *Star Trek* movie.

**Kennedy:** Man, what an entrance then.

**Andi:** I know, and I loved it. I thought it was amazing.

**Kennedy:** Yo, I did myself a disservice and did not watch that in theaters because I was like, every nerd ever. "I'm not going to watch this. Why are they--"

**Andi:** How dare they?

**Kennedy:** [crosstalk] "-Mary was alive. If he didn't run, Mary had been murdered, he'd be spinning in his grave. Why would anybody do this?" And then I watched it on a bootleg on a tiny ass screen and was like, I denied myself the opportunity to be gung-ho about this.

**Andi:** I wasn't even in Chicago yet living. I was in Chicago visiting, and I went to see it with a friend of mine who also had never seen any *Star Trek*. And we were just like, "This looks kind of fun." We're in Downtown Chicago, we have to kill some time until our next thing. "Let's just go to see a movie." And we went and saw it on a giant screen in Downtown Chicago, and we walked out, and we're just like, "That was amazing." We were so into it. It was one of the best experiences I've ever had in the. And like now as a firm Trekkie, I'll rewatch it and I'll see the flaws. But as an introduction, it's amazing. It really is.

**Kennedy:** Yeah.

**Andi:** And I remember the moment where Kirk, as a kid, is going down the street to Sabotage, and I was like, "Oh, yeah, I get this, dude." Now I have critiques on whether or not they really captured Kirk, or they captured the fan idea of Kirk, and not even *Star Trek* fan idea of Kirk, but the wider media landscape idea of Kirk. But that's neither here nor there. I love Chris Pine. It's all fine.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, that's neither here or there specifically because the Kelvin-verse has literally nothing to do with what we know of it.

**Andi:** Yeah. And I think it does make sense to me that he would be a different person without the influence of his dad. Not a completely different person, but like a more reckless person. They actually do have an in-universe explanation for why Kirk is a little bit less--more impulsive and less thoughtful than he is. And also, this is a young Kirk, this is not Kirk, several years into being a captain. It's literally his first time captaining in this movie. But *Sabotage* becomes like Kirk's theme song in those movies. Like, they bring it back in *Beyond* for a really fun needle drop moment. And so now, for whatever reason, the Beastie Boys and *Star Trek* are linked in my mind. And I think it's cute. I like it. I like the Beastie Boys, I like *Star Trek*. What's not to love here?

**Kennedy:** There you go.

**Andi:** Yeah. Slightly different than *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys*. Not nearly as much lore.

**Kennedy:** That's okay.

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** I would say probably more lore, considering it's tied to Trek. Like, quite literally.

**Andi:** Yeah.

**Kennedy:** My next one, I guess, is probably another 180 from that. And not even really, I would say a *Trek* reference, but kind of something that you brought up, Andi, that I think is fascinating we can get into with this. I put down Disney's *Gargoyles*, not because it's a reference to *Star Trek* at all--

**Andi:** Loved this show, by the way.

**Kennedy:** --but because there's such a huge chunk of *Trek* actors with distinct voices in this series. And I'm not just saying every once in a while, Jonathan Frakes was in the first season, I think almost every episode. Same with Marina Sirtis. And I believe Michael Dorn came in at some point towards the middle of that first season as well. The second season, we started to play around with more Shakespearean influences. So, Titania and Oberon and the fae folk with Brent Spiner as Puck and Kate Mulgrew as Titania. So we definitely see, and obviously, these characters have nothing to do with their actors characters on *Trek*.

**Andi:** But that is a large confluence of *Star Trek* actors in one project.

**Kennedy:** That's like somebody said, "Hey, I don't know if you know, but they're casting for this thing."

**Andi:** They looked right at *TNG*, and they were like, "I want all of those."

**Kennedy:** It's like someone in the break room one day or in the morning as everybody was getting made up, saw-- it was like reading, I don't know, backstage or whatever the publication was in the 90s to see who's looking for what, and they're like, "Voiceover? I could do that." And then, someone got in. It was probably Frakes. He was like, "Hey, guys, I don't know if you know--"

**Andi:** [crosstalk] Sweet voice acting gig if you all want to be a part of it.

**Kennedy:** But it's pretty good. For those of you who are into *Gargoyles*, that's another deep set of lore that I won't trouble you all with.

**Andi:** I will say though that *Gargoyles* had more of an impact on my childhood than *Trek* did, which I know is not the norm for your average Trekkie.

**Kennedy:** I mean, somehow it still did because all of those people were in *Trek*. So, that feels like somehow incestual in a weird media consumer way. But either way, there are talks of there being a live action Disney's *Gargoyles* in production. I don't know how I feel about that.

**Andi:** I would like it if they would stop taking things that really only work in animation. Anime is a good example of this. I mean, I'm not going to get too angry at an *Avatar the Last Airbender* live action. But sometimes, the medium does matter. I don't see how *Gargoyles* translates to live action without looking incredibly cheesy.

**Kennedy:** I mean, the CGI has-- and with mo-cap performances as well, all of that has advanced to a point where it could be possible.

**Andi:** It'd be really expensive though.

**Kennedy:** I mean, it's Disney. They got the money.

**Andi:** Mmm. Yeah, I guess.

**Kennedy:** Anyway, Disney's *Gargoyles* is amazing. It's about these gargoyles who were in Scotland at the turn of the medieval times, and they were cursed by a petty sorcerer to remain stone until the castle rose above the clouds. And then, some rich guy who had way too much money thousands of years later, decided he wanted that-- a thousand years later? A thousand years later, decided he wanted that and took the entire castle, the entire one in one piece, huge undertaking, and put it on top of his skyscraper in New York City, making it the tallest building in New York. And in doing so, removed the curse, and now the Gargoyles live again. They can only move around at night, and during the day, they turn the stone. But he was like, "Oh, y'all protect the castle so we could be homies." And they was like, "Okay, cool." And then they found out that he was kind awful.

**Andi:** What? That doesn't seem like it could be right. A rich person?

**Kennedy:** And friend of the cop-- you get over the copaganda a little bit, because Elisa Maza is a good cop. She's not [pause] the worst example of law enforcement in media or real life, I'll say that.

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** And also, nice intersectional representation as well as an Afro-Mexican-- I think she was Afro-- No, she's Afro-indigenous woman of color just on television. I was like, "Ooh, this is amazing." So, it's lots of heavy lore in that. Lots of fun times. I don't know how they'll be able to reproduce some of that stuff that is uniquely animation based, but--

**Andi:** We'll see.

**Kennedy:** Why not? [chuckles] At this point, who am I to say what can or cannot be made?

**Andi:** Yeah, and you bring up a good point, Kennedy, though about the *Trek* actors themselves being a *Star Trek* reference, because I can think of a lot of times where a *Trek* actor came in and it was pretty clear that it was meant to be like-- not necessarily stunt casting, but like a cameo. And I have a couple of really deep cut favorites on this. One is, I don't know if you ever watched the original *Roswell*. [chuckles]

**Kennedy:** No.

**Andi:** Oh, my God. Okay, *Roswell* is like one of the old school CW shows from back when it was the WB.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, I remember.

**Andi:** It was basically hot teen aliens in the desert.

**Kennedy:** Okay.

**Andi:** That's really what it is, and it was great. Genuinely love that show, unironically think it's good. But Jonathan Frakes is heavily featured in it, and he directed a ton of it. They're in *Roswell*, and so everything's alien themed, and there's, like, an alien museum. So, he keeps showing up as actual Jonathan Frakes to cut the ribbon on alien museums and [chuckles] stuff like that.

**Kennedy:** Wow.

**Andi:** And at one point, they bring him out there to put his hands in concrete to have Frakes' handprints, and he falls into the concrete. And it's really funny. I find Jonathan Frakes to

have such a fun sense of humor and when she totally can make fun of himself. And that's a good example of that, like, there was no reason to actually have Jonathan Frakes in there, except for he was probably directing the episode and just was like, "Hey, why not?"

**Kennedy:** You know, was going to get paid both ways.

**Andi:** Exactly. Like, it can't hurt. And it does actually thematically make sense that they would hire people like this to do their ribbon cutting at alien museums.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, kind of like in *Independence Day*, seeing Brent Spiner as a crazy scientist.

**Andi:** And the fact that so many people don't know that's Brent Spiner, he really did a good job of totally inhabiting that role, and I think the big long hair helped.

**Kennedy:** Man, listen, I remember seeing that movie in a drive-in, that's how long ago it was. It was a drive-in double feature. This was the family film at first, and I think *Broken Arrow* may have been the "grown film" later on, they just had cussing in that one. It wasn't too grown--

**Andi:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** Anyway. It was just cussing, that's all. Just a lot of cussing.

**Andi:** Just a little of that.

**Kennedy:** There was no T&A, there was no peen, just a whole lot of cursing, and blowing stuff up. A lot of people got shot in *Broken Arrow*. Anyway, I remember being in that setting where you're not really connected with the other people in the audience. You're connected with the people in the car you're in, but not everybody else. I remember there being a collective, "Ooh," "Oop," when we saw Brent Spiner in *Independence Day*, and it was only maybe 30 people, but 30 people in a drive-in is intense. So, I just remember they did that on purpose. Like, you're already casting Jeff Goldblum, who's a pillar in science fiction, so you're already drawing that crowd. Just the intersectionality of it is what tickles me. Just every time I see him, "I know he's there. I know he's there. I know he's there." And every time it's like, "Heck, yeah."

**Andi:** Yeah, absolutely. And I think there's lots of examples about this, and I would love to hear from folks about what their favorite *Trek* actors and other surprising things is, because we could do a whole show just on that. So, those are some very wide-ranging examples between you and I, of some pretty deep cuts, in some cases of *Star Trek* references in other media. But I did want to have kind of a short conversation about the overall impact that *Star Trek* has had on media. And one of the things that I want to talk about right off the bat is fan fiction.

Earlier, I said that *Star Trek* was one of the granddaddies of genre. And really, what I meant by that was, in my head, I was thinking Kirk and Spock and shipping is very much the genesis of modern slash fic. And then, there are some really famous fanfic tropes that are straight from *Star Trek*. So, Pon Farr is a great example of a fanfic trope called fuck-or-die, which is one of those kinds of ways that you get your characters together and they're like, "Ooh, sorry, you can't dance around anymore. You've got to fuck or you'll die." So, Pon Farr is a good example of that.

**Kennedy:** What a reach. Just the whole concept of the bang or die. It makes me think of that episode of *Voyager* where somehow B'Elanna caught Pon Farr, like, "What?" [laughs]

**Andi:** Yeah, yeah. And it's straight from *Star Trek*. It's so funny. It's like people in the wider fanfic universe are just reading their fics with dubious consent issues because of this and not knowing that it fully comes from Spock's Pon Farr. And then, another one, Poor Spock, sex pollen. The whole time that he had the flower sneeze in his face, and he got all horny. [laughs] That is also straight from *Star Trek*, and I have seen that in One Million fics. People are funny. I especially used to see that in the *Doctor Who* fandom. That was a really common one in that, which makes sense because they were always going to other planets and weird plants, all this stuff.

**Kennedy:** Interesting.

**Andi:** I'm trying to think of other ones. Those are the two that come to mind immediately, and I know I'm forgetting one for sure, but I just always have found it funny. Like, whenever I find these tropes out in the wild, when I'm reading through summaries, I'm like, "Ah, Spock, poor Spock." And then just shipping in general. The fan magazines, and just like overall intense shipping, like the modern-day version of that, because there are examples of that from farther back. And it's actually funny that some of the older versions are like Sherlock and Watson. Tumblr was not new. [laughs] They did that back when Sherlock was literally-- like, the Sherlock Holmes stories were literally being written at that time, they were shipping for those characters.

**Kennedy:** And just to clarify, shipping, by shipping we mean the pairing of favorite characters romantically, not the distribution of said characters. [chuckles] I remember back when I was into a wizarding property on LiveJournal.

**Andi:** Oh, yes, good time.

**Kennedy:** That was a big thing. Those were the days. Shoutout to LJ.

[laughter]

**Andi:** Oh, yeah. And the other thing is, I had somebody once say to me, they were like, "Wait a second," because I said something about how *Trek*-- or not *Trek*, Mulder and Scully were one of the earliest, most intense ships. And they're like, "Yeah, but they hook up in the show." And I realized that they thought that shipping was only for non-canon relationships. You can absolutely ship canon relationships.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, sure.

**Andi:** If it's in the show, that doesn't matter. So, just some background on shipping for you all, because I know that's so important for folks. And then, conventions.

**Kennedy:** Oh, yes.

**Andi:** And if you all have more interest in this, I absolutely recommend taking a look at some of our fan episodes where we talk about shipping, where we talk about fanfic, and we talk about conventions, because we certainly go much deeper into it and the history of it and *Star Trek's* impact on those things than we can do now. I just feel like when we're talking about media impact, we've got to talk about these things because now it is a totally normal and part of your average media tour to do something like Comic Con. And that all has its roots in *Star Trek*. So, I always think that's kind of interesting.

And then, we referenced David Fincher, I did at the very beginning of the show, who's a super famous Trekkie, and he will find any way to put *Star Trek* into his movies. Ben Stiller, also a huge Trekkie. We could have spent 20 minutes in this episode talking about



*Zoolander* because there are so many references to *Star Trek*. Like, Will Ferrell's character is called Mugatu of the old Yeti-looking creature that used to tackle Kirk.

**Kennedy:** Oh, wow. I'm not exactly-- I'll be honest, I'm not a fan of either of those two dudes. So, I think I might have seen that movie once--

**Andi:** A million years ago?

**Kennedy:** Yeah. And was just like, "What is happening?"

**Andi:** "What?" Yeah, that's why his character design is that weird, like fluffy white everything.

**Kennedy:** Oh, my God.

**Andi:** Yeah, because he's the Mugatu. And that's just such a wild thing to put in your movie. To me, that's really funny. Seth McFarlane also famously really into *Star Trek*, which is why whatever that show is exists-- I'm blanking on the name of it. I'm sure a lot of our listeners have watched it though.

**Kennedy:** Oh, *The Orville*.

**Andi:** *The Orville*, yes. And then, we also did a whole episode on *Galaxy Quest* for our one hundredth. That is wall to wall, probably the most famous *Trek* reference. The whole movie is a *Trek* reference.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, for sure.

**Andi:** And it's so good. For Thanksgiving and I was hanging out with my family, we were like, "What movies should we watch?" And we didn't have access to streaming, so it was just like this basketful of DVDs, which was like, "Man, I missed this." So, like, going through all the DVDs, and I was like, "Let's watch *Galaxy Quest*." And none of my family watches *Star Trek*. And I was like, "It doesn't matter. You're still going to really love it." And they were like, "Really?" And I'm like, "Absolutely." And at the end, they were like, "That movie was really good." And I was like, "I know."

**Kennedy:** "I know what I'm doing."

**Andi:** Anyway.

**Kennedy:** *Galaxy Quest* is difficult for me because of Alan Rickman. It's difficult to watch because it just gets me right in my feels for him.

**Andi:** He's so good at it.

**Kennedy:** His entire body of work is a gift. But for some reason, *Galaxy Quest* makes me feel his loss more profoundly than anything else.

**Andi:** That makes sense.

**Kennedy:** Also, Tim Allen is not exactly my favorite.

**Andi:** He's not mine either. And he's from Michigan, and I have stories.

**Kennedy:** Ooh.

**Andi:** Mm.

**Kennedy:** [laughs]

**Andi:** But I think he's really good in that movie.

**Kennedy:** Yeah. It's in the same way that you might love Kirk and not be a fan of Shatner. It plays into this heel protagonist kind of interesting trope there that is alluring. I can definitely admit to that.

**Andi:** Well, and Tim Allen's not actually an actor, really. I mean, he is, obviously, but he is a stand-up comedian first, and then they gave him *Home Improvement*, and he got into acting, and certainly he acted for however many years that show went on, if we could call it that. So, he's not really like an actor. So, I actually think this is by far his best performance by a million.

**Kennedy:** That's generous of you, Andi.

**Andi:** Well, it's true. And I think part of the reason is because he's tapping into some of his own personality traits. Anyways, we don't really need to go deeply into our dislike of Tim Allen on this show.

**Kennedy:** No, we sure don't.

**Andi:** We sure don't. But I don't know, Kennedy, is there anything you wanted to add? I really had a lot of fun talking to you about this, even though I'm sure there's going to be people who are like, "Why did we have to listen to you talk about *Supernatural* for 10 minutes?" Because I wanted to, okay? This is our show.

**Kennedy:** I mean, it's fine. I've watched *Star Trek*. I've seen almost everything there is to see about *Star Trek*. So, I cannot in good faith give anybody a hard time for watching shows that have longevity.

**Andi:** Oh, it's not that it's long. It's that it's terrible.

**Kennedy:** But I'm saying, you said after the fifth season, you're already invested, so you're watching it. If you can get past *Enterprise*, [chuckles] you know what I'm saying? That's the fourth, fifth series. Not seasons. You've been around for five series.

**Andi:** Yeah.

**Kennedy:** So, you're in here at this point, I can't give anybody, especially since I just sat here and pontificated about *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys*. [Andi laughs] I think this is the most time I've said *Captain Simian & the Space Monkeys* in a single day since it was on the air.

**Andi:** That's pretty funny. Well, thanks for joining me, Kennedy. Thanks for talking through this with me, as we have mentioned several times, there are so many of these. So, I genuinely would love it.

**Kennedy:** This is not a comprehensive list.

**Andi:** Yeah, no, but I would genuinely love it if folks would just add their favorites. Let's talk about them. Like, there are probably ones I'm not even aware of. I would love to hear what you all think is-- if you had to sit down and talk about this with me and Kennedy, what three

*Trek* references would be on your list? That's what I'm asking. So, feel free to hit us up in the comments on that because I really am truly interested to see what people think about those things because it's just like such a varying-- even just between the two of us, we came up with some wildly different shows, and then-- [crosstalk]

**Kennedy:** Which is awesome.

**Andi:** -to talk about. Yeah, absolutely.

**Kennedy:** How boring would it have been if we--

**Andi:** If we had the same ones.

**Kennedy:** Oh, snooze. Honk shoo, man.

**Andi:** Amazing. All right, well, I think that's all the time we have for today. Kennedy, where can people find you on the internet if they want to hear more about Dr. Simian and the Space monkeys?

**Kennedy:** Captain. He's not that smart.

**Andi:** Captain. Sorry. I was thinking, he was--

**Kennedy:** He's not that smart.

**Andi:** No, I was thinking he was *Doctor Who* related at that point. Like, he was just going through time and space.

**Kennedy:** It's so good. If you want to reach out to me, you can actually hit me up at [kennedy@womenatwarp.com](mailto:kennedy@womenatwarp.com).

**Andi:** Perfect. And I'm Andi. You can find me on most places [@FirstTimeTrek](https://www.instagram.com/FirstTimeTrek). To learn more about our show or to contact us, visit [womenatwarp.com](http://womenatwarp.com), email us at [crew@womenatwarp.com](mailto:crew@womenatwarp.com) or find us on Facebook or Instagram [@womenatwarp](https://www.instagram.com/womenatwarp). Thanks so much for listening.

**In Unison:** Bye.

[Women at Warp theme]

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