Bashir helps a group of eccentric fellow genetically engineered Humans try to make a useful contribution to the Federation; the Dominion offers to sign a truce with the Federation.

**Teaser**

Lieutenant Karen Loews, a Starfleet psychiatrist, brings four genetically engineered Humans to Deep Space 9 looking for help from Dr. Bashir. The group hasn’t been as lucky as Bashir, and every one has strong social disabilities (mania, bipolar disorder, catatonia, etc.). The group consists of the hostile and hyperactive Jack, the seductive Lauren, the child-like Patrick, and the completely unresponsive Sarina. Loews tries to calm them down, as she’s leaving for the three weeks they are spending there, but they are nervous. Jack breaks a PADD Lauren is using to read about Bashir and angrily slams it into Loews’ hand, cutting her. She, however, calmly says he’s not to do things like that, and leaves.

Loews comes out to meet Bashir, shaking off her bleeding hand and wishing him luck.

**Act One**

Bashir spends a few moments meeting the group. They’ve turned out the lights, leaving him to be observed without being seen, but his eyes adjust soon enough. Jack is adversarial, criticizing on a distant relative poet of his, performing a full-body flip and asking if he can also do that, and asking for the cube root of 329. Lauren, however, is intrigued with him and asks about his genetic background and how he hid it from everyone. Jack interjects, saying he’s different, however, and was able to “cut a deal” with Starfleet when his genetic status came out, angry that he didn’t have to spend his days like they did in an institute. Bashir points out it’s still possible to be a productive member of society even if the Eugenics Wars gave a good reason why people like them have been barred from certain professions. Jack has clearly never accepted that argument and will never forget what’s been done to him.
Bashir thinks that’s enough for now, and simply ends the conversation saying he has dinner plans. After he leaves, Lauren chides Jack for “scaring him off.”

During a dinner party hosted by Captain Sisko, Bashir discusses with the rest of the station’s senior staff the group as well as the issues surrounding genetic engineering and his wish to help the group become normal members of society. The feedback he receives is divided: while the others agree that while they shouldn’t be blamed for what their parents had done to them, it is felt that they should indeed be limited in what they are allowed to do, such as joining Starfleet, lest other people be encouraged to do the same thing. Sensing an uneasy mood, Sisko brings up Damar’s upcoming speech, and the officers all agree that, whatever he says, it’ll likely be bad news for the Federation. They are interrupted when Jack breaks into the com system to contact their new friend about an annoying high-pitched noise.

Back in their quarters, Bashir confirms what nobody else can hear. Then, quickly, Jack grabs Sarina and threatens to snap her neck if he doesn’t fix it.

Act Two

Bashir, not worried, calls Miles O’Brien and asks Jack to let Sarina go. He eventually submits and soon O’Brien arrives to fix the problem. He avoids the eccentricities of the others in the room and goes to the other side. With some unexpected help from Patrick, who can diagnose it with his ears, he confirms the problem with his tricorder and quickly fixes it, much to the others’ relief.

While Bashir and O’Brien are in the room, they hear Damar, now leader of the Cardassian Union, broadcast a speech, and not wanting to miss it they watch it on the room’s viewscreen. Damar is calling for negotiations for peace with the Federation. The transmission captures the group’s attention, and they are quickly enthralled by it. Interestingly, they start making very accurate guesses about who Damar is even though they know nothing about him. Bashir and O’Brien are astonished at the speed with which the group is able to deduce much of Damar’s story based on only the one speech. They become very interested in the matter and quickly go through all the database material about Cardassia and the Dominion.

Bashir goes to Ops and tells the others about the remarkable observations. When he hears that the Dominion has insisted that the negotiations be recorded, he enthusiastically intends to let the group see it, thinking they can assist the peace talks between the Dominion and Starfleet on the next day. They are thrilled.

Act Three

While viewing a holographic program of the negotiation talks, the group proves very useful at uncovering a move by the Dominion to acquire a strategic planet that would allow them to produce ketracel-white. Bashir happily takes the information to Sisko and he even agrees to send the information along, and the analysis behind it, to Starfleet Intelligence. The group celebrates with a party.

In the meantime, Bashir goes to Quark’s with O’Brien after the group notices that the chief seems to miss his friend, especially since his wife is off-station. Bashir proves difficult, walking the wrong side of the thin line between super-intelligent Humans and "uncomplicated" (as he qualifies O’Brien), "slow" people.

Later, back with the group, Bashir attempts to cheer them up by announcing that Starfleet has granted them access to classified information, but he is welcomed by a new and devastating projection. According to them, the Federation will be defeated despite many different likely scenarios happening. Bashir checks all the statistical analyses, but he cannot find any errors.
Act Four
Bashir tries to convince Sisko of the new information. The group is confident that, even though the Federation will be conquered, they will eventually rebuild and form a rebellion against the Dominion. Since it seems inescapable, the best move would be to surrender immediately to prevent the loss of life. The captain refuses point-blank to accept this and passes on the projections to Starfleet without his endorsement knowing they’ll be rejected. Bashir can’t believe it.

Bashir goes to Quark’s and tried to explain the analysis to O’Brien, but the chief agrees with Sisko. He can’t understand why they don’t agree with the analysis, and O’Brien starts to take offense, seeing the implication he can’t understand it. Quark tries to point out at a dabo table that even when the odds are against you, you can still win, and you can enjoy the hope of winning.

Bashir explains the situation to the others, and tells them Starfleet has rejected the recommendation to surrender. Jack, however, won’t sit by and do nothing. He suggests they can save billions of lives by contacting the Dominion by themselves and giving them the classified information on Starfleet battle plans, ending the war earlier. Bashir objects, saying they don’t have the right to decide that. Jack immediately knocks him out and they get to work.

Act Five
During negotiations, Damar is complaining about the peace talks’ lack of progress. Weyoun tells him he has just received a communication from an anonymous Federation source promising them some very valuable information.

Back on Deep Space 9, Bashir regains consciousness. He is tied up. Everyone but Sarina is gone, and Bashir realizes they have probably gone to meet the Dominion representatives. Fortunately, he is able to convince Sarina to help him prevent them from committing treason, pointing out they’ll be arrested and she’ll never see Jack again. He catches up with the group on the way to the secret meeting and takes back the classified information.

Meanwhile, Damar and Weyoun are waiting in Cargo bay 2 for the meeting when Odo walks in. He tells them no one else is coming, and offers to escort them back to their quarters.

In the group’s quarters, Bashir tells the group Sisko has decided not to press charges, but they will have to go back to the Institute. Jack is still furious. Bashir then explains that even when probability is not on your side, one person can still change the course of history. He uses the example of Sarina’s helping him – as one person, she changed the course of history in a way that Jack hadn’t predicted. There's always an element of uncertainty. As such, the Federation is willing to bet nine hundred billion lives.

Bashir and O’Brien meet in the bar, and the chief says it must have been a hard decision for him. That wanting to save lives is what makes him such a good doctor. Bashir says he feels the whole thing was his fault – he just wanted to prove the group could make a contribution. O’Brien assures him they did and then leaves to go on duty.

Bashir starts playing dabo, making risky bets – and wins. Just then, O’Brien calls to let him know that a certain group of passengers is refusing to board their transport unless the doctor comes to see them.

In the guest quarters, Bashir says he didn’t think they’d want to see him again. Lauren kisses him. Patrick asks if Bashir will come visit them. Bashir says yes, he’d like that. He tells Sarina she did the right thing. Jack asks if he will listen if they do come up with a way to defeat the Dominion. Bashir says yes, he can’t think of anything he’d like better. Jack says, "Good, good. Let’s go then." Bashir calls O’Brien to beam the four to their transport.

Memorable quotes

"Did you hear that? He used the passive voice transitive."

"Since when can you speak Dominionese?"

"Since this morning."

- **Jack** and **Bashir**

"Fellow citizens, these are great days for Cardassia. Together, with our Dominion allies, we have given our enemies cause to fear us once more. The war with the Federation accomplished all of our goals. Cardassia is strong again, an empire to be feared. We are safe behind secure borders, and no one will ever dare attack us again. From this position of strength, we are poised to take another bold step to ensure our future—peace. It is time to bring an end to this war with the Federation. It is time for us to rebuild on the foundation of strength we have laid. The sons of Cardassia shed their blood to defend our home. Their sacrifice must not be in vain. The peace we seek will honor their memory, and preserve the gains for which they gave their lives. I challenge the Federation to answer my call for peace. I am ready at any time to meet with its representatives to discuss how we can bring an end to hostilities. As your leader, I pledge that I will do everything in my power to protect Cardassia and allow us to move forward into a new era. This I vow with my life’s blood, for my sons, for all our sons."

- **Damar**

"Surrender to the Dominion. Not on my watch!"

- **Sisko**, when Bashir, Jack, Patrick, Lauren, and Sarina come up with casualty projections for the current war.

"It was amazing. They pieced together the entire story of how Damar came to power. Weyoun is the dark prince, Gul Dukat is the deposed king, Damar is the pretender to the throne, and Ziyal is the innocent princess he murdered. And now the pretender is wracked with guilt over what he’s done."

"And they got all this just from watching Damar's speech?"

"Well, they were fascinated by the whole thing. They kept bombarding me with questions about Cardassia and the war. I've never seen them so engaged."

- **Bashir** and **Kira**, about Damar

"You’re welcome to play your little "we’re all friends here" act with me. But I wouldn't try it on Captain Sisko. He's not in the mood."

"We’re on a mission of peace, Major. Maybe he should get in the mood."

- **Kira** and **Damar**

"Well, I’d love to stay and chat about our impending doom but…"

- **Bashir**, when he is called away from dinner to deal with Jack
The story line was based on Isaac Asimov's classic *Foundation Trilogy*. Asimov based his work on issues raised in Edward Gibbon's *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, and the basic plot involves a scientist (Hari Seldon) who develops a branch of mathematics known as psychohistory which he uses to calculate that galactic civilization is doomed to fall, leading to 30,000 years of darkness and barbarism. Seldon, terrified at this prospect, takes action to attempt to minimize the oncoming "dark ages" to only 1,000 years, but his plan fails to foresee that the actions of a single individual could render his predictions invalid. Psychohistory is based upon mass action, and it can only predict the future when dealing with large groups, predicting trends in large masses of people, which is why Seldon is unable to take into account the actions of individuals – when it gets down to individual people, the variables become so vast as to be impossible to calculate, so the predictions become unstable. In the novels, a character called The Mule, who has psychic abilities, becomes intimately involved in events, and directly influences their outcome, something which Seldon's psychohistory could never have predicted. This is exactly what happens in the episode: the savants make large scale predictions based upon mass action, but they fail to take into account the actions of one single individual, who comes to directly affect everything they have predicted. (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion*)

In René Echevarria's first draft of this episode, the savants were a think-tank that had been recruited and trained by Starfleet Intelligence. They had been sent on an intelligence mission to Deep Space 9 and they were to operate under the supervision of Bashir. However, because the story called for the characters to be somewhat neurotic, the idea that Starfleet had entrusted these people with such sensitive information quickly became absurd, and Echevarria changed the plot so they were sent to Deep Space 9 not as intelligence consultants, but simply for counseling. (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion*)

The character of Jack is based upon Dean Moriarty (who was based on Neal Cassady), one of the main characters of the 1951 Jack Kerouac novel *On the Road*, a wannabe philosopher who talks a mile a minute. (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion*)

**Production**

Of her performance as Sarina, actress Faith C. Salie says "I was told to behave pretty much catatonic. Anson told me, 'There's a lot going on in your mind, because you're genetically enhanced, and you're brilliant, but you can't facilitate it because your body doesn't know how.' I created a switch in my brain that I could turn on and off to make everything become hazy around me, so that it seemed as if an amalgam of voices and sense were coming at me and that it was overwhelming." (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion*)

Of his performance as Jack actor Tim Ransom says "I figured he's the equivalent of a guy who drinks forty cups of coffee a day." (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion*)

Of her performance as Lauren, actress Hilary Shepard Turner says, "She was described as being obsessed with Bashir, and very va-va-voom, but I decided to make her a little Hannibal Lecter-ish as well. It was director Anson Williams' idea to never have Lauren stand up. The only time I ever stood was when I danced with Bashir." (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion*)

Of his performance as Patrick, actor Michael Keenan says, "He's essentially a child, so I just played him that way. Children have instant access to their emotions and they don't filter anything, so that's what I did." (*Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion*)
- Of his scene speaking the Vorta language, Jeffrey Combs commented "That was very strange. I had to work hard too for that very tiny little bit. It's very hard to speak a language that's totally made up, and yet keep the cadence and sensibility of an actual line in English. Because what they did is they played it once in English and then they replayed it in Vortanese (or whatever it is), and I had to really concentrate to get that the way I worded it. They gave me syllabic words, and it was up to me to break it down into the phraseology that I did. It's interesting how the brain works. I really, really had to hang in there and run it by rote. It's easy to memorize words and phrases and strings of thought when it's your native language, but when it's a nonsensical group of syllables, it takes a lot more brain juice to make it seem very easy and conversational". ("Double Act", Star Trek Monthly, issue 43)

- The music played at the "party" is Johann Strauss the Younger's An der schönen blauen Donau, more commonly known in English as "The Blue Danube", a waltz written in 1867, and later featured in VOY: "Renaissance Man". The dance sequence was originally supposed to be far more elaborate than that seen in the final episode, and was to include a lengthy crane shot, but neither Alexander Siddig nor Hilary Shepard Turner were able to dance properly, and in the end, the shot was scrapped. The dance sequence was choreographed by Laura Behr. (Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion)

- During pre-production of this episode, there was a great deal of discussion as to where to set it, i.e. where to have the savants. The script specified that they were to be in the wardroom, but from a practical point of view, shooting several scenes with five characters in a such a relatively small location was not desirable, so it was agreed to move the scenes to somewhere else. It was Steve Oster who suggested the cargo bay, because "we thought we might be saying something about Starfleet's treatment of these people if we put them in the cargo bay." (Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion)

Reception

- This is one of Alexander Siddig's favorite episodes; "People ask, 'Was that a comedy or a drama?' "Statistical Probabilities" was like that, not quite one thing or the other. The humor came out of the misery and angst captured by those wonderful actors. And I enjoyed the fact that Bashir served as a kind of pinball throughout that show. He was just battered about." (Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion)

- Siddig also admires the episode for its political engagement; "The episode touched on a couple of political issues in terms of whether or not you can incarcerate people like this. I think the commentary that came out of Bashir's mouth was right and called attention to the fact that double standards happen in society. We do put good people away, like the Japanese-Americans placed in internment camps during World War II. The group in this episode seemed like lovely people, and Bashir showed some vulnerability in the fact that he understood their plight. They might not have been misfits if they had not been put away for such a long time." (Star Trek: Deep Space Nine Companion)

Trivia

- This is the first of two episodes to be directed by Anson Williams. The second is "It's Only a Paper Moon".

- Jack, Lauren, Patrick, and Sarina reappear in the seventh season episode "Chrysalis". Indeed, the writers only conceived of that episode because Sarina never spoke in "Statistical Probabilities", and they were interested in developing her character a little more. Originally, she was supposed to have a few lines in this episode, but the scene in which she spoke (when she untied Bashir) was cut for time.

- Observing Gul Damar's broadcast, Jack references William Shakespeare's plays Henry IV, Part II ("Uneasy lies the head that wears the crown.") and Macbeth ("Methought I heard a voice cry 'Sleep no more!' Damar does murder sleep.")

- Luther Sloan references the events of this episode in "Inquisition" and again in "Inter Arma Enim Silent Leges".

- Damar becomes leader of the Cardassian Union in this episode.

- Interestingly enough, the group's predictions about the Romulans entering the war and the Cardassian Rebellion would later come true. However, the Romulans were brought into the war through the action of just two individuals, Garak and to a lesser extent Sisko.

- It could also be argued that their predictions about the war may have come true if not for the Founders being infected with the Morphogenic virus by Section 31, which was not revealed until Season 7.

- Cirroc Lofton (Jake Sisko) does not appear in this episode.
Video and DVD releases

- UK VHS release (two-episode tapes, CIC Video): Volume 6.5, 1 June 1998
- As part of the DS9 Season 6 DVD collection

Links and references

Starring

- Avery Brooks as Captain Sisko

Also starring

- Rene Auberjonois as Odo
- Michael Dorn as Lt. Commander Worf
- Terry Farrell as Lt. Commander Dax
- Cirroc Lofton as Jake Sisko
- Colm Meaney as Chief O'Brien
- Armin Shimerman as Quark
- Alexander Siddig as Doctor Bashir
- Nana Visitor as Major Kira

Guest stars

- Jeffrey Combs as Weyoun
- Tim Ransom as Jack
- Jeannetta Arnette as Karen Loews
- Hilary Shepard Turner as Lauren
- Michael Keenan as Patrick
- Casey Biggs as Damar
- Faith C. Salie as Sarina Douglas

Uncredited co-stars

- Bill Blair as Alien with head tendrils and facial spines
- Cathy DeBuono as M'Pella
- David B. Levinson as Broik
- Mark Allen Shepherd as Morn
- Unknown actor as a Cardassian soldier

Stunt double

- Brian Hite as the stunt double for Tim Ransom

References

adjutant; advisor; Alpha Quadrant; Bashir, Amsha; Bashir, Richard; Bashir, Singh el; Bashir's doctor; Blue Danube, The; Cardassia; Cardassians; Cardassian Empire; cart; normaline; coup; cube root; dabo; Damar’s son; darts; DNA resequencing; Dominion; Dominionese; Dukat; Earth; Eugenics Wars; Federation; generation; genetic engineering; Holna IV; "Institute"; Institute doctors; Institute patients; Institute patient’s parents; Jem'Hadar; Kabrel system; Kabrel I; Kabrel II; Kandora champagne; ketracel-white; knight; mizinite; mole people; murder; mutant; neck; nonlinear dynamics; O'Brien, Keiko; Obsidian Order; passive voice transitive; plagiarism; power coupling; Quark’s; red carpet; ringside seats; Romulans; Saber-class; Shakespeare, William; shorthand; Starfleet; Starfleet Command; Starfleet Intelligence; statistical analysis; statistics;
Steamrunner-class; surrender; sympathetic vibration; *There's a Hole in the Bucket*; three-dimensional chess; Tora Ziyal; treason; tricorder; Yeager-type; yridium bicantizine

External links

- "Statistical Probabilities" at StarTrek.com, the official Star Trek website
- "Statistical Probabilities" at Memory Beta, the wiki for licensed Star Trek works
- "Statistical Probabilities" at Wikipedia

Languages: Deutsch | Español | Français | Nederlands