

[Women at Warp theme]

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

**Kennedy:** Hello.

**Jarrah:** And we also have special guest, Subrina, from SyFy Sistas!

**Kennedy:** Whoop, whoop.

**Jarrah:** 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 a month and get rewards like social media shoutouts and watch along commentaries. We also do bonus episodes about non-*Star Trek* topics every couple of months. And this month, we are going to have a cathartic discussion about *Love Actually*. So, [chuckles] visit [patreon.com/womenatwarp](https://patreon.com/womenatwarp) for that.

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Okay, so as mentioned, we have special guest, Subrina, on the show. What's new with you and SyFy Sistas, Subrina?

**Subrina:** Well, hi. Yes, SyFy Sistas! right now are in hiatus. We will be coming back in January with more shows. We just dropped the last show for Season 3 on Friday. And we do have the new YouTube channel. So, if you've been watching our Wednesday at 9:30 Live Chats that we started about two months ago, thank you so much. That's what's happening for us. Been busy.

**Kennedy:** Hey, congrats on the YouTubes.

**Subrina:** Thank you.

**Jarrah:** And so much good historic content as well from your show. So plenty to keep folks busy during the break. Awesome. So today, we have a patron topic that was suggested by Fiona. So, thank you, Fiona. And we're talking about diversity and progressivism in *Star Trek*. Fiona said, "I'd love to see an episode on the ways in which *Star Trek* from the very beginning has been diverse versus progressive. That is, the way in which representation has or has not been reflected in the narrative. As an example, *Star Trek: Discovery* has an incredibly diverse cast, even by Trek standards. But Season 1 in particular has some very non-progressive text and subtext, orientalism, islamophobia, etc." And we will get into that and the ways in which *Star Trek: Discovery* does better later on in the series sometimes and some of that early stuff.

But that's basically what we're going to talk about today. Before we get into it, I just want to kind of lay out a few basic definitions for those that may not be kind of familiar with the difference between diversity and progressivism or progressive politics.

**Kennedy:** Talk to them, Jarrah. [laughs]

**Jarrah:** I will. [laughs]

**Kennedy:** Yeah, talk to them.

**Jarrah:** The definition of diversity is basically the practice or quality of including or involving people from a range of different social and ethnic backgrounds and of different genders, sexual orientations, etc. So, for our purposes, we're basically talking about episodes and series with not just cis, straight, able-bodied white men.

Related to this is the idea of tokenism, which is something that a person or organization does that seems to support or help a group of people who are treated unfairly in society, such as giving a member of that group an important or public position, but which is not meant to make changes that would help that group of people in a lasting way. So, if you have diversity on its own without any progressivism, sometimes, often that can be tokenism. Take, for example, Chakotay.

**Subrina:** That's what went through my mind. [shivers]

[laughter]

**Jarrah:** Progressivism, or progressive politics as a movement, emerged during the enlightenment as broadly aimed at improving the human condition through social reform. Early on, it was associated with abolition of slavery, decline of poverty, reduced inequality, and increased literacy. Today, the word "progressive" is associated with left leaning social liberalism and socialism. And core values include social justice, equity, and expansion of civil rights. So, in my opinion, the difference is progressivism requires intersectionality and moving beyond tokenism for true equity, antiracism, and inclusion.

**Subrina:** Right.

**Kennedy:** Right. It's almost like just because everybody's getting treated the same way, doesn't mean everyone has the same opportunities, the same access to resources, etc., etc. And as you said, Jarrah, the intersectionality will almost inherently require equanimity to be called into focus.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. Basically, it's not enough to merely have a diverse group of people in a room if all of their resources, opportunities, etc., were inequitable, and if everyone's working in a system that was still designed for the most privileged.

**Subrina:** I'll break it down for you in real simple terms, especially since we're in that season. It's like having a football team, but all the black people can be on the defense, but they can never be the quarterback, they can never be the coach, and they will not be the owner. It's diverse, but it isn't progressive.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. Like, fundamentally, does this diversity actually challenge anything or make us more equal?

**Subrina:** You got 20 rich guys. [chuckles]

**Jarrah:** Yeah. To be clear, I think that there's a fairly strong consensus, at least in kind of our universe of listeners, that diversity is important. There's the whole quote, "If you can't see it, you can't be it." But it's possible to be diverse and still not progressive. So, you can, for example, have a bunch of diverse politicians that still roll back minority rights. For example, a woman politician rolling back reproductive rights. You can have diverse characters that are written as really one dimensional by nondiverse writers, which is basically the approach known as "add diversity and stir." Cool. Let's get into *Star Trek*.

**Kennedy:** Let's do it.

**Jarrah:** All right, so we have kind of three categories we're going to talk about, and we're talking about kind of specific episodes and series. And then at the end, we'll kind of look at the whole thing holistically. Let's start with episodes that are diverse but not progressive. Let's start with *Discovery*. I would say that the number one thing that stood out for me was Culber's murder.

**Kennedy:** Oh, my gosh.

**Jarrah:** But there was also the multiple women of color being killed off.

**Kennedy:** Like, Landry was problematic, but she didn't have to go out like that. Hmm, girl.

**Subrina:** Like, Ripper just took her out. Whoo.

**Kennedy:** I feel like that needed to go through several more people before that was agreed upon to be printed [laughs] and sent to the editing.

**Jarrah:** Yeah, I mean, what Fiona was referencing in terms of orientalism and islamophobia was the Klingons in Season 1 being portrayed as a bit of an exotic other. Yeah, I think know fans spoke up about those issues as well as at the same time in *Picard* Season 1, we had men of color being killed, or black men particularly, being killed violently.

**Kennedy:** Oh, right. Dodge's boyfriend right out the gate.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. So, that would be diversity but not progressive.

**Subrina:** Right out of the first minute of the show, I couldn't believe it. We did a whole episode on that in *SyFy Sistas*!

**Kennedy:** And these two episodes specifically are super important because they are no longer under the protective umbrella of it's "a product of its time." Because in the 60s, there was excuses. In the 70s, there was excuses. In 80s, excuses. 90s, even in the early 2000s, we can put *Enterprise* under the umbrella of product of its time. But here we are, in the year of Wilson Cruz, 2017, and the first thing out the gate is these horrible examples of what we do when we get people of color in the show? Like, I, mm, [pause] very, very poignant point to start with.

**Subrina:** I can tell you how disappointed I was when I realized that Philippa Georgiou was going to be offed in, what, Episode 2.

**Jarrah and Kennedy:** Mm-hmm.

**Subrina:** I said, you've got Michelle Yeoh, my girl. Now you're going to bring her back as another character that is stereotypically the evil Asian woman. But it was so disheartening. I was so happy when I saw the trailers for *Discovery* that we were going to have a black female leading, and then we were going to have Michelle Yeoh. And then, what happened? Okay, we have a murder, a mutiny. I just went, "Oh, my God."

**Kennedy:** Yeah. I think Michael Burnham's story in particular, as much as we laud the arc of Michael Burnham and how an amazingly complex and nuanced human experience watching this character's arc, it's just, mm, transcendent. But the optics are still there. This is the first time we see a black female character who's from the Gate, the focus of the show, and the first thing we see is she loses her family, then she loses her humanity, then she loses her job, then she has to come back to her job and still somehow reclaim her humanity, but also

try and get her job. It's a lot. It's a lot. And I just wonder why we are still in this portion of the 21st century, still forcing our black characters to go through traumatic things on screen. I'm still trying to understand why all of them have a root of some type of traumatic event. When you look at it, it's like, "Man, what's going on?"

**Subrina:** And to be fair, almost every captain in *Star Trek* has some traumatic event that they've been through, but it is not something that is the storyline until we get to old ass Picard. But even Kirk, he went through whatever happened to him with the planet where they were all starving and whatever, whatever. But you don't even know this until a particular episode. When he comes in, he is the hero, he is the protagonist, hero. There's nothing wrong with him. He is going to save the day. But that's never the way a black female or black male or any other race comes into *Star Trek*. They always got to explain and excuse.

**Kennedy:** Yeah, and particularly, I want to point out the fact that they've always-- I'll use Uhura as a great example on *Strange New Worlds*. Here's a character that everybody knows and loves, period. And here's an opportunity to flesh out her backstory and finally give her the crown she deserves. And we find out that she's lost her parents immediately and was raised by her grandparents, which is a million people's real life lived experiences. So, there's nothing wrong with that. But why can't she be, I don't know, the 14th princess in a long line of women regents of a specific place on the continent, and she don't know what struggle is, so she has to learn what struggle is. She has to learn what poverty is. She has to learn what discrimination and racism and other forms of bigotry are because she's never experienced that shit before. That's how you can tell what a story can be like without traumatizing the character first. Like, why everybody?

**Subrina:** Why couldn't she be [unintelligible 00:12:12]?

**Jarrah:** Well, yeah, why [laughs] can't she be Tom Paris?

**Kennedy:** Right.

**Jarrah:** I mean, I think there's an argument to be made having those traumatic backstories for characters like Kirk and Picard and then acting like it doesn't have an impact was also a product of its time. And that in some ways, trying to dive into it is helpful now. But I think that it's problematic when it's the diverse characters that get that. And I would also say that Picard's-- like old ass Picard's trauma, it makes him super self-centered and actually less concerned about others. But other characters with traumatic backstories in new *Star Trek* don't have that option of just withdrawing to their vineyard.

[chuckles]

**Kennedy:** I just love that he is no longer Jean-Luc Picard. He is old ass Picard. I didn't make the rules. You heard it here twice, folks.

**Subrina:** You did. That's my word for him. I'm sorry. I love him.

**Kennedy:** Old ass Picard.

**Subrina:** Old ass Picard. As opposed to cha'Dich Picard. That man.

**Kennedy:** Right. Where did he go? His 401K got cashed in, so he reevaluated his priorities. That's what happened with cha'Dich.

**Subrina:** For real. cha'Dich, that was my boy there. But hey, and I want to be clear to whoever's listening, I love *Star Trek*. I had not watched it for a while because, as we were

saying during the beginning and the break, the strike was on, we didn't have any new *Star Trek*. We at the SyFy Sistas! had switched over to watching *For All Mankind* and *Foundation*. So, I had to come back and watch some of these episodes to get ready for this show. And I realized how much I had missed watching *Star Trek*. Because even when you're making me watch some of these episodes, where I'd go, "Oh, not this one again," I still wanted to see it. So, I want everyone to know, I love *Star Trek*, but we can always try to make *Star Trek* a little better by voicing our opinions, keeping them on the path.

**Subrina:** And we are starting with some of the worst examples.

**Kennedy:** Right. I'm really glad that you're here, Subrina, and I'm really glad that you said that because Jarrah as my witness, I have resigned my commission [laughs] when it comes to Trek, and I've just, like, I'll stay in my quarters. I'll keep a very small dilithium footprint. I won't try to rabble the lower decks or anything. I don't want to shit on anybody else's joy, but doing a deep dive for an episode that Elisa and I did a few months back at this point, *Black Pain in Trek*, really opened my eyes to all of this and forced me to kind of peel back the veil a bit. So, I'm glad that you're here to remind folks that there is still love here because they might not hear it from me. I want to talk about *Code of Honor*. I need to get into it.

**Subrina:** All right, let it out, girl. Let it out.

**Jarrah:** Do it.

**Kennedy:** I know everybody hates this episode.

**Subrina:** No, we have one sister that does not hate it.

**Kennedy:** Yeah? Okay, good. I understand.

**Subrina:** We understand. Go ahead.

**Kennedy:** And hold space and honor people's position against this episode. But here's why I always advocate for it. As cringy as it is from the depiction of the folks who had the vaccine, their names escaped me right now. It's someone with an L, right? It's not librarian-- [crosstalk]

**Subrina:** It was-- Lutan was the guy, and they were the Ligonians.

**Kennedy:** Ligonian, there they are. The Ligonians, clearly a self-sustaining people, medically advanced, obviously, if Starfleet has to come to them. So, that's a good thing. We've seen that in elements of human history. It's cool. But the cringiest parts of it are not the fact that this man was acting in questionable ways towards a Starfleet officer who may or may not have been a blonde white woman. All that looks weird. It doesn't translate well. But the reason why I hold space for *Code of Honor* is because there are black people like that. There are insulated large communities of black people all over the world who move and think and conduct themselves in the same way as the Ligonians did.

And even though a lot of the positions, a lot of the behaviors are questionable, discussable, one would say in a social context, do they not still have a right to exist? Just because-- We talk about black lives mattering, that means all of them, even the people who are running contrary to progress itself. I look at what we call colloquially hotepts as being perfect examples of real life Ligonians. Like, those dudes and those women are for real, and they live that life. They mean that life. And while it's an issue right now in this social climate, it's still important that this juxtaposed position exists because it forces us to have these nuanced conversations about social issues and why things are effed up and how we can do better.

So, I always say that *Code of Honor* is a rough one to look at because-- And it's like real 80s too. So, you got a little bit of that cringe going on. But I've seen dudes act like that. I've seen communities of black people act like that, and I'm just like, okay, this is not-- People always want to act like this is an episode they want to leave behind or not include in any anthology, or, "Can we just pretend this episode didn't exist?" And I feel that to pretend this very polarizing point of view doesn't exist is a disservice to the complexity of that community and of our community as well. So that's how I feel about it. Yes, the space hoteps is weird, but they're valid too and we need to keep them. Otherwise, we're no different than anybody else.

**Subrina:** I hear what you're saying, Kennedy, this is Subrina, I hear what you're saying, and I get what you're saying. But what I want to just kind of put out there is that if that were the intent of the writer, then I will let you go with that. But you know this woman didn't have no idea who-- [laughs] She just hit on these people because this was her gaze, this is what she has seen. And the cringiest part in this episode, for me, we'll do two things. First of all, every other aliens that we ever see, come on and start speaking standard English. Speak standard English. Except for these brothers. I don't know what the translator was doing, but they had some sort of like messed up, [crosstalk] old ass African accent.

**Kennedy:** Wait. Are you saying the universal translator was racially biased?

**Subrina:** Yes, that's what I'm saying. That's what I'm saying.

**Kennedy:** Wait. Wait. Wait. [laughs]

**Subrina:** Not so much. But some of the lines I was like, "Is this where the translator is really going?" [crosstalk]

**Kennedy:** The translator was like, "Oh, we're going to Ligonian? Hell, yeah. I've been waiting, son. I've been waiting, son. Let's go."

**Subrina:** Went into hotep default. [Kennedy guffaws] And the other thing was Tasha Yar's lines in this, and they were like, "Well, he is like the basic male that you could really get into." I was listening to this, like going this is so wrong on so many levels that don't just blame the black people in *Code of Honor*, blame the white women in *Code of Honor* too, because they were contributing to this mess. So, the writer-- poor Tasha, these two actresses had to send you these lines. They all said that they didn't realize it was going to be as crazy as it was. But watching it is painful, and I do skip over it, and I do leave it behind, and I'm not even worried about it.

**Kennedy:** We got to bring them with us because we got to.

**Subrina:** We got to. [crosstalk]

**Kennedy:** We got to because they're the canary. That's the canary. That's the canary. When stuff starts to go down the route of the Ligonians, that's when you know, we need to reevaluate what we do in here. They are the canary. You don't have to keep the canary on the dashboard. You can keep the canary in the back. You know I what mean? But it's got to come.

[chuckles]

**Jarrah:** Well, I love this. And still, do you think there's a progressive message there?

**Subrina:** Oof.

[laughter]

**Kennedy:** Here's what not to do-

[laughter]

**Kennedy:** -when depicting self-sustaining, non-Earth-based black people.

**Subrina:** Black people that got their own transporter, they were like, "No, I got my own transporter." "Hey, I got the vaccine. I got the transporter, but I'm still sitting up here." I don't know. I would have loved it, maybe even if they had put them in a production that looked futuristic, that didn't look like they were trying to make it look like *1001 Arabian Nights*. If the costuming even had been different, it may not have been so painful because this was a progressive society, but you got them banging sticks-- who they doing? They were tossing tomahawks. I'm like, "Lord Jesus, help us all." Okay.

**Kennedy:** But wait. There's something to be said for holding space for ancestral traditions. That's all I'm saying.

**Subrina:** [laughs] That's all.

**Kennedy:** That's all I'm saying. Like I said, we don't have to put the canary on the dashboard. You can keep it in the back.

**Subrina:** All right. Okay. I was waiting for somebody to jump a broom or something. Okay.

**Kennedy:** And you're not wrong. You're not wrong. Especially because, like you said, if the writer, if the creatives behind the story had had that intention when creating it, different ball of wax. But because we have to make this head cannon, these mental gymnastics justify it. [laughs]

**Subrina:** You got to do this to justify it. Exactly. But this was not Avery Brooks wearing Kente cloth. This was not Avery Brooks putting up African sculptures on his wall. This was a brother wearing like polyester harem pants.

**Kennedy:** Harem pants. He had MC Hammer pants-- [crosstalk]

**Jarra:** Disco Aladdin.

**Kennedy:** Disco Aladdin.

**Subrina:** Tossed in tomahawks. Tomahawks? What tomahawks? Are we appropriating from indigenous people now too? I mean, what's going on here?

**Jarra:** Yes, we are. [laughs]

**Subrina:** I just can't. I can't. I'm leaving-- [crosstalk]

**Kennedy:** You're not wrong. I totally understand why one would do that. But here's the thing. This presents an opportunity to do better. The fact that no one has gone back to deal with the Ligonians, the fact that we haven't had a Ligonian in Starfleet is the problem.

**Subrina:** You know what? You're right. You are right.

**Kennedy:** Just saying, that's the issue. Okay. Yes, that was a problem. Here's an opportunity to put a Ligonian in the-- [crosstalk]

**Subrina:** In the medical forces. Why aren't they in medical?

**Kennedy:** Have them on board, keeping shit in line. They could be a personnel officer. I don't know. PAO from Ligonian? Yes.

**Subrina:** I want them at Starfleet Medical. They got the vaccine. Come on now.

**Kennedy:** You know, just saying. That's all I'm saying.

**Subrina:** [laughs]

**Kennedy:** You can't leave them back there.

**Subrina:** All right.

**Kennedy:** How else will you learn?

**Subrina:** We've got to bring the Ligonians with us.

**Jarrah:** Okay, well, any other examples people want to talk about from the sort of diverse but not progressive? I feel like there's a lot of examples we could go into.

**Subrina:** I'll give you one. [chuckles] This is one that drives me crazy. Diversity. I'm going to go back to *TOS* because you know I'm Subrina, and that's my jam, that's my show, *TOS*. The ultimate computer. We are introduced to Dr. Richard Daystrom.

**Kennedy and Jarrah:** Mm.

**Subrina:** And diversity on steroids. I mean, when I saw this as a kid, I said, "You're telling me that the brainiac, the man that invented these computers of the Federation, is a black man?"

**Kennedy:** We out here.

**Subrina:** I'm there for this. And it's William Marshall, who played *Blacula*, I was just totally into this. You have this man go crazy, all right, because he's hearing people talk behind his back and he's hearing people building on his work. And I'm like, any brother that is smart as this has been used to that mess, and that is not enough to drive you crazy, but they did. But the thing that gets me with this, and I want to compare it to something else, because this has always bugged me. Dr. Daystrom is such a character that the institute is named after him, you got all this stuff going on, but you never got a dynasty of Daystroms like you got of Soongs. We had so many Soongs. I know you got Brent and you got all this stuff, but it was an idea of inherited brilliance that we never see that--

**Kennedy:** Argh, Subrina.

**Subrina:** [crosstalk] -Daystrom dynasty that I should be seeing more Daystrom because his brilliance was that much. It's like, "No, he's black. It's an anomaly." Yeah, you had one smart black guy.

**Kennedy:** Argh. Oh, why is there not a Daystrom class of starships? You're not wrong. Oh, I didn't even think about-- Ooh, I'm mad all over again. Argh.

**Subrina:** I'm just saying. That's what I see as diverse. Diverse but not progressive.

**Jarrah:** I just feel like we could just stop the episode right now [crosstalk] takeaway.

[laughter]

**Kennedy:** You're not wrong. You're absolutely not wrong.

**Subrina:** And then, when they tried to bring in Daystrom's daughter, the people of the *Next Generation* were so unaware that Richard Daystrom was a black man that they cast a white actress, they had to change her name to Leah Brahms, and we lost the possibility of the Daystrom dynasty and never revisited. It always kills me that he's always building an award and a colony, but I want to see a walking black man walking around. He's going to say, "I'm Dr. Daystrom's great-great grandson, and he invented something."

**Jarrah:** Yeah, this is amazing. And it reminds me also of the kind of erasure of Lily Sloane in history as well.

**Subrina:** Ooh.

**Kennedy:** Hmm.

**Jarrah:** She's such an important part of that first flight. But no one knows who she is when they show up in the past. Everyone knows who's Zefram Cochrane was.

**Subrina:** Right?

**Kennedy:** And you already know why.

**Subrina:** Yep. And I'll say another thing. I'm going to bring it--

**Kennedy:** Go on, go ahead.

**Subrina:** I'm on it now. I'm on it.

**Kennedy:** Go ahead.

**Subrina:** Well, I'm going to bring it up to *Discovery*. So, here we have Michael Burnham, smartest person in the room--

**Kennedy:** Period.

**Subrina:** -and her mother smartest person--

**Kennedy:** The other smartest person, smarter than her.

**Subrina:** Finally get to, "Ooh, we got some inherited brilliance. We got it."

**Kennedy:** Hey, here we are.

**Subrina:** Mama passing it down to daughter. And they went and turned the sister into a warrior nun. I said, "Wait, no. No. No."

**Kennedy:** I'm kind of okay with her being in the Qowat.

**Subrina:** I'm okay with that too. But the reason why was because what she was so guilty, because she had made--? Okay, here's the other thing. She makes a time travel suit. The sister made a time travel suit. But everybody got so twisted up with the show going 900 years in the future and changing the tone of the show and all that, you got all twisted up in that story that you forgot that a sister built a time-traveling space suit. I'm like, "Okay, come on. Somebody give me some canon and put that in something, because she's up there with Dr. Daystrom."

**Kennedy:** Right. And also, to another point you made, Subrina. Here we are with another black character being traumatized from the Gate.

**Subrina:** Oh, gee. You know, wow.

**Kennedy:** From the Gate. Both Danielle and Michael Burnham suffered a great deal of trauma on that day when she went to the future and husband/dad was killed. Okay, and that's a weird thing to say, husband/dad, because technically, that is Sonequa Martin-Green's husband, but he also played her dad. Anyway, don't worry about it. Don't worry about it. Just don't even think about it. People are like, "What?" Uhm, I lost my train of thought. Yeah, instead of dealing with her trauma, processing what it means to have lost your child and your husband and your time and point in the universe, she joins a cult. And this has happened. This has happened in history to dozens of different people. Like, it's a true lived experience. But we are not talking about her healing from this. We have watched Michael find some type of solace and learn how to process her grief and her loss and all of that. And then here, you come with an estranged parent? That's not new trauma? We've already seen Michael go through trauma. Now, you want to traumatize her again? What is the fascination?

**Subrina:** How much can a sister take in *Star Trek*?

**Kennedy:** This woman done lost two boos, the new one she had to leave behind, the next one was messing around on her job. Leaves his cat, his huge cat for her to take care of. Now, I've got to be a caregiver to your baby? What's happening?

[chuckles]

**Kennedy:** Amazing.

**Jarrah:** Well, I would like to get into the next kind of bucket, but I'll just kind of list off a couple more episodes. I don't know if we need to go into them, but if you want to, feel free to jump in. So, I mentioned Chakotay. I was thinking tattoo, particularly as a, "Oh, hey, you've got the rubber tree people that don't actually exist. And, oh, it turns out that they were all basically just shepherded by a white god." So, that was great.

**Subrina:** White alien, that was like-- how can you even say this to me? [laughs] Okay, whatever.

**Jarrah:** *Favorite Son* was another one that jumped out, where you have Kim and a matriarchal society, but they're all just there to kill men. And it was a diverse matriarchal society too. But yeah, I mean, there's so many examples over time in *Star Trek*. Yeah. And I will say that diversity in our society, being a capitalist, western society, it's easier to be diverse than to be progressive.

**Subrina:** I got one more in this category for you that just-- *Aqui!* Can we talk about *Aqui!* for a minute? Because that one--

**Jarrah:** Yeah, go for it.

**Subrina:** And this was written by Brannon Braga and Ron D. Moore. So, I'm expecting a bit from them because they've given me so much. And Ron is still giving us so much over on *For All Mankind*. I mean, this guy is-- I love him. To see a black Starfleet officer come into a show and her immediate description before the murder, before anything happens, before anything, whatever, whatever she is called belligerent and insubordinate, and not a model officer. I said, "Oh, well, that's a place to start with a black female officer."

**Kennedy:** Immediately, like, "What did she do wrong then? She sounded like she made the right decisions."

**Subrina:** Right. I don't even understand it. So, here she comes. We're going to do black female that can't get her shit together. And the funniest thing about this one, I was watching it again. I was like, "Sister can't even get some healthcare on the Enterprise." She comes back, she's got a bleeding head, she's been lost for 46 hours. She tells Dr. Crusher, "I don't remember what happened. My memories seem to be gone." They don't even take the girl to sickbay. She goes to Ten Forward and has a drink with Jordi. I said, "What is going on this ship?" The girl just said she can't remember anything. She got hit in the head. Somebody tried to kill her, and she'd been missing for 46 hours. And you're like, "Are you sure?" I said, "Wait, please, somebody stop this show." It is incredible to watch it.

So, the whole show, they were trying to do this Laura thing, where you didn't know if she was dead or not, and is Jordi is going to have a new girlfriend and all this. And I understand that the writers were kind of disappointed that the love story angle didn't come off, but I didn't understand what they were trying to say. There was one line when Jordi said, "I'm not the one judging." And I said, "Is this what the theme was supposed to be? Is it just the love story? Were you trying to tell me that you shouldn't judge a book by its cover, and you've already got a white glaze on the cover?" I mean, what were you trying to say in *Aquiel* that you would paint this woman so ineptly and nobody believes her? When you believe anybody that hears a thing on their ship, if they said they thought they heard something that night, they are running scans, they are looking for shit. But Beverly, she was so busy looking at the deck plate and stuff, they just did not believe this sister from the minute she showed up. And this show, it just grates on me. I just cannot stand that one.

**Kennedy:** See, *Aquiel* is the one I want to leave behind.

**Subrina:** Yeah.

**Jarrah:** Mm.

**Kennedy:** That's the one I want to leave behind. Because all you did was piss everybody off in this room by this episode. All you did was piss everybody off. So why are we adding this one that does nothing but continue to paint Jordi as a creep? Because him being in her room, touching all her stuff, playing with her dog, that's weird. That's weird, bro. What is he doing? And it's like I don't understand, first of all, we never saw Jordi get paired off with anybody except for Data. Just acknowledge that it's Data. Why is it that-- Child, don't get me started.

**Subrina:** I hear you.

**Kennedy:** Yes, everything you said.

**Subrina:** I hear you, but that's the other one. I'm going to leave that one.

**Kennedy:** That's the one. Yeah, *Aquiel*, I can definitely leave behind. And I always forget about that one. I feel like I've already left it behind. And whenever I do a rewatch, I'm like, "Argh, it's this one."

**Subrina:** And I'm just going to throw the Irish people in there for the *Up The Long Ladder*. I know the Irish people.

**Kennedy:** Oh, my gosh. Yeah.

**Subrina:** What did you got against Irish people? What was that one about?

**Jarrah:** I won't even know that it's that diverse of an episode.

**Subrina:** Well, class.

**Jarrah:** That's very true. Yeah, I have issues with that. Yeah.

**Kennedy:** It's so interesting too, because as I've been conducting my own Irish studies, technically, the Irish diaspora is one of the largest in humanity. There are more people of Irish descent living in other countries than there are in Ireland.

**Subrina:** Talk to me. I'm from Boston, Massachusetts. I know that's true.

**Kennedy:** So, it's interesting because as I've done my own kind of ancestral digging and found out that I have Irish ancestry way back in the way back, way back. I had to learn I didn't consider that a diaspora. But when I thought about, "Oh, there's been famine, there's been wars, there's been colonization. People don't speak the language anymore," it stands to reason that somewhere a group of rural Irish folk was like, "I'm out. Wherever we can go, let's just go and get out of here, because it's not cool. We'll find someplace and everything will be fine. Everything will be fine. Don't even worry about it."

**Subrina:** Wanted white people to have their moment of diversity and progressiveness.

**Kennedy:** But here's the thing. It's okay to depict a group of people. It's even better to depict a group of marginalized people and their experiences and their languages and all that stuff. But if you don't portray those characters to the highest of their intellectual capabilities, then it comes off that you're making fun of people. So, the fact that none of those people had any type of-- I mean, I guess if they were Luddites and they just didn't want to deal with technology, that's valid too. But none of them-- there's ways to depict intellectual prowess without it being focused on technology. Like, there's other things to be supremely academic about or supremely intelligent about. And the fact that effort wasn't made to convey that these people weren't just-- To equate rural upbringings with being ignorant is the problem in this one. They can be rural and sound like they just left the island without appearing to be dimwitted in any way.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. And I don't mean to suggest that it wasn't diverse because they're clearly made a very visible ethnic minority and it's building on stereotypes from when Irish were not considered white Americans, basically. So, yeah.

Okay, let's get into progressive but not diverse. One, I wanted to highlight from this batch is the entire storyline of the Bajoran Resistance in *Deep Space Nine* because I think there's a lot of really good messages there, but for some reason we don't really get any prominent Bajorans who are not white and no queerness and things like that but that was basically all *Star Trek* except for *Rejoined* and the outcast, like, no overt queerness.

And so, I was actually just recently read a book called a different *A Different Trek: Radical Geographies of Deep Space Nine* by David Seitz. And he talks a bit about this, about the implications of the Bajoran Resistance storyline related to Palestine and other colonial occupation struggles over time. And yet, it's mostly white people. And this also happens with the Maquis where you have people like Eddington and stuff who are the face of the Maquis other than Chakotay and B'Elanna, went from being an indigenous movement to being kind of a general movement, which-- it's cool in a way, but then you lose the indigeneity and the connection to that storyline.

**Subrina:** Sisko had his one boy that was in there. [chuckles] But yeah, that whole Bajoran storyline, it was always a good one. And again, they had a lot of good effect of feeling that you're worth being loved again because of things that you've done. Nerys just went through it and she took us all the way from being like angry white woman, all the way to being Major Kira. What a great arc, but I never really thought of that being predominantly a white or non-diverse storyline. But yeah, it is.

**Jarrah:** It's got lots of women doing stuff.

**Kennedy:** Right. And it didn't really occur to me until you pointed that out. Like, "I'm thinking everybody? Damn, even the Kai." My thing with the Bajoran-Cardassian conflict, I always saw it as an allegory for like the Bosnian-Serbian conflict, which as a European conflict, I assume would be mostly white people. We didn't even see a black Cardassian until Season 7. So, I in my brain just kind of accepted it because of that presumed allegory. But yeah, holy smokes. Also, Kira was able to flourish and develop in a good way because she had a commanding officer that didn't try to control or police her in any way. He got out of her way. He just tried to channel her energy in a way that was conducive for everybody's point. So, Kira was able to fly because Sisko cleared the runway for her.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. And take a listen to our Best Male Allies episode from early on in the show for more on that. In terms of progressive messages around the Bajoran Resistance, I think an episode like Shakaar comes to mind where Kira basically decides to disobey the Kai. And in my opinion, this is out of a desire to advance social justice. Let's help the people that are marginalized, keep their farming equipment. So, it's got class dynamics. There's a lot of good political analysis in that. And there's episodes like *Duet* that are very powerful. They're important episodes but they, like I said, don't really feature non-white or queer people, people with disabilities, other kind of axes of identity.

**Subrina:** They were just having a hard enough time being Bajoran. Just the-- [laughs]

**Kennedy:** Yeah. And there's something powerful to be said in that moment. One could make the argument, if one didn't know better, that the creative team used a predominantly white-appearing race of people to tell this type of story so that folks who also looked like them would be more susceptible-- [crosstalk]

**Subrina:** To the story. That's a good point.

**Jarrah:** I don't think they thought about it.

**Kennedy:** No, they definitely didn't. That's me, again.

**Jarrah:** But I do think that's the impact.

**Kennedy:** Mental gymnastics, giving them more credit than they deserve.

**Subrina:** No, this writing team that maybe-- I don't know. No, no, no. They may have thought of it. I don't know.

**Jarrah:** Any other episodes or moments you want to highlight in this kind of category of progressive but not diverse?

**Subrina:** Well, you mentioned *The Devil in the Dark* and that one always gets me how they won't kill a creature that's the last of its kind. But it was interesting that they did do that in another episode. Those two episodes always kind of get me where they didn't give the poor salt creature the same progressive stance. I mean, maybe they just didn't have the time. I mean, it was shoot now or Spock is going to die or Kirk was going to die, you had to do something." But they never seemed to want to preserve the creature. I mean, they were just straight out going to kill it. And maybe they learned from the salt creature so that by the time we got to the Horta, they had a new way of thinking. Spock was like, "Hey, you know what? Look what we did with this other one."

**Kennedy:** Yeah. I would say all of *TOS* is progressive but not diverse.

**Subrina:** Right.

**Kennedy:** Honestly. [laughs]

**Jarrah:** There are probably some episodes that aren't that progressive, but there's definitely a lot that, especially for their time, were advancing important messages and trying to get people to think about diverse perspectives, even if the people advancing that message were not diverse. And, I mean, I think the same continues in *TNG* with basically every episode that is solved by Picard giving a speech.

**Kennedy:** Mm-hmm.

**Jarrah:** And again, it might be partly like you were saying that the effect of that is that maybe that message is more palatable or more acceptable to a white, educated audience if you hear it delivered by Patrick Stewart. But that is kind of problematic. And it reflects this whole idea of colonialism and western expansion of white people going to places and telling other people, people of color, indigenous people what to do and how to live and what the right moral values are.

**Kennedy:** Mm-hmm.

**Subrina:** Yeah. I think one of my favorite things about the Ferengi is that Quark was always telling the Hew-mons what their story was about. "Let me break it down for you. No, you're not. Once you lose your comfort and you're this and that." He had them nailed. And I am not a Ferengi fan. People know this about me. But that was the one thing about the Ferengis that I love. They could call it when they saw it.

**Kennedy:** Yeah. And it was really powerful when Quark had those moments telling Hew-mons about themselves. Like, "Hey, we're not the monsters, we never enslaved ourselves and each other. We never did all these things. Yeah, we're greedy, but everyone has the opportunity to be greedy here. That's got nothing to do with what you look like, where you come from, what you put--" [crosstalk]

**Subrina:** I'm not killing people. [laughs]

**Kennedy:** Right.

**Subrina:** Yeah, that was one of my favorites. And I love that he put it right between their eyes.

**Kennedy:** I feel like we're living in the mirror Ferenginar. It's still a capitalist society, but way more violent than it ever was on actual Ferenginar.

**Subrina:** Ooh, yeah.

**Jarrah:** Another one that I had on my list was *Critical Care*, the *Voyager* episode. It's clearly got a progressive message about how you shouldn't deny healthcare based on ability to pay, but it's one that's predominantly told by white men. And another one that is my pet peeve is the Kir'Shara arc and Archer's role as the carrier of Surak's katra because I love so much about the Kir'Shara arc, but why is T'Pol not the center of the story or T'Pol's mom? And instead, it's like Archer is definitely the white savior of the story and they're just kind of all there helping out.

**Subrina:** He could be in the story if he was the one that got her safely back to wherever, he would be the protector of the katra. But no, he's got it in his dag on head. I was like, "Oh, my God." And *Enterprise* is my show. Okay? I am the one here that loves the song. I love *Enterprise*.

**Jarrah:** We all love the song.

**Subrina:** Here's why I love this show so much because you want to talk about progressive and diversity. This is the one show that actually had two women on the bridge in *Legacy* Trek. They're the only ones that did it. This is the only show that had a black male, human, non-enhanced Starfleet officer who had the best pilot in the fleet with Travis Mayweather. I mean, everybody says, "Oh, it was a lot of-- this character, he was away. He never did anything." But Travis was my one black male that didn't have nose ridges, enhanced eyes, wormhole mother, whatever. Travis was just a brother. And I loved that about *Enterprise*. And he saved that shit more than once. That brother saved that shit more than once.

**Kennedy:** Mm. I have feelings about Travis.

**Subrina:** I know. Everybody does because they wrote him that way.

**Kennedy:** I would put *Enterprise*-- just like I would put *TOS* under the progressive but not diverse umbrella, I would put *Enterprise* under the diverse but not progressive umbrella. Because the only thing we ever learned about Travis was when his father died. And then, we had to see a trauma being shared by two black men over the--

**Subrina:** I disagree. We did learn that about Travis. One thing I loved about Travis, and it was funny for me to hear it because my dad used to always tell me when we were studying history and everything, and we were talking about history of Magellan circumnavigating the world the first man to do it. Kind of like Archer, the first man to go out there. And my father says, "Well, he's not the first man to circumnavigate the globe because his navigator was from Africa, and he was the first man to circumnavigate." And I was like, "Yeah, Travis was a boomer. He'd been out here before. He had seen all this mess. He could tell these people what was going to happen."

And I loved that fact about him that they didn't play up. There was a lot of stuff that they gave him that they never played up. And when you watch it in streaming, when you can just binge it, you get a little more of a sense of him that he's a joker, that he's a practical joker, that he's cool, and people just-- they kind of get on that one thing about him, and they didn't do much with this character, but I love the little tidbits--

**Kennedy:** [crosstalk] -they didn't do much. There was so much potential.

**Subrina:** There was so much potential in this regular brother that was like the best pilot going. And the fact that they did have this thing with T'Pol and Hoshi, two women on the bridge. I mean, here we are, two smartest people in the room on that bridge. And I love this one episode where Hoshi's having a problem-- the Bechdel Test is about to fail, but they pass. The two women actually have a conversation about higher mathematics that they need to create something to talk to whatever that creature is in the cargo bay. And here they are trying to figure this thing out. And I appreciated that one two-minute scene so much where they figured it out, Hoshi finally had to say, "I don't know this higher math." I said, "Hoshi, if you got to go to the science office of Vulcan for the higher math, there's no shame."

So, she goes T'Pol, and T'Pol sits there, and they figure this thing out. And I said, "Thank you. Thank you." It is not Nurse Chapel, it's not Ogawa, or another nurse. They're trying to figure this out because the captain is getting encompassed by this creature. The captain's going to die if these two women don't figure this out.

**Jarrah:** I do love that scene. I do think there was a lot of potential for Hoshi and also for T'Pol and Hoshi to work together more.

**Subrina:** They dropped it. They dropped it.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. And we have a whole episode on Hoshi where you can hear me talk about it, so I won't go into it now.

**Subrina:** Oh, do you? Oh, okay, I've got to go back and listen to that. That's my girl. Hoshi's my girl.

**Jarrah:** [chuckles] But, yeah, let's go into examples of *Star Trek* doing both. Diversity and progressivism. And we may have some debate, as we have on some of these about whether it's actually succeeding. The one that was raised most often when I brought this up on thread was *Far Beyond the Stars*.

**Kennedy:** Yeah. What can you say? I feel like I've said everything there is to say about *Far Beyond the Stars*. What a perfect example of how to tell a story without sparing anybody's feelings and still enabling people to walk away feeling empowered, enlightened, and motivated.

**Subrina:** Yeah. The thing that gets me with that-- and I do love that episode. For some of us, it's really hard to watch. I mean, Marc Scott Zicree, who came on our show and talked about that episode, he really nailed it. And one of the things I asked him about was the composition of the writer's room of *Star Trek* at that time. "Were there any black males in that writer's room?" And he stopped. He stopped cold. And he just goes, "No." And I said, "I have to take away a half a point," but we don't have behind the camera. We finally started getting behind the camera with the directors, but the writing of *Star Trek*, for all these things, we're talking about, progressive, diversity, we're relying on white male and females, thank you, Jeri Taylor, thank God you were there, to do this. And it's not until we get in the new *Trek* that we start seeing some writers coming in that are actually diversity in the writers' room, which for me, with a screenwriter's point of view, that's where it is.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. And *DS9* actually had very few women writers too. It was one of the worst ones in terms of just numbers of women credited. Season 7 of *Deep Space Nine* has no women writing credits the entire season.

**Kennedy:** You can tell. You could tell.

**Jarrah:** That said, it also had *Past Tense* and *Homefront* and *Paradise Lost*, so a lot of getting into more, I think, directly relevant social, political messages in a way that, because of the diversity of the cast was highlighting-- Yeah, I think it talked about opportunities for allyship and how war pushes a tradeoff in values. And we've talked a lot about *Past Tense* and stuff on this show. But *Deep Space Nine*, I would say when I was trying to think of progressive and diverse episodes, it was mostly *Deep Space Nine* episodes that were jumping to mind.

**Subrina:** Because, thank God, they had Avery Brooks to push this shit back up to the top. What? Uh-oh. I could just see him saying, "Oh, we're not doing that today." But unless you have top of the lead sheet that can do that like Sonequa you're going to have the watered down scripts that we see in TNG. Not to their fault, because you had those very powerful-- and I would say in those earlier days, the powerful network suits telling you that you couldn't do this when you're totally relying on ad dollars to keep the show going. Now that its streaming money, it's a different ballgame altogether. You're not so sensitive to, 'I don't need to make this palatable to everybody in middle America. I can say what I want to say because I'm doing niche writing for a niche that's going to pay to see this show."

So, it's a different ballgame. It's sort of apples and oranges. But I would pull out *Deep Space Nine* for having so many of these because they did have that top of the lead sheet in Avery Brooks. And I want to give Mr. Brooks all of the cred because I know even behind the camera, as a director on that show, he was doing things that probably wouldn't have made it to the screen if not for him.

**Jarrah:** Yeah, I also think they had, which you're sort of alluding to that, freedom because they weren't the flagship show. Being kind of overshadowed, at least from the perspective of the creators that-- you had basically the main TNG writing group moved to *Voyager* because they wanted to be on *Voyager*. And so, the *DS9*, being the "black sheep" of the *Star Trek* family, gave them a little bit more freedom. I don't think they always hit it out of the park, but there's some really good examples there.

**Subrina:** A lot of times, you didn't need to hit it out of the park. You just had to get the game going, just get to the next base.

**Kennedy:** I love how talking about *Deep Space Nine* automatically shifts us into baseball analogies.

**Subrina:** Of course, it does.

**Kennedy:** I love it, I love it, I love it.

**Jarrah:** Go Niners. Okay, so let's talk about streaming-era *Star Trek* and let's go back to *Discovery* and where *Discovery* works on this front. It's hard to pick an episode because it's not an episodic show by and large, but I did just rewatch *Choose to Live* as an example of one. It is a warrior nun show. But one thing I think *Discovery* does a good job of is it really makes explicit the system that they're working in and its challenges. So, it's not just Starfleet's great and it's also not like *Picard* where Starfleet's shady. But then at the end of the day, we're just going to pretend that they all do the right thing and not really go into it.

So, there's this kind of interaction at the beginning where Rillak and Burnham and the Qowat Milat and Ni'Var, are all kind of negotiating on establishing this joint mission to apprehend this Ni'Var sister who's killed a Federation official. And they basically promise to respect the ways of the Qowat Milat and then--

**Kennedy:** Ooh. Hold on. I'm sorry not to interrupt you. Not just a Federation official--

**Subrina:** Okay. I was waiting.

**Kennedy:** --One of the first black captains that we see-- [crosstalk]

**Subrina:** Thank you. Oh, my God.

**Kennedy:** [crosstalk] -shit, she was like, "Shank, what's happening?"

**Jarrah:** Yeah, that's not cool. That's not cool.

**Kennedy:** Oh, I forgot all about it. See, I'm mad all over again.

**Subrina:** I was waiting for you [crosstalk] I know she's going to say something.

**Kennedy:** Ooh.

**Jarrah:** Yeah, that's not cool. But then, Burnham and Rillak go off and Rillak basically says, "Okay, but between us, this is your mission." And Burnham talks about, "Well, we basically just made this commitment to these folks." And Rillak makes a valid but frustrating point about basically the importance of developing-- the importance of getting Ni'Var back in the Federation is kind of superseding what they just said to people or, "This is why we said this." But it's not in a way that it's necessarily like Rillak is evil. It's Rillak is kind of the voice of--

**Kennedy:** She's politicking. She's a politician.

**Jarrah:** Yeah, exactly. And so, it makes that really explicit at a number of points in discovery. And there is also a weird part at the end where Burnham's like upset that they're not giving the family justice by not putting the guy in prison. And that's weird.

**Kennedy:** I think that's topical though.

**Jarrah:** Yes, it is.

**Kennedy:** When that was on the air, that was a thing.

**Jarrah:** Yeah, for sure. But yeah. Anyway, what I think is something *Discovery* does is it doesn't say, "We're not working in a messed-up system," but it makes pretty clear how that system works.

**Kennedy:** Yeah. And I think that perspective is unique to them, not only because they're in the future now, although it's all the future, but in Season 1 of *Discovery*, it was that primordial Starfleet phase. We were no longer cranking dials and flipping switches and throwing chunks of dilithium in the warp core like they were on the NX ships. But we're not quite a Constitution class yet. So, there's still a lot of structuring in real time of this immense organization and what their overall mission is and-- what the code of conduct is for its personnel. So, for them to be the one to have that unique perspective in the beginning, and then end up here, Rillak was such a great-- Ugh, I had so many issues with her just by looking at her. I was like, "What is this?" You know [crosstalk] Cardassian and she got to be, "What is this?" But after having seen a season of her, I just really not only respect the character, but also the move of putting a character like that, that forces Michael to think of the world outside of--

**Subrina:** *Discovery*. Right, the world outside of *Discovery*.

**Kennedy:** Yeah. And with them not being impressed by that crew when they first got there and being a little resentful of their optimism and their can-do-it-ness, I think, is a really great way of showing-- just because you mean well, that you're not entitled to people's acceptance of you. And that, I feel like, is a keynote that a lot of the series tend to miss. When you understand that just because you mean well, not everybody-- that doesn't mean people have to message you just because you mean well, and what that means, that doesn't mean be persistent and try to convince them that you're cool, that means respect boundary. [chuckles] And if they come round, they come round.

**Subrina:** Read the room, because this is a different room now. I know you're coming from wherever you're coming from, but you can't just come in here and, "Oh, yeah, I got a mushroom drive." So what?

**Kennedy:** Right.

**Jarrah:** *Disco* also shows how the federation has had to start doing stuff differently. And instead of going around and just expecting, everyone's going to want to join you. And if you make a great moral speech that people are going to agree that was universal values, or they can just eff right off. If they don't agree, they have to go to planets and say, "You know what? We're going to give you some dilithium and you don't have to join us. Let's talk." Basically, "We see your need, we're going to help. But if you're not comfortable with that, if you're not comfortable with the way we do things, then that's cool. But we want to dialog, and we want to show you that we're not putting ourselves out there as the arbiter of moral, universal justice."

**Subrina:** I think there was a great line in the Harry Mudd episode when he was in the prison and he was yelling at the Captain Lorca, and he was saying, "You guys have your wars, and all the rest of us that are down here on the planets have to basically suffer through this. You make these decisions. We've got to survive." And it was the one time I ever heard a character basically say, "I don't care what's going on with what political thing you're doing or what thing you think you need to rescue. I'm just trying to get through the day." And I thought that *Discovery* was really good with starting to let you see how that was really the whole galaxy now was in that situation in this new *Trek* when they go to the future, everybody was like this now. "I'm just trying to get through the day." Even the Federation is just trying to get through the day. So, I'll cut a deal.

**Jarrah:** Yeah. Let's talk briefly before we wrap up about just kind of where we feel *Star Trek* is at these days. Any general takeaways from this discussion? We could 100% go all day on this. Encourage listeners, if you have episodes or moment you want to highlight that we didn't get to, please comment. We'd love to get your feedback. Of course, we don't have time to discuss every episode of *Star Trek*. But, yeah, where do you feel like we're at on the balance of diversity versus progressivism, how is *Star Trek* doing? Is it ever going to be hitting a home run on both these fronts? Thoughts?

**Kennedy:** I would say they've gotten better for sure, especially in later seasons of *Discovery*. But I feel like it's two steps forward, three steps back because of the point that I made about Uhura in *Strange New Worlds* and sis having to suffer through trauma. Also, another step back with this weird dynamic between Mariner and her mother. Look, just because you can show a complicated, dare I say, tumultuous relationship between the mother daughter in Starfleet, and they're marginalized, they are women of color, like, "Oh, cool, we're hitting all these optics," does that mean you should. Did you stop to think about the emotional responsibility that goes along with depicting a mother-daughter--? I feel like some conversations are an in-house conversation, you know what I'm saying?

So, I can't say that it's 100% gotten better with the times because we always have to be reminded, "Oh, it's a product of its times." Well, this is a product of its time now. And I feel like there's still-- despite the fact that we've got a "diversified creative staff," writing, producers, directors, camera, makeup, costumes, like we in here, but there's still steps that need to be made because why are we still watching black women be traumatized? Why are we still offing queer characters almost immediately? Why are we still applying dragon lady tropes to somebody who's amazing as Michelle Yeoh? I just feel like how much all that talk I made before about having to bring people along, even though they're not as progressive, so that they may get there too, how do we incorporate that in this? Do we need to continue to include these people in the creative conversations if this is what they're doing? Despite having a cast and crew that is a more accurate representation of humanity?

**Subrina:** I agree with a lot of what you just said, Kennedy, that is still going on. But staying with *Lower Decks*, I love the fact that Mariner does come from an intact family. She comes from a family of people, she's second-generation Starfleet now. Her parents are admirals and captains. I said, "Oh, I'm loving that." Not only that, her mother, one of the few, the first black women to come into a *Star Trek* franchise full pips. She comes in as the captain, and she doesn't die at the end of it. They did put her in manacles, which, okay, you know what?

**Kennedy:** Okay. Hello. Hello. [chuckles] I was like, "What's happening?"

**Subrina:** But she had the ship when the show started, and she's still alive. So, I am happy for that. I love the fact that they are being adventurous with the musical episode of *Strange New Worlds*. I don't know, love it or hate, it was a try. And I loved it. I appreciated it. I don't know if I wanted any more of it, [chuckles] but I appreciated it. We had instant classics like *Ad Astra per Aspera*, which will go down as one of my favorite episodes ever now. And that brings me to the one thing about *Strange New Worlds* that I just wish that they could unhook from *TOS*. Could you please unhook from *TOS*? And just fly, blackbird, just fly. [laughs] You got it. There's always this reference back to-- They've got Kirk in the show. But if you got Spock there--

**Kennedy:** You already know why though.

**Subrina:** Yeah, I know.

**Kennedy:** That's to make a certain group of individuals feel included in the universe. Because *Disco* is black as hell and gay as-- And they don't want to see that. They feel like they're not included. So, here's-

**Subrina:** They want their white captain.

**Kennedy:** -flipping pancakes in space. Don't get me started.

**Subrina:** You know what? I will be there at the table to eat those pancakes. I love Anson Mount. Anson, if you're listening, and I know you are-

**Kennedy:** He's a gem.

**Subrina:** I love you.

**Kennedy:** He's an absolutely gem.

**Subrina:** He's been so kind to the SyFy Sistas! He has done so much for. But I love his portrayal as Pike.

**Kennedy:** We're separating artist from--[crosstalk]

**Subrina:** I know. I am.

**Kennedy:** He's not in control of what they do with the characters. He's just reading what they say, what they put in front of him.

**Subrina:** I don't know. I think he too could be a force like Avery where he can put his foot down and say he's not doing something or that he will do something. I give him that kind of props on that show. I get that feeling he would do that. But I don't know from what I speak. But I do like the new Trek. I'm into it. Loving that *Prodigy* is back, that they saved it. Hey, how to be old time *Star Trek*, man? Write some letters, get the show back on for another season. That was just like such classic *TOS* move there. So, I'm happy. I'm jazzed. I can't wait to see the new shows. I will be here to critique and call out, but I can't wait to see them.

**Jarrah:** Nice. I'll say, I did have a hard time thinking other than *Ad Astra per Aspera* of episodes in *Lower Decks* or *Strange New Worlds* that were progressive, like sending an explicit message about equality, there are a couple other ones, equity and oppression. But I think that ultimately it comes down to we talked about a product of its time. All of the shows are always going to be a product of capitalism because they are selling the shows. So, there's kind of an inherent thing there that how much can they really challenge the system if they're also not wanting to upset the system that enables the shows to be produced?

And also, just it being very much from a background, and especially, like you were saying, that hooking with *TOS*, *TOS* was *Wagon Train* to the stars. It's fundamentally space western colonial narrative. And there's been a push away from that with shows like *Discovery*, but it's never going to be completely. And ultimately, I'm excited for what's coming next as well, but also just kind of conscious of that.

All right, that's about all the time we have for today. So, Subrina, where can people find you on the internet?

**Subrina:** You can find the SyFy Sistas! at [syfysistas.com](http://syfysistas.com). And also on Facebook at [syfysistas.com](https://www.facebook.com/syfysistas). And you can find us on Instagram and TikTok and everything else @SyFy Sistas! And enjoy us on YouTube, our new YouTube channel, which is [youtube/syfysistas](https://www.youtube.com/syfysistas).

**Jarrah:** Awesome. And Kennedy?

**Kennedy:** Oh, I went private [laughs] on all my socials. So, if you want to reach out to me, you can email me at [kennedy@womenatwarp.com](mailto:kennedy@womenatwarp.com).

**Jarrah:** Amazing. And I'm Jarrah, and you can find me @jarrahpenguin on Threads and Instagram now. And I'm also at [trekkiefeminist.com](http://trekkiefeminist.com). 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, Twitter, or Instagram @womenatwarp. Thanks so much for listening.

[Women at Warp theme]

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