**'Distant Origin' (episode about Lizard People) Star Trek Voyager**

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| **http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Distant\_Origin\_%28episode%29****"Distant Origin"** |
| [VOY](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY)AGER, Episode [3x23](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_3)Production number: 165First aired: [30 April](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/30_April) [1997](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/April_1997)  |
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| Forra Gegen examines globe of Earth.jpg |
| *Written By*[Brannon Braga](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Brannon_Braga) & [Joe Menosky](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Joe_Menosky)*Directed By*[David Livingston](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/David_Livingston) |
| *Unknown* ([2373](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/2373)) |

An alien scientist finds evidence linking his species' ancestry to Earth, but government officials refuse to accept his evidence because it conflicts with existing doctrine.

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**Summary**

**Teaser**

A pair of [Voth](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth), a [species](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Species) of [reptilian](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Reptile) [humanoids](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Humanoid), named [Forra Gegen](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Forra_Gegen) and [Tova Veer](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tova_Veer) conduct an [archaeological](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Archaeology) investigation in a cave on an [M-class](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/M-class) [planet](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Planet). They search the cave with their [flashlights](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Palm_beacon) and Veer discovers a tattered piece of cloth; while he does not appear to recognize it, it is a gold-colored [Starfleet](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Starfleet) [Operations division](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Operations_division) uniform. Gegen journeys a bit further into the cave where he delicately unearths a [Human](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Human) leg bone. Upon realizing what it is, he emits a series of clicking sounds to summon Veer and scans the bone with a small round device similar in function to a [tricorder](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tricorder).

Veer asks if the discovery is a genetic match, although to what he does not say and Gegen confirms it is. "*Could this be it? The proof?*" Veer asks eagerly. "*If it is,*" responds Gegen, "*We've just made the most important discovery in Voth history.*" He shines his light on a nearby Human skull as he speaks and the camera fades out.

**Act One**

Forra Gegen and a Human skull

Now aboard their vessel, Gegen and Veer have laid the bones collected out on a table, forming an approximation of what the skeleton would look like if complete. They study the incomplete skeleton much as [paleontologists](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Paleontology) would study a [dinosaur](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Dinosaur) fossil and determine it is related to the Voth. They decide to present their findings to the [Ministry of Elders](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Elders).

However, [Minister](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Minister) [Odala](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Odala) does not take kindly to their findings. She claims the similarities are coincidental, accusing Gegen of questioning [Voth Doctrine](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth_Doctrine). Once he realizes that he will get nowhere with her, Gegen decides to mount an expedition on his own.

His daughter [Frola](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Frola_Gegen) wants to believe in him but she finds it hard to believe that the Voth are related to [mammals](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Mammal) from elsewhere in the [galaxy](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Milky_Way_Galaxy). Unfortunately, Tova informs him that he has been charged with heresy against [The Doctrine](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth_Doctrine) and all of his supporters have abandoned him. Determined to find the truth, Forra and Tova set out on their own.

The two of them find one clue on the uniform of the corpse they recovered: they need to find something called [USS *Voyager*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/USS_Voyager).

**Act Two**

"*Across the vastness of space, to find one ship among a sea of stars is no simple matter, and for many weeks we found nothing. And then, fortune glanced in our direction. A trader from a* [*space station*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Bahrat%27s_space_station) *bordering the* [*Nekrit Expanse*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Nekrit_Expanse) *informed us of a curious group of explorers claiming to be from the other side of the galaxy. The merchants there spoke of a vessel called* Voyager*. They were able to help us clarify certain details. With this new information, we began to acquire other items and new evidence. Our most significant find: a canister of* [*warp plasma*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Warp_plasma) *from* Voyager*'s engines. For now, we are scanning space for a matching signature. Little is known about these explorers but they call themselves Human, and they claim to be traveling home to a distant planet. My thoughts are with you, Frola, as are those of my colleague Veer.*"

On the ship, Gegen jokes with Veer, who is clearly interested in Gegen's daughter, Frola. Suddenly Veer detects an energy transmission and after coming out of warp, he and Gegen see the *Voyager*.

After deciding to observe *Voyager*, the two board *Voyager* undetected under an [interphase cloaking device](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Interphase_cloaking_device) and wander around the ship looking at several things such as the computer, the "male and female interacting" and "courting behavior" between [Tom Paris](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tom_Paris) and [B'Elanna Torres](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/B%27Elanna_Torres). As they observe, they seem to think of the Humans as primitive compared to their own species. On the [bridge](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Bridge), still cloaked, they assume that the social hierarchy is matriarchal due to [Kathryn Janeway](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Kathryn_Janeway) being the [captain](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Captain). At this time the crew discovers two unknown hidden beings onboard. Gegen and Veer attempt to leave only to realize they cannot transport off their ship. While the bridge is being sealed by a level 10 [force field](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Force_field), Gegen and Veer teleport to the [mess hall](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Mess_hall). Lieutenant [Tuvok](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tuvok) makes the two appear and when Veer instinctively shoots Chakotay with a small dart, Gegen instantly transports him and Chakotay away to his vessel.

**Act Three**

In [sickbay](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Sickbay), Janeway attempts to converse with Veer to find that he speaks with clicks. [The Doctor](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/The_Doctor) finds that his body temperature and metabolism have dropped and Janeway orders others to examine the new species.

On Gegen's ship, Chakotay finds that Gegen is a molecular paleontologist and explains that he accidentally took Chakotay instead of Veer. While on Gegen's ship, Gegen questions whether there are any of his species on Earth, a term unfamiliar to him. After Gegen shuts the force field around Chakotay off, he and Chakotay make formal [First Contact](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/First_Contact) between the two.



A hadrosaur seen on the Holodeck, possibly the ancient ancestor with the unknown species

The Doctor finds that the [DNA](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/DNA) of the Voth and [Humans](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Humans) are remarkably similar ([47](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/47) chromosomes in common) and Janeway makes the conclusion that the Voth evolved on Earth. Janeway goes to [holodeck](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Holodeck) 2 and tries to picture the closest relative to the Voth from Earth. In the holodeck, she and The Doctor see various reptiles from the [Cretaceous era](http://en.memory-alpha.org/index.php?title=Cretaceous_era&action=edit&redlink=1), most notably a [hadrosaur](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Hadrosaur). The Doctor predicts that the hadrosaur continued to evolve after the extinction of other beings to the present Voth civilization.

On Gegen's ship, Chakotay and Gegen propose that any existence of the intelligence of the dinosaurs could have been deep under the surface, never to be found by the Humans on Earth. Gegen begins to see that the Humans and mammals as a whole are not as inferior as he once thought. When Chakotay requests to beam back to *Voyager*, Gegen denies his request and says that he must bring Chakotay to the Ministry to prove that Humans exist.

Back on *Voyager*, the ship begins to be probed with an energy beam that cuts through the shields and beams the entire ship into the alien vessel.

**Act Four**



Interior of the city ship with *Voyager* inside

With *Voyager* inside the massive [Voth city ship](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth_city_ship), the ship and weapons begin to lose power. Tuvok is shot by a dart from behind and orders Paris, who is with him, to leave without him. Janeway, with Ensign [Harry Kim](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Harry_Kim) and another officer, encounter the Voth and realizes they are captured. The Voth interrogates the Humans about their origin. When Janeway mentions Earth, the Voth suspects Gegen in spreading rumors. When Paris attempts to fire a full spread of [photon torpedoes](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Photon_torpedo) through the city ship, he is stopped by an unknown force.

Professor Gegen meets the Ministry again and is accused of going against The Doctrine. On trial, the Ministry further accuses Gegen of disputing Doctrine through the [Distant Origin Theory](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Distant_Origin_Theory) and being a destructive influence on society. After given a chance to deny of the evidence, Gegen refuses. The Minister states that the Humans are not related at all to counter Gegen's theory. Chakotay responds by saying that *Voyager*'s fossil records prove otherwise. The Ministry stops and begs Gegen to admit that his interpretation and theory is wrong. Gegen again refuses and claims that the entire Voth civilization is from the Human planet of Earth.

When the Minister questions Veer about the theory, he states that Gegen's research was flawed. The Minister praises him for his testimony. Once again, Gegen is questioned about his theory whether or not he has been mistaken. When Gegen rebels against why Veer would have spoken against him, he challenges the plan of the Voth to keep their "myth" of their history and beliefs. When the Minister asks yet again, Chakotay speaks against the Minister about how their beliefs are so clouded just as Gegen's theory is and that Gegen and he found out that the genetic structure of Voth is incredibly similar to almost every species found on Earth, which is too much to be coincidence. Chakotay states that the Doctrine was changed when transwarp technology was introduced, just as Gegen's theory is attempting to be introduced. The Minister states that she does not want to believe the theory because it might show weakness on the Voth's behalf, depicting them as a race of cowards who fled their home. Chakotay responds that the Voth culture had a great past, surviving on Earth against great odds and subsequently coming to leave Earth and thrive in a distant part of the galaxy, their denial of the past shows the denial of their true heritage. To deny this heritage would be to ignore what their ancestors accomplished in order to save the species. Despite Chakotay's plea, Gegen is found guilty and is ordered to be placed into a detention cell along with the entire *Voyager* crew after the surrender of their ship. At the last moment, Gegen, defeated, gives in to the Minister's desire.

Back on Gegen's personal ship, Chakotay gives him a small hand-held globe of prehistoric Earth in the hope that one day the Voth will see it as their home. "Eyes Open" replies Chakotay before beaming back to *Voyager*.

**Memorable quotes**

"*Did your eyes see the planet of our origin, the true home of our race? Was it beautiful? Was it covered by oceans? By sand? Were there nine moons above your head? Were there none?*"

- **Forra Gegen**, to the Human skull

"*I'll see you tonight. BYOB.*"
"*What?*"
"*Bring your own* bat'leth."

- **Tom Paris** and **B'Elanna Torres**

"*Note how the female through the feigned antagonism encourages the male in his attempt to mate.*"

- **Gegen**, to Veer while observing Tom and B'Elanna's verbal sparring

"*Tuvok, I hope that's your stomach.*"

- **Tom Paris**, upon hearing the clicking sounds of the Voth while *Voyager* was being boarded

"*Who's that?*"
"*My helmsman. Sounds like he's about to blast a hole in the side of your ship.*"

- **Haluk** and **Captain Janeway**

"*We are not immigrants! I will not deny twenty million years of history, and doctrine, just because one insignificant Saurian has a* theory*!*"

- **Odala**, to Forra Gegen

"*Someday every Voth will see this as home.*"

- **Forra Gegen**, to Chakotay while holding a globe of Earth

"*This should do the trick.*"
"*An apple?*"
"*You said you wanted an organic test subject.*"
"*I was referring to a bio-cylinder, but the fruit will suffice.*"

- **Tom Paris** and **Tuvok**, while testing the Voth personal cloaking device

**Background**

**Story and Script**

* This episode started as a premise that co-writer [Joe Menosky](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Joe_Menosky) described as "basically dinos with automatic weapons." Menosky added, "*That was the fun of it. [Co-writer]* [*Brannon [Braga]*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Brannon_Braga)*'s a big action guy, a perverse horror story kind of a guy. That's the direction we had.*" He also referred to the premise as "basically [Aliens II](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aliens_%28film%29), as it were, with automatic weapons." ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 86)
* Brannon Braga and Joe Menosky then took this premise and several other story ideas to executive producer [Jeri Taylor](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Jeri_Taylor)'s office. While they were there, executive producer [Rick Berman](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Rick_Berman) happened to walk into the office and influence the story considerably. Joe Menosky remembered, "*He happened to come into the room when we were talking about this show. The first story notion that Brannon laid out to Rick in Jeri's office was [the action-oriented story idea] and Rick just hated it. He said, 'All I see is a bunch of lizards with AK-47's. Where's the humanity? This should be* [*Galileo*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Galileo_Galilei)*.' As soon as he said Galileo, I thought, that's perfect. I've done a lot of research in Italian history, so I knew exactly what he was talking about [....] Rick Berman's participation at that basic story level made this episode happen.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 86)
* As they proceeded to work on the episode, Brannon Braga and Joe Menosky continued to use, as an historical point of inspiration, Galileo's trial by the Catholic Church. Joe Menosky said of the episode, "*It's our retelling of Galileo's trial, in science fiction,* Star Trek *terms.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 86)
* The writers enjoyed detailing the alien culture of the Voth. "*What was really fun about this episode,*" Joe Menosky reminisced, "*was basically creating a culture, and all the little sort of texture details, knowing that we might not ever see these guys again.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112)
* This episode's final draft script was submitted on [23 January](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/23_January) [1997](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/January_1997). [[1]](http://www.indiana.edu/~liblilly/lilly/mss/subfile/taylorjinv.html)

**Cast and Characters**

* The story's Galileo-related roots were personified in the character of Gegen, who Brannon Braga described as "this Galileo lizard." ([*Star Trek Monthly issue 28*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Monthly_issue_28), p. 17) Joe Menosky noted, "*It's as if Chakotay were on trial along with Galileo.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112)
* Joe Menosky was thrilled by the performance that Chakotay actor [Robert Beltran](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Robert_Beltran) gives in this episode. Moments after citing the episode as one of two Season 3 *Voyager* installments (the other being the third season finale "[Scorpion](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Scorpion_%28episode%29)") that have "these scenes where Chakotay basically talks for an entire page of dialogue without break," Menosky remarked, "*Robert Beltran was just awesome in 'Distant Origin'. He's just got massive amounts of charisma.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 94)
* One aspect of this episode that Brannon Braga liked was "the acting", generally. ([*Star Trek: Voyager Companion*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek%3A_Voyager_Companion), p. 179)

**Production and Effects**

* According to the unauthorized [reference book](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Reference_works) [*Delta Quadrant*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Delta_Quadrant_%28reference_book%29) (p. 182), the opening shot of this episode was an establishing shot leftover from the production of the third season premiere "[Basics, Part II](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Basics%2C_Part_II_%28episode%29)".
* Also according to *Delta Quadrant* (p. 182, *et al.*), this episode reuses a stock set that was previously utilized in the Season 3 installments "[The Chute](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/The_Chute_%28episode%29)" (as the [Akritirian maximum security detention facility](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Akritirian_maximum_security_detention_facility)), "[Fair Trade](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Fair_Trade_%28episode%29)" (as [Bahrat's space station](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Bahrat%27s_space_station)) and "[Unity](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Unity_%28episode%29)" (as the [Borg Cooperative](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Borg_Cooperative)'s colony).
* Make-up supervisor [Michael Westmore](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Michael_Westmore) was challenged by the large quantity of Voth shown in this episode. "*We only had time to make one basic head,*" he recalled, "*so we did a face cast of one of the females and designed a different version for the rest of them. Then they had the gloves, which were basically one size fits all. We had six or seven of them running around, and that's a lot for ST:VOY.*" ([*Star Trek Monthly issue 32*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Monthly_issue_32), p. 75) Both director [David Livingston](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/David_Livingston) and visual effects producer [Dan Curry](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Dan_Curry) were highly pleased with the final look of the Voth. Livingston enthused, "*Michael Westmore created this really compelling makeup.*" Curry agreed, "*That was a virtuoso makeup job by Mike Westmore and his department.*" ([VOY Season 3 DVD](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_3_DVD) special features)
* During production, Gegen actor [Henry Woronicz](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Henry_Woronicz) wore an undersuit padding lot (as did, presumably, the other performers portraying Voth). [[2]](http://startrekpropcollector.com/trekauctions/items/9327)
* While filming this episode, David Livingston endeavored to accentuate the other-worldly quality of the aliens. He recalled, "*I chose to shoot them with a really wide-angle lens, in close, to magnify and get as much detail and distort even the makeup that [Michael Westmore] had done. And by doing so, it made them look even more terrifying and weird and stuff. To me, distorting those dinosaurs was going to be really cool. So we put the camera right up against their face, and they did – they look really weird and somewhat, a little bit terrifying. It's a technique to make the makeup even weirder. You can't do that to Humans, because if you do that to Humans, they look distorted and stuff. But you can get away with that on aliens.*" ([VOY Season 3 DVD](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_3_DVD) special features)
* Although David Livingston usually found that filming trial scenes was very difficult to make visually interesting, shooting the trial in this episode was much easier for him. He remarked, "*Trials are* really hard*, because you want to keep it moving [....] That one worked out okay because you had weird things to look at. You can do* really *weird angles of coming up, and really strong profiles, and do weird kind of tracking shots because you're in a weird courtroom. That particular trial scene was okay, because of the elements that we had to work with.*" ([VOY Season 3 DVD](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_3_DVD) special features)
* Representing the holographic dinosaurs in this episode involved the use of physical models, as opposed to CGI depictions. The first stage of visualizing the holograms was the creation and utilization of life-size mock-ups. "*There are a couple of moments where we saw dinosaurs recreated in the holodeck,*" Dan Curry recalled, "*so [Janeway and The Doctor] could determine how [the Voth had] evolved [....] And so the actors would have a sense of how big they were, I made full-scale mock-ups of how big the dinosaurs would really be, putting them together like slot puppets so they could stand up, even though they were made out of two-dimensional foam core.*" (*Red Alert: Amazing Visual Effects*, [VOY Season 3 DVD](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_3_DVD) special features) "*That way the director and the actors would have something to relate to on the set as a reference,*" Curry further explained. "*Their sight lines would be good, and we'd have a reference when we replace it with the detailed miniature dinosaurs.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 111) The two dinosaur models that were used in the episode's final version had their own separate genesis. "*The actual sculpture that was used for the* [*Eryops*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Eryops) *was [...] made out of modeling clay that a sculptor named* [*Jordu Schell*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Jordu_Schell) *made,*" Curry remembered, "*and then I did the final painting on it. And the large* [*parasaurolophus*](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/parasaurolophus)*-type creature was one that we rented.*" The latter type of holographic dinosaur was actually much smaller than it appears on screen. Dan Curry noted, "*On screen, it looked like it was about 12 feet high.*" (*Red Alert: Amazing Visual Effects*, [VOY Season 3 DVD](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_3_DVD) special features)
* Visual effects were also used to depict the Voth vessels. [Mitch Suskin](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Mitch_Suskin), who served as visual effects supervisor on this episode, related, "*There are a couple of [alien] ships in the show, a lot of shots of these enormous ships [....] We see a cloaking effect, and the* Voyager *gets beamed inside of their enormous mother ship.*" In fact, the Voth city ship was said to be one of the largest ships ever created for *Star Trek*. ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112)
* The effect of the Voth ships speeding through space was adapted from the second season installment "[Threshold](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Threshold_%28episode%29)". Mitch Suskin explained, "*There's an effect that was established in ['Threshold'] which is the episode where they're experimenting with transwarp. We're just going back to the transwarp effect. These people [meaning the Voth] have technology where they travel in transwarp, so we see them come out of transwarp a few times.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112)
* Brannon Braga was ultimately highly satisfied with the visuals of this installment. He said of the episode, "*It looks great. Great effects.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112) On another occasion, Braga stated that he enjoyed "the effects, and the directing..." of this episode. ([*Star Trek: Voyager Companion*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek%3A_Voyager_Companion), p. 179)

**Reception and Aftermath**

* Ultimately, Brannon Braga and Joe Menosky were both very pleased with this episode. Moments after describing the possibility that dinosaurs had evolved to be bipedal organisms as "sort of a neat science fiction idea," Braga enthused, "*It's the perfect episode in my mind.*" ([*Star Trek Monthly issue 28*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Monthly_issue_28), p. 17) However, Braga also commented, "*It was one episode that was just about perfect.*" Moments later, he remarked, "*It was a very complex [and] ambitious show that really turned out great.*" ([*Star Trek: Voyager Companion*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek%3A_Voyager_Companion), p. 179) Shortly after completing work on *Voyager*'s third season, Braga said, "*We think it's the best show that we did this season, and I think it's the best show I've written on* Voyager*. It's a very special episode.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 91) He also included this episode among a few examples of third season *Voyager* installments that he thought were good (the other episodes being "[Scorpion](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Scorpion_%28episode%29)" and "[Unity](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Unity_%28episode%29)"). He said of this particular installment, "*That's a classic that I'm really happy with. That's good.*" ([*Star Trek Monthly issue 29*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Monthly_issue_29), p. 13) For his part, Menosky commented, "*I think [it's] classic* Star Trek*, with all the kind of humanity that* Trek *is supposed to have.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 86) In fact, Menosky believed this episode captures the flavor of some of the most successful installments of [*Star Trek: The Next Generation*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek%3A_The_Next_Generation). "*It felt as close to TNG in spirit, as anything I've ever been involved on, since I've been writing for* Voyager*, frankly closer to the spirit of the kind of best TNG's than a lot of TNG's I've done.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112) Menosky particularly liked "the courtroom scenes" of this episode, saying, "*I think [they] are just really wonderful.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112)
* A particular facet of the episode that Joe Menosky thought was "very unique" is the alien perspective that the installment initially takes. ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112) Brannon Braga also thought this element was notable, believing that it partly made the episode's entire story very unusual. He observed of the episode, "*It's a 'what if' science fiction premise [....] It's a really rich metaphor for the creation/science debates and Galileo-type struggles. And it's got a totally unique structure, which is them tracking us [....] It's rare that a* Star Trek *episode can have all three of those things, and this one does.*" ([*Star Trek Monthly issue 28*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Monthly_issue_28), p. 17)
* Story consultant [Michael Piller](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Michael_Piller) was so impressed by this episode's teleplay that he sent a memo to Joe Menosky which said, "*The best* Voyager *script I've ever read.*" ([*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique), Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 112)
* Executive producer [Rick Berman](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Rick_Berman) also liked this episode. He referred to it as "a great *Voyager* episode" and also said, "*It's a really classic piece of* Star Trek*.*" ([*Star Trek: Communicator*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek%3A_Communicator) issue #111, p. 8)
* This episode achieved a Nielsen rating of 4.4 million homes, and a 7% share. [[3]](http://voyagerview.com/review2.html)
* [*Cinefantastique*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Cinefantastique) rated this episode 2 and a half out of 4 stars. (*Cinefantastique*, Vol. 29, No. 6/7, p. 111)
* [*Star Trek Monthly*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Magazine) scored this episode 4 out of 5 stars, defined as "[Trill](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Trill)-powered viewing". ([*Star Trek Monthly issue 32*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek_Monthly_issue_32), p. 93)
* The unauthorized [reference book](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Reference_works) [*Delta Quadrant*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Delta_Quadrant_%28reference_book%29) (p. 183) gives this installment a rating of 8 out of 10.
* The undersuit padding lot that Henry Woronicz wore for this episode was later sold off on the [*It's A Wrap!* sale and auction](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/It%27s_A_Wrap%21_sale_and_auction) on eBay. [[4]](http://startrekpropcollector.com/trekauctions/items/9327)

**Continuity and Trivia**

* *Voyager*'s crew complement, as of this episode, is 148.
* The Voth scientists' discovery of the Human skull and their subsequent search for *Voyager* are examples of continuity with previous episodes: the skull was left in the third season opener "[Basics, Part II](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Basics%2C_Part_II_%28episode%29)", which establishes that the bones and uniform fragments found in the same scene of this episode belonged to [Ensign](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Ensign) [Hogan](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Hogan), and the canister of warp plasma that the Voth retrieve at [Bahrat's space station](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Bahrat%27s_space_station) in this episode is an acknowledgment of the events of "[Fair Trade](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Fair_Trade_%28episode%29)". The warp plasma originally came from the [Tak Tak](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tak_Tak) and presumably was obtained during trade negotiations in "[Macrocosm](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Macrocosm_%28episode%29)".
* The events of this episode are referred to in the [seventh season](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_7) episode "[Friendship One](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Friendship_One_%28episode%29)".
* The throne chair that [Minister](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Minister) [Odala](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Odala) is sitting on was later reused as [Doctor Chaotica](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Doctor_Chaotica)'s throne in [VOY](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Star_Trek%3A_Voyager): "[Bride of Chaotica!](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Bride_of_Chaotica%21_%28episode%29)". It was originally created for the *Coneheads* movie. ([citation needed](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Memory_Alpha%3ACite_your_sources) • [edit](http://en.memory-alpha.org/index.php?title=Distant_Origin_%28episode%29&action=edit))
* Another reference to the number [47](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/47) – the number of genetic markers shared between Humans and Voth.
* The fate of the Voth personal cloaking device is unknown and it is never again used or even mentioned on screen.

**Video and DVD releases**

* UK VHS release (two-episode tapes, [CIC Video](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/CIC_Video)): Volume 3.12, [29 September](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/29_September) [1997](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/September_1997).
* As part of the [VOY Season 3 DVD](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/VOY_Season_3_DVD) collection.

**Links and references**

**Guest stars**

* [Henry Woronicz](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Henry_Woronicz) as [Forra Gegen](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Forra_Gegen)
* [Christopher Liam Moore](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Christopher_Liam_Moore) as [Tova Veer](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tova_Veer)
* [Marshall R. Teague](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Marshall_R._Teague) as [Haluk](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Haluk)

**Special guest star**

* [Concetta Tomei](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Concetta_Tomei) as Minister [Odala](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Odala)

**Co-stars**

* [Nina Minton](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Nina_Minton) as [Frola Gegen](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Frola_Gegen)
* [Majel Barrett](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Majel_Barrett) as the [computer voice](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Computer_voice)

**Uncredited Co-Stars**

* [Tracee Cocco](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tracee_Cocco) as a [Nekrit alien](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Unnamed_humanoids_%2824th_century%29#Hairless_pink_alien)
* [Tarik Ergin](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tarik_Ergin) as [Ayala](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Ayala)
* [Dennis Madalone](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Dennis_Madalone) as a [Voth guard](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Unnamed_Voth#Voth_guard_.231)
* [Louis Ortiz](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Louis_Ortiz) as a [Voth guard](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Unnamed_Voth#Voth_guard_.232)
* [John Tampoya](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/John_Tampoya) as [Kashimuro Nozawa](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Kashimuro_Nozawa)

**References**

[47](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/47); [anodyne relay](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Anodyne_relay); [apple](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Apple); [autonomic nervous system](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Autonomic_nervous_system); [*bat'leth*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Bat%27leth); [bio-cylinder](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Bio-cylinder); [BYOB](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/BYOB); [Circle of Archeology](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Circle_of_Archeology); [Circle of Exobiology](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Circle_of_Exobiology); [Circle of Philosophy](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Circle_of_Philosophy); [Circles of Science](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Circles_of_Science); [communicator](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Communicator); [containment field](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Containment_field); [Cretaceous](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Millions_of_years_ago); [Delta Quadrant](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Delta_Quadrant); [dilitus lobe](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Dilitus_lobe); [dinosaur](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Dinosaur); [dispersion frequency](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Dispersion_frequency); [Distant Origin Theory](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Distant_Origin_Theory); [Devonian](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Millions_of_years_ago); [DNA](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/DNA); [Earth](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Earth); [endothermy](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Endothermy); [*Eryops*](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Eryops); [First Contact](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/First_Contact); [fossil](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Fossil); [gigahertz](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Gigahertz); [hadrosaur](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Hadrosaur); [heresy](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Heresy); [hibernation](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Hibernation); [Hogan](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Hogan); [Hokath](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Hokath); [holodeck](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Holodeck); [interphase](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Interphase); [interrogation surgeon](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Interrogation_surgeon); [Jefferies tube](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Jefferies_tube); [Klingon martial arts program](http://en.memory-alpha.org/index.php?title=Klingon_martial_arts_program&action=edit&redlink=1); [mammalian](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Mammalian); [matriarchy](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Matriarchy); [medical tricorder](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Medical_tricorder); [microcellular scan](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Microcellular_scan); [Ministry of Elders](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Ministry_of_Elders); [Nekrit Expanse](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Nekrit_Expanse); [phase variance](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Phase_variance); [photon torpedo](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Photon_torpedo); [plasma conduit](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Plasma_conduit); [replicator](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Replicator); [saurian](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Saurian); [spatial displacement](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Spatial_displacement); [sulfur](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Sulfur); [tetryon radiation](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tetryon_radiation); [transwarp](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Transwarp); [tricorder](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Tricorder); [Towt](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Towt); [turbolift](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Turbolift); [Voth](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth); [Voth city ship](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth_city_ship); [Voth Doctrine](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth_Doctrine); [Voth Fourth Colony](http://en.memory-alpha.org/index.php?title=Voth_Fourth_Colony&action=edit&redlink=1); [Voth research vessel](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Voth_research_vessel); [warp plasma](http://en.memory-alpha.org/wiki/Warp_plasma)

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