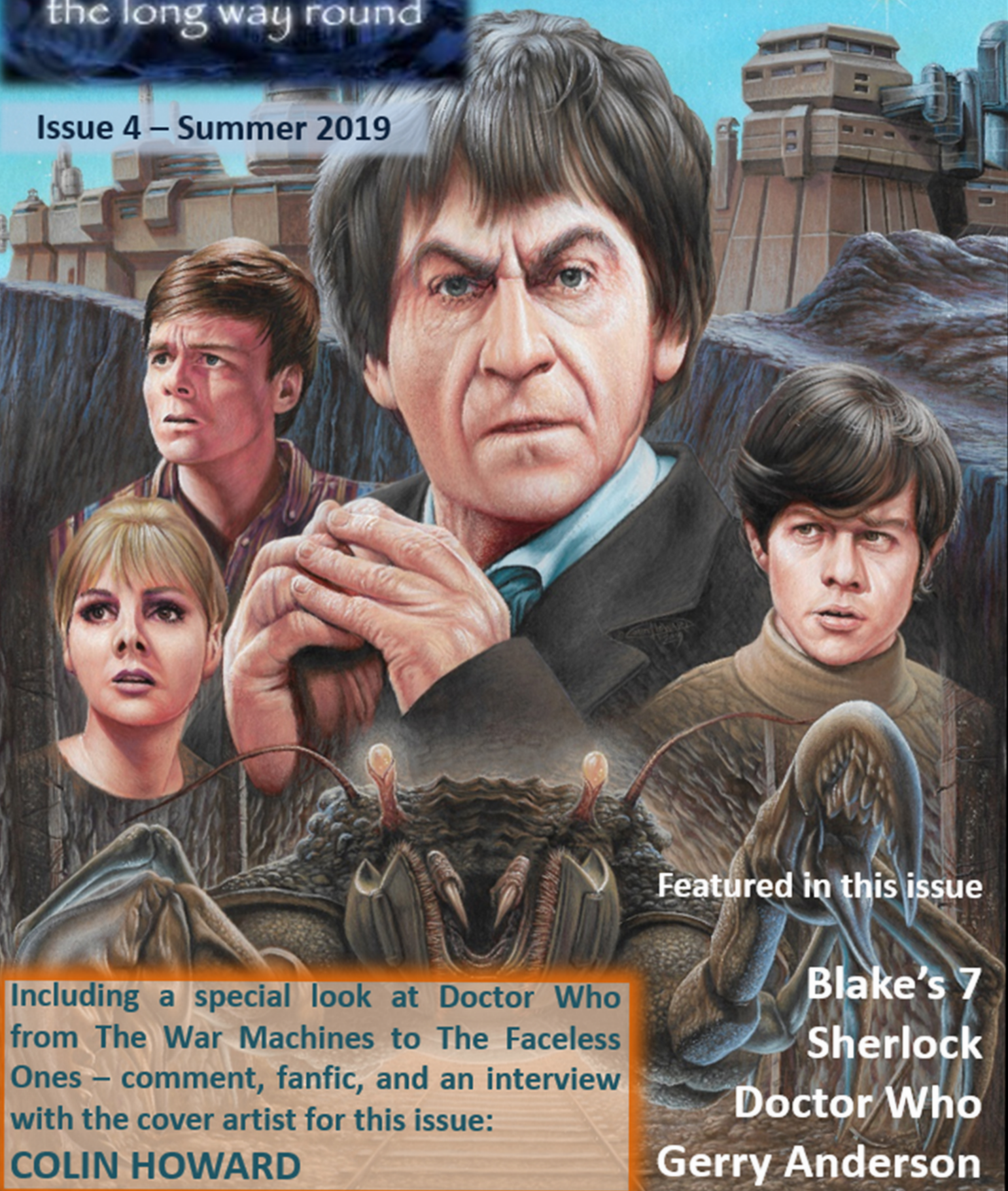


Gallifrey, the long way round

Issue 4 – Summer 2019

THE MACRA TERROR

We celebrate a 60s classic!



Featured in this issue

Including a special look at Doctor Who from The War Machines to The Faceless Ones – comment, fanfic, and an interview with the cover artist for this issue:

COLIN HOWARD

**Blake's 7
Sherlock
Doctor Who
Gerry Anderson**

Gallifrey, The Long Way Round

Issue #4: Summer 2019

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Doctor Who: The Macra Terror

Artwork by Colin Howard ©

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If you are interested in contributing to this Fanzine, please contact us on the email address below.

All submissions are subject to editorial approval.

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EDITORIAL by Nick Mays, Editor-in-Chief

Welcome to Issue 4 of *Gallifrey, The Long Way Round*. Yes, yes, I know that it says “Summer 2019” on the cover, but it IS Summer (nearly) in Australia and New Zealand. Oh, we don’t just confine ourselves to the Northern Hemisphere, you know—we have a global readership after all! In all seriousness, we *had* hoped to have *Ish #4* online two or three months ago, but that irritating phenomenon known as Real Life (*ptoo!*) got in the way and circumstances prevented this happening. As Editor-in-Chief I must shoulder the blame for this. However, we have got plans to give you a little bonus in between now and Issue #5, so watch this space—or at least our Facebook pages! Ooh! Mysterious eh?

Talking of our Facebook pages (*Gallifrey, The Long Way Round TV Show* and *Gallifrey, The Long Way Round Group*, I recently started posting an occasional series of editorial observations under the imaginative title of *The Ed Sez* to keep in touch with our readership (and also to trot out the latest excuses as to why Issue #4 hadn’t materialised yet). Thus far, it seems like they’ve been well received, although we really would love to hear more from you. Don’t be shy—post a message, start a thread. We don’t bite and nor do our pet Cybermats! (Well, not often, anyway). So, in one such *Ed Sez* I answered a few questions that we’ve had over the past few months, the most frequent of which is what kind of Fanzine is *Gallifrey, the Long Way Round*? Is it a *Doctor Who* or *Blake’s Seven* fanzine? Well, the answer is that it’s a fanzine for fans of... well, *anything* Sci-Fi or Fantasy related really, but *especially* Doctor Who and Blake’s 7. Any given issue will have at least a 40 to 50% *Who/Blake* content, but that doesn’t limit our scope, oh no. Just take this issue for example—Craig Sanwell covers a vast range of genres with his brilliant article *Funky Thrills*, a 70s/80s childhood in 20 sci-fi/fantasy objects. It made me feel real warm, and fuzzy with nostalgia, I can tell you! And our Netherlands fangirl *Mrs* Veerle Baljic-Kik (congrats again, hon!) delves into the worlds of Pratchett and Gaiman with a detailed look at the demon *Crowley* from *Good Omens*. Next issue we aim to be looking at Anime (or “Aneem” as my son Dan called it when he was young) and then there’s all those brilliant Irwin Allen sci-fi TV series, such as *The Time Tunnel*, *Lost in Space*, *Land of the Giants*... as well as films and TV series like *Planet of the Apes*, *Terminator* or any of those wonderful films and series in the genre which Netflix seem to have cornered the market in! It’s a great time to be a sci-fi fan!

Of course, our humble ‘Zine is only as good as its contents, so once again, on bended knee I ask two things: 1) PLEASE write us a feature or an article or a review of something in the genre which interests you. Don’t worry about spelling or grammar (I seldom do!) that’s what we Editors exist for—we edit! Drop us a line at the email address on Page 2 or send a droid with a holo-message and we’ll get right back to you about running with it. 2) Can you help me up off my knees please? I’m not as young as I was...

Finally, the team would like to dedicate this issue to two great names of *Blake’s Seven* and *Doctor Who*, who are sadly no longer with us: Paul Darrow and Terrance Dicks. Thanks for everything Guys! Enjoy Issue #4! *Nick & Co*

SHERLOCK

A twenty-first century reimagining, but of what?

The television series *Sherlock* began in 2010, and it is fair to say that it became an instant cult success that has continued to grow in popularity, despite periods off the screen enforced by the availability, or otherwise, of a cast, who have likewise gone from strength to strength in their own careers. In many ways, the show is a collaboration between several writers and actors, but has the additional distinction of an episode writer and keen creative force behind the scenes, Mark Gatiss, also being a member of the regular cast as Mycroft Holmes. This dual role is uncommon in British television, especially in such a long running show.

This article will look at each of the episodes in turn and offer a critical view on their strengths and weaknesses, along with a couple of side notes on the show as a whole. It does, by necessity, contain spoilers if you have not seen the show.

The very first episode represents a somewhat slow start to the first season. Sherlock Holmes, as played by Benedict Cumberbatch, is such a strong personality, and the investigative element of the script is so minimal in order to allow maximum time to introduce his new interpretation, that the first hour has a definite balance problem. It relies heavily upon the viewer making an investment in the main character rather than being drawn in through the storyline. The mystery itself is rather shallow, and remains no nearer to a solution when the hitherto unknown antagonist, conveniently pops into 221b Baker Street to offer an unsolicited confession. Having said that, the last half hour is nonetheless worth waiting for and an excellent piece of television, an intense 'two-hander' between Cumberbatch and Phil Davis, a guest actor somewhat underused here. Perhaps the biggest failing of *A Study in Pink* in bringing the tales of Sherlock Holmes to a new audience, however, is in missing the point, one we will return to, that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's approach to writing the original source material was to create interest in the client and their case through the prism of investigation. Here, the focus is

entirely upon the two main leads. We get to know nothing about any of the non-regular characters in the story until the above-mentioned, final confrontation with the murderer.

The Blind Banker is completely different, and remains unique in the show at the time of writing as an adventure story in a classic British literary style, without any modern twists. So traditional is this story, that it has a slight Sax Rohmer, or Edgar Wallace flavour; but there is also a hint of Dan Brown in the execution. The strong Oriental theme of the narrative and visuals, is supplemented by the activities of the ubiquitous secret society, a quest for ancient artefacts, decoding a cypher, the equally ubiquitous setting of a museum, the slightly more quirky setting of a circus, a confrontation and deadly danger in an abandoned railway tunnel (another regular trope of the genre), and a plot that gives an intriguing trail of clues for the detective and the viewer to follow. The significant format change of season three is foreshadowed here by the team of Holmes and Watson becoming a trio, with red-haired heroine Sarah joining in and helping to solve the clues, before finding herself in a perilous situation in the final act of the story. While we never see Sarah on a case again, it is pleasing to see that she remains in a relationship with John Watson until the following episode. This episode would have been equally at home in the first season of another cult television series, *The Avengers*, and it is quite easy to imagine the roles of Sherlock, John and Sarah substituted with John Steed, Doctor Keel and Carol Wilson!

One of the key format weaknesses of the show in its first two seasons, is that it adheres to the myth that, simply because the stories are collectively given his name, Sherlock Holmes is the main character in the stories that feature his cases. This view has been perpetuated over many years by various stage and screen adaptations of Conan Doyle's work, usually with a star actor, and the subsequent popular image of the character informed by the films rather than the books.



Holmes and Watson – the great bromance?

only highlights this issue, leaving the result inaccessible, and somewhat less than the talent of the cast involved. The plethora of story ideas, enough crimes to fill an entire series, all rushing past the viewer but none fully formed or allowed time to mean anything, creates the impression of an over-excited creative team, left with a white-board covered in brilliant ideas, (and not wanting to lose them in case a second series was not commissioned), trying to crush them all into the last episode without narrative cause for doing so. Probably the

weakest effort of the season, maybe the entire series, but saved to an extent by the quality in front of the camera.

The second season began with the first of many new directions the show would try. The problems of a sociopath being the main character are partially resolved here, by exploring Holmes' feelings through those of the characters around him, especially by creating a romantic attachment and sexual tension between Sherlock and one-off guest character Irene Adler. This allows commentary and insight on the character of Holmes without compromising his inherent inaccessibility. Although both John Watson and Molly Hooper, (representing bromance and unrequited admiration respectively), play an important role in the episode, it is only through Irene, whose interest Holmes does reciprocate, that we explore the sexuality and capacity for true love within an otherwise concealed, inner identity. We also see the first use of creative surrealism, a quasi-virtual shared experience between Sherlock and Irene as they visit a crime scene together despite being nowhere near it in reality. This brings a degree of fantasy to the show that will be explored and expanded in ever greater extremes over coming seasons until Sherlock has virtually crossed the line into the same fantasy genre as *Doctor Who* or *Torchwood*, something that Sir Arthur, a keen fantasy enthusiast, might well have enjoyed.

Returning to *A Scandal in Belgravia* for the moment, though, special note has to be made of the outstanding, if deeply awkward, scene in which Sherlock mocks Molly at a Christmas gathering without realising that she is presenting him with a gift. It sets a tone for stronger, better drama to come in future episodes.

In truth, John Watson is the hero and main viewpoint character of the original stories. Holmes is an enigmatic character who, like the first Doctor in the early seasons of *Doctor Who*, is often not even present in the story while events are being experienced by, for example, John Watson or Ian Chesterton. An excellent example of this is *The Hound of the Baskervilles*, paradoxically the most popular story for adaptation, and the hardest story to adapt while meeting the needs of a film or television drama that has a star cast as Holmes, since his absence from the majority of what is, essentially, a Watson-centred adventure, is a key plot point. This presents *Sherlock* the show with a problem. Not only is Benedict Cumberbatch the star of the show, but his on-screen persona, combined with his obvious talent and magnetic personality, means that he dominates the screen. The side-effect of this is, that the focus almost inevitable shifts from the guest characters, and the actors who play them, onto the main cast, thus altering the premise of the Sherlock Holmes concept as originally written; that 221b Baker Street is a window into other people's lives. It is, however, the lives of Sherlock and John that are the consistent primary focus of the drama for most of the first two seasons. A composite side-effect of this, combined with the emphasis on Holmes as a 'higher functioning sociopath' in this version, is that the intrinsic lack of emotion in the character then inevitably knocks on to the drama when he is also a principle viewpoint medium. The lack of emotional depth in these early episodes is also at odds with the source material, but, as we shall see, the problem was remedied later, albeit not until the third season.

Making the finale, *The Great Game*, entirely about the duel between Holmes and Jim Moriarty, sadly

Just as the middle episode of the first season was a successful sidestep into a different genre, the same can be said of *The Hounds of Baskerville*, with its horror and science fiction themes. The research centre is a very good example of the 'pure-SF' sub-genre, with a solid scientific basis elaborated into a visual and conceptual extreme that, in a rare but welcome moment of similarity with Moffat-led sister show *Doctor Who*, gives off not only *Quatermass*, but modern era UNIT, vibes too. The night shooting in the woods, and liberal use of 'shock effect' lighting and reflections, as the characters are stalked by the terrifying hound, also take the episode firmly into the realms of horror homage. But there is something else different about this episode that is equally effective, and that is taking the show out of the city. Here, we not only get stunning scenery that changes the mood of the show, but the setting of village pubs and cottages gives it a literal breath of fresh air.



Moriarty: "But can you prove intent?"

And then comes the season two finale, an episode that bizarrely fails to learn from the failings of the previous season. We begin with a court case, a rare sidestep into the legal drama genre, and are faced with some unusually lazy writing in a show that is normally so razor sharp in its dialogue and plotting. The defence does not have to provide evidence of innocence, that burden lies upon the prosecution, and even a brief glance at the relevant laws will show any viewer that Moriarty has not committed an offence. There is no attempt to remove the jewels from the Tower or money from the Bank, so it was not attempted burglary. The intention to steal must be proven; even some characters within the story comment on why this element was not present. Moriarty was not even guilty of breaking and entering since the Tower was open to the public. Far from shock at the not guilty verdict, it is obvious that the defence would

have claimed that there was no case to answer right from the beginning. The police should not even have passed this on to the CPS in the first place. Then, as in the previous season's last episode, we have a confusion of unrefined and undeveloped ideas thrown at the viewer without any memorable supporting characters to give the story any depth. Random acts of violence without a real narrative context do not make a good story, they merely show that you do not have one. Anderson, Donovan, Mycroft and Kitty are all portrayed as complete fools, a long way wide of the mark in at least two of those cases, simply for plot convenience. One positive point to take away is the performance of Martin Freeman as John Watson, except that this in turn highlights how wasted he is in this episode in a reduced role as essentially a bystander.

And then comes season three. The opening sequences of *The Empty Hearse*, full of style and energy, are nothing short of amazing! Anderson's theory on the events that concluded the previous story are a nice nod to a fandom that had been doing exactly the same thing for months. The music has pace, and the imaginary reconstruction even has passion as Sherlock and Molly kiss in the version created by the forensic investigator. The end of this alternate universe wink at the show's loyal fandom leads into a two-hander between Anderson and Greg Lestrade, with both played as sympathy characters rather than merely an irritation to the main protagonist, that allows actors Jonathan Aris and Rupert Graves more opportunity in a couple of minutes to explore and perform their characters, than either was granted in the previous two seasons combined. Visually, the sense of motion and energy carries on by means of a 'fast forward' journey through the Underground, and so do the nods to the show's own fandom with a reference to the John/Sherlock 'ship', popular online.

There are so many notable moments to describe from this one episode alone. The blend of fast music and slow motion, of high drama and comedy in the restaurant scene in which John proposes to Mary, takes the portrayal of John and Sherlock to a new level. The contrasts within the sequence continue and become nonlinear, cutting between events in the restaurant and introspection in a nearby café. Martin Freeman excels, portraying anger management and slapstick in the same performance, that is open to a variety of interpretations.

A fun two-hander between Sherlock and Mycroft at the flat then leads into another clever sequence that cuts between Sherlock and Molly interviewing clients, and the surgery at which John is trying to work as a doctor. When we return to Anderson, we see his club of 'Sherlock fans' as they work together to piece together the clues of what really happened at the end of the previous adventure, an even more perfect homage and love letter to the show's fandom. Both this and Sherlock finally working with Molly Hooper are excellent examples to incorporating liberal amounts of fan service into a long running show in a way that makes it ever stronger. This culminates in the reveal that Molly's new boyfriend is effectively a Sherlock cosplayer!

All of this is not to say, however, that the episode is without its faults. There are some lazy factual errors in the latter parts of the episode which moves the story into the London Underground. While common for film producers to use any footage of trains that looks close enough to what is required, this can be an issue when your plot is very route specific. In simple terms, the London Underground is in reality a combination of two completely separate railway networks that are as technologically and historically unique from each other as Apollo 13 and the Space Shuttle. They have common links and personalities but are nonetheless distinct. The 'tube' network is essentially a metro, run using smaller trains in what amounts to a deep level tram service. The 'sub-surface' lines – including the Metropolitan and District lines amongst others – were built as a mainline railway, in conventional brick or concrete tunnels, and with a vast number of complex junctions, sidings, possible routes and so on. Please do bear with us, this is not mere train geekery! The plot itself is based upon the premise of an Underground line close to the surface that passes nearby Westminster and the Houses of Parliament, and which has the necessary trackwork and sidings for a carriage to be uncoupled and concealed. In other words, the story is written specifically for a particular line, the District Line, and uses its history as a railway hidden in conventional tunnels directly below the surface, as a key plot point. So, who in the world thought that filming the scenes on the Northern Line would work? They don't, and two things make the error stand out. Firstly, at no other time in all four seasons does the show have a "that'll do, nobody will notice" attitude, and secondly, the script involves Sherlock learning of the plot by means of a keen railway enthusiast. The lack of thought put into this part of the story is underlined by the premise of detaching a carriage from the



Big Brother Mycroft and unrequited love Molly – both ground Sherlock in the real world. Or do they?

back of a train and running it into a siding. The safety features of fixed formation trains, driven from either end and with continuous brakes and electrics, and the integrated signalling revolution, mean that this *Thomas the Tank Engine* nonsense was impossible in the chosen setting when the writers were still at school, or maybe not even born. In any other show, you might just about get away with this, but not in one so obsessed with facts and accuracy as part of the basic format.

Before moving onto one of the absolute stand-out episodes of the show, however, it is worth taking another sidestep into looking at the central character of Sherlock Holmes in this new series. Benedict Cumberbatch's version of Holmes is in truth a modernist interpretation of that previously created by Jeremy Brett, with several of the latter performance's traits raised to a more extreme level.

performance's traits raised to a more extreme level. However, Brett's was already a radical reinvention of the character, albeit one concealed within an otherwise accurate 'period drama' style adaptation of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle's works in terms of content. This 1980s take on Holmes added a cold yet simmering, abrasive quality of aggression. The original literary character is, by contrast, identified as approachable in nature. People virtually queue to sit by his fire-side and pour out all their troubles and anxieties, including things that were difficult to talk about in Victorian society. Many of these visitors were women. This popularity is not down merely to results, but also Holmes' personality. Clients are drawn to trust him, and take refuge in the hope he offers. In comparison, the Holmes of *Sherlock* is seen to intimidate women, including not only those who do not know his softer side, but also those who do, such as Molly. He is pulled up and criticised by other characters for being unapproachable and dismissive, detached from human emotion and needs, inconsiderate and insensitive. Although this is addressed by his working with Molly, admitting, in a way, his feelings for her in a later episode, and by the arrival of Mary, this is still a character informed more by television pop culture than by the source material.



Jeremy Brett as an earlier TV incarnation of Sherlock Holmes; the original, you might say...

The show truly comes of age in the middle episode of the third season. *The Sign of Three* has the focus of a fully character-led play about a specific event in a protagonist's personal journey, in this case that of both John and Mary, but also enjoys a nonlinear structure that allows other stories to be told. The strength here is in how these other threads are drawn together later in the episode, not discarded along the way. Ultimately, the episode's greatest

strength is the way that it builds up as a murder mystery but becomes, for once, a redemption tale about honour and saving a life as much as it is about taking one. John and Sherlock's night out, and the premise of the best man speech, are more fine examples of how to expertly weave fan service into a functioning plot; demonstrated by the way that the speech itself forms the narrative framework that brings the threads of the play together. The love story at the core of the story, allows Cumberbatch as an actor the chance to loosen his approach and play out some awkward moments with a broader range of humour and emotion than normal. And there is lots of humour in this episode, and music and dance that generates a momentum not seen in the show before this moment. The viewer is given a sense that the whole production is having a party to which we are all invited. The 'memory palace' concept is developed further here, as Sherlock visits his inner mind as a real place, interacting with other characters as real people, and this will be further developed in future episodes. The lighter tone and positive vibes really work, even to the extent that we see Sherlock flirting with bridesmaid Janine in a way previously unthinkable. And then, at the last moment, the episode proves that it has more tricks to play as, in a quite beautiful homage of the 1973 *Doctor Who* serial *The Green Death's* final scene, Sherlock walks away, as did the Doctor, from his best friend's party, alone, as the music plays on. Jo Grant would take many years to be reunited with the Doctor, whereas John and Mary continue to play an active role in Sherlock's life. Nonetheless, the poignancy and power of the scene is extraordinary.

And, this time, the finale is equal to the episodes preceding it, with a gripping and dark political thriller. There are stunning revelations and big, game changing events that really do reposition the goalposts and alter the overall direction of the show. One of the highlights is a further expansion of the memory palace concept, taking the show a step further into the fantasy genre and away from the somewhat crowded schedule of basic crime drama on twenty-first century television. Here, time as well as space become the playthings of the creative forces at work on the show, as time in effect, stops, and Sherlock, with a bullet speeding towards his chest, is permitted the chance to visualise and discuss the situation with virtual manifestations of regular characters, and run through simulations, before the bullet strikes him to the ground. Dramatic and intense, but also clever and creative in its manipulation of a medium

with vast potential. The confrontation between some of the key players back at the flat is razor sharp in its delivery, but so is the way that the episode changes gear in a single stride as we experience a Holmes' family Christmas, a sequence that spoils the viewer with introspective one on one scenes of Sherlock in the garden with Mycroft, and John confronting his feelings with Mary indoors. And country homes continue as a theme of the episode as we move from the warmth of Mr and Mrs Holmes' place to the cold efficiency of Appledore, the estate of the story's antagonist, Magnussen. Arriving at the glass lined style and opulence of the setting by helicopter makes Holmes and Watson appear almost as though they have arrived in a Bond movie or Le Carré adaptation, though the story owes the most to the Nordic *Noir* style. And that sums up the episode in one word really. Stylish.



Shattering the Fourth Wall: Sherlock goes back to its roots in *The Abominable Bride*

Between the third and fourth seasons, fans were treated to a New Year special that is perhaps one of the finest examples of a gift to fandom from the producers of any show. One of the most exciting and innovative elements of *Sherlock* was, from early in the second season, the realisation of quasi-virtual metafictional visions, often referred to as a mind or memory palace, visited by multiple characters, sometimes at the same time as a shared experience, and increasingly interlaced with 'reality' within the show's fictional parameters. Top of many fans' wish lists, however, must have been to see a whole story take place within a virtual

environment. And that is what *The Abominable Bride* delivers. Full on, one hundred percent, fourth wall shattering, alternate universe fan service, loaded with fan favourite tropes for added value! The period setting is rich in cult movie inspired Gothic horror, with a mansion in the country complete with an iconic maze, lots of night scenes, ladies dressed in lace dresses that soak up the moonlight, and plenty of supernatural allusions. In-jokes and self-referential humour are in plentiful supply, and the blurring of fantasy and reality becomes increasingly clever. We see a flame-filled Gothic basement beneath romantic storybook ruins host the meeting of a secret society, and yet again we see the show's ability to effortlessly change gear with a genuinely moving nod to a historical series of events, grounded very much in real life.



Cumberbatch and Freeman channel Brett and Burke in *The Abominable Bride*. Why? Why not!

Much like a real dream, events switch back and forth with characters mixed together into a single and implausible context. Further, it is within this surreal, almost pseudo-context of a dream sequence, (an opportunity missed by many shows over the years), that a deeper level of true meaning becomes clear. For this is a commentary, albeit a drug influenced and slightly askew one, of his own life and friends, from the subconscious viewpoint of Sherlock himself. This is especially notable since the sociopathic and deliberately inaccessible nature of the character normally denies us Sherlock as a

viewpoint. The loving homage to the original writings of Conan Doyle, intrinsic to the choice of the Victorian setting, only add layer after layer to the experience. This is both limitless fun and deeply profound, and that is surely a rare thing to say about any single production? As the story builds to a conclusion both in the dream and in reality, another classic horror homage – a grave digging sequence – leads into a direct homage of the original Reichenbach Falls scenario that cleverly constructs a second fourth wall behind the usual one, with visions within the fantasy being sub-fictional creations within Holmes' definition of reality, and then, with a smile and a wink at the viewers, smashes both walls down simultaneously. The final stages of the story involve the same trope as that employed to equally great effect in the *Doctor Who* episode *Last Christmas* and the Hammer House of Horror episode *Rude Awakening*, of a dream that wakes into another dream, that in turn wakes into another reality-like dream, rather like a psychological tower of Russian dolls. This whole episode is classic and traditional but also modern and very creative and experimental at the same time, while also being a stack of love letters to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and *Sherlock* fandom, and the show's own cast and crew. Absolutely brilliant.

One of the strengths of *Sherlock* as a series, and one that you might expect from the product of *Doctor Who* fans gathering to recreate another legend in a new format, is that it combines elements, and the style, of many different genres and themes in its episodes, in noticeably varied ways, while always having a unique identity. *The Six Thatchers* opens the final season by demonstrating this, with a sidestep into a world of private security operators, so-called 'black ops' connected to the secret services, and double agents of course; an essential part of this kind of storytelling. The change of setting, taking part of the story to the Middle East, really sells the switch. In making this an espionage tale rather than the usual sleuthing, therefore promoting Mycroft and Mary to the position of primary protagonists, a significant new change in the approach of the show is achieved. John and Sherlock are still the 'stars' of the show and feature predominantly throughout, but their role within the narrative becomes one of observing and facilitating someone else's story. That the final events affect them so directly, in a story in which they were both outsiders, only makes those effects more traumatic, allowing Benedict Cumberbatch and Martin Freeman even more licence to explore realism in their performances, and also enables us as viewers to see the characters and the show from

a new angle and in a new light. The emotive style of lighting, musical accompaniment and the overall direction by Rachael Talalay, who also brought the thematically similar *Doctor Who* episodes *Heaven Sent* and *Hell Bent* to realisation, make this a deep and moving experience to watch. The aquarium sequences alone must be amongst the show's most iconic moments.

Almost to compensate for placing him in a bystander role in the previous story, *The Lying Detective* is unashamedly a stage for Benedict Cumberbatch as Sherlock from start to finish. It is the kind of story that you can only really do as a middle episode within a season, so indulgent is it towards one actor and his fans. Most of the first half an hour alternates between homage of Cumberbatch's work on the Shakespearean stage, and parody of his then recent starring role in the *Marvel* comics movie *Doctor Strange*. The surrealism established in previous episodes reaches new and captivating extremes here, with a virtual character interacting with the real world, and a real character appearing as a virtual one. The distinction between reality and what we might now call 'virtuality', becomes not so much blurred, as dispensed with altogether. Assuming, as noted in the opening paragraph, that anyone reading this review has either seen the episodes or is familiar enough with the show's essential continuity not to be concerned with general spoilers, this story cannot be discussed without a passing mention of how the episode is an homage of yet another piece of cult television lore. For anyone that has seen the 60s classic *Randall and Hopkirk*, it is impossible to watch Mary interacting with John and not recall Marty and Jeff sharing a similar concept and dynamic.

The villain played by Toby Jones might be larger than life to an almost comical, *Avengers*-like, diabolical mastermind degree, but here it works because of the extremes that Cumberbatch and Freeman put into their own performances. Anything less would have been instantly forgettable. The introspective scene in the 221b study at the end of the episode is a good example of the piece as a whole. The main plot has by this point been resolved, and it shows the confidence of the audience in the show, that the scene is so much like theatre, like a miniature play performed on a single set in isolation of any other elements that you might take for granted in modern, fast-paced television drama. The depth of John and Sherlock's emotions, shared with the other characters and by its fundamental nature, with the majority of viewers, allow deep realism and frivolous

surrealism to be juxtaposed in a way that you only normally get away with on stage, or on the platform of independent film-making. Perhaps within a mainstream drama series more than anywhere else, you need a phenomenally high calibre of actor to carry it off. Here too, *Sherlock* delivers. And yet, amidst all of this excellence, episode after episode in the final two seasons, the show still arguably manages to save the very best until last ...

The final episode, aptly titled *The Final Problem*, immediately grabs our attention with a young girl on an aeroplane, aboard which the crew and passengers are unconscious, finding a phone and calling for help. We return to the scenario again and again through the episode, with Sherlock trying to save the plane and his family and friends, as the action reaches a climax. Yet, all is not as it seems. Although we have seen her twice before, it is in this episode that we are introduced to Eurus Holmes, the sister of Mycroft and **Sherlock**, believed to be insane and incarcerated in a special facility, beneath a cover story of having died. The quasi-virtual world of the memory palace is again developed, and again as a shared experience, that allows not only Sherlock and Mycroft, but also John Watson, to see back in time to the brothers' childhood with their sister. An evocative, stylised yet dark, parody of the 'slasher' genre of horror films follows in Mycroft's home, which, in a neat and self-parodic inversion, turns out to be a real scenario faked by Sherlock and John. As in the previous episode, the directors are playing with viewer expectations by portraying illusions as real and reality as virtual.

When the narrative changes location to visit Eurus' prison, it does so to beautiful coastal scenery and a stunning cliff-top fort that, as a real-world location, dates from the Napoleonic wars. The use of, for once, a conventional flashback, allows Andrew Scott to appear as Moriarty, before his suicide in season two. Eurus Holmes, described by Mycroft as better than Sherlock or even himself, is nothing less than an amazing character and creation, worthy of a spin-off show. Attractive, clever, talented, creative, and with a razor-sharp intellect and wit, Eurus is the equal and opposite of the brothers, a nemesis with a close personal bond to the hero. She is a female version of the Master (in *Doctor Who*, though most readers here will know that already), without the Mary Poppins comedy of Missy. Supposedly locked away in a secure coastal facility as the 'special' prisoner, she has in reality hypnotised the governor and comes and goes at

will, finally using the visit of her brothers to openly turn the tables and lock up her enemy instead. Not only is Eurus analogous of the Master, but the setting and much of the story is an homage to the first few episodes of *The Sea Devils*. The Palmerston Fort in the latter serial may not have been the prison, but both stories feature one as a key location, so it's near enough! Not only that, but the way her story and her incarceration are brought to life, make this an homage of another 60s cult television legend as well. Eurus is not only the Master, she is also Number Six! (*The Prisoner*, if you didn't know already).

Once the Holmes brothers and Watson are incarcerated in Sherrinford prison, which incidentally has a strong science fiction concept and visuals in keeping with being a *Doctor Who* partner show, a series of challenges and countdowns, along with Eurus dictating events by video screen, create a powerful and emotive intensity. The locked room scene with just Cumberbatch, Freeman and Mark Gatiss, with Sian Brooke a fourth player by means of a large monitor behind them, and the gun prop, truly is pure, top class theatre on your television at home. Audiences pay top money for this on the London stage and it really is value for money drama..



Eurus Holmes played by Siân Brooke

In the 1960s, television as we know it evolved from plays for television in shows like *Armchair Theatre* and *Out of the Unknown*, and it really is something special to see modern drama like this revisiting that kind of intensity. Another change of scenery takes us to the Holmes family home of their childhood, now a derelict Gothic mansion. This new setting combines popular horror elements, familiar from many cult classics by Hammer and other studios, with a reference to *The Musgrave Ritual* of the original written source material, and adds a dramatic race against time to save John Watson and the girl on the doomed airliner. Remember that all was not as it seemed? A final twist in the tale takes the scene, the episode and the show to a new high, as Sherlock realises in a moment of brilliance by both the writers and their creation, that the girl and the plane are not real. In a perfect pay-off from the blending of reality and fantasy over the last three seasons, the girl on the plane is revealed to be Eurus, driven to schizophrenia within her own mind palace. The danger of being trapped on the plane, alone in a space filled with people, needing to call Sherlock for help, is revealed as an avatar for her mental illness. Based on classic literature, but so contemporary and relevant too.

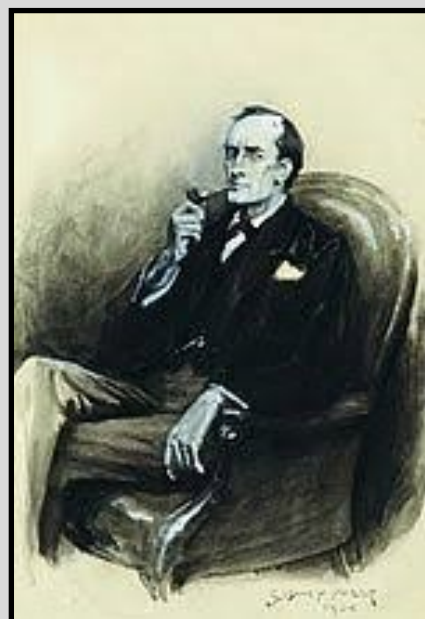
With a reference to the, at the time, current Doctor (Peter Capaldi), and his ongoing character's question of whether he is 'a good man', *Sherlock* the show, ends with Sherlock the man finding closure and new beginnings. We see the Holmes family – Sherlock, Mycroft, Eurus, and Mr and Mrs Holmes – reunited at Sherrinford Fort, Sherlock and Eurus playing the violin together, communicating through music; a theme that is carried into a montage that gives the show closure too. We have cameos for many of the stars of the show, like a virtual curtain call that is so appropriate for a show unashamed of its links to the theatrical world. Greg, Molly, Mary, Mrs Hudson ... they all played an important role in making the show what it became.

The dynamic created by adding Mary to the team, maybe made the greatest contribution. The bromance between John and Sherlock was limiting, emotionally and dramatically, with John having nobody to relate to, and Sherlock not wishing to relate to anyone. The relationship with Mary allowed Martin Freeman and the writers many more options, and also created a new way of exploring Sherlock's otherwise concealed sociopathic personality. It also opened the way for more flexibility, with character pairings other than John and Sherlock on a case, making those moments that two leading characters do share all



Let's hear it for the girls! Mary Watson (top) and Mrs Hudson (below) – both very much part of the *Sherlock* 'family team'.

the more meaningful. The show went out on a true high, so does not really need a continuation, but also still had lots of potential remaining, which is a credit all round. If you have not yet seen the show, we highly recommend it!





CROWLEY?

CROWLEY WHO?

BY

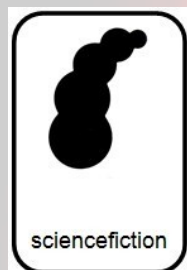
VEERLE BLAJIC-KIK

The Tale of the Two Crowleys

'There is no such thing as coincidence.'

As a kid those words briefly made me believe There Was Something Out There. Today it mainly makes me look for connections. Recently, that led me to Crowley.

Even before I mastered the magic that is the written word, I used to stare wistfully at books, sighing, 'I wish I knew what it said...' When I finally did, I devoured everything I could get my eyes on. My dad read books that the library had labelled with a funny little cloud, so naturally, that became my preference.



As our local library didn't usually differentiate between fantasy and science fiction, not only did I feast on Asimov and Heinlein, but also Pratchett and Gaiman. It was in the latter variety that I crossed paths with the first character named Crowley. This is where the story begins.

In Pratchett and Gaiman's collaboration *Good Omens* (recently made into a TV mini-series), Crowley is a high ranking demon who loves being on earth. So much, in fact, that when it transpires the Antichrist will soon be born, and Armageddon will finally be happening, he tries to stop it. Why? Well, Hell is... Hell, actually. And he does not particularly miss it. Also, his track record's a bit dusty and dated. Sure, he's done some evil, but is he really living up to his reputation? Humans mainly inflict it on themselves anyway; so he's been living it up, enjoying the good life. But what if they find that out back home? He fears he may be degraded. So he strikes a deal with his frenemy

Aziraphale, an angel, who also would not want Earth to stop existing. He'd miss books too much. And besides, heaven's a bit boring.

For years, this was all there was and I never thought twice about Crowley.

But this winter, I finally gave up on resisting the TV show *Supernatural*. Sure, its main audience consists of teenage girls, pining after lead characters Sam and Dean Winchester, but if you can keep a show going for 16 years, you surely must be doing something right.

Full disclosure: I wasn't immediately impressed. In fact, I only started to get into it after side characters Crowley, a demon, and Castiel, an angel, join the cast in the fourth and fifth season. This Crowley starts off as a so-called "cross roads demon", who makes deals with people in return for their soul. Later on, he manages to climb the corporate ladder and becomes King of Hell. It sort of rang a bell, but I couldn't quite put my finger on it. And then the Apocalypse started happening. Suddenly we see Crowley make a deal with the Winchester boys and angel Castiel. Why? Well, with Lucifer free and back on his throne, what faith awaits a demon? Will everything be like Hell from now on? And Hell is... Hell!

This is when the penny dropped, and the big question arose: Could these Crowleys be the same person?

The Search for Crowley

'There is no such thing as coincidence', I told myself, and since the show's characters Gabriel, Raphael, Azazel and Lucifer are also copied straight out of the Bible, I went looking there for mentions of a *Crowley Demon*. After all, what else had showrunner Eric Kripke and the Pratchett-Gaiman duo in common but this pre-existing base of knowledge? Besides, I had a very good clue. In the book, Crowley is explained to be derived from



David Tennant as the demon Crowley from the TV adaptation of *Good Omens*

generate more questions as I found yet another Crowley.

The Third Crowley

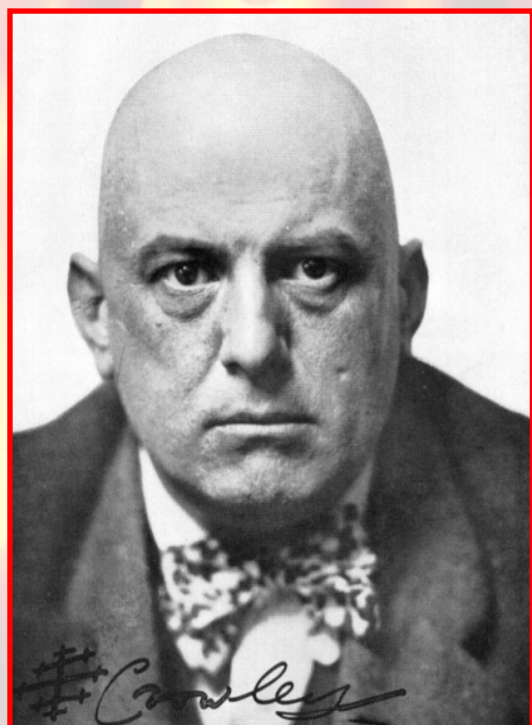
This Crowley at least had been a real person. Late 19th to early 20th century **Aleister Crowley** is often named in the same breath as Satanism, and it is generally believed he was one of the main promoters of this religion. The reality is quite different however. Yes, he did write books under the alias 'the Apocalyptic Beast 666', or just 'the Great Beast', but this was probably because that was what his mother called him, after he lost his faith.

Having grown up a devout Christian, his belief took a serious hit when his father died, which led him to him questioning it all. Eventually he broke all ties with Christianity, and started practicing yoga and studying the occult. And even though he went quite far in this – he would end up the leader of the *Argenteum Astrum*, a magical order known for its perversity and sodomy, which was eventually banned – breaking with God meant also breaking with Satan. He believed in neither. Yet, because all his, especially for the time, strange ways, the media named him '*the wickedest man to ever have lived*', and since wicked is Evil, and Evil is Satan, the connection stuck. It even resurfaces in an Ozzy Osbourne song, some 30 years after Crowley's death. The lyrics '*You fooled all the faithful with magic/ yeah, you waited on Satan's call*' shows just how much occultism and Satan have become intertwined in the minds of people.

'crawly' as this was his fate after seducing mankind in the Garden of Eden. God himself had decreed that, from now, he would be forced to crawl in the dust. That surely meant that this Crowley was the snake, right? For a brief moment I thought I had it, but then libraries' worth of explanations and discussions came tumbling into my computer. I couldn't even begin to understand everything about it, as they were going back to original Hebrew and it's (flawed) translations; but pretty soon it became apparent to me that if that was Crowley, he would have been Lucifer. And that would pretty much make the story impossible. Maybe the authors hadn't delved into it as much as I did and had just made something up. That would be very much the authors' M.O. So not *the* crawly then, but maybe *a* crawly? The search was back on; there had to be another mention of him somewhere.

But Crowley wasn't mentioned anywhere else in the bible either.

Where, then, could he be? I wasn't yet ready to give up on this similarity, but my search seemed to only



The wickedest man alive?



Demon Crowley in *Supernatural*, played by Mark Sheppard

Looking at all three of the Crowleys, there's only a few certainties:

1. Aleister Crowley was a real person.
2. *Supernatural* Crowley bears similarities to *Good Omens* Crowley, although mainly in his earlier seasons. Apart from the name, there's the flashy ways, the enjoying of the 'finer' things in life, the sarcastic superiority masking his existential doubts... But after that, he does his own thing, which is only natural (pun not intended) when your story needs to continue beyond more than one ending of the world.

There just wasn't enough glue there to stick them together. I needed more.

The Missing Link

I decided that maybe I was too close to it, and might never unravel this mystery. Maybe I should let it rest for a while.

I continued watching the show, and didn't actively look for connections. It took some time. But the answer was on its way; I just didn't know it yet.

In the eleventh season of *Supernatural*, a reaper named Billie is seen casually reading a book. True to my book-loving personality, of course I paid close attention. *The Devil is in the Details*, the episode is named, and how apt that turned out to be! The book she's reading turned out to be the key to my mystery.

Suddenly it dawned on me, very much like the witch Anathema Device in *Good Omens*, I couldn't see the answer for the same reason you can't see America from Times Square. I had to zoom out!

Billie was reading *Death: The Time of Your Life*, written by none other than Neil Gaiman himself! Here I was, looking at a tiny link, when all along it was a whole chain. The writers of *Supernatural* were fans of Neil Himself!

Once I started following that thread, it all became clear. I even found video footage of Mark Sheppard - aka *Supernatural*'s Crowley - saying that *of course* his character was based on the *Good Omens* one. Even better, Neil, in return, is a big fan of the show and all the ways in which it intersects with his own work.

In the book, Crowley brags about his design of the M25, which is shaped like a sigil so the traffic can, "*unknowingly help generate a low-grade evil to pollute the metaphysical atmosphere*". When Crowley is introduced to the *Supernatural*, the opening shot is of a complicated freeway, crossing and turning on itself, crowded with cars.

It doesn't end with Crowley either. The look of the angel Castiel in *Supernatural* (trench coat over a suit with a black tie) is directly based on Gaiman's character *John Constantine*. So much so, that at (comic) cons you see Constantine cosplayers with signs pinned to their back '*I'm not Castiel you idiots!*' Once you start seeing it, the show is teeming with references to the authors' works.



John Constantine inspired Castiel's look

Loose Ends

I finally had my answer. All doubts had vanished when I came across showrunner Kripke saying this: *'I'm such a fan of Neil, and he's every bit as smart as promised and every bit as cool and down-to-earth, and I just loved my conversations with him... I've ripped off Neil front, right and centre. I mean Supernatural is basically Sandman meets American Gods.'*

The only thing I hadn't quite explained, was if and where the real Crowley fitted in. Of course, I had solved my original mystery, but I'd spent quite some time learning about Aleister, and I didn't want that to go to waste. Besides, knowing the authors, they wouldn't let a chance like this go by without in some way making a connection or a pun.

Luckily, Mark Sheppard came to my rescue yet again with the quote *'The names are the same, but it's always a nod to Aleister Crowley. Everything has always been a nod to Aleister Crowley.'* And that settled that.

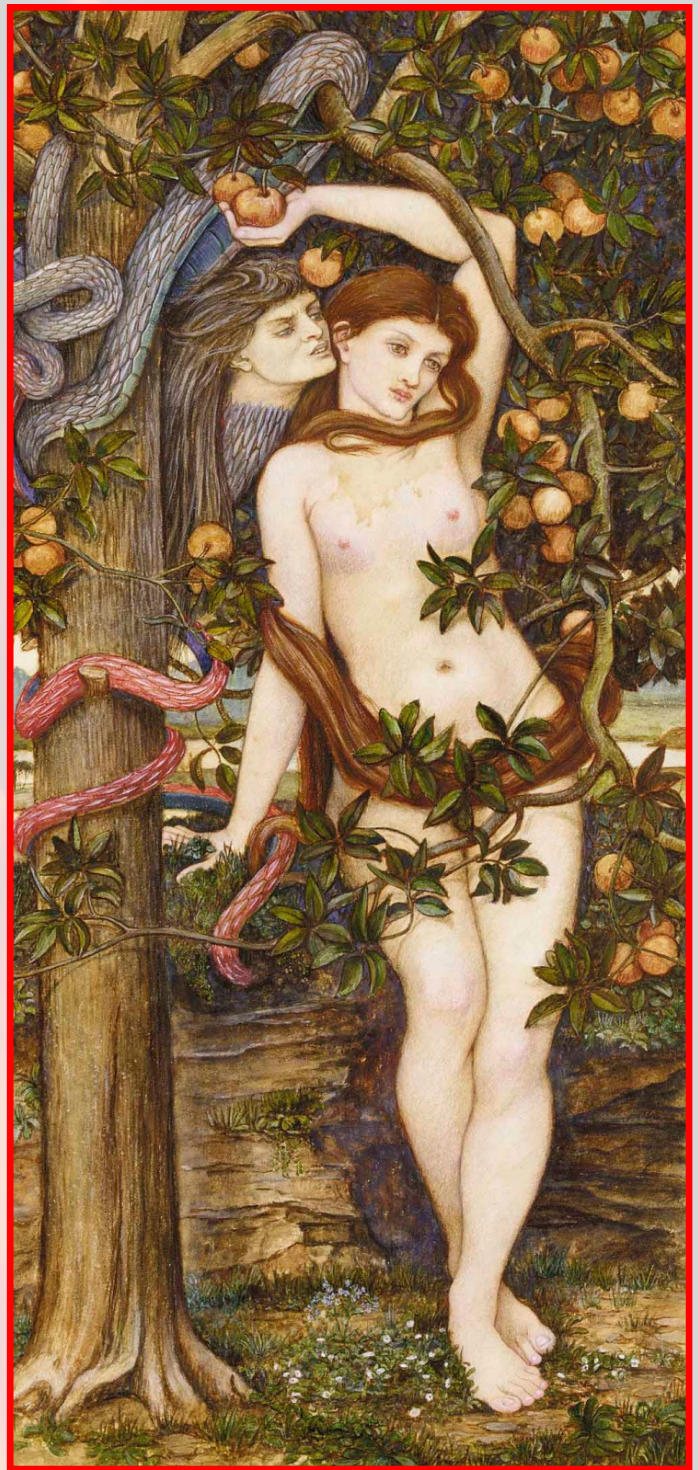
My quest was done, fully and completely. Of course, in the end, while they are both enjoyable characters, that may have the same attitude, their origins are very different. Where *Supernatural* Crowley used to be the human son of a witch before he died and became a demon, the *Good Omens'* one is just an angel who didn't so much fall from heaven, as sort of vaguely saunter downwards. So the fact that the latter was named Anthony instead of Aleister, shouldn't be surprising either. They are only inspired by each other; they don't have to be exact copies. I was confident I got everything I could possibly get out of this.

Idly, I let my eyes rest on the webpage. I noticed a highlighted line. It read *"'Heigh ho', said Anthony Crowley, and just drove away."* Underneath it, a link to the lyrics of a nursery rhyme: *A Frog He Would A-wooing Go*. About a frog. Named Anthony Rowley. Who says *Heigh Ho* after each verse.

Like the descendant of Agnes Nutter (witch), and like Sam Winchester (hunter), I too got a package from the past handed to me just as I thought it to be all over. There will never be an end.

Damn it Crowley, you evil son-of-a-witch! You got me again.

Heigh Ho!

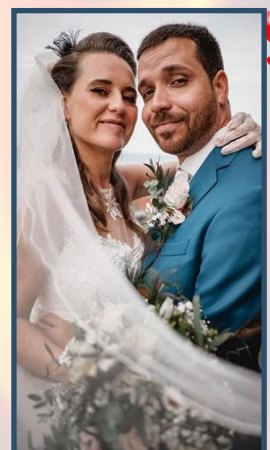


***Eve Tempted* by John Roddam Spencer Stanhope (1829-1908) Naughty Crowley!**

Editor's Note:

If I can be a little devil (well, I am Old Nick after all) and sneak in here...

Congratulations to Veerle and her new husband Daniel on their recent marriage. Wishing You Both Much Happiness Guys!



OBITUARY:

PAUL DARROW

The actor Paul Darrow, who has died aged 78, will be best remembered as the sardonic antihero Kerr Avon in all four series of *Blake's 7* (1978-81), the BBC TV science fiction show, created by Terry Nation about rebellious outlaws fighting a cruel Federation.

When Gareth Thomas playing Roj Blake, left after two years, Avon became the main character. He was a terse, cold pragmatist with a fine line in purred cynicism, and beneath his steely eyes and inscrutable visage Darrow imbued the character with a quick, calculating intelligence and simmering danger. He considered Avon to be a cross between Steve McQueen and Elvis Presley, with a touch of Richard Nixon thrown in. It was a captivating performance, never dull, and Darrow's smouldering good looks and gift for icy put-downs made Avon hugely popular with viewers and a *bona fide* science fiction icon.

The series ended with the shocking deaths of all the lead characters (including Blake, returning for one last episode), with Avon the last man standing. The show's final shot was a closeup of Darrow, gun raised, grinning down the barrel of the camera (and several Federation rifles). Gunshots sounded over the closing titles.

Darrow enthusiastically reprised the role when *Blake's 7* was revived on audio by both the BBC (1998-99) and Big Finish (2012-19). He wrote a novel, *Avon: A Terrible Aspect* (1989), and even tried to acquire the rights to continue the screen incarnation of the series.

He was born in Chessington, Surrey, as Paul Birkby, the son of a pharmacist, Val Birkby, and his wife, Gwen (nee Thomas). After a peripatetic postwar childhood he settled with his parents in Mill Hill East, north London, and was educated at the Haberdashers' Aske's Hampstead school before enrolling at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art.

When he graduated in 1962 an agent convinced him that his name was not actorly enough, so his father suggested Darrow, after the great American attorney Clarence Darrow. His theatrical career began in repertory in Cheltenham in 1962; he toured in *Chips with Everything* in 1963 and then spent a year at York Theatre Royal, where he became engaged to a fellow actor, Janet Lees-Price, whom he married in 1966.

Other stage roles included the title role in *Alfie* (Northampton repertory theatre, 1965), Jimmy Porter in *Look Back in Anger* (1968, York Theatre Royal, then a tour of the Netherlands), Rocky in *The Iceman Cometh* (Bristol Old Vic, 1971) and Detective Sergeant Trotter in *The Mousetrap* (Ambassadors theatre, 1972).

After *Blake's 7* he was in the West End for Ray Cooney's *Run For Your Wife* (Criterion theatre, 1985-87), played Presley for Bill Kenwright in Alan Bleasdale's *Are You Lonesome Tonight?* (tour, 1987-88), the title role in *Macbeth* (tour, 1992) and Captain Vimes in Terry Pratchett's *Guards! Guards!* (tour, 1998-99).

Having made his television debut in 1963, he played the dashing young doctor Simon Verity in *Emergency - Ward 10* (1965-66); by happy coincidence, Janet also landed a regular role in the show at the same time. As well as playing guest parts in many popular dramas in the 1960s and 70s, he took the title role in *The Poisoning of Charles Bravo* (1975) and was the Sheriff of Nottingham in *The Legend of Robin Hood* (1975) before being cast as Avon in 1977.

When *Blake's 7* ended he delivered a superb turn as James Carker in the BBC's *Dombey and Son* (1983), entertainingly chewed the scenery in the *Doctor Who* adventure *Timelash* (1985), and was a regular in *Making News* (1990) and *The Strangerers* (2000). Darrow played judges in

Hollyoaks (2002) and *Law and Order* (2009-14), had two short stints in *Emmerdale* (1991-92, 2009), did comic turns for *Little Britain* (2004) and *Toast of London* (2014), and hosted the athletic endurance series *Hercules* (2004).

He lent his distinctive tones to numerous commercials and video games, and was the voice of the Oxfordshire radio station *Jack FM* for more than a decade, providing jingles and promotional inserts.

In 2014 he suffered an aortic aneurysm that led to the partial amputation of both legs, but he responded with trademark good humour, persevering with his hugely entertaining turns at science fiction conventions. His last television appearance was with his old friend and *Blake's 7* co-star Michael Keating on an episode of *Pointless Celebrities* in 2018.

He published an autobiography, *You're Him, Aren't You?*, in 2006.

Janet died in 2012.

• **Paul Darrow (Paul Valentine Birkby), actor, born 2 May 1941; died 3 June 2019**

**Obituary © Toby Hadoke; printed in *The Guardian* 6 June 2019.
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Resurrecting The Dead

What Happened After Blake's 7 Ended?

By Annie Worrall

Coping with loss is a personal process but there are recognised components to it: disbelief, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. Of course grief is not as clear cut as this implies. It's more a debilitating mish-mash of the above and you thank the day when something occurs to lift the clouds and you notice that the world is still a colourful and interesting place.

I'm not suggesting, for a minute, that watching your heroes die in a TV programme is anything like as bad as losing a loved one but after witnessing the demise of our favourite characters in *Blake*, we fans went through something similar to the grieving process. Well I did at any rate and I'm pretty sure you did too.

My first thought as Avon smiled out at me, the screen faded to black and I heard those shots, was that he'd been working for the Federation, all along. Nooooo. Avon!

Shock and disbelief followed on quickly. I couldn't really be saying goodbye to those I'd accompanied through four action-packed series, could I? Any moment now, an announcer's voice would assure me that the show would return, as it had after *Terminal* aired.

But nothing happened.

Then I got angry. The Federation had won. Servalan remained at large and unpunished. That wasn't what I'd expected at all. How fair was that?

Later I discovered I was not alone on feeling cheated. Parents wrote letters complaining about the effect this was having on their kids. Others petitioned the BBC, hoping their protests would force those in charge to change their minds and announce a new series. They wore their *Bring Back Blake's 7* badges and even marched on Broadcasting House. No. Still nothing. Not even a promise of a repeat.

Abandoned by the Corporation, fans were forced to come up with their own ideas. Yes but we hadn't see Avon die had we? The others? Well there wasn't any blood on most of them, so the troopers could have been using stun guns as they did in Project Avalon. Blake's blood? Fake. He and Avon set the whole thing up. Such theories flew back and forth, none of them too far-fetched to be discounted. (Avon ducked and the encircling Feds shot each other? I ask you!). I wasn't part of fandom then, but I remember weeks of bargaining



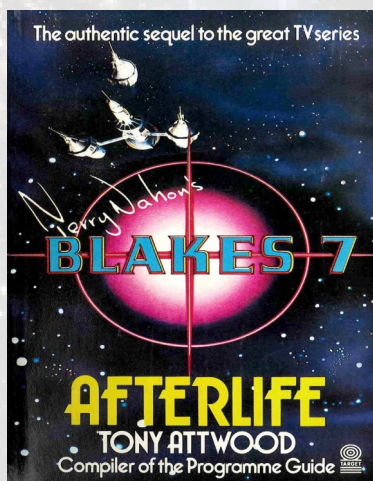
The Final End...?

It was no good. They weren't ever coming back. Depression descended. How could that good fight be lost so easily and for such a stupid reason? What was the point? Better they'd just nipped off to Del 10 and frittered the Liberator's treasure on Soma, Sex and Song while waiting to be recaptured.

Finally of course, came acceptance.... It was over. Time to move on. Ah! Well.... That's where it all falls down, doesn't it? Because I - and I suspect you - have never really been able to accept that that was the end. Which is why I have so eagerly snapped up any post Gauda Prime stories around in an attempt to keep my heroes alive and kicking. As you will know, there have been many of these, all offering different solutions to the problem. Indeed they're still being written; I've even penned a couple myself. But I want to tell you about those which have been more significant to me than the rest.

At some point, you may have, like me, read, or tried to read, *Afterlife* by Tony Attwood, the only official continuation of the *Blake's 7* adventures.. Paradoxically, it's my least favourite PGP continuation but also the most important. I read it about two years after the series ended, happening on it by chance while browsing in a book shop in Reigate. I must confess my initial excitement at my find diminished considerably by the time Tarrant made his gratuitous appearance and was promptly eaten by white tigers - but up until then I'd quite enjoyed it; particularly the description of the planet Scatt, its grass rich with the sygnum crystals that everyone needed to build their plasma shields. I could just hear Servalan commanding her latest Travis substitute to: "Get mowing and get me those crystals."

Afterlife wasn't the continuation I'd hoped for, but it's BBC seal of approval meant that it was now cannon that not all the rebels were dead. And if some had survived, then possibly others had too. Not Tarrant of course but I wasn't too bothered about that. (Sorry Tarrant fans.) I fully expected a fifth series to be announced any day.



One sequel version...

Alas it wasn't to be: probably for the best if *Afterlife* was the direction they envisaged it might take! So my sense of loss bubbled on, until, eventually, it was overtaken by other concerns.

Then, one day, years later, I discovered Horizon, Big Finish and *Lucifer*.

It's funny how submerged feelings can suddenly be dragged up into the light. Funny peculiar not funny hilarious obviously. One minute I hadn't given the programme a thought for years, the next I was missing it like crazy. Rewatches were all very well but there was still that ending to recover from.

Horizon sprang to my rescue with reviews of the Big Finish *Blake's 7* books and audios, and when I visited their site, I discovered that Paul Darrow had continued the story in his *Lucifer* Trilogy, using ideas mooted by Terry Nation for a fifth series of the show. Admittedly it was an Avoncentric continuation, but I liked Avon, a lot, so that was alright... And it had the posthumous Nation seal of approval.



... and another!

Well I did enjoy those books. This Avon is a deliciously rotten hero - a bit like Flashman but without his self-awareness, or cowardice. The villains all get a satisfying comeuppance at his hands as he stabs, shoots and bombs his way out of trouble, nonchalantly setting traps for them with nitro glycerine, much to Orac's disapproval. Although the trilogy ends on a downbeat and rather moving, note, the adventures leading up to it are enormous fun- more pulp fiction than *Blake's* fiction it's true - but they resurrected the show as an adventure story, something I'd forgotten it could be in the dystopian gloom of the final episode. All this was very cheering.

But something was still missing. Neither *Afterlife* or the *Lucifer* series had managed to explain to my satisfaction just why Blake and his crew failed so spectacularly. Yes the flaws in their character provided a partial motivation but I'd always had a sense that it had happened more because they didn't understand the true nature of the threat facing them, than because the stress of trying to survive had driven them nuts. The final episode had provided a depressing closure to the personal Avon/ Blake conflict but it left many unanswered questions about the Federation role in their downfall. Had Sleer set it all up? Why was the planet being blockaded? Where had all those troopers come from? What, in short, had been going on behind the scenes?

It was You tube that provided an answer. Something called *The Logic of Empire* popped up when I typed *Blake's 7* into the search box. It was an audio adventure starring Paul Darrow and Jacqueline Pearce -every incentive to listen to it- and it proved to be both bleakly plausible and stunningly realised. Its solution to the questions that nagged me was logical and deeply disturbing and left me sucking in my breath and muttering, "Oh of course," in one of those rare moments when things fall into place and, even if it's painful, they at last make some sort of sense.

So now I'd rejoiced in the fact that at least some of my heroes had survived; enjoyed a rollicking adventure starring one of the seven; and listened to a bleakly satisfying explanation for the end of the show. I was ready for something different: something that would excite me and feel as fresh as when I first started watching *Blake* and his rebels.

I found that in the *Kaldor City* audio adventures. Made by Magic Bullet Productions, they are an extension of Chris Boucher's *Doctor Who* story, *The Robots of Death*. I didn't know what to expect from them but I was intrigued to see that they featured Carnell, one of my favourite guest characters from *Blake's 7*, and Kerr Avon in the guise of the mercenary, Kaston Iago; and that these roles were played by the actors who created them. It didn't hurt that they also starred the incomparable Russell Hunter, Brian Croucher, David Collings and Peter Miles- all actors I admire.



The story continues...?

I soon discovered that *Kaldor City* is very much the heir of *Blake's 7*, inhabiting a similar, paranoid Universe, where death comes for the innocent and guilty with equal impartiality, and is as likely to be delivered by the hand of a lover as it is by an enemy. It's compelling stuff, defying simple analysis, with an ending as controversial, bleakly inevitable and open to interpretation as the ending of *Blake*. Just what I needed!

All the writers I've mentioned took the time and trouble to continue the *Blake's 7* story and I'm so grateful to them because they've allowed me to have my own ideas about what happened next.

What those ideas are change regularly depending on my mood. Sometimes *Blake* overthrows the Federation and I explore how the new regime develops. Sometimes only one of the seven survives and I try to imagine how they coped with their memories of Gauda Prime. My views of the "afterlife" are pretty fluid.

The one thing, however, I can tell you with certainty, is that those creators of *Blake's 7* sequels have shown us that the seven wait in the wings of our imagination until we choose to call them forth. And that when we do, they resume the place where they belong, centre stage.

Resurrection complete.



"Have you betrayed us? Have you betrayed... me?"

After The Guns Stopped Firing.... A Conversation

by

by Annie Worrall

So...how did I survive three gut shots, Avon?

Three gut shots? You've been dreaming, Blake.

I'm not in the mood for sarcasm, Avon. How come I'm still alive?

Ah, memory playing up again, I see. You set all this up. With my help of course.

And mine.

Is that...Jenna? Blake told me you had hit the self-destruct button and gone down with your ship.

He lied Tarrant... He was testing you out.

Look none of this explains how we're all still standing here...At least not to my satisfaction...

Remember your clone, Blake? It wasn't you Avon shot... Servalan used your clone to trick us...

How come I remember being shot then? It bloody hurts too...

ESP, I'd surmise. You and your clone share the same DNA and you are empathically feeling his pain.

Only the Aurona are telepathic, Avon...

Cally??? You're dead...you died on Terminal...I saw your body...

Or claimed you did...

Be quiet Vila...I was in a trance, Avon. We Aurona enter a healing trance when we are near death. I managed to telepathically contact Franton on Kaarn and she sent a ship to rescue me.

That's nice...Doesn't explain why I'm still alive though... I can't enter a healing trance.

Oh come on Vila, we all know that you took a dive as soon as the shooting started... That's how you were able to spring Avon from the cell they threw him into and he was able to rescue the rest of us.

Either that or you were so pickled with booze that the stun guns the Federation used had no effect on you.

Yes...thank you ladies... Any explanation why they were using stun guns against the Federation's most wanted?

Servalan...

Don't hiss her name like that Avon. Really gives me the creeps that does...You mean she wanted you alive?

Oh yes....

You can wipe that smug smile off your face... She wanted anything that shaved. Tarrant... that cave man, Jarvik...

She even had a go at me once, Dayna.

That's just disgusting Vila.

If it's true...

Oh, it's true alright, Avon... Servalan knew how to appreciate my talents even if you...

That's **enough!** We've got more important things to do than listen to you two bicker like an old married couple.

I thought that was you and Avon, Blake...

Look, Soo...Lin... Whatever your name is...We go down that route over my dead body...

Well that's a twist I haven't encountered before, Blake.

Avon...I'm trying to work out whether I'm still alive and whether the fight for freedom continues.... Look, I'm sorry I shouted. Now will you please stop sulking...I'm sorry. I mean of course, suffering beautifully and in silence and...

I'm definitely still alive, Blake. No one saw **me** gunned down. Last man standing..

Devil looks after his own.

Shut up Vila... **I** wasn't expendable... Mmmm ...devil...I like that idea....I could make that work for me.

There were shots though, Avon... They were all shooting at you...

Who the hell are you?

Deva...my name's Deva... Arlen shot me. I'm Blake's Computer expert.

Ah yes.... the inferior replacement...The one who couldn't work out that Arlen was a Federation plant. Can't you work this out either?

Really, there's no call to be rude... and...well, no I can't...

I ducked of course. Those stupid guards encircled me. All I had to do was drop to the floor and they shot each other over my head.

Stupid guards???? Ducked???? That is out and out the most implausible explanation for our presence here that I've ever heard.

Calm down, Blake...You'll burst a blood vessel...

Blood...so much blood...

Avon? Why are you looking at him like a space health resort visitor catching a whiff of frying bacon?

I knew it. He's a vampire, Dayna. You're a vampire aren't you Avon? That's why we're still alive...

Idiot...of course I'm not a vampire.

Or a ghost...That's it, you're a ghost. We're all ghosts, doomed to sail the stars for eternity seeking justice and liberty for all...

A plain man's guide to Series Five! No, Vila, I'm not a ghost either. How's this? Servalan kept me alive and I waited until I got an opportunity to kill her...I escaped... changed my name to Kaston Iago and made my way to Kaldor City....

Better than the one when you suddenly acquire a sister with a mind-bending machine.

Oooh, am I in that one?

Briefly Tarrant. You get eaten by tigers...

And I suppose I'm President Blake of the New Republic?

Well, are you sure you aren't?

Of course there's always Dorian's basement isn't there, Avon? We only have your word that you blew it up.

And if I did use it to resurrect myself, Tarrant, I suppose I later got captured by Servalan and brainwashed into believing I was the new Blake....

THIS IS RIDICULOUS! None of these explanations satisfy me... Can't we consult Orac? Where is he by the way?

It. It's an 'it' Blake. I gave it to Vila to hide before we entered the silo... Vila?

Ummmm....

Vila?

I swapped it.

Swapped it???

Avon...put Vila down, there's a good chap. Tarrant you grab his arms. Now Vila...

I was dying of thirst, Blake.... dying... you know how it is. And there was this old crone who suddenly appeared and offered me some booze... Now, no violence please. I hate personal violence, especially when I'm the person. Hear me out. She also promised me my heart's desire in exchange for the stupid box... So you can jolly well stop glaring at me Avon. It's thanks to me you're all still alive. And it's a bloody sight more that you deserve...

If we're still alive.

You doubt it?

Let's just say I'm finding the evidence less than compelling.

Well if we haven't got Orac, maybe we can ask Zen...

Zen's dead, Blake. Avon killed him.

Killed...**Zen**....My God, Avon you've been busy during my absence...

Zen's not dead.....

I'm afraid he is Jenna...

No he's not Arrant....

Tarrant...

Whatever.... He regenerated and made contact with me... He's on his way to pick us all up in the new Libby.

That's lovely Jenna...Now why don't you sit down over here while you wait for him? That's it. Close your eyes for a bit. Have a nice rest... He'll be here soon...

When pigs fly, Cally.

Hush, Avon. She'll hear you...What's a pig?

My head hurts. All this talking. We're getting nowhere... How can I possibly have survived three shots to my gut? How can the rest of you have survived being blown up or gunned down?

Perhaps I can help?

The six, five, six, currently nine but who's counting, turned as one to encounter a tall hooded figure holding a curved scythe in one hand and what appeared to be a cocktail shaker in the other. He loomed over them, grinning affably with just a trace of hidden berserker.

"You didn't survive," said Olag Gan. "Nobody survived Gauda Prime. Drink anyone?"



SPIRAL CONFLICT

The Galactic and Intergalactic Wars

By Alan Stevens

It is a common assumption that the “Intergalactic War” and “Galactic War” are terms used in *Blake’s 7* to reference the same event. It appears to have been a confused and contradictory affair, with some episodes suggesting a short, if devastating, battle, others a long struggle; some referring to an alien-human war and others to what seems to be a humans-only conflict. While it may be tempting for the casual viewer to put this down to lax continuity on the part of the script editor, there is considerable evidence within the series to imply that they are, in fact, two separate, though related, actions, with one brought about as a direct consequence of the other. Indeed, once you consider this possibility, all the perceived contradictions melt away.

1. The Intergalactic War

First, let’s examine the details of what is unquestionably an intergalactic war, the conflagration which breaks out at the end of Series Two between the Terran Federation and the aliens of the Andromeda Galaxy. All evidence indicates that this war is a fairly short-lived one. Exactly how short-lived it is difficult to say: we have no idea how much time elapses between Servalan ordering “Red One Mobilization” and the responses by various ships and fleets announcing their positions; or what their positions were, at the precise moment Servalan gave the order, relative to those that they occupy when they report in. However, it cannot be more than four hours’ journey at maximum speed between the Federation’s closest forces and the antimatter minefield, because we hear an announcement in this sequence that the Galactic Eighth Fleet is “underway” and estimating their arrival in four hours.

Although the *Liberator* we see in *Volcano* does not appear capable of holding out alone against an alien fleet for a minimum of one hour seven minutes (the position of the closest ship at the point at which the alien fleet comes through) and a maximum of four hours, it is worth remembering, firstly, that the *Liberator* was in a strategically advantageous position because the alien ships could not pass through the minefield all at once. Secondly, the *Liberator*, as it picked off the advancing ships, would also generate a debris field which would further slow down the Andromedans. And thirdly, the *Liberator* seen in *Volcano* had been through the war, so, repair circuits notwithstanding, it was in a much weakened state.

Once engaged, the conflict again appears to have been short-term. When Servalan is shot down in *Aftermath*, at which time, we are told, “the battle was virtually over”, she is wearing the same clothes that she wore in *Star One*, and the members of the *Liberator* crew whom we see are also wearing the same costumes as in that episode. I think we can accept that the chances of all of them wearing the same garments on the same occasion months later, is rather unlikely. Also, Servalan refers to herself as the Federation’s “new President”, a role which she assumed just prior to the war. And lastly, we have Tarrant’s description in *Powerplay* of how he came to the *Liberator*:

“Like you, I went in against the aliens; unlike you I barely survived the first salvo. I was picked up by a Federation ship — that’s how I came by the uniform. When she was hit and we abandoned, my life capsule homed in on the *Liberator*. She was still in bad shape, but the repair circuits were beginning to make headway.”

These events would appear to have happened in fairly quick succession: very little time elapses between the first salvo and Tarrant’s discovery of the partially-repaired *Liberator*. References to the Intergalactic War, therefore, indicate it to be a brief, if widespread, combat between the Federation and the Andromedans.



The *Liberator* takes on the Andromedan Battle Fleet
conclusion of Season 2, Episode 13: *Star One*

2. The Galactic War

The Galactic War, on the other hand, describes a different, if related, campaign. The first time it is named as such is in *Volcano*, when we learn that the Pyroans: “were right in the middle of the war zone where some of the greatest battles of the Galactic War took place, yet the planet survived untouched.”

Later, there is this exchange:

AVON: Did either side land survivors or damaged ships on the surface of the planet Obsidian?

ZEN: Available data suggests that they did not.

AVON: That’s what I thought. Zen, do you have any information as to any neutral status accorded the planet Obsidian?

ZEN: No official neutral status was accorded the planet Obsidian.

AVON: Then what have they got that protects them?

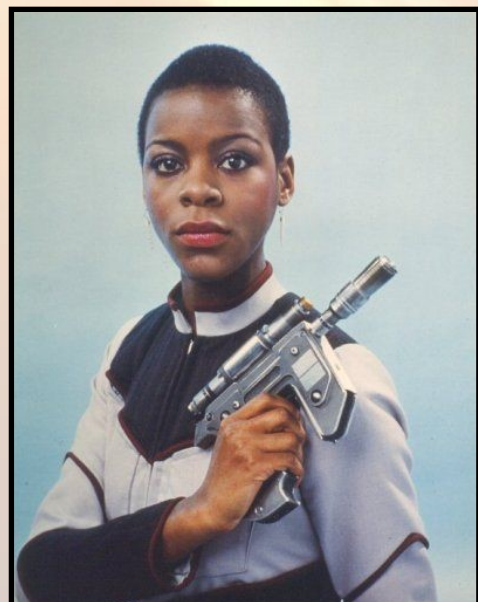
While one might assume that this alludes to the recently-concluded Intergalactic War, there are three pieces of evidence that signify a different engagement. In the first place, it is repeatedly called the “Galactic War”, rather than the “Intergalactic War”, and the use of the latter term in *Children of Auron* to name what is explicitly the human-Andromedan conflict, suggests that “Galactic War” is a distinct title, rather than a lazy shorthand for the intergalactic set-to. Then, aliens are at no point referred to as combatants in the Galactic War, whereas *Children of Auron* specifies they were a party to the intergalactic confrontation. Additionally, Avon’s references to “neutral status”, and the landing of survivors and ships on particular planets by different sides, intimate a long-term affair, affording time for some groups to be formally accorded special privileges. This would have been an unlikely concession for the Andromedans to grant as they were dedicated to the eradication of the human race. There is also the fact that Obsidian was evidently not seeded with alien pathogens, which as *Children of Auron* implies, was common for planets in the battle zone during the Intergalactic War.



No new costumes—how much time has elapsed?

There is further evidence from the episode *Animals*. Again, speaking explicitly of a “Galactic War”, Servalan’s captain states that Justin’s experiments were “developed further during the war”; and Servalan herself comments that Justin’s scientific team “were on Bucol Two towards the end of the war and they spent twenty million credits on whatever it was.” This indicates that the Galactic War went on long enough for the Federation to plan, budget for, and spend money on a programme to develop radiation-proof shock troops, which in itself proposes a long-standing face-off (in that they were planning to use these troops not immediately, but at some stage after the design had been perfected). Servalan also references “war departments”, again showing that people had enough time to organize themselves and develop bureaucratic structures. Furthermore, Justin describes what can only be a ground conflict, mentioning the Federation losing “sixty per cent front line troops” and thus needing soldiers who could “go into areas heavy with radioactivity”; all arguments for a protracted, multi-planet, ground warfare, rather than a brief space battle.

Finally, there is the fact that in both stories, the Galactic War is accredited as a humans-only affair. In *Volcano*, Dayna says, “as the Galactic War has just demonstrated, aggression seems to be programmed into the human psyche.” The Intergalactic War, however, not only involved aliens, but they were in fact the aggressors; the humans merely defended themselves. Justin, similarly, says, “most of my pupils of your time are dead, perished in the Galactic War. That war was a terrible, terrible mistake.” Since the Intergalactic War was triggered by an alien attack, it cannot really be described as a “mistake” as this would imply that the Federation had played some conscious part in instigating it. Moreover, during *Aftermath*, Mellanby says that the alien fleet was “virtually wiped out”, proving that they were incapable of engaging in the kind of sustained encounter which, according to *Volcano* and *Animals*, constituted the Galactic War.



Dayna Mellanby joins the crew

3. The Nature of the Galactic War

From hints throughout Series Three and Four, the Galactic War would appear to have been an internal conflict within the former Federation which emerged in the aftermath of the short, Human-Andromedan, Intergalactic War. We know that the Federation was demolished by the Intergalactic War from two exchanges in *Aftermath*.

The first is between Mellanby and Avon:

MELLANBY: What's left of the Federation fleet, which isn't much, is scattered halfway across the galaxy. I'd say the Federation's in a lot of trouble.

AVON: Yes, it's difficult to sustain a military dictatorship when you've lost most of the military. I only hope Blake survived long enough to realize that he was winning — both wars.

And the second, between Servalan and Avon:

SERVALAN: Star One was destroyed.... They reduced the entire planet to so much space debris. Nothing survived.

AVON: And Star One was the basis of Federation power. It controlled everything.

SERVALAN: Exactly. And now it's gone, so is most of the Federation. From now on there will be chaos in the star systems. No central control, no unifying force. Over half the civilized planets left to their fate.

Later in the same conversation, Servalan says:

You could rebuild it all. All those worlds could be yours, Avon, they're there for the taking. You and I could build an empire greater and more powerful than the Federation ever was or ever could have been.

These exchanges show that, by the time of the events of *Aftermath*, the Federation has been smashed; something confirmed in both *Children of Auron* and the later *Stardrive*. In these the Federation's "break up" and "collapse" are underlined; yet there are some within the former Federation with an interest in seizing what remains, and a struggle for power between rival factions is, indeed, what follows.

In *Volcano*, the talk of organized battles between different sides with declared neutral parties, indicates fighting between specific groups. There is also the implication that Servalan is, at this juncture, employing a mercenary force: her troops are a scruffy unshaven lot, the Battle Fleet Commander is South African (which is 70s-television shorthand for a mercenary) and the scripted "Kommando" is spelled in the Afrikaans' way. The later reference in *Children of Auron* to an "ex-Federation ship" would suggest that various groups broke away, taking their ships and material, to go it alone, and we are told in *Traitor*, that a number of planets, such as Helotrix, gained independence from the Federation and managed to retain that status for some time after the events of *Aftermath*. There is also an explicit case in *Moloch* of the Fifth Legion making a bid for power. By Series Four, we learn that Servalan has been deposed, with the High Council once more in control.



Servalan's mercenaries need a shave

The post-Intergalactic War scene, in consequence, was one fraught with internal schisms and various groups splintering from the Federation, with Servalan fighting to establish her own power base, but ultimately driven out by rival forces.

Rumours of Death is interesting in this regard as it refers to a civil rebellion as well as an internecine struggle within the Federation's power structures. Chesku's speech runs, in part, "The rabble which sought to challenge the established order lacked our inspiration, our unity, our leadership. They are crushed. Earth and the Inner Planets are once again united." Shriner also speaks of a failed rebellion. Nevertheless,



Tarrant explains how he survived...

this is not simply a case of insurgents rising against an established order, as Shrinker admits to changing sides to join the rebels, and, later in the episode, Servalan is attacked by Anna Grant, a known Central Security agent, claiming to act on behalf of the rebellion. This suggests that the revolt may have, at least partly, served as a cover for power bids by more formally organized factions, and that these factions were aiming to oust Servalan from her precarious position at the head of the partially-reconstituted Federation.

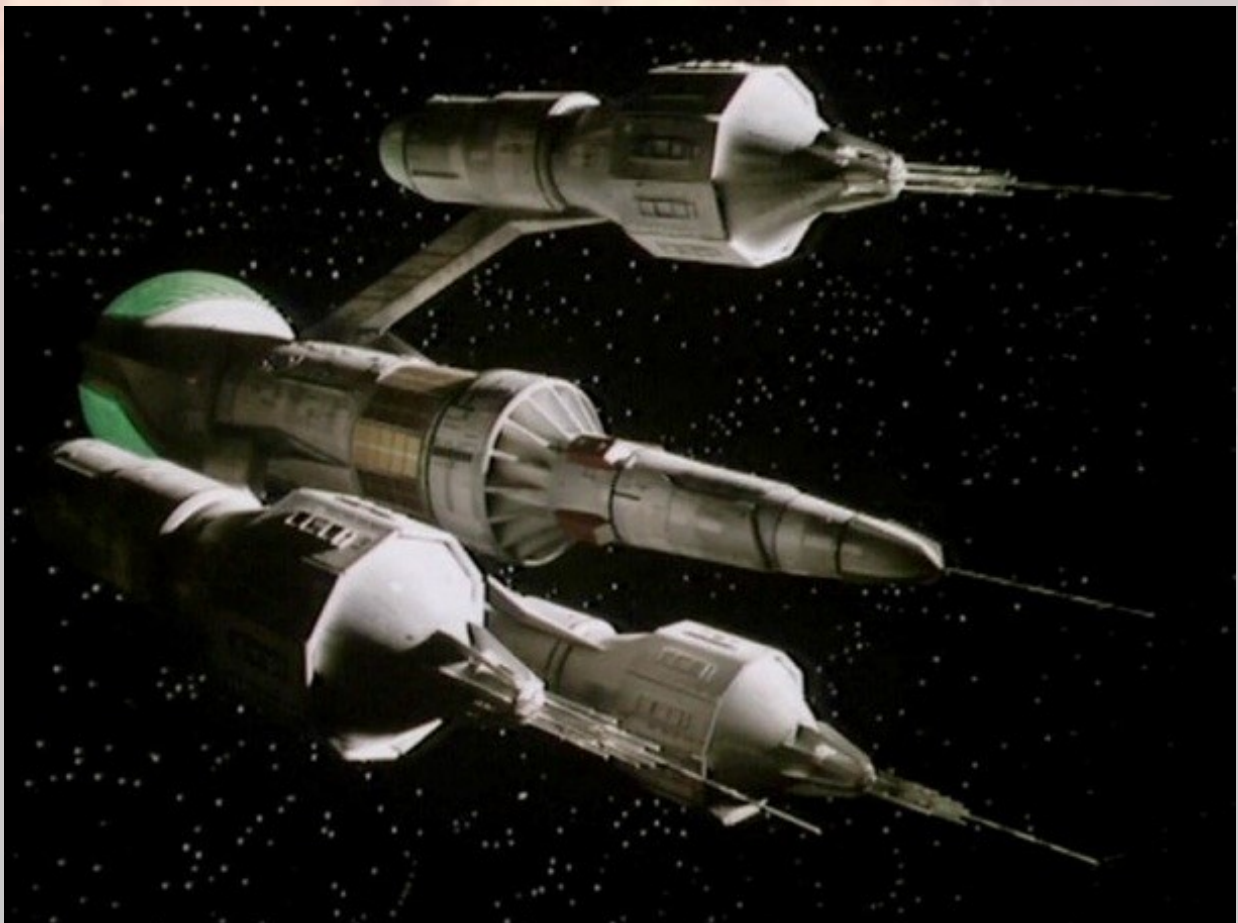


Anna Grant: Face of the revolution

If the Intergalactic War covers the brief Human-Andromedan slaughter, then it seems logical that the Galactic War relates to the somewhat messier aftermath, which consisted of at least one rebellion (which may have been partially a cover for a failed coup); internecine strife between factions of the former Federation; and wars of independence on the part of former colony worlds.

The events of the series itself, therefore, do not speak of a single human-alien war — variously referred to as galactic and intergalactic, short and long, organized and chaotic — but of a brief intergalactic war which the Federation nominally wins, losing status as a sustainable organization in consequence. This is followed by a longer, more chaotic, civil war between different groups in the territory of the former Federation, during which Servalan assumes presidency of Earth and the Inner Planets, with the conflict effectively over by *Volcano*. This civil war is later succeeded, within the series, by a period in which Servalan attempts to extend her power base, but is then displaced by a successful coup that restores the old High Council.

In conclusion, the Galactic and Intergalactic Wars are not the same event and are clearly, and consistently, referred to across the series as two separate and distinct entities. However, the events of one *do* precipitate the other, indicating a close connection between these two devastating military endeavours.



FOOD, GLORIOUS FOOD!

PROTEIN CULTURES A MUST HAVE...

By Annie Worrall

Any fan of a long running Sci Fi tv series, sooner or later is faced with the question: *"How do my heroes satisfy their basic bodily needs?"*

Do they have access to lavatory facilities for example? Is loo paper still a requirement or has humankind evolved to develop a more efficient means of cleaning waste from their nether regions? How do they rid themselves of bodily hair? When Avon tells us in *Rescue* that he was bathing, does he mean he was immersing himself in water, or was he using a sonic shower or some sort of dirt magnet system? Fascinating things to speculate about.

As someone who likes her fodder, I am always curious about what food and drink Sci-Fi writers imagine will be available to us in the future. Today, population increases have reduced the amount of land available for agriculture and global warming is affecting food production. We will need to develop new ways of feeding ourselves. How do these writers envisage that those who will inherit our Earth have solved these problems?

In this and subsequent editions of *Gallifrey*, *The Long Way Round*, I will be examining, episode by episode, the information we are given about eating in the *Blakes 7* Universe, teasing out the vision that Terry Nation and his team had on the issue.

Join me on my quest to discover why obesity is still a problem on Federation Earth, what the crew of the *Liberator* have to eat and whether our children's, children's, children's children are still enjoying chocolate.

So, starting with Season One...

The Way Back

* Ravella tells Blake that all food and drink consumed by the inhabitants of Earth is routinely dosed with suppressants. She asks him to starve himself for three days prior to his meeting with Bran Forster to get them out of his system. While this may explain the docile citizens we have seen processing through the domes, it doesn't explain why Tel and Marja Varon are able to reason clearly and effectively. Blake is sceptical about the information, "not that again", as am I. The logical deduction has to be that

some suppressants may be used on delta and beta grades at least some of the alpha grades' food and drink is exempt.

* Ravella claims that the water Dome dwellers drink has been recycled a thousand times. She offers Blake "natural water" from a stream located outside the dome which he spits out, claiming the recycled tastes better. Those memory alterations must have affected his taste buds drastically!

* Why is there a need to recycle water anyway when the stream Outside seems to offer an abundant supply of available, fresh stuff? It could be because it's easier to administer suppressants in a recycled system. Or perhaps it's because the Federation has designated the Outside a 'forbidden zone', dangerous to the wellbeing of Dome citizens. This must once have been true but is now a fiction maintained by the Administration so that control of citizens is easier to effect.

* Food is rationed. Dev Tarrant proposes that the rebels disrupt food manufacturing because, "there's nothing more effective than ration cuts to cause unrest."

* Food is manufactured in the Domes not farmed. A way of recycling massacred rebels? More likely hydroponic systems or mycelium culture. Ganymede (Jupiter's moon) supplies Earth with "protein cultures" and, if this is a development of 21st Century techniques, the process is likely to involve fungal biomass.

* Protein cultures are considered a gourmet food item, raising the question as to what forms the staple diet for delta grade citizens? Best not to ask, perhaps.

* Food is dispensed via dispensing units implying limited citizen choice, with 'gourmet' items as an incentive or reward. At best there may be a ration card system with recorded points that citizens can exchange for food items. Worst case scenario is that you are allotted your food according to your grade and have no choice in the matter.

* Not everyone we see in this episode is thin. The rebels aren't a very fleshy lot, it's true, and none of the citizens we see walking through the corridors at the start of the show are fat but neither are they emaciated. Blake seems well-covered and has had

dental work. Ven Glynd and Altar Morgan are borderline obese. What can we conclude from this?

* One might have expected that some sort of dietary control would be imposed on citizens in a society so tightly controlled as this, but given their well-padded physiques, that does not seem to be the case. The food available to them must be nourishing and of acceptable quantity - unless their fleshiness is a side effect of the suppressants.

* Dental decay implies that Federation citizens have a diet high in sugar and that, whatever their water is laced with, it certainly isn't fluoride. Perhaps glucose is added in during the food manufacturing process to make it more palatable and this causes the decay.

* It is significant that, in the main, it's the citizens higher up the Federation hierarchy who seem to have let themselves go a bit, suggesting that they have more freedom to make the sort of bad food choices we make today.

Space Fall

* This episode confirms that suppressants in food are used by the Federation, at least in some circumstances, because the Captain of the London, demands that the "highest level of suppressants" are added to the prisoners' rations to "keep them docile".

* Sub Commander Raiker carries a flask and a cup onto the flight deck. The flask implies he's got a hot drink of some kind, perhaps some analogue of tea or coffee.

* Jenna tells Blake that most of the prisoners are "doped to the eyeballs" which begs the question how Blake, Avon et al have avoided this state. Perhaps they have had to starve themselves.

* Vila suggests that a guard "needs a drink" in the scene where he's tasked with distracting him by performing a magic trick while Avon accesses the control centre via the service channel. The dialogue implies that this is alcoholic in nature:

Vila: *You look as if you could do with a drink.*

Drainer: *I'm always thirsty, Vila.*

Vila manages to 'magic' up two full glasses of unspecified liquid in succession.

* If the prisoners have been on the ship for several months before Blake's attempted escape, it is possible that they have set up some kind of still and are producing a raw spirit from their rations. The guard's request that Vila drinks first suggests either that he is aware that the prisoners distil their own alcohol and that it's pretty rough stuff, or that he fears the liquid has been tampered with in some way. Of course it may just be that the crew are forbidden to eat or drink when on duty and he is just thirsty and the liquid is harmless water.



Vila prepares to conjure up a drink

Cygnus Alpha

* Survival on a prison planet is certainly not easy. The first shot we see of it is of Laran, one of the residents, roasting some unspecified meat on an open fire. No food dispensers here!

* Vila remarks that the rotting smell the newly arrived prisoners detect could be their "dinner" which suggests he is accustomed to having more than one meal a day and the meals differ in content sufficiently to warrant different names. It also implies that he's had some pretty ropey meals.

* Vila, Gan and the other newly arrived prisoners are given food and drink by Vargas's acolytes which contain a mild poison.

* Vargas compares death to a "ravening beast". His use of "ravening" is evidence that the prisoners have probably experienced ferocious hunger within living memory and have fought each other for food.

* Vargas also tells Blake that he needs, "New blood muscle and sinew to work the land", so the community must be growing some of its own food, not simply hunting for it.

* There is a marked difference between the natural food and water available to the prisoners on Cygnus Alpha and the processed or cultured food and recycled water that forms the staple diet of the dome dwellers, although the ruling classes in both communities use chemicals in the food to control the rest of the population.

Time Squad

* Vila asks Avon: "What's eating you now?" This idiomatic expression first appeared in print in 1872 in Jack London's book, *Gringoes in Mexico* but must have been around before that. It suggests that something you have experienced has annoyed you by comparing it to eating something disagreeable. The fact that the expression is still being used so far in

the future shows that the food available to Earth citizens isn't just bland, nutritionally-balanced mush but varies in quality and digestibility.

* Blake tells Jenna that, "Half the population [of Saurian Major] were butchered." His use of the term, "butchered" signifies that animals are still raised and slaughtered for food somewhere in the Federation and that he has learned of, or witnessed, this practice.

* Blake also mentions that some of the plants on Saurian Major, "are carnivorous." It is possible then that meat features at least on the Alpha citizens' menus in the Domes. Either that, or Blake experienced hunting for meat, or watching animals hunt for meat when he visited Ushton on the prison planet Exbar as a boy.

The Web

* It's difficult to understand the science that has created the Decimas and allows Saymon's brain to stay alive as it is only vaguely described. However, phrases such as "simple enzyme culture", "silicone life forms" and "tanks of fluid linked to a life support system" suggest that in the future, sophisticated, artificial means of creating and sustaining life are possible.

* Of more interest is Vila's recognition of the hunting behaviour of spiders:

Vila: *About spider's webs.*

Blake: *Hmm, what about them?*

Vila: *Used for trapping food.*

It's difficult to believe that arachnids and insects live within the domes, which begs the question where has he encountered them?

* Avon refers to "field rations" during the episode. This implies that he has some first or second hand experience of military service. It may be that a period of such service is a compulsory part of the Alpha grades' education but there is no direct evidence for this.



The Decimus: A'hunting we shall go...

Seek, Locate, Destroy

* The crew drink some sort of cold beverage on the *Liberator* flight deck from white polystyrene cups with silver stripes.

* A scientist is shown preparing a flask with a drug dissolved in liquid that is then administered to Cally, probably via injection but possibly orally. It seems to cause her pain which may be its purpose but it may also contain a variant of a truth drug.

Mission to Destiny

* There is an implication in this episode that the Federation uses biochemical warfare to subdue planets. Keiler reports that the Federation approached their independently colonised world inviting them to join it. They resisted and immediately a fast growing fungus attacked and destroyed their growing crops bringing them to the brink of starvation. It is not stated explicitly that the fungus is the work of the Federation but, to quote the old saying, "I've lost a halfpenny and you're eating nuts!"

* Blake, Vila, Jenna and Gan quaff something cold and orange from smokey glass tumblers, possibly a vitamin solution or just juice. Gan is obviously in charge of providing refreshments.



Gan: Cheers! Long life and happiness... er...



"An interesting vintage... got a bit of an after-taste."

Duel

* We learn that Mutoids are adapted humans who need blood serum to survive. It appears that this has to be human blood because bat's blood is not suitable, whereas Jenna's blood is. Whether all humans are required to donate blood to blood banks to feed these adapted humans is not clear. Mutoids have the means to extract blood from living donors and are commonly referred to by unadapted humans as "vampires". It is unlikely that they could transport sufficient phials of blood to sustain themselves for long periods in space, so it's likely that they regularly "milk" those they capture, or subdue much as the Masai warriors rely on their herds of cows to supply them with blood. Freshly taken blood may also be more nutritious than stored blood. It is not known whether a Mutoid kills a human donor when extracting their blood, but it's more likely that they extract sufficient for their needs, weakening their victim but allowing them to recover so they can be "milked" again, relying on them much as the Masai warriors rely on their herds of cows to supply them with blood.

* Travis remarks after the healed Mutoid has topped up her levels of blood serum, "The condemned ate a hearty meal." He is referring to the fact he intends to have her court marshalled. But it also suggests that the practice of allowing prisoners to choose their last meal prior to execution persists, at least in military circles.



"May I take some of your blood to top me up?"



"That'd be a 'No' then...?"

Project Avalon

*Despite hanging out in caves on an ice planet, Avalon is pronounced a "good, healthy specimen" so she and her fellow rebels must have access to food supplies.

*The Liberator crew are now using metal tumblers. Blake shoots one on the flight deck to demonstrate that the guns the Federation were using have been doctored. Perhaps the glass ones were smashed in one of their skirmishes.

Breakdown

The Liberator has obviously paid a visit to Space Ikea to replace the smokey glass tumblers since Cally attempts to mix up a tranquilliser for Gan in one in the med lab, and later Gan drinks something cold from one. Either that or they were never broken in the first place.

Bounty

Despite the promise of the title, no food or drink is consumed in this episode.

Deliverance

* Servalan has taken to imbibing a glass and has a choice of green or amber to choose from. Her preference is for green. She pours a relatively small amount which suggests that the drink may be more a spirit than a wine.

* The Scavengers wear furs, fight with bones and are seen eating meat. Since their planet is high in radiation, then the animals they eat are probably mutations, although a bone glimpsed in the hands of one of the primitives looks suspiciously human. The name, "scavengers" implies that the tribe subsists from scavenging corpses rather than hunting. It's possible they also consume the remains of human corpses as well.

* Meegat seems to exist on a diet of devotion, although logically she must have living quarters which we are not shown, with a supply of food and drink. It is possible that these consist of protein packs. Kashel the Wise must surely have had the forethought to provide a source of nourishment for "the one who waits".



Naturally, only the best drinks for Servalan!

Orac

* Ensor hasn't managed to bring a spare set of batteries for his artificial heart but he has an abundant supply of fish food.

* The arrangement we see with his indoor decorative plants suggests that he may have some sort of hydroponic system for food production.

* He drinks something blue from a snazzy ice crystal tumbler. It may contain a pain killer or be a food supplement.

Summary for Season One.:

For some reason, drinks in the future seem to be green, blue or amber coloured. Food is either dispensed via machines, or grown hydroponically on technically developed planets, or caught on the hoof on primitive ones.

No one in the future appears to be starving. Obesity and dental decay are still problems.



"So, let me get this right Ensor... This supercomputer Orac is the most sophisticated and powerful computerised brain in the Galaxy, but it can't rustle up a simple cup of tea?"



"So, that's two votes for the stripey tumblers, two votes for the glass tumblers and one vote for the metal tumblers..."



Soma: The drink for any occasion...

A Kind of Immortality

A Tribute to Paul Darrow

2nd May 1942 - 3rd June 2019

By the time you read this obituary, you will probably have read a lot of similar ones, many written by those who worked with Paul Darrow and knew him intimately. I knew him only through his acting performances, *You Tube* videos, and through four appearances he made at conventions I attended. What can I say about him that you haven't already heard from others?

Well let's start with the fact that, when I learned of his death I wept. Buckets. An actor who had been important to me for over 40 years had been ripped out of my life. I had been expecting it- he had been living on borrowed time since an aortic embolism nearly cost him his life five years before- but I had hoped he would survive for at least another year. Actually I hoped that he'd beat the impossible odds and live for ever.



Paul Darrow as the iconic Kerr Avon

You may be interested to know as well, that the last time I'd met him, despite the traumatic illness which had resulted in the loss of his legs, he was still oozing that magnetic charm and energy that had drawn me to him as I watched him as Avon in *Blake's 7*.

If the job of a celebrity at a signing is to leave his fans feeling a little more glamorous than when they arrived, then he achieved that in spades. Having Paul Darrow smile at you, ask where you were from, show an interest in how you got to the convention, even tease you a bit, left you feeling considerably 'cooler' and more attractive than you did when you arrived.

It also resulted in queues which grew and grew, while the convention organiser pulled out enough hair to go prematurely bald.

Then there were his panel appearances.

I always felt sorry for anyone sharing one with Paul Darrow. He was such an irrepressible entertainer that only long practice enabled any of the other guests to get a look in. And what distinguished his performances for me, wasn't their flamboyance alone, it was their emotional truth, (not the whole truth perhaps but truth never less), which made them personal, funny, and moving.

My first meeting with him took place at a convention in Peterborough. In a sense his was a first too: his first in a wheel chair. I was apprehensive, fearing that this might make for an awkward occasion. I shouldn't have been.

Paul spoke openly about his disability. He had been talking to his PA, Maureen Marrs, felt an excruciating pain in his side and woken up a couple of weeks later in hospital. His reaction on being told he'd lost his legs was to ask, "Well, can't we find them again? I may need them."

He didn't sugar-coat the experience, admitting he'd relied on a friend in the Samaritans to support him through some dark times. His greatest regret was having to re-home his beloved dachshund.

In the space of ten minutes, we'd laughed, sympathised and cried with him.

Paul proceeded to entertain us with a fund of funny, often scurrilous, showbiz stories, impressions and bad puns. Some of his audience had heard them before, but he performed them with such relish that they laughed as heartily as those of us hearing them for the first time. Then there were the rueful comments he made as he signed one of our photos of Avon. 'That was when I had teeth, hair,' he muttered sadly. We hastened to reassure him that he still had IT as far as we were concerned. He did too. I went to that conference as a fan of Avon, and left a fan of the man who'd created him.

Much of what I now know about Paul Darrow, I've learned from his autobiography, *You're him, Aren't you?* It's an interesting read. He was the only son of a chemist who's business went bust during the war; a circumstance which resulted in him spending a year in his maternal grandmother's care. During that time, his constant companion was a small dog, and when he had to return to his parents, the dog set out to find him and was run over and killed. This he recounts with stoicism, but it had to have hurt, and perhaps explains why he owned so many dachshunds. Although he does not say so, I gained the impression that this loss haunted his formative years and that he turned to celluloid fantasy to compensate. Indeed he spent so much time at the cinema that his mother used to call the box office to ask them to tell him that his tea was ready. But as I say, this is only an impression. As Avon would say, "Spare me the amateur psychology."

What is indisputable is that Paul loved films, and remained star struck throughout his life. The book is full of affectionate vignettes of meeting celebrities like Liberace and Laurence Olivier, and he admits homaging Burt Lancaster, Clint Eastwood, Marlon Brandon and Humphrey Bogart in some of his roles. It's probably why he understood us fans so well and knew what we were looking for when we met him. And the desire to make it big in films, is certainly why he turned to acting.

There is a good deal in Paul's autobiography on the subject of performance. He distinguishes two types. The first is when the audience leaves with the thought, "Wasn't Paul Darrow excellent as, (say) Elvis?" The second, "That was a great Elvis." It's an important distinction. There are times, watching him, as Tekker for example in the *Doctor Who* story *Timelash*, when I thoroughly enjoy seeing him chew up the scenery in what he describes as the first type of 'egocentric' performance, (also known to his fans as 'Darrowing'); something which occurred when he had little respect for the script he was given. But for the most part, he created complex characters that seem real. His performance as Thomas Doughty in *Drake's Venture*, a made for TV film, is extraordinarily vivid and rounded. He's a despicably charming, Mr Carker in *Dombey and Son*. And his Avon is arguably, the definitive portrayal of an anti-hero. It's worth noting too, that he was as great at comedy as he was the serious stuff. It's a shame he wasn't given more comedic roles to play, because his timing was impeccable.

Although Paul is sometimes accused of 'Darrowing' as Avon, I don't see it. Even when he's at his most operatic in the role, there is a grounding, underlying truth. Take for example, the moment in *Headhunter* when he shouts at Orac: "Restore the Teleport." His delivery perfectly captures how Avon is feeling: concern at having to make a risky choice; reluctance to lose two useful members of his team; anger at the Universe for having put him on the position of having to choose; resentment at having the risk pointed out by a computer. And all that conveyed in three words. Or how about when he tries to cajole Vila out of hiding in order to dispose of him via the air lock in *Orbit*? His voice is quite unlike his usual, clipped delivery; a creepy attempt at reassurance that wouldn't have fooled Vila for a second. It's so unconvincing that it forces the viewer to question whether he will actually go ahead with the murder if he does flush Vila out, or indeed, if he's actually warning Vila to stay put. This ambiguity of intent is what makes his Avon exceptional. We are never completely certain of his motives.

As an author, Paul has come in for some stick, and some of the criticism is justified. His novels, audio script and short story for the Big Finish range of *Blake's 7* books would all have benefitted from stricter editing, and they lack the moral and political complexity of the original series. But they are also, great, if violent, fun - a sort of guilty pleasure. The Avon

in his *Lucifer* trilogy is, for the most part, an unreconstructed, selfish, murdering bastard, yet Paul also imbues him with a kind of melancholy, particularly in his interactions with Orac, which enables this reader at least, to warm to the character. It's an Avon who is only too aware he is going to die; he's just keen to postpone the moment, although he has no good reason for doing so apart from the fact that surviving beats oblivion. The dance with death has become his *raison d'être*.

At the end of the last ever episode of *Blakes 7*, Avon faces the camera, raises his gun and, unforgettably, smiles as he defies his fate. Nothing has ever convinced me that he died in that fusillade of shots accompanying the end credits. Nor did he. Avon's legacy continues through the DVDs of the series, the books Paul has written about him, through the *Kaldor City* audio series from Magic Bullet Productions, the *B7* audios from Big Finish, and of course, fan fiction. The actor too lives in perpetuity as the voice of radio JackFM.

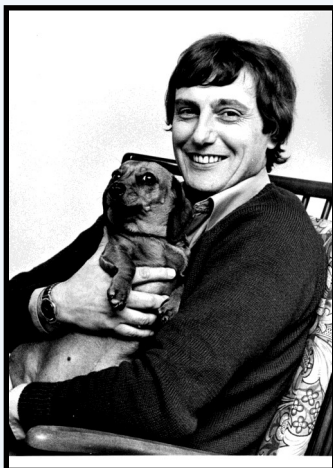
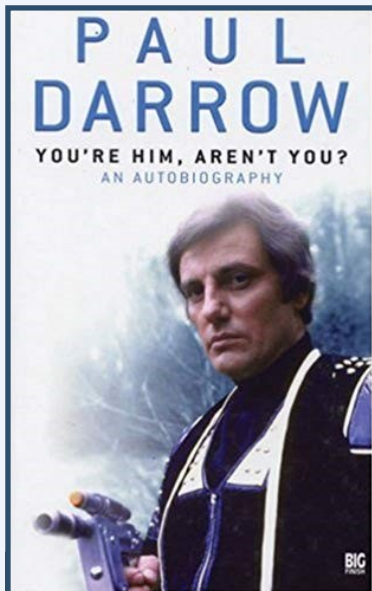
But the man who went out of his way to appreciate his fans and, in so doing, became our friend, will never attend another convention. It's something that makes me well up as I write it.

I can't claim that I knew Paul Valentine Birkby (his birth name), but I did feel close to Paul Darrow, and thoroughly enjoyed my encounters with him. They are special memories. One, at the Supreme Cat Show in Birmingham (of all places) stands out, because he went out of his way to wheel himself over for a chat with a group of us fans. I regret that I never plucked up the courage to give him a hug, but we did share a joke or two.

His death is much more than the loss of a good actor; it's the loss of someone who created a character which has become a legend amongst sci-fi fans. Paul's characterisation of Avon was that rare, perfect match of role and actor and has given him a kind of immortality. His iconic status will continue, I think, throughout my lifetime and beyond. Which is a comfort. As he said in his book, "Every actor wishes to be remembered."

But perhaps what would please him more, is that, to us, his fans, his death is felt as something deeply personal. We have lost the heart of our fandom, the man who always made us feel we were a valued part of a *Blake's 7* family. And my goodness aren't we going to miss him!

Annie Worrall



DOCTOR WHO

Years Three & Four

July 1966 to May 1967

The War Machines to The Faceless Ones

Introduction

This was a period of incredible change for *Doctor Who* as a production and as a narrative. The serials immediately prior to *The War Machines* had all shared the comfortable Saturday tea time mild perils that had characterised most of the show since the beginning. But this was a new era, heralded by the first full story dealing with a direct and contemporary threat to the same world in which the viewers were themselves watching the show. The Doctor was an adventurer in space and time, but his latest adventure was right now, in our time and place. They were not yet Yeti in Tooting Bec, either relieving themselves or otherwise, but this was a game changer that we will discuss again within the essay. In terms of the real world behind the scenes, recasting the Doctor with actor Patrick Troughton, and the first two Dalek stories on which Terry Nation was not a writer, showed a pathway to the future of the show, one that we as fans inhabit.

Not all stories have separate entries in this piece. *The Smugglers* and *The Highlanders*

continued the trend seen previously in *The Romans* and *The Gunfighters*, that of family-friendly parodies of popular film and television genres that have since been rebranded out of their original (and intended) context as 'historical' and are thus missed by fandom less than perhaps they should be. Adventure films about crime, rebellion, soldiering, life on the high seas, the clash of pirates' sabres and the crack of the Redcoats' muskets was the bread and butter of cinemas in the preceding couple of decades, and both of these stories really drop the time travellers into the same genre in terms of how it was viewed at the time through the prism of 'books for boys', annuals, television serials and movies.

It has to be noted here, when criticising the level of historical accuracy in these two *Doctor Who* stories, that the lack of historical accuracy and the generic nature of the tropes were a hallmark of the genre as popular light drama or fiction at the time. It was important to give viewers a break from the immediacy of an attack on London or the excitement of the Daleks' return.

Likewise, the outer-space futurism seen in *The Moonbase* or the colony worlds of *The Power of the Daleks* and *The Macra Terror* owe much more to the classic radio series *Journey Into Space*, the comic-book escapades of *Dan Dare*, or any number of 'space stories for boys' books than any of the more serious space exploration fantasies by the likes of Clarke or Asimov. Of course, many of these influences would become a greater part of *Doctor Who*'s style and approach in the later seasons, but the three stories mentioned above are very much 'fort under threat' or 'mad scientist' narratives dressed in the trappings of futuristic space adventure. It is, for example, not too difficult to imagine the titular moon base as a supply fort on the North West Frontier rather than a weather station, especially as the scientific nature of the base is little more than a futuristic gimmick until the control beam is turned by the Doctor into a massive canon to shoot at the Cybermen emerging from the Moon equivalent of the Khyber Pass. This is not in any way a criticism, merely context for the stories as television drama in a way that is easy to forget when scanning through them in an episode guide. Inspected as what they were, and as the relatable family tea time entertainment they were intended to be, these stories were and remain very good indeed.

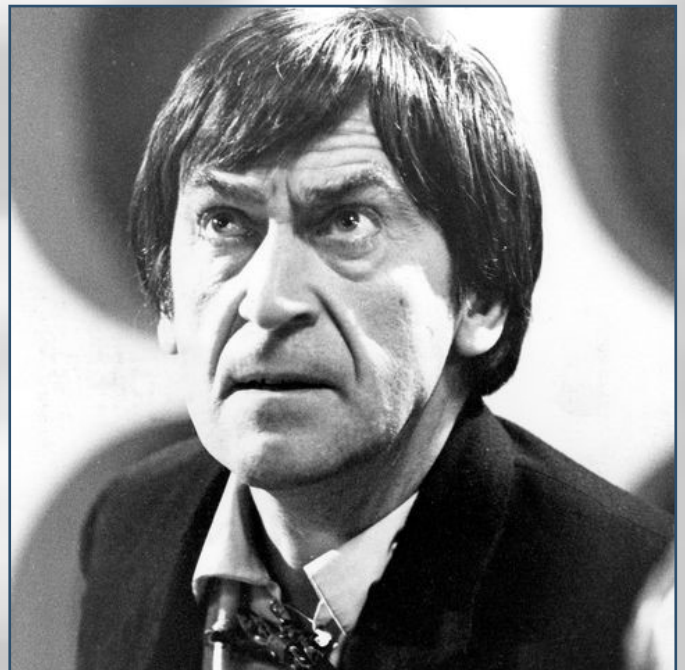
It can also be argued that the traditional nature of a story like *The Power of the Daleks* stands in its favour, since one of the story's greatest strengths is the way that it drops the Daleks into a narrative that is primarily a political one, thus maintaining the Daleks as 'hidden danger' and allegorical of any threat that man ignores because of focusing upon his own personal interests versus the greater good. This principle can be applied to numerous examples from the Holocaust to global warming. Making the Daleks a metaphor within a bigger picture is a masterstroke that allows the story to work on two levels, possibly more; the basic adventure story that could take place in any number of settings, in the real world or as here a fantasy one, and a deeper and more thought provoking one, probably missed by most casual viewers at the time, in which science fiction is used as a prism through which to project a political viewpoint that would be less discreet in another setting.

This essay will comment on just some of the stories in this period and will present a couple of theories on the events seen within the

episodes from an in-universe perspective. It is followed by a short fan fiction in which a season four character, Polly, meets a more recent one, combining elements of the show from the 1960s and the 2010s.

There is also a look at the recent animation of *The Macra Terror* by means of a brief interview with artist Colin Howard, a key contributor to the new production, after your **Gallifrey, the Long Way Round** correspondent enjoyed watching the four new episodes with Colin at his Norfolk home. The transformation of season four has brought a previously overlooked era of *Doctor Who* into the limelight in recent years – with animations of missing episodes from *The Tenth Planet*, *The Power of the Daleks*, *The Moonbase* and *The Macra Terror*.

What might the future bring? The juxtaposition of the swinging 60s, Victorian gothic and epic futuristic fantasy found in *The Evil of the Daleks* is surely ideal for the high production values and stunning visuals of a modern animation, as seen in *The Macra Terror* with its traditionally created backgrounds. But there is also the relevance of *The Faceless Ones*, in the real world with an increasing awareness of young adult disappearances, and in the show too, as the concept of an iconic British aircraft design breaking free of our atmosphere for a rendezvous in space anticipated the Spitfire on the Dalek saucer in the 2010 season!



All change: Patrick Troughton took over the role of the Doctor just three stories into the new season...

The War Machines

Although the show was often inspired, by design or coincidence, by other genres, the realism of this opening episode must have had quite a surreal effect. For most fans, it is impossible to watch episode one now without the hindsight of later episodes, and later 'contemporary Earth' stories in general. But the Tardis here lands in what might best be compared with a Cathy Gale episode of *The Avengers*! The swinging 60s nightclub is a setting more alien and unfamiliar in *Doctor Who* than a strange planet. The early part of the story features a press conference at a members' only club and sinister goings on with a prototype super-computer, all typical of the so-called 'spy-fi' genre and especially *The Avengers* in its earlier era. Episodes 2-4 are progressively more fantastical, with an army of marauding killer-robots being more traditional SF territory, but episode one is very non-fantasy in a season that has been quite 'way out' in its fantasy concepts; the proto-*Star Wars* empires of *Master Plan*, the actual destruction of the Earth as seen on the view screen of *The Ark*, the virtual realities and overt surrealism of the *Toymaker* realm, and even the singular pseudo-scientific concepts behind *The Savages*. For a show that was teasing viewers' imaginations in quite a fantastical way up to this point, season three ends by projecting a new threat into their living rooms in what must have been an unsettling manner.



What's really going on in The War Machines?

It should be said at the outset that this is a fan theory from an in-universe

perspective, with the benefit of hindsight, and that there is no suggestion here that the original creators of these episodes could or should have thought along these lines at the time. There are certain points left unexplained by *The War Machines*, so here we present a theory that might cover some of them. The inconsistencies include, but are not limited to, these observations:

Firstly, when WOTAN reveals its identity and exercises mind control over several of the main characters, apparently for the first time, it is also revealed on screen that the production line for the War Machines is all

ready to go, with the parts ready for assembly, a large hypnotised workforce, several large buildings for the construction, and vehicles ready for the operation, all on the same evening. Clearly this cannot be achieved as seen within a couple of hours, but how can WOTAN alone have organised any of these things in advance when the whole point of the story was that it was not yet connected to a wider network, apart from testing of some kind?

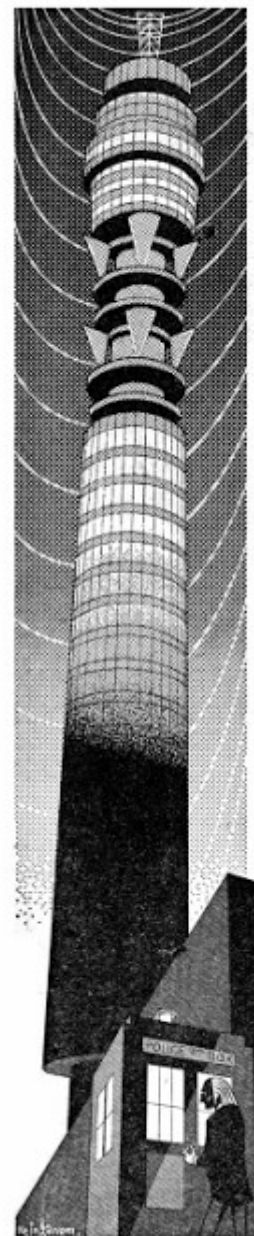
Secondly, the design and capabilities of the War Machines are beyond human technology for the 1960s in the *Doctor Who* universe. Granted, WOTAN is a fantasy concept (at the time of real world production of the episodes), but the abilities of the weapons to kill selective targets at a distance (meaning that it is not merely a poisonous gas) and jam mechanical firearms is more similar to energy weapons, commonly of alien origin, and belong in a different genre to the AI concept.

Finally, we never learn how or why WOTAN knows about the Doctor or the meaning of the term Tardis. Perhaps a clue can be found in this line of dialogue from the beginning of episode one, as the Doctor arrives in London and is immediately overcome by an odd sensation.

"...it's got something sort of powerful. Look at my skin! Look at that! I've got that pricking sensation again, the same... just as I had when I saw the Daleks... those Daleks were near."

The Doctor then visits the Post Office Tower and encounters the WOTAN computer, thus associating the dangerous supercomputer with the sensation.

However, the Daleks are indeed active in London at the time of this adventure.



It is quite possible that the sensation felt by the Doctor is caused by the Dalek time transference machine in the back offices of Edward Waterfield's antique shop! We can extend this further, though, and speculate that a trap set for the Doctor using advanced AI technology, energy weapons mounted on remote controlled carriers, and an army of mind controlled human slaves, might just have the Daleks behind it as well. This might have been the original plan to trap and control the Doctor, with stealing the Tardis from Gatwick Airport being plan B.

It does not add to the theory in fictional terms, but, in real world production terms, the weapons of the War Machines actually do resemble the special effects used for the Daleks in the Peter Cushing films. It also rationalises an inconsistency in *The Evil of the Daleks*, in which there is a singular dissonance between the Daleks' substantial, and carefully planned, operations and the apparently opportunistic nature of the Tardis' theft from the airport.

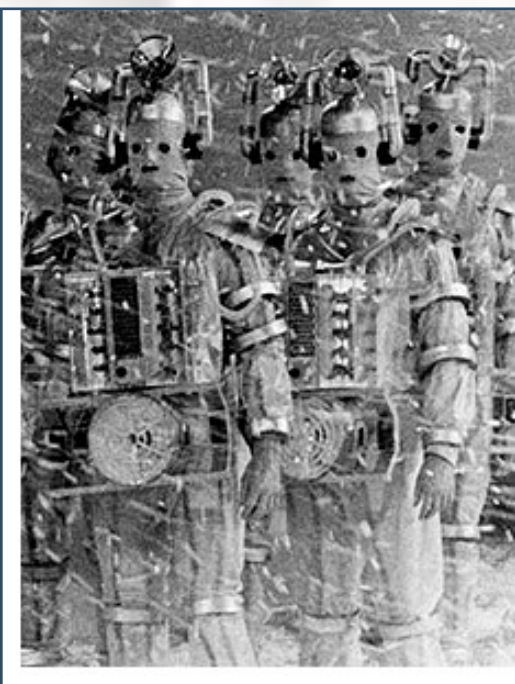
The Tenth Planet

Although this is the first true 'base under siege' story in the Troughton mould, this is almost two stories (similar to *The Ark*). The first phase of the serial is very much a science fiction take on the real-life Gemini missions (and the Russian equivalents, see also the *Armchair Theatre* play *The Man Out There* starring Patrick McGeehan) with an emphasis on mission control, the capsule, the practical concerns of spaceflight, and the astronaut

'experience'. Yet the second phase of the serial is more like a pastiche of *Level Seven* (adapted by the Sydney Newman created sister show *Out of the Unknown* in a production broadcast between episodes 3 and 4 of *The Tenth Planet*), with its visualisation of Nuclear weapons, control bunkers and global destruction, with a few *Doctor Strangelove* references thrown in too. Looked at in the context of following so closely behind *The War Machines*, it is not surprising that a lighter adventure such as *The Smugglers* was chosen to split these two dangers to Earth in the present or near future.

The Power of the Daleks

As noted above, this story is especially memorable for its narrative construction in that it is almost not a *Doctor Who* story at all, due to the emphasis on the events in the colony and the Doctor's principle area of concern, the presence of the Daleks, relegated to a sub-plot for much of the screen time. Ben and Polly as regular characters are even further relegated to very minor roles in both importance to the plot and their own screen time. Even when the 'new' Doctor does take over as the main protagonist, it raises one or two questions. Granted, it was necessary for the Doctor to damage the power supply to defeat the Daleks, but the way that he flees the scene as though a guilty party as soon as the damage is mentioned is interesting. In his first story, this incarnation of the Doctor subconsciously associates his interference with the feeling of guilt, despite his apparent role as saviour. This foreshadows the basis for his future trial, and what we see here by means of 'viewer privilege' somewhat undermines his defence in the later story.



(Left) The Cybermen make their debut in the First Doctor's last story, *The Tenth Planet*...

(Right) The Daleks make their return in the Second Doctor's first story *The Power of the Daleks*



The iconic final scene of
The Power of the Daleks



The Underwater Menace

Arguably, the discovery of episode two shares, with *Galaxy 4* episode three, the feeling of anti-climax, with many fans saying something along the lines of “that’s nice, but I wish they had discovered (insert more popular story here) instead”; however, there are two interesting points of observation to be drawn from watching episode two:

One criticism of the story used to be the bland ‘recreation’ of Atlantis, achieved before and since and better elsewhere. However, much of the scene-setting, in which we follow the main characters in discovering the city and having its layout and operation explained to us, occurs here and makes the city as a fictional location for the story far more effective than if you only had episode three, as was the case previously.

The discovery of the episode also allows us to see in full the sequence previously glimpsed, by means of the Australian censor cuts, in which Polly is held down in an operating theatre while a doctor attempts to inject her with drugs, against her will, for a harmful and life-altering operation. Anneke Wills plays the scene rather too well, and it is easy to imagine adult viewers squirming on their sofa and wishing they could join their children behind it, perhaps reliving similarly traumatic experiences with needles.



Polly tries to resist the medics’
attempts to turn her into a Fish
Person



It seems safe to say that the nature of the content, and the realism with which it is portrayed, would have seen the production referred to the censorship board with regard to an X-rating if it were a film, as actually did happen when the show went ‘down under’. Another point of interest in this story, from a science fiction point of view, is the conceptual similarity between the so-called fish people and original Cybermen – the influence of Gerry Davis as script editor and indirectly, through their working together on other projects and episodes, of Dr Kit Pedlar?

Animating *The Macra Terror*: An interview with Colin Howard

Earlier this year, shortly after the story was released on DVD and Blu-ray, your GTLWR correspondent had the opportunity to chill out on the sofa at the home of Colin Howard, a member of the animation team responsible for *The Macra Terror*, and share all four episodes with an enjoyable and informative 'live' commentary. This interview evolved from that discussion, and we would like to thank Colin for his time in sharing his thoughts with us and our readers.



GTLWR: One of the ways in which this animation took its production values to a new level was in the use of traditionally created illustration to create the background environments. What are the advantages of this to a production such as *The Macra Terror*?

Colin Howard: For me, this time was quite a different experience. Charles Norton, our Producer, loves 'Traditional' Artwork, seeing the way a line can go 'askew', or how a nice rough 'texture' adds a certain 'charm' which works very well with the 'low-fi' look of 1960's Doctor Who, and indeed hand drawn characters. Previously I had worked solely digitally on *Shada*, so this time around I have a quite large volume of background artworks, which were quite a challenge to paint, especially in last year's very hot summer months, with the paint drying in seconds on the palette, as we usually were asked to do the next animation's

backgrounds in that part of the year. Mostly, the sets were built up digitally with textured artwork layered onto Rob Ritchie's 3D Sets, which also enabled him to saturate these to varying degrees with the chosen lighting, creating the often sumptuous, layered look of *Macra*.

So, how long did it take to create your share of the illustration, and how many separate visual elements did this amount to?

As I mentioned, it took most of last summer for me to create all the artworks for *Macra*. I think it wasn't officially commissioned until later than last time, around the end of June until October. This time round I worked on A3 'Multi-Media' paper which provides a nice subtle texture to the Illustrations as well with its surface. So I'd pencil the design, then scan it in and email for approval, then paint it up and scan in the final artwork and upload it to the shared project folder. I ended up with a quite large volume of paintings ranging from full background plates to object element faces for 3D set-build. All in all, I painted approximately 25 or so separate Illustrations, some of which were scanned and used in 'stages' in order to create variety.

Were there any unexpected challenges that had to be overcome with the design of certain elements?

I painted a LOT of walls on *Macra*, most of which were excitingly concrete. Early on, I suggested to add variety that I could take a section of wall and scan it, then work it up to a more detailed look, scan it in again and then repeat the process to a finer level of detail, turning one piece of wall into 3 alternate sections. I offered a similar technique with the wooden pit props in the Old Tunnels, including separate layers of lichen/mould and rusted nails etc, to be placed onto the traditionally painted props. These were completed in transparent layered sections digitally, which enabled them to be easily re-positioned. However, a lot of this detail wasn't used in the end. I also supplied some 'line drawn' cobwebs, that were supposed to be flipped into negative and stretched to create natural-looking webs. Unfortunately, this must've failed somehow in the digital process, and we ended up with some quite 'Scooby Doo' webs. With the Modern Tunnels, I also painted a 'machine-cut' stone wall, that had horizontal regular striation marks, where the surface had been machined. Again I did this in 3 stages, for variety, as well as the metal wall/ceiling supports, with varying levels of shine, to enable variation with their construction. These unfortunately seemed to be slight victims of the lighting, and most of the detail didn't show on screen in the end. I did notice the re-use of some of my previous animation elements in *Macra*, as well as the Wheel in Space short film... have you? For instance, my 'Vogan'-branded 'reel to reel' tape-deck from *Shada*.

Are there any visual elements that you designed and were especially happy with, and did they all make it onto the screen?

I think possibly my favourite element on screen ended up being the Cage Lift, where Jamie escapes from the Old Tunnel network. Charles suggested basing this on the Cage Lift featured in the Green Death, so I took the basic structure design and added a more detailed cage back effect, then made it look rusted and deteriorated, and with a separate lever handle for Jamie to use. I then scanned this in and digitally removed all the background between the elements, so when it moved, the wall behind would be visible as it ascended. I then had to create the Colony lift door scene when it arrives just before Jamie's Cheerleader try-outs! This lift I was asked to give a slight 'Art Deco' look to, especially the level indicator needle. I did supply moderately transparent glass for the doors too, with a leaded design in them. However, when I completed the design on the glass, I didn't like it, so changed to a simpler line design that kept the Art Deco style. I'm guessing due to Time constraints my idea of seeing Jamie through the glass was too much.

I did unfortunately end up with 2 background plates cut from the final release; this is where Polly and Ben get attacked by a Macra outside the main colony buildings. I did a building in profile, with the Outer Colony walls in the distance, where, in the Storyboard Bible we artists have to follow, a boulder is meant to start to rise and reveal itself to be a Macra and advance toward them. The second scene is from the Macra's viewpoint, looking down at Ben. As this was an exterior shot, I formed the ground to be exterior dirt with strewn/rusted tools and pieces of scrub/grass. However, it turned out that it should've been large floor plates that were featured in another background that I was unaware of being in that area and had not featured in my storyboard reference. Plus, the heavy reddish filter of the Macra's viewpoint would've obscured all my detail anyway.

Are there any particular scenes where we can look out for your work?

I did quite a few scenes in Macra, starting with the opening shot of the planet from space, created on a few layers over traditionally painted land mass (which I based on Pangaea) with contra-rotating digital cloud systems, as well as the Console Room and Wall Monitor (based on the idea it was the earlier incarnation of the monitor featured in The Three Doctors). It was quite funny that one, because we researched all the panel faces of the console, especially instruments and particularly the colour choice, being from Pertwee's first season, only to end up having it in Black & White! I also did all the backgrounds in Medok's cell, which I think I had to paint from three angles, so I popped some friends' names

scratched in the walls as inmates would do, only to realize I had to include them in the same positions in each of the paintings! The bars were added by Rob digitally. Funnily, I did a key-code entry system for the Cell door, only to find we had to put a lock and handle on the door, as obviously in the future they still have mortice locks! I later also had to change another 'Actual Set' door handle, for a submarine/ship style wheel with a lock as well, due to plot. I did most of the Colony corridors, and where the Doctor talks to Medok hiding in a wall-recess, and where the Doctor hides in the foreground from guards, based mostly on a set photo, and the old and new mines.



Was this story one that you were familiar with before the project and what are your thoughts on the original story?

Strangely, The Macra Terror is a story I knew little of. I think I read the W H Allen novel many, many years ago, but for the most part I knew next to nothing of the story. I borrowed the audio off a friend in order to familiarize myself with it, after I knew it was the next animation I'd be working on. I was so hoping it'd be Fury from the Deep but no, I think the length of that was prohibitive. However, I must say I was very pleasantly surprised and proud of the final production.

In a personal project, to celebrate the new release but not commissioned by the BBC, you created a special artwork that combines elements from the original production, the animation, and your own imagination. What can you tell us about that?

I decided this time I would do a traditional painting to celebrate my part on the Macra animation, and decided to produce a painting that envisaged how I used to do the VHS covers back in the 90's. In the same kind of style of those, but without the modern constraints that are put on you for the solely animated story re-creations, where I could actually paint the actors, rather than their animated incarnations, and also let my Imagination play a little on the revised Macra (designed by Martin Geraghty) and make them a Threatening Horror style

version. I had to hold back revealing my painting until release of the DVD to avoid spoiling the surprise for anyone not aware of the change seen at the BFI screening.

One final question... if you could in the future work the animation of another lost story, is there one that would especially appeal to you as an artist?

I have absolutely loved being a part of the animation team on these first 3 Classic Who animations, and am quite sad that I am, unfortunately, currently no longer involved. There has been a change of producer, as Charles has left to concentrate on the restoration of other classic television shows, as he has dedicated the last 4 years of his professional life to these animations and there are other things he'd like to go back to. Everybody has their own idea of how things should be done and the new person has had to juggle things as best she can. The door is open for me to possibly return in the future when and if I am needed, and I'll be interested to see the next project when it gets released. I would love to see 'Fury' done or perhaps one of the Classic Hartnell Dalek stories. However, these are pretty long stories and the budget would have to be increased to make it a viable concern as each takes the best part of a year to produce.

Colin Howard, Thank you.



**Some of Colin's un-used artwork for
The Macra Terror animation**

The Faceless Ones

What's really going on in *The Faceless Ones*?

What is generally considered a plot flaw in the conclusion to this story is actually one of its strengths. Events turn on the revelation that the 'originals' (the captive, miniaturised, unconscious humans upon which the Chameleons base their form) of the twenty-five senior Chameleons are left behind in a 'safe place' at Gatwick Airport when the final evacuation takes place, leaving them accessible to the airport authorities after a search, and the Chameleons in their form vulnerable to destruction if the link is broken. Why would the Chameleons leave themselves so vulnerable, when simply taking the original humans with them, along with the abducted 50,000 students, would be obvious and simple?

However, there is another level to this. The details of the evacuation are the planning of the Director, chief antagonist amongst the aliens, who has his own original on board the ship. It is by pointing out to Captain Blade and the other senior Chameleons that the Director has effectively betrayed them that the Doctor wins them over, leaving the Director on his own with one acolyte. So, there is the possibility that this betrayal, conveniently realised and opportunistically used by the Doctor to his advantage, was the Director's intention all along. Interestingly, Nurse Pinto also seems to be a co-conspirator as she also keeps her original with her. Looked at in this way, with the Doctor as an unexpected rogue element that thwarts the Director's plans beyond the primary abduction plot of the aliens, what is actually alluded to is a multi-layered story in which the Chameleons are not merely a generic 'monster of the week' but a society with its own divisions and internal issues to resolve. This could be put down to over-thinking the story and coincidence, except that it was written by Mac Hulke, who overtly introduced similar depth to the Silurian race soon after.



That's karma, Chameleon

**All
original
artwork ©
Colin
Howard**



POLLY AND THE CYBERMAN

A FAN FICTION

1

Standing on the King's Road and looking across it, through the window of a café opposite, the short girl waited patiently, running a finger slowly through her brown hair, admiring the short skirts passing by and smiling inwardly at some short tempers. Though she looked little older than a girl, she was far more mature in years and experience than any of those who stepped around her on the pavement. In the café, a middle-aged businessman and a twenty-something blonde talked over coffee. The girl could wait. That was her life, waiting.

She was waiting for the Doctor. There was a time when he was everywhere! The Daleks in their bizarre antique shop, the dodgy package holidays, the worst robot tanks in history that couldn't even take over a fruit and vegetable market, more robots disguised as abominable snowmen stopping the tube trains, and the Cybermen of course. They hadn't been too happy with the Yeti robots, and had been about to go into the railway tunnels from the sewers and blow them all up when the Doctor had done it for them. Then he had blown the Cybermen up too.

But it was always the wrong Doctor, and he always had the wrong travelling companion. She was still waiting for the right one to come back. She thought she had seen her working at the Post Office tower before the incident there, but there was some story about a secretary being electrocuted by WOTAN trying to save everyone and she never saw her again. Until the Yeti business. That girl looked just like her too, until she tried to stop one of the robots going into an electrical shop where the Doctor and a soldier were inside. Such a shame. She had a lovely smile, and... never mind. Then she saw her again, only it couldn't have been, obviously. Went into International Electromatics and never came out. So, she waited for *her* Impossible Girl to turn up. One day.

Which brought her to now. International Electromatics, outwardly an electronics company but really a cover for an invasion from outer space, obviously. Lethbridge-Stewart had done a reasonable job in clearing up the mess. What UNIT missed, Torchwood mostly didn't. It was the *mostly* where she came in. The man in the café had been wandering the streets for days. He never stayed anywhere, but he wasn't homeless either, not in the conventional sense. He just didn't need to sleep, or eat. Although he was sitting in a café now, talking to the girl, he wasn't eating or drinking.

The girl was drinking coffee, and talking animatedly. She was a nuisance. But then, most of the Doctor's friends were. Just not as big a nuisance as the man himself. The girl across the street could imagine the conversation, and could certainly lipread certain words. Words like Cybermen. The music in the café must be loud enough for the man and the blonde to think they were being discreet, but no loud record playing could stop someone looking from across the street from seeing what they were saying. Only the blonde picking up the menu to choose a sandwich could do that. Damn.

It didn't matter. She knew where they would go. Nowhere. Because there was nowhere to go, not for a Cyberman. Not a full conversion, obviously. The helmet would take too much explaining. But Vaughn wasn't stupid enough to try out the partial body replacement on himself first. One of his science team, probably. Converted, kept out of the way to protect the secret. That's why he missed the invasion. That's why the clean-up operations had missed him in return. Under the radar, just a technician. Not just a technician. What in the world did this Polly person think she was going to do with a half human, half Cyberman? No, don't answer that.

No sandwich. They were leaving.

The walk to Polly's flat was a short one. Surely, she wasn't taking a Cyberman home? What would the neighbours say? Speeding up and crossing the road ahead of them was easy in the hustle and bustle of London on a late Saturday afternoon. Reaching the flat first, the girl turned around and blocked the door. Polly and the man stopped. Was the stranger friend or foe? The girl did not know.

That was an hour ago.

Initially defensive, Polly had proved surprisingly willing, after some name dropping of alien species and references to supposedly secret incidents such as the Post Office tower, to enlist the assistance of a complete stranger to find somewhere else for the Cyberman to go other than her flat. Her story was similar to that of the girl. She had been looking for the Doctor, come across the IE conspiracy, survived the invasion, and continued searching for anything unusual or unexplained. They had both discovered the man by these means and, ultimately, each other. The man had remained silent as they compared brief notes on the Doctor, a sort of exchange of credentials, and, with nowhere else to go, had agreed to accompany them. He was obviously anxious to avoid the police, any remnants of Vaughn's private army, UNIT agents, and especially Torchwood.

The trio now stood on a less crowded section of pavement, as lengthening shadows heralded the dusk. The girl had allowed them to pace up and down the same section of pavement five times now, amused at their perplexed expressions. This was the safe place, she had assured them, where even a human-Cyberman hybrid could live away from the scrutiny of the authorities. Eventually, Polly and the man gave up. The girl gestured for them to hold hands, which they did, if a little uncomfortably, with the girl taking Polly's, a gentle squeeze matching a warm, reassuring smile that Polly weakly returned. As the rest of London continued its business, they stepped through a gap between two tall buildings that Polly, from her glance of apprehension mixed with sheer amazement, believed had not been there a moment ago.

Letting go of Polly's hand, the girl skipped a couple of ostentatious steps and spun to face the visitors. They stood, staring back at her, then up at their surroundings, and then back to her again, as if for an explanation that was not forthcoming. Moments earlier, they had stood in a modern, 1960s London street. But now, it was as though they had travelled in time. The street was old, so very old. Wooden timbered houses stood in crooked rows, lit by gaslight, fronted by rough wooden benches. Merchant signs swung noisily despite the absence of a breeze. The cry of a bird made Polly look up as a splendid raven flew over their heads. There was a singular ambience about the street, something false but also more real than anything beyond its fantastical boundaries. Here was a sanctuary from the madness of the world outside. From the wars, the surveillance, from the oppression of anything alien in the well-ordered society of the capital of Victoria's once great empire.

Victoria... the girl mused on her recollections of the monarch. There was something familiar about the memory, about the aspect of the woman that was not obvious on any souvenir mug. Something that was familiar about her that the girl could not place.

Polly's call returned the girl's attention to the matter at hand. The man had gone, taken into a home by a small and welcoming group. The visit was over. Soon, Polly would not remember the street, the girl, or the Cyberman. She would be helped to forget, to continue her search for the Doctor elsewhere. For a moment, the girl thought about inviting Polly to stay. But then there was the sailor, Ben, and the lies that Polly would have to tell, the risk of exposure that the street would face if Polly could not tell them. And so, with a sad heart, the girl led Polly into a nearby building. Then, a few moments later, back to the street. The girl slipped away behind Polly, then followed at a discreet distance. First, the café, then the flat, then the closed IE offices, Polly searching through the evening as though she had lost something. Then back to the flat again, to continue her life.

With a satisfied nod, the girl disappeared into the night to continue hers also.

The End



CHANGE, MY DEAR

BY JEFF GODDARD



It wouldn't be an exaggeration for me to say that this has been an incredibly tough article for me to write. Not because of the content or themes herein, because (to be honest) this is just really a look at things we *Doctor Who* fans take for granted: more that it has been difficult for me to write anything 'factual' about *Doctor Who* for the last year or so, and especially where series 11 starring Jodie Whittaker is concerned. It has seemed that you can't post anything *Doctor Who*-related online without some argument or opportunity to bash Whittaker, Chibnall *et al* being jumped upon.

However, I know the readers of this esteemed publication are above and beyond that, with open minds and an appreciation for the very nature and essence of *Doctor Who*.

It is indeed that very nature and essence that I wish to explore in a little detail here. That of change and renewal. Something that has allowed the show to reach its 56th year with a new series in production ready for showing in 2020. Not many television shows can claim such a remarkable achievement (16-year hiatus or not), and those that can claim such longevity, are either factual or Soap Operas. *Doctor Who* however is a unique beast. It can be all things, sometimes in the space of just a few short weeks.

Since *Doctor Who* returned to our screens in 2005 it had only had, up until Chris Chibnall, two show runners: Russell T Davies and Steven Moffat. Both had substantial runs at the helm of the show, and while their eras were not identical by any stretch of the imagination, they did bleed into one another in a way that felt natural, not jarring. There were no immediate 'stamps' made by Steven Moffat to make 'his' show markedly different from RTD's; instead he would introduce these changes in tone and concept subtly throughout his tenure. It certainly didn't continue along RTD's more homely 'Soap' style of *Who*, but we still had some of those familiar things around us.

This is, partly, why I think some people have struggled with the first season of Chris Chibnall's run. He has chosen to mark it as 'his' version of *Doctor Who* from the outset. I would argue that series 11 is probably the first major change those who have grown up with *Doctor Who* since 2005 have seen. Some of those people were (maybe) aged in single digits when they started watching the show under RTD, with either Christopher Eccleston or David Tennant as the Doctor and are now in their late teens and early twenties. That's a long time to go with *Doctor Who* being both a pretty consistent show and character.

Now, if we compare this to, say the first ten years of the classic run of *Doctor Who* it is a completely different experience.

In November 1963 television viewers, along with a pair of curious schoolteachers would discover a strange old man and his unearthly granddaughter squatting in their impossible blue box in a junk yard in London. All we would know is that the strange blue box was a time machine called TARDIS and The Doctor and Susan were exiles in time and space. After their discovery they would go off on many adventures, both fantastic science fiction stories set on strange alien worlds and historical encounters that were meant, at heart at least, to be semi-educational. This was the original concept of the show, to entertain and to educate. However, we all know that this wasn't going to be how *Doctor Who* would remain. Indeed, the entertainment and the science fiction/fantasy element took over fairly quickly after the show struck gold in the creation of the Daleks. Historical stories would continue throughout William Hartnell's time as the Doctor, but by Patrick Troughton's second story would become themselves, well, history. But I'm getting slightly ahead of myself here.

Producers and script editors would come and go behind the scenes, as would supporting cast in front of the cameras, but after three years it became clear that the show would no longer be continuing with William Hartnell in the role of the Doctor. The bold decision of recasting was made. After three years of lots of small changes the biggest yet was about to happen, and at the culmination of the second story of the fourth season, *The Tenth Planet*, William Hartnell will collapse to the floor of the TARDIS and a completely new man, Patrick Troughton, would take his place. Yet even now this wasn't called regeneration, instead this was a rejuvenation



I'm starting with the man in the mirror...

process and part of the TARDIS. The show would remain essentially the same around him, but the Doctor, his reaction to, and methods of dealing with those events he encountered were very different to those of his predecessor. As yet more production changes took effect the show itself would change too. During Troughton's second year, as the BBC tried to market the show to America, who preferred a more standardised format of

storytelling, the 'Base Under Siege' style of story would become the mainstay of the show. The locations and monsters may change, but essentially the stories were interchangeable.

The gruelling production schedule would take its toll on Patrick Troughton and by the end of his third year it was time for the Doctor to change his appearance once again. In the 1969 10 – part epic *The War Games* we would finally learn a little more about who the Doctor was. It would be revealed that he was from a powerful race of time-faring beings, the Time Lords. Six years had passed before something we now take for granted (we were told almost weekly that he was a Time Lord during the David Tennant years) was written into *Doctor Who* lore. But a far bigger change was just around the corner.

It would be the second regeneration that would herald the biggest change in the show's history up to that point. When Jon Pertwee fell from the TARDIS in 1970 (our time, UNIT Dating TBC) it wasn't only the Doctor who had changed but the very TV programme itself. *Doctor Who*, freshly in colour for the first time, was now a very different beast.



"The name's Who... Doctor Who.... Or is it Smith... Dr John Smith?"

Gone was the cosmic hobo flitting around space and time, replaced instead by the man of action, exiled to Earth and adopted by a secretive military organisation. He used science and Venusian Aikido to solve his problems, as opposed to guile and charm. Backed up by gun-wielding, no-nonsense professionals this was more *James Bond* with aliens than wacky space adventures. Yet it was still, undeniably *Doctor Who*. The Doctor, although becoming increasingly bitter at his exile to one planet, one time, was still very much 'the Doctor'. A different aspect, yes, but still the same man people had grown to love over his two previous monochromatic incarnations.

The next year would see the producers bring back elements from the previous decade, the more 'rompy' style story and indeed an alien world, and a new nemesis for the Doctor, in the form of an evil renegade Time Lord, The Master, but interestingly none of the familiar enemies such as the Daleks, Cybermen or Ice Warriors had yet made an appearance. Even the Master, who we now take for granted as part of the DNA of the show was new. Doctor Who would then continue with the same format of primarily stories comprised of four or six episodes, with the occasional two or three episode story, for most of the rest of its original run. There would be a mix of tones and styles of course, as the production teams changed. From the famous 'Gothic' style of the Hinchcliffe and Holmes era that borrowed heavily from cult horror classics, to the 80s where John Nathan Turner would preside over three very different eras of the show with three very different script editors.

But it is the early years and the first years of the 70s that interest me here, and certainly when looking at the show's most recent output. In much the same way that Jon Pertwee's first two years would bring the audience a show that was completely different to what had directly proceeded it so too has Jodie Whittaker's first year. We have had a recurring villain, but a new one, in Tzim-Sha/'Tim Shaw'. In Pertwee's second season we had the new recurring villain of the Master. Other than that, until *Resolution* we wouldn't see anything we would recognise from previously in the *Doctor Who* universe, other than the Doctor, the TARDIS and the theme tune along with other elements of the format (companions, story tropes etc.) This is another near parallel to the early 70s.

It's when we look at the very beginnings of *Doctor Who* in comparison to where it is now that we start to find a lot more similarities. Once again, we see the Doctor, at least initially, with an air of mystery about her in the eyes of her companions/friends/crew/fam. Not once have they heard the names of Gallifrey, or the Time Lords. In a way their companionship is accidental, the Doctor has once again taken unwitting passengers on her journeys through time and space, although in far less sinister a fashion than the abduction of Ian and Barbara at the climax of *An Unearthly Child*. The Doctor is finding herself embroiled in events in Earth's past that are both of historic importance and educational to the audience at home. If ever there was a return to the show's roots, this is this. We are also seeing an ensemble cast, rather than the Doctor and a single companion, another staple of the show's early years.

It certainly seems that Chris Chibnall has taken a 'back to basics' approach for *Doctor Who*, and I can't help but wonder if this is what has caused some of the friction for the fans? A lot of modern fans are far more used to RTD and Moffat's complex and flashy stories and plots, with

overarching threads often tied up at the end of the series. To go from that to a far more traditional and, some may say, gentle and slower paced style of story has been jarring. To see the Doctor go from a war survivor, angst ridden and with a dark edge, to a more carefree and enthusiastic maybe even a little wide-eyed and naive explorer that they were before the Time War must also seem strange.

But it is all just another example of *Doctor Who* doing what it can do so well. It can change, it can alternate between styles and tones. The Doctors themselves can be a wildly different person from one incarnation to the next yet still be 'the Doctor'. If we know anything about *Doctor Who* it is that it will always change, it always *has* changed, the lore is ever expanding and retracting, the Doctor will always be the Doctor, whatever face, gender or skin colour they happen to wear and that's why we still have it to talk about, to write about and to celebrate almost 56 years later.

Now to a bit of a confession: Series 11 has been my favourite since the show returned in 2005. I have a huge love of the William Hartnell years, and especially the first two seasons. I find them utterly magical and I saw some of that same magic in series 11. As a child of the 80s with a love of the 60s this was *Doctor Who* hitting all the spots. No series is flawless, nor will they ever be, but in general this wrapped me in a huge and cosy nostalgia blanket.

So, *change my dear*, and it seems not a moment too soon! (at least for me!)



Back to basics: The 13th Doctor and her new friends.. not just companions or assistants





PASSING THE BATON

How Doctor Who survived the transit from the 60s to the 70s

By Nick Mays

One Thing that all *Doctor Who* fans - and, arguably, most Sci-Fi fans love – is an anniversary. 2019 has plenty of them, particularly with regard to what has now become known as ‘The Classic Series’ which ran between 1963 and 1989.

Thirty years ago, in 1989, *Doctor Who* was effectively cancelled by the BBC, unloved and unwanted, dismissed by no less than Michael Grade, Controller of BBC1 as an “old and tired property”. But ten years before that, in 1979, the show had achieved its highest ever audience for a single episode (16.1 million for Part 4 of the Tom Baker series *City of Death*, although admittedly this was helped by an ITV strike).

But go back another ten years to 1969 – fifty years ago this year in fact – and *Doctor Who*, the show and the character, were on trial and it looked like the thrilling Adventure(s) in Space and Time envisaged by series creator Sydney Newman were about to come to an abrupt end. So how did *Doctor Who* make the leap from the 60s to the 70s and survive for another two decades?

By the beginning of 1969, the show’s leading man, Patrick Troughton was simply exhausted by the show’s punishing production schedule which kept the show on TV for nearly 10 months a year. Troughton had suggested to then-Producer Innes Lloyd that maybe the show’s run could be reduced to six months in a year with a more actor-friendly period for rehearsals, studio and location filming. Although this

idea would ultimately be taken up, it came too late for Troughton, who had decided that three years in the role was enough and that he would leave the programme at the end of its sixth season. His co-stars Frazer Hines (Jamie) and Wendy Padbury (Zoe), both of whom were good friends with Troughton off-screen, ultimately decided to leave with him.^[1]

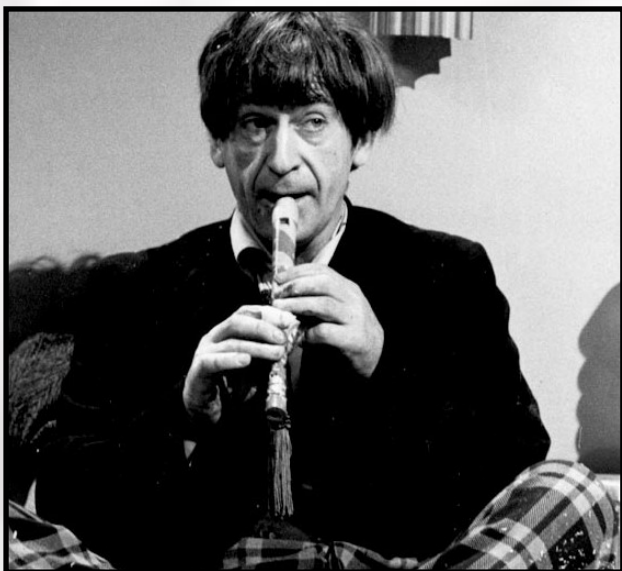
Doctor Who had enjoyed great success from its shaky start in November 1963, due, in no small part to the popularity of its iconic returning villains, the Daleks. But now that Dalek creator Terry Nation, who owned the rights to his creations had withdrawn permission for their use by the BBC in the hope of taking the Daleks to the USA to star in their own show (a venture which ultimately failed), *Doctor Who* didn’t even have these metal meanies to fall back on. For a while, re-using the show’s second most iconic monsters the Cybermen seemed a sure bet of retaining the ratings, but even Cybermen get passé after so many outings, no matter how often you re-design them.

The programme had previously survived and arguably benefitted from the change of lead actor in November 1966, when ill-health forced original star William Hartnell to reluctantly relinquish the role. Hartnell’s Doctor, a silver-haired, grandfatherly and often argumentative old man morphed into Troughton’s younger, more whimsical Beatle-mopped, recorder-playing, Chaplinesque “cosmic hobo” in the second story of the fourth season at the conclusion of the Cyberman debut story *The Tenth Planet*.

In *"Whoniverse"*: At the end of the Cyberman adventure the Doctor complains to his companions Polly and Ben that 'this old body of mine is wearing a bit thin', before collapsing onto the floor of the TARDIS. His features blur in a haze of white light and he simply changes – rejuvenates – into a younger man. There is no concept of "regeneration" back then; this process is explained away by the "new" Doctor to his astonished companions as being somehow triggered by the TARDIS, saying, 'without it, I couldn't survive.' And that is all the explanation that Polly and Ben and, through them, we the viewers get, because the TARDIS has landed on the human colony world of Vulcan and the Doctor is pitched into conflict with his oldest foes the Daleks in the adventure *Power of the Daleks*. After this, the Doctor's travels in the TARDIS continue throughout space and time much as before, picking up new companions and saying goodbye to old companions along the way. Even in other media, such as *TV Comic's Dr Who* strip or the World Distributors' official *Doctor Who* annual, the Doctor's change of appearance is simply glossed over; this is still the Doctor; yes, he has a different face and personality it's true, but he still fights evil and champions those oppressed by it, so it's business as usual. The Doctor's adventures continue...



All Change! The first regeneration, although it wasn't called that back then.



Patrick Troughton as the Second Doctor, very much the "Cosmic Hobo"

So, back to 1969: The programme was visibly running out of steam; ratings were dropping off as competition from glossy ITV adventure shows were snapping up viewers and the Production team were faced with the loss of the entire main cast. Could the show survive?

This is where accounts of actors, writers and production staff blur and differ. At the distance of fifty years it's not easy to see *exactly* what happened behind the scenes in 1969. For some years, the received (fan) wisdom was the BBC were ready to axe *Doctor Who* and revive their popular 1950s sci-fi-cum-horror series, *Quatermass*, the last instalment of which had been broadcast ten years before, in 1959. This *may* have been considered, indeed it might still have been an active consideration when *Doctor Who* was given the green light by BBC bosses for a seventh season to air in 1970, subject to that season being a success and garnering enough ratings to make it viable. A key factor in this need for success was that *Doctor Who*, like all BBC programmes, was to be filmed and broadcast in colour from January 1970, so it not only had to be good in storytelling terms, it had to *look* good too.

Producers Derrick Sherwin and Peter Bryant weren't at all sure that colour production would enable them to create convincing alien planets and special effects.^[2] It was ironic that, when *Doctor Who* went off-air for an extended six-month break in June 1969 – the longest inter-season break ever for the show – the BBC filled the vacant slot with a highly polished sci-fi series from the US (filmed in full colour) called *Star Trek* which had convincing (for the time) special effects a-plenty!^[3]



'Aren't we supposed to be in colour, Mr Spock?'
'It's TV, but not as we know it, Captain.'

Star Trek first aired in the UK on BBC 1 soon after Season Six of *Doctor Who* finished, occupying the same Saturday teatime slot.

Sherwin and Bryant decided to use the 'change of appearance' ploy for a second time to enable them to re-cast the role of the Doctor again, so they started the process of finding a new leading man. It was also agreed that something would cause the Doctor to be Earth-bound for the next season, thus getting around the problem of making convincing alien planets in colour. Then, to add to the production team's collective headache, plans for the last two stories of Season Six – a four-parter and a six-parter – both fell through late in the day, leaving a ten week hole to fill and thus bring the Second Doctor's adventures to a close, whilst at the same time paving the way for a Third Doctor. This led Script Editor Terrance Dicks, who had joined the show the previous year, to step up as writer to fill that void, and explain the Doctor's soon-to-be Earthbound existence. Dicks sought the help of his friend and fellow writer Malcolm Hulke, so together they penned an epic ten-parter, *The War Games* to conclude the Second Doctor's adventures. In doing so, they created several aspects of the show which were to inform its existence for years to come, indeed to this day, namely that the Doctor was indeed an alien (as had been hinted as far back as the very first episode in 1963), a renegade from a race called the Time Lords...

Again in "Whoniverse": The Doctor, Jamie and Zoe find themselves on an alien planet which is divided into numerous different 'war zones' where soldiers, kidnapped from wars throughout Earth's history are brainwashed and forced to fight in what they believe to be their conflicts. The aliens behind the plot, led by the evil War Lord, plan to use the survivors of these conflicts to create an all-powerful army to conquer the galaxy. They have been given the time travel technology to manipulate the soldiers in the form of short-range time capsules known as SIDRATS (Space and Inter-Dimensional Robot All-purpose Transporters) by one of the Doctor's own people, another renegade Time Lord named the War Chief. He subsequently recognises the Doctor by some form of identity perception which only Time Lords possess.



Rentarenegade: The War Chief, another of the Doctor's own people, working for the Warlord

The TARDIS crew meet up with a resistance force made up of human soldiers who have broken their mental conditioning and together, they manage to overthrow the aliens. This leaves thousands of soldiers stranded on the alien planet and no means to get them home. The Doctor cannot use the TARDIS to take them home as its guidance system is erratic at best. Eventually, the Doctor sends a mental message to his people the Time Lords via a 'message cube' which mysteriously teleports, presumably guided by the Doctor's mental powers, using a unique Time Lord ability. This enables the Time Lords to pinpoint the alien planet in space-time exactly. The War Chief panics at this, protesting to the Doctor that the Time Lords will surely execute them both as renegades for breaking their laws. He attempts to escape but is apparently killed by the War Lord's guards before the War Lord departs ahead of the Time Lords' arrival, which is heralded by an eerie sound.

As the Time Lords begin the process of dematerialising the displaced soldiers back to their rightful times and places on Earth, the Doctor and his companions try to escape in the TARDIS. The Doctor reveals to Jamie and Zoe that he is himself a renegade from his own people and stole the TARDIS to leave the Time Lord's planet and explore the universe in time and space. However, the Time Lords capture the TARDIS and transport it to a mysterious complex which may or may not be on their own planet. There the Doctor is called as a witness to the trial of the captured War Lord before a Tribunal of Time Lords. The War Lord is to be charged with the crimes committed in the 'war games', whilst the Doctor is to be charged with the two offences of having stolen the TARDIS and, more seriously, breaking the Time Lords' most sacred law, that of non-interference in the affairs of other races.

At this point, the War Lord's guards arrive by SIDRAT, killing two Time Lord technicians in an attempt to rescue the War Lord and kidnap the Doctor. However, they and their leader are captured in a force field and simply erased from existence by the Tribunal.



Even more of the Doctor's own people! The Time Lord Tribunal stand in judgement

The Doctor is then placed on trial and puts up a spirited defence, pointing out *that 'all you [Time Lords] ever want to do is observe... I wanted to explore!'* and defends his actions of "interfering" in the lives of others by saying that he has only ever acted on the side of good, by fighting evil and oppression wherever he finds it. (At this point he uses a Time Lord thought channel to project images onto a viewer screen of his many foes, including Daleks, Cybermen, Ice Warriors, Yetis and Quarks). Although the Doctor, at the behest of Jamie and Zoe makes a half-hearted attempt to escape soon after, he is once again captured and accepts that the game is up; he has to accept the Tribunal's decision.

The judgement proves to be both painful yet ultimately merciful; Jamie and Zoe are to be returned to their own times, literally just a few seconds after they had originally departed with the Doctor. Their memories are wiped, so that they will only recollect their first adventure with the Doctor and none of their subsequent adventures and travels with him in the TARDIS. Sadly, the Doctor watches on the viewer screen as both are returned to the places they originally met him; a 21st Century space station in Zoe's case and the 18th Century Scottish highlands in Jamie's case.

As for the Doctor, the Time Lords have accepted his plea that there is evil in the universe that must be fought, and that he still has a part to play in that battle. They have noted his particular interest in the planet Earth and this will have given him a special knowledge of that world and its problems. He will therefore be exiled to Earth in the late 20th Century with the TARDIS disabled and the secret of time travel erased from his memory. When the Doctor protests that he is known on the Earth and that 'it could be awkward' for him, the Tribunal inform him, 'Your appearance has changed before, it will change again'. After the Doctor peevishly rejects a selection of faces offered to him via the thought channel, the Tribunal tell him he is wasting time and that he must begin his sentence. The Doctor finds himself in limbo, as his face appears on the thought channel screen and seems to be contorting – perhaps the change of appearance is beginning – and then he is shown spinning away into darkness, protesting loudly until his voice and image fade away...



The Doctor's sentence takes place...

There were plenty of discussions between the Production office and head of Series and Serials Shaun Sutton as to who should play Who. Eventually they settled on Jon Pertwee^[5]. The actor, then aged 50, was known mainly for his comedy roles, such as impersonating film star and performer Danny Kaye and more especially for radio shows such as *The Navy Lark* and *This Waterlogged Spa*, where his funny-voiced characters brought tears of laughter to the nation's listeners. Pertwee himself had wanted to be seen as a more serious actor and, upon hearing that the role of the new Doctor was up for grabs, he had asked his agent to put his name forward to the BBC, which was fortuitous as his name was top of Sutton's list of potential actors for the role!

Pertwee was formally contracted for 21 episodes (later extended to 25) on 21st May 1969. The new Doctor was introduced to the press two weeks later on June 7th, clad in frilly white shirt, cravat, dark blue smoking jacket and his own black and scarlet cape which he'd inherited from his grandfather. This firmly established the new Doctor's look as a Victorian dandy, not a million miles from the Carnaby-street fashions of the time.

On Saturday, June 21st 1969, the final episode of *The War Games* was screened, bringing to an end the adventures of the Second Doctor and of the black & white era of 60s *Doctor Who*.



The Third Doctor (Jon Pertwee) comes to terms with his exile on Earth, flanked by Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart (Nicholas Courtney) and Liz Shaw (Caroline John)

So, having got their new leading man, Producers Sherwin and Bryant set about devising the look and feel of the Third Doctor's adventures in exile on Earth. It was decided early on to make Season Seven as markedly different from what had gone before as possible and to this end the show had a much more 'adult theme'. The Doctor was to become scientific advisor to a covert military-scientific organisation called UNIT – United Nations Intelligence Taskforce – first seen in 1968's Cyberman serial *Invasion*.^[6] As a further point of continuity, UNIT's head honcho would be Brigadier Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart, originally introduced as Colonel Lethbridge-Stewart of the Scots Guards in *The Web of Fear* and later of

The Web of Fear and later in charge of the newly-formed UNIT in *The Invasion*, played by actor Nicholas Courtney. The Doctor would have an assistant, rather than a companion, in the form of scientist Dr Elizabeth Shaw, played by Caroline John. The serial order of the new season was also radically altered, partly to keep costs down, being made up of one 4-part story and three 7-part stories.

Location filming on the first story of the new season, *Spearhead From Space* took place in September 1969. As was usual at the time, location filming was done on 16mm film, as opposed to video tape in the studio, giving a distinctly different look and 'feel' to interior and exterior sequences. However, a technicians' strike the following month meant that all studio sessions for the story were cancelled. Instead, all remaining scenes were instead shot on film at the BBC's engineering training facility in Evesham. The end result was a very professional and "grown up" looking serial, which actually came in several thousand pounds *under* budget, despite being shot on film, but by avoiding all those highly regulated, unionised studio facilities!

The first episode of *Spearhead From Space* was broadcast on Saturday, January 3rd 1970 and, as Jon Pertwee's Third Doctor stumbled out of the TARDIS, the show's first – and possibly last – season in the 1970s began. The Doctor had been put on trial by his own people and exiled to Earth. Now, *Doctor Who* the show itself, was on trial...

In Whoniverse: The TARDIS lands in Oxley Woods, south east England, at the same time as a mysterious meteorite shower has landed nearby in a directed funnel of hot air. The newly-regenerated and disorientated Doctor stumbles out of the TARDIS and falls unconscious to the ground...

The British branch of the United Nations Intelligence Taskforce (UNIT) is investigating the meteor shower but draws a blank. Unbeknown to them, local poacher Sam Seeley has found and hidden one of the 'thunderbolts'. When UNIT's Commanding Officer Brigadier Alistair Lethbridge-Stewart hears that an unconscious man was found next a police telephone box nearby, he immediately thinks it must be the mysterious Doctor, whom he has met twice previously at a time of two attempted alien invasions. He orders his men to transport the TARDIS back to UNIT HQ, then hurries to the local cottage hospital to see if this man is indeed the Doctor. He is accompanied by new UNIT recruit, scientist Liz Shaw. He is disappointed when he does not recognise the white-haired stranger in the hospital bed, although the stranger seems to recognise him...

In the course of the ensuing events, an examination taken at the hospital indicates that the Doctor has two hearts and a much lower pulse rate and body

temperature than normal humans, together with a blood group of no known type on Earth! ^[6]

Eventually, the Doctor tries to escape in the TARDIS only to find that he can't, as the Time Lords have disabled it and his memory of the necessary dematerialisation codes and protocols has been blocked. Somewhat reluctantly, he agrees to help the Brigadier solve the mystery of the meteorites. These turn out to be containers for a gestalt alien intelligence, the Nestene Consciousness, which manifests itself via plastic dummies manufactured by Auto plastics. The Nestenes aim to colonise the Earth and 'awaken' Autons positioned throughout London in shop windows as display dummies, who proceed to gun down several civilians. The Doctor manages to destroy the Nestene's nerve centre, deactivating the Autons and thwarting the invasion. The Brigadier offers the Doctor the position of scientific advisor to UNIT, with Liz as his assistant, in return for giving the Doctor a laboratory and whatever materials and equipment he needs to repair the TARDIS. The Doctor agrees and settles on being known by the pseudonym of Doctor John Smith.

Although the Doctor is initially quite prickly and often bad-tempered, most likely as the result of his exile and being stuck in what he sees as a primitive time, he forms a close bond with Liz and her successor as his assistant, Jo Grant. He also develops a respectful friendship with the Brigadier, although often berating him for his 'military pig-headedness'. The Doctor is also called upon to act occasionally as a reluctant agent for the Time Lords who steer his TARDIS by remote control to planets and times where his intervention is needed, if not actually welcomed. Also, during this time, the Doctor is pitted against another evil renegade Time Lord, The Master, a former friend of the Doctor's from the Time Lord academy, destined to become his long-standing, returning nemesis...



No, it's not the War Chief (or the Meddling Monk)!
But yes, it is *another* renegade Time Lord...
Meet The Master, the Doctor's arch enemy, played by
Roger Delgado

Season Seven of the re-vamped, all-colour *Doctor Who* attracted favourable ratings and Jon Pertwee proved to be a hit with viewers, so the BBC decided to allow the series to continue. As Season Seven got under way, there was a change of production team, with Barry Letts being appointed as Producer. He and Script Editor Terrance Dicks immediately gelled, both having the same vision for the show. From Season Eight onwards, they toned down the more 'adult' themes shown in Season Seven, although the programme was often slammed by TV watchdog Mary Whitehouse (amongst others) for being "too violent". The character of the Doctor was softened too, largely thanks to Terrance Dicks' careful script editing, making sure to give the Doctor moments of 'a little twinkle' as Jon Pertwee used to call them.

For these first two seasons, the Third Doctor didn't face any returning villains, except for the Master, who appeared in every story of Season Eight. However, to kick off Season Nine in January 1972, the Production team scored a massive PR coup by securing the rights to use the Daleks again after almost five years – pretty much a lifetime for younger fans of the show. At the conclusion of Episode 3 of *Day of the Daleks*, the Daleks subject the Doctor to a brain scan, and images of his previous selves are projected onto a screen identified as the First and Second Doctors (BBC publicity photographs of Hartnell and Troughton respectively), the first time the series confirmed, without a doubt, that this was the same Doctor. It was also the first time that the show had acknowledged and depicted earlier Doctors!^[7]



Oh No! Not the mind probe!
'You are the Doctor! You are an enemy of the Daleks!
You will be exterminated!'

The Production team went one better in January 1973 in the opening story of Season Ten, almost, but not quite ten years since the series started, when the Doctor joined his previous selves in a battle against Omega, another one of those pesky renegade Time Lords who was threatening the existence of his own people. The adventure was called, not surprisingly, *The Three Doctors* and it set another 'staple' of the series' mythos – that the Doctor can indeed meet and interact with his previous incarnations. At the conclusion of this serial, the Time Lords, grateful for the Doctor's defeat of Omega, restore his memory of time travel codes and give him a new dematerialisation circuit for the TARDIS. The Doctor's freedom to travel in space and time could continue unimpeded, allowing him to visit alien planets with special effects provided by Colour Separation Overlay and model work, looking as convincing as they ever did.



Doctors One, Two and Three: A publicity shot from the BBC *Radio Times Doctor Who 10th Anniversary Special*, published in November 1973

During this new heyday for the show, *Doctor Who* gained a very high public image, with Jon Pertwee happily promoting the show via his image on anything from breakfast cereal to chocolate bars. *TV Comic*, (later *Countdown* and *TV Action*) carried the Third Doctor's adventures in comic strip form, the regular annuals were still published (except in 1972 for some unknown reason), whilst publishers Target started a range of *Doctor Who* books, novelisations of recently screened and older *Doctor Who* serials, which were destined to be published for years to come.

By the time Jon Pertwee left the series in June 1974 after five successful years as the Doctor, the show was in great shape, with high ratings, its place in the TV schedules assured. It was a give that the Doctor would again change his appearance, although in Pertwee's final story, *Planet of the Spiders*, this process was given a name, itself another staple of the series – *regeneration*.

On December 28th 1974, the Fourth Doctor, in the form of 40 year-old Tom Baker, then the youngest actor yet to play the roving Time Lord, took over the controls of the TARDIS, whilst a new production team in the persons of Phillip Hinchcliffe and Robert Holmes were poised to take over the controls of the show and lift it to even greater heights of popularity. The baton had most definitely been successfully passed from the 60s to the 70s. *Doctor Who's* future was assured.



Footnotes:

1] Wendy Padbury initially planned to continue in the role of Zoe, so plans were put in place for Zoe to accompany the Third Doctor into exile on 20th Century Earth. However, Padbury changed her mind after a few weeks and decided to leave the show along with her friends Troughton and Hines.

2] When *Doctor Who* was given the go-ahead by the BBC to be revived in 2003, Showrunner Russell T Davies faced a similar dilemma with planned special effects. He wanted to make sure that the revamped show could compete with big budget sci-fi productions, so he initially set the Ninth Doctor's adventures on Earth (or close to it) for the first season screened in 2005. The SFX, provided by independent SFX company The Mill proved successful, so from then on, alien planets abounded.

3] Ironically, *Star Trek* had, by this time, been cancelled by US network NBC after three seasons, running from 1966 to 1969. Constant fan pressure had given the show a reprieve after Season 2, but failed to save it after Season 3. But the fans never went away and *Star Trek* returned, this time to the big screen in 1979, followed by a series of feature films. The series returned to TV with *Star Trek: The Next Generation* in 1987. *Star Trek* (the original series) Season 1 was first screened on BBC1 on Saturday, 12th July 1969, just three weeks after *Doctor Who* ended.

4] Jon Devon Roland Pertwee was born 100 years ago this year on 7th July 1919. As a young man, he served in naval intelligence in World War Two, before beginning his acting career in earnest after being de-mobbed, appearing in theatre, films, on TV and radio. He died on 20th May 1996, just days before the attempted and ultimately unsuccessful mid 90s revival of *Doctor Who* in the form of a US/UK jointly produced TV movie acting as a prelude to a possible new series. The movie entitled (quite originally) *Doctor Who* aired in the UK on 27th May and was dedicated to Jon Pertwee's memory.

5] *The Invasion* set the template for the Doctor Who stories of the early 1970s, being set on (possibly) contemporary Earth, with the Doctor and UNIT battling alien and home-grown scientific and ecological threats. Let's not even go *near* the "UNIT dating controversy" that arose in the 1980s... (or was it the 1970s?)

[6] Yes, two hearts! Another staple part of the Doctor Who mythos. It's well known nowadays, but back then it was an amazing revelation!

[7] Legend has it that the BBC used a quaint term for never repeating adventures of the previous Doctors (at least up until 1981): Repeats were not allowed "*Out of Doctor*" as it might confuse viewers and undermine the current actor playing the Doctor. (It was more probably due to the BBC not wanting to pay the actors repeat fees). It's a pity the BBC employed this policy, because they might not have wiped so many tapes of the old serials in the late 60s and early to mid-1970s!



OBITUARY:

TERRANCE DICKS

Terrance Dicks, who has died aged 84, had a long association with the popular BBC series *Doctor Who*. He was the show's script editor from 1968 to 1974, wrote numerous episodes, and adapted more than 50 of the television stories into bestselling novelisations. Published by Target Books, they could reasonably be claimed to have inspired legions of children to take up reading in the 1970s and 80s. A great number of those children became writers too, with Neil Gaiman, Mark Gatiss and Paul Cornell among those acknowledging his influence on them.

The books captured the imagination and excitement of the TV scripts and their prose was ambitious yet accessible, broadening the vocabulary of their young readers – the Doctor's pockets, for example, were “capacious”, and “wheezing, groaning” is the closest anyone has got to accurately describing the noise made by the arrival of the Tardis.

He also wrote, with Malcolm Hulke, the show's first ever behind-the-scenes book, *The Making of Doctor Who* (1972, rewritten by Dicks in 1976), in which he described the Doctor as “never cruel or cowardly”. This distillation of the hero's character was so apt that the writer and executive producer Steven Moffat (a fan since childhood) ultimately wrote it into the 50th anniversary episode, *The Day of the Doctor* (2013), and Peter Capaldi's valedictory regeneration speech in 2017's *Twice Upon a Time*.

Dicks had joined *Doctor Who* as an assistant script editor in 1968, five years into the series. Quickly promoted to script editor, he found himself doing major surgery as stories fell through around him, ultimately co-writing (with Hulke) the second doctor Patrick Troughton's swansong, the 10-part classic *The War Games* (1969), which introduced the Doctor's people, the Time Lords, and so added another layer to the show's mythology.

The first year of the new doctor Jon Pertwee revitalised the ailing series, and Dicks found himself simpatico with the incoming producer Barry Letts: together the pair introduced Roger Delgado as the Master, a new nemesis for the Doctor, and devised the popular companions Jo Grant (played by Katy Manning) and Sarah Jane Smith (Elisabeth Sladen).

Under the aegis of Letts and Dicks, the show featured killer plastic daffodils (*Terror of the Autons*, 1971), monsters rising from the sea (*The Sea Devils*, 1972) and huge maggots (*The Green Death*, 1973, a dire warning about the dangers of industrial pollution), as Pertwee's stylish, virtuous Doctor battled ambitiously staged invasions with wit and ingenuity. Dicks was responsible for helping his writers to maintain the Doctor's moral integrity and mould their scripts into the programme's notoriously small budget and tricky production schedule.

When Dicks, Letts and Pertwee left at the end of *Planet of the Spiders* (1974), *Doctor Who* was riding high, winning the Writers' Guild of Great Britain award for best children's drama script. Dicks convinced the incoming script editor Robert Holmes that it was traditional for the outgoing incumbent to be commissioned upon departure and so wrote Tom Baker's opening adventure, *Robot* (1974), establishing the fourth doctor's zanier, more unpredictable persona.

Unhappy with alterations to his next script, *The Brain of Morbius* (1976), Dicks decreed that it should “go out under some bland pseudonym”. It did, credited to “Robin Bland”, a move Dicks greeted with characteristic good humour (indeed, “blandrobin” became part of his email address). Horror of Fang Rock (1977) is a claustrophobic masterpiece dripping with mordant humour and suspense as a shape-changing alien picks off the well-drawn, dwindling inhabitants of a lighthouse, while *State of Decay* (1980) is a clever meld of vampire legend and science fiction.

The special feature-length episode *The Five Doctors* (1983) – Peter Davison by now in the lead role – is an effective and entertaining 20th anniversary celebration despite Dicks being obliged to include a host of popular monsters, various companions and every incarnation of the central character. Rewrites were imposed late in the day to cover Baker's unwillingness to take part but cunning use of archive footage left most viewers none the wiser.

Dicks's first Target novelisations appeared in 1974, and he continued producing them until the early 90s, when the company was acquired by Virgin and there were no more TV stories left to adapt. Virgin then produced original *Doctor Who* fiction titles and he penned their second release, *Timewyrm: Exodus* (1991), and later launched a new range for BBC Books with *The Eight Doctors* in 1997.

He wrote two spin-off stage plays (*The Seven Keys to Doomsday*, 1974, and *The Ultimate Adventure*, 1989), contributed books based on *Doctor Who*'s successful 2005 relaunch, and happily appeared at conventions and on DVD special features: a proud and generous ambassador for the show. His final short story, *Save Yourself*, will be published in BBC Books' *Doctor Who: The Target Storybook* in October 2019.

Born in East Ham, east London, Terrance was the only son of Bill, a tailor's salesman, and his wife Nellie (nee Ambler), a waitress who later worked alongside Bill running a pub, *the Fox and Hounds*, in Forest Gate. At East Ham grammar school Terrance excelled at English due to his voracious appetite for all kinds of literature (he was a lifelong bibliophile) from the classics to pulp thrillers and adventure stories. He won a scholarship to study English at Downing College, Cambridge, in 1954 and after graduation joined the Royal Fusiliers for his national service.

On demobilisation he worked as an advertising copywriter until Hulke, his landlord and mentor, asked Dicks to work with him on *The Avengers* (four scripts, 1962-69). He wrote three radio plays in 1966-67 and then joined the storylining team of ATV's *Crossroads* until mid-1968 when he moved to the BBC and *Doctor Who*.

During his time on the show he and Letts devised *Moonbase 3* (1973), an attempt at more adult science fiction, and they continued their fruitful partnership as producer and script editor after they left with BBC classic serials including *Great Expectations* (1981), *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (1982, with Tom Baker as Holmes), *Beau Geste* (1982), *Dombey and Son* (1983), *Jane Eyre* (1983), *Goodbye Mr Chips* (1984), *The Invisible Man* (1984) and *The Pickwick Papers* (1985).

Eventually becoming a producer Dicks oversaw *Oliver Twist* (1985), *Alice in Wonderland* (1986), *Brat Farrar* (1986), *David Copperfield* (1986 – nominated for the Bafta for best children's programme), *The Diary of Anne Frank* (1987), *Vanity Fair* (1987) and *The Franchise Affair* (1988).

He also wrote more than 150 children's adventure books including the *Mounties* trilogy (1976), the *Star Quest* trilogy (1979-83), *The Baker Street Irregulars* (1978-87), *The Adventures of Goliath* (1984-93) and *The Unexplained* (2000-2001), and penned several non-fiction works for children.

He married Elsa Germaney, a teacher and later a Quaker recording clerk, in 1963. She survives him, along with their sons, Stephen, Jonathan and Oliver, and their granddaughters, Amy and Nelly Rose.

**• Terrance William Dicks, writer, producer and script editor:
born 14 April 1935; died 29 August 2019**

Obituary © Toby Hadoke; printed in *The Guardian* 3 September 2019.

Terrance Dicks:

Tributes for a Brilliant Writer

Always There

In some ways, Terrance Dicks as a *Doctor Who* writer is best represented by a story not from his own era and with which few fans immediately associate him, and that is the season eighteen adventure *State of Decay*. This is because, in a season that was dominated by new ideas, new styles of narration, new visual and sound design, new personnel on both sides of the camera, and possibly the greatest culture shock to viewers since 1971, here was one story, like its writer, standing as a pillar of classic *Doctor Who*, something familiar, a kind of fans' comfort zone, a bit like going back to your favourite novelisation and reliving a favourite era. And Terrance Dicks was a part of most of those eras, starting out in the late 60s, running the show with Barry Letts through the early 70s, contributing to the iconic mid-70s, *State of Decay* and *The Five Doctors* for the 1980s, and writing for Virgin books' *New Adventures* in the 1990s, which many fans enjoyed as the official continuation of the show at that time.

His own tongue-in-cheek cynicism about the show often came out in interviews and DVD commentaries, but actions do speak louder than words, and the bottom line is that Terrance Dicks was always there, being interviewed at conventions or for documentaries, recording commentaries, and never stopped supporting the show or its fans: That's what shouts loudest about his inner feelings for the show. One target of his gentle cynicism was *The War Games*, which he co-wrote with Malcolm Hulke, which he would describe as repetitive and simplistic. Yet the story remains a firm favourite, a masterclass in world building and creating characters that you really care about and feel that you know, a production that could stand alone as a show in its own right, as a classic BBC science fiction serial, that you could easily show to a non-fan in the present day with every expectation of it standing the test of time.

Terrance Dicks was, above all, a great story teller who had a special grasp of how to bring this to life on screen and in print. Key influences included the classic Hollywood gangster and monster movies of the 30s and 40s, but a view that this lent Dicks' work a superficiality, in its pursuit of thrills and a sense of dangerous fun, would miss the vital quality that Dicks' work had that the work of, for example, Chris Bidmead or Steven Moffat sometimes failed to capture. Everything written by Terrance Dicks is easy to follow and understand, without needing to be an expert on the show, the latest scientific ideas, or the fantasy genre. It means that Dicks' never really wrote with the long term pay-off in mind, but the quality of his work that you can watch one story and go away satisfied and happy, whether or not you ever watch *Doctor Who* again, is something that drew many casual viewers to the show. Of course, a great many did tune in again, and again, and again. It is not possible to overstate the impact of Dicks on the success of *Doctor Who*.

This accessibility carried through from Dicks' work as a script writer and editor into his work in writing many *Doctor Who* adventures as novelisations for the print medium. Many have expressed how these helped them as children to read and become enthusiastic about literature and writing. The clever way they are written in an adult prose style, but with a structure and content accessible to readers of any age or ability, must have played a large role in this. They are perfect for those with no experience of reading but are also satisfying if you regularly read longer novels too, and, as with his television scripts, they work equally well if you are a keen fan or if it happens to be the only *Doctor Who* book you ever read. Remarkably, this was not limited to the novelisations either, for his New Adventure novel *Blood Harvest*, a combination of gangster B-movie homage and *State of Decay* sequel, is equally accessible and easy to read despite being aimed at a different readership by its publisher.

And there is another important distinction. The publisher of the novelisations had a readership in mind as did Virgin Books in the 1990s, but Terrance Dicks wrote for everyone.

AP

Thank you, Uncle Terrance

Like so many other fans of *Doctor Who*, especially those of us who grew up in the 60s ,70s and 80s, I was truly saddened by the death of former Script Editor Terrance Dicks.

He was often referred to in fandom as "Uncle Terrance", because that's how he was seen - as an avuncular, witty Uncle with a twinkle in his eye. When I heard of his passing it felt just like I *had* lost a favourite Uncle.

Terrance's contributions to *Doctor Who* are almost too numerous to mention, but he came along as the new Script Editor at just the right time for the show in 1968. The show had been running for five years and was showing signs of running out of steam. Together with Producer Barry Letts, Terrance transformed and revitalised the show, adding so much to the *Doctor Who* mythos, not least the creation of the Time Lords, the Master, Regeneration and the ability to circumvent the First Law of Time which allowed the Doctor to meet up with his previous incarnations. He wrote great stories and tweaked so many scripts to add to the legend.

Then, of course, there were Terrance's brilliant Target novelisations and his many other books, which allowed us young fans to relive and discover previous Doctor Who stories in those far off days before VHS, DVD and On Demand TV. He even tidied up a few nagging continuity issues too! Not only that, he turned so many children on to reading not just with *Doctor Who* novelisations and original fiction but also his numerous other adventure books. He acted as the go-to guide on how to write exciting, engaging stories in a concise and thoughtful way. Don't use clever words, don't lecture your readers – just tell the story.

It's perhaps ironic that Doctor Who Magazine's recent special issue on *Target books* and issue #542's *Writer's* feature were published just a few weeks before Terrance's passing. I sincerely hope that he read the many tributes to his writing skills and sheer genius before he left us - and in so doing, knew just how highly he was regarded by today's *Doctor Who* writers, actors, producers and fans and indeed, how much he was *loved* by so many people the world over.

He really was our favourite Uncle.

Thanks for being so brilliant, Uncle Terrance: We owe you so much.

NM

Making a difference

That's all many of us want: for our lives to have made a difference in this uncertain world. Until he died, I really hadn't considered how much Terrence Dicks had contributed to improving it. I'd known about him of course: I'd enjoyed some of his Target novelisations of *Dr Who* stories, and he'd directed some of my favourite episodes of the series. I knew his name was a legend among *Who* fans, part of the backbone of their universe; so much so that, not being a Convention attender, I had assumed he'd already passed. And then my Twitter feed filled with an outpouring of love and grief for his loss, account after account thanking him for teaching them to read.

Oh my word. Can you think of any better legacy to leave than that of inspiring a generation of children (boys in particular) to read? Because I can't. And his lucid, simply written yet evocative, novelisations of *Who* adventures didn't just enthrall his young readers; they *inspired* them to explore their own creativity and write their own stories. His work enabled hundreds, maybe thousands, of children to find their voice, develop empathy and begin to innovate. That's a pretty big contribution, and it deserves respect and gratitude, not only from his fans but from all of us who want to live in a world where everyone can articulate their thoughts and feelings and weave a bit of their personal magic into the tapestry of life.

Terrence Dicks you were amazing. Thank you.

AW

A Great Legacy

Terrence Dicks: writer, author, script editor; a devotee of Doctor Who from its early years until his death.

Always willing to be interviewed for conventions, TV, or DVD extras, his enthusiasm was obvious. His contribution to the Doctor Who archive is manifold but he never tried to be "clever", expecting viewers/readers to analyse the content of his stories to appreciate them; rather they were always good, easy to follow, entertainment.

Terrence never got tired of Doctor Who, and fans never got tired of Terrence.

His legacy will live on in our lives and continue to give us immense enjoyment, and hopefully many more fans of the current show will get to know him too.

Uncle Terrance, we salute you!

LP



POTENTIAL OF THE CYBERMEN

TONY J FYLER

The Cybermen have rarely, if ever, been used to their full potential on-screen.

Ahhh, it feels good to say that out loud.

The Cybermen are *Doctor Who's* silver medal monsters. Only the Daleks outrank them in the show's history, and the reason for it is that, like the Daleks, they work on two levels – the immediate, threatening, scary monster level and the philosophical level, embodying a primal human fear.

The Daleks are what happen if you raise a child in darkness and isolation, teach it that it is superior and instruct it in hatred, then trap it in a tank for its whole life. With their genuine belief that they are superior, they glide on screen and scream at you, but they also embody both a fear of nuclear poisoning, and the rigidity of mindset that comes with a racial superiority complex. They're both demented loveless children and out-and-out Nazis in tanks.

The Cybermen, if anything, incorporate an even more primal fear – the fear of ageing, of decrepitude,

and of death. The Cybermen are what happen when a society's ability to keep death and ageing at bay is equal to its fear of those material constants. They're what happens when the trend for cosmetic, elective plastic surgery, and soon, nano-surgery, tips the balance of life and death in favour of living forever, and living free of the concept of pain.

This philosophical reality of the Cybermen – the Dorian Gray factor, where the longer you live and the more you replace, the less human or humane you become – has been woefully underexplored in their on-screen exploits. What's more, their USP, the fact that they're governed by pure logic, has rarely been used to their advantage, but far more often as a demonstration of human superiority by virtue of our retaining the ability to act illogically.

Of course, that doesn't mean there have been no successful Cyber-stories – of course there have: you don't achieve the Cybermen's high status among *Who*-fans if you don't absolutely blow the screen to bits on many occasions.



From the creepy body-horror of *The Tenth Planet* to its slicker metal re-run, *The Moonbase*, from *The Invasion* to *Earthshock*, the Cybermen have frequently justified their place in the villains' pantheon. But they've frequently done it by sheer visual intimidation – the sight of a seven-foot man walking across a polar landscape, the shape of a Cyber-shadow thrown on a Moonbase wall, hordes of Cybermen bursting out of the London sewers and colonising landmarks, hordes more bursting out of tubes on a space freighter and marching towards the reader like a silver moon-booted force of



destiny, are all images that make the Cybermen a very visual memory, rather than a sense-making one. Just as a challenge, try and remind yourself what exactly the Cybermen wanted with the Gravitron on the *Moonbase*. What their actual stated goal was in *Earthshock*, before it all went a bit Jurassic. These are harder things to remember than the visual impacts of the stories would have you believe.

There are also instances in both 'Classic' and 'New Who' of the Cybermen acting logically and running a plot: *The Tenth Planet*, *The Moonbase*, *The Invasion*, *Tomb of the Cybermen*, *Rise of the Cybermen/Age of Steel*, at least some of *Army of Ghosts*, *The Next Doctor*, *Nightmare In Silver* and *Closing Time* are all stand-out stories in which the Cybermen have an objective *that makes some kind of sense*, and work towards achieving it. *Wahay!* Have a gold star...or maybe not.

So what exactly is my Cyber-beef? Why am I claiming that the Cybermen have rarely, if ever, made the most of their potential on-screen?

Simply this: another of the great ways in which the Cybermen differ from the Daleks is in their attitude to change. The Daleks already think they're the supreme being in the universe. How do you improve

on perfection? You don't, really – the basic Dalek shape has remained the same for fifty years, though it's been big, small, *reeeeally big*, bronze, black, grey, yellow. You name it, more or less a Dalek is a Dalek. If you think that's unfair, witness the furore when the Daleks actually *did* briefly change what they fundamentally looked like and hint at potential new functionality – the New Paradigm was met with howls throughout the fandom, and were hastily shuffled back into a pack of Dalek designs, and then mostly forgotten.

The Cybermen never believe they've reached perfection. All they believe is that they're better than us; our weak, fragile flesh being subject to ageing and disease and decay. They are the ultimate evolutionists, their mantra the upgrading of everything. That means they don't have theoretical limitations. They don't have a theoretical end-state where the perfect, the ultimate Cyberman, is achieved. And that means *every Cyber-story is a chance to expand what they are*, what they can do, and the reasons we should be scared of them. It means the potential of the Cybermen is enormous and ever-evolving, and far too often, that's squandered in favour of having them stomp about the place being imposing.

The Cybermen should be a storytelling *gift*. You can tell all kinds of stories with them, because their fundamental basis is broad enough to allow you angles on them. You can use them for creepy base-under-siege, city-under-siege, even world-under-siege stories, where their presence and their purpose is not discovered until they're ready to reveal themselves. You can emphasise the body-horror of them (as Russell T Davis sometimes did) by having them involved in hospital settings, or pushing the reality of conversion to the forefront. You can use them as Neil Gaiman did; as an ever-advancing, ever-upgrading unstoppable force, where the only safe option is to get off any planet on which they happen to be standing, and then to blow up that planet.



You can use them – again, as RTD did early on, as an avatar of our societal desire for every new gadget, every new upgrade. As they were originally born out of the fear of organ and limb replacement, you can update that fear in a world of 3D-printed limbs and nano-surgeries. You can even use the Cybermen as an avatar of hope – for those who are old, for those perhaps who face a debilitating degenerative disease, the Cybermen, with their endless memory capacity and their indomitable strength, could be the saviours some people would adore. For those who've suffered unimaginable tragedy too, the chance to simply turn off the hurt could make them see the Cybermen as angels of mercy – a theme vaguely hinted at in *Dark Water/Death In Heaven*. At least as much as that though, it's time to make full components. While the classic Cyberman shadow, the handle-headed, blank-faced, blank-eyed shiver-maker is a thing of terrifying beauty, the Cybermen show more sentimental attachment to their old human body-template than is right for a species governed by logic and dedicated to evolution. They could be an action figure wonderland, because the point is that while the Daleks maintain their rigid certainties of their own pre-existing superiority, the Cybermen's mode of life should be one of constant flux – they could be and should be updateable, both in terms of their knowledge and their physical evolution, depending on the circumstances they encounter.

Gaiman's *Nightmare In Silver* began to take us down this road and was, again, roundly decried by fans, despite being one of many right routes to make the Cybermen relevant and frightening again. The Cybermites should be able to instantly re-engineer their bodies, so you should be able to have Special Weapon Cybermen to storm fortifications, Cyberzerkers, overclocked fast battle units sent in to clear resistance, Stealth Cybermen (something admittedly deployed on a couple of occasions in both Classic and New Who) and while of course they can fly now (a development long overdue for a species so dedicated to improving itself), they should be able to discard the vestige of their humanoid shape



when, for instance, other shapes would be of more benefit – Cyber-Spiders, Cyber-Snakes, you name it, the Cybermen should be all-terrain adapters. And they should, of course, never ever be fully dead unless the organic elements – the brain, and



nervous system essentially – are irreparably damaged. You should be able to blow them apart, and have them lie there looking dead as doornails, only to discover later that they've been in self-repair mode, the host of Cybermites in each Cyberman rebuilding systems, bringing the host Cyberman back on line as a carrier for the organic brain, to rise again and get back to the fray.

What's more, another Gaiman development from *Nightmare In Silver* showed a genius way for the Cybermen to adapt going forward. The Cybermites were an elegant evolution from the Cybermats, but they could be made to do so much more. While *Dark Water/Death In Heaven* showed their potential as a large-scale conversion cloud, the Cybermites should be a Cyberman's close-contact weapon. Like the Borg's nanites, the Cybermites should give the Cybermen a 'conversion-touch' ability that brings their body-horror into play. They should to some extent be the zombies of the Doctor Who universe; one touch and you should be on the road to a conversion. There should be none of the traditional big machinery for conversion, They should work like parasitic wasps, invading bodily systems and rewriting them, 'eating' away the host until the Cyberman is left in its place – including the area of the brain responsible for emotional responses, eaten or burned away, rather than, for instance, the emotions all being kept intact and merely 'inhibited', as in the RTD era, for ease of Cyber-defeating. Keep the body-horror, but instead of large-scale surgery and factory processing, make it tiny and intrusive – an insect, a plague, a cancer, eating the host alive until only the Cyberman remains. As the Cybermen themselves, and the Cybermites in particular, are also bridging creatures between organic and electronic systems, so, as in the old days when the Cybermats used to scuttle about and bite people with plague while also gnawing through cables to mess with electronic systems, the Cybermites

should be able to infect both humans and computer systems, plugging computers into the Cyberiad as slave-systems, and turning humans into walking warriors for the Cyber-cause.

So that's what I mean by the Cybermen being used to their full potential on-screen. They should be able to be all things to all plotlines – silent silver hands behind inexplicable catastrophes, ever-adapting zombies with an ever-expanding range of abilities, masters of both the flesh and the electronic elements of our complex world (and those beyond), philosophical comments on our own society, our own fears and strengths, and so on, and so on. As Neil Gaiman said about *Nightmare In Silver*, they should be able, if you write them at the limits of their potential, to be absolutely unstoppable. Of course,

not all Cybermen need to be all these things every time they appear – that would be frenetic and crammed and probably make them unbeatable. But writing Cybermen stories that pay homage both to where they came from in our psyche and to what a race dedicated to its own continual improvement and to making a universe in its own image, could be truly frightening. It would be a task which would challenge both writers and Doctors to be better if they want to take on the implacable, unstoppable march of augmented reality that are THE CYBERMEN.



THE AUDIO EXCELLENCE OF THE CYBER RACE

While they may never have achieved their full potential on-screen despite many good appearances, it's a whole different story in audio. Big Finish has frequently advanced the Cybermen, or realised them in ways that make you feel you've been properly Cybered. Here's just a handful of the must-listens for Cyber-fans...

Spare Parts, by Marc Platt

The Rise of the Cybermen/The Age of Steel and World Enough And Time/The Doctor Falls both gave us alternative 'Genesis of the Cybermen' stories for the New Who generation. Both had their merits. Both are utterly blown out of the water by Spare Parts, a Fifth Doctor story held by many fans as the 'actual' genesis of the Mondasian Cybermen who then went on to become the planet-bothering men in bandages with arc-lamps on their heads. It's a phenomenally tense drive towards an inevitable twist which sets the Cybermen on their way.

Hour of the Cybermen, by Andrew Smith

A relatively new title, this brings back the actors behind the Eighties Cybermen's essential presence, David Banks and Mark Hardy, thirty years on and sounding better than ever, in a Sixth Doctor story dripping with class, which gives us both the creepy inexplicable phenomenon which turns out to be a Cyber-plan *and* uses the Cybermen as a source of succour to a heartbroken human. Instant classic, and the music and sound design give us the Eighties Cyber-story you waited for for a decade.

Cybermen 1 and 2, by Nicholas Briggs and James Swallow

Early in Big Finish's career, it took both the Daleks and the Cybermen outside of a who-centric universe and allowed them to live in their own universe driven by their own agenda. What you get as a result is a more 'grown-up' universe of humans, androids from Andromeda and, both lurking on the sidelines and then taking over

your streets, the Cybermen, taking no stick from anyone and being the kind of strategic geniuses you want them to be.

The Gathering by Joseph Lidster, The Reaping by Joseph Lidster and The Harvest by Dan Abnett

A rough, sort-of-but-not-really trilogy of stories with the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Doctors, each of these takes a new bold angle on the Cybermen. Here you'll find Cybermen who don't want to be Cybermen any more (or do they?) in a story that introduces BF companion Hex, Cyber-converts and a town under siege when Peri goes home to face the music after running off on Lanzarote, and Cyber-technology causing havoc and grimness when the Doctor meets up with Tegan again, years after she left him. There's plenty of real, harsh human drama in the mix, but the Cybermen emerge from each story with abilities or angles you hadn't thought about before.

UNIT: Cyber-Reality by Guy Adams and Matt Fitton

In particular, listen to Episodes 3 and 4 of this box set for some hardcore Cyber-action, including lots of instant updating of Cyber-skills and an unstoppable Cyber-onslaught. When you have to rely on the War Master to get you out of trouble, it's a dark day, but there's lots of good Cyber-inventiveness here with Osgood being utilised by the Cybermen to fight a war for conquest of the Earth against Kate Stewart and the Master.

The Silver Turk by Marc Platt

The Eighth Doctor and Mary Shelley (Yes, that one) uncover the ghastly body-horror of a lone Mondasian Cyberman turned into a sideshow amusement. Things...don't go well. But it's a great listen that grinds the body-horror, the pain from which the Cybermen are escaping and gives the Cybermen themselves a Gothic twist which works well with the obviously Frankensteinian undertones behind their existence.

Funky Thrills!

Kids' 1970s – early 1980s

Film, TV, Sci-Fi and Fantasy:

A Guide in 20 Objects

(or, My Childhood in 20 Categories)

By Craig Sanwell

“When I was 10, I read fairy tales in secret and would have been ashamed if I had been found doing so. Now that I am 50, I read them openly. When I became a man, I put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up.” - C.S. Lewis

For every memory well remembered, others exist, buried deep at the back of the brain, waiting for a song, or a passage in a book, a scene within a film, or even a scent or conversation involving nostalgic trivia, to kick-start the cognitive senses into production and help raise them from the dead.

For every iconic associated product of the 1970s/early 80s that is constantly referenced – Chopper Bikes, Racing Bikes, Raleigh Griffiths, Space Hoppers, Swingball, Connect 4, Ker-plunk—there are a wealth and breadth that are equally well forgotten - Merit Games' *The Amazing Magic Robot*, Denys Fisher's *Ghost Train* and BBC TV's popular *Dad's Army* board games. Love Is...Stickers, Squirmels and Gonks! To name but a few.

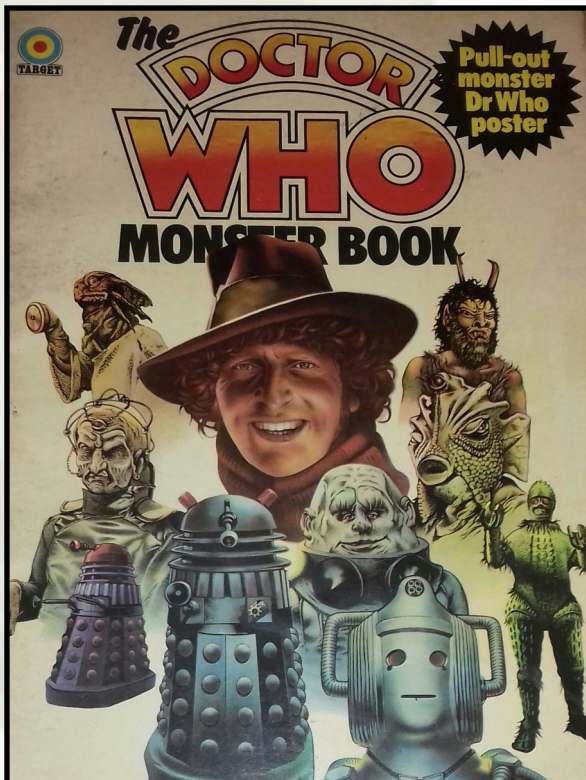
For every memory of when *Wagon Wheels* were bigger, there is also a long distant memory of Fizz-Gongs being too big to fit in the mouth! And for every associated celebrity superstar of the day promoting the top-drawer products of the day - think Kevin Keegan, Barry Sheene, Evel Knievel and Dave Prowse as the Green Cross Code man - there was equally an Alvin Stardust declaring 'Are you out of your tiny minds?' and Jon Pertwee exclaiming 'Splink!' in previous road crossing safety campaigns and who has forgotten the Mum interrupting her children playing a round of *Operation* with the imposition 'Can I have a go?' Or the theatre goer inappropriately yelling 'You sank my battleship!' from the balcony. You had to be there, and if you weren't, ask your Nan or Grandad.

My memories of childhood, as is true for most, are of endless summers building camps, climbing trees, playing marbles, conkers, football, war. Adult-run play centres, rope swings on trees, Penny for the Guy, acorn fights, home-made go-carts, skateboarding, tubs of green luminous slime, trading card playground swaps and seaside trips. And a very particular vivid recollection of being sat inside a rotating, revolving life-size Dalek, with my Nan looking on, in the amusement arcade as a small boy in the early 1970s.

As well as embracing the outdoors I also had an affinity with—and love for—staying in and I was always collecting something or other. Let's face it, for a kid who loved Sci-Fi and Fantasy TV, it was pretty good in the 1970s to early 80s as was the “merch” associated with the hit shows/films of the day, which were both useful and helpful ways of gaining status and equally handy bartering tools among peers inside and out of the school playground.



- 1) My earliest memory of any Sci-Fi/Fantasy associated product is also connected to one of my earliest life memories; *Doctor Who*. The final serial of Jon Pertwee's penultimate season - *The Green Death* - is my first Dr. Who recollection as well as one of my earliest childhood memories and would result in my Dad taking me with a Christmas or Birthday gift voucher to our local WH Smith's to purchase the Target imprint bumper volume *Monster Book* with a glorious cover and poster insert by Chris Achilleos, which adorned my bedroom door and both thrilled and terrified me in equal measures. My love affair with the Target novels and their artwork began, highlighted by an array of beautiful jackets presented on the reverse cover. Purchases and gifts of *Terror of the Autons*, *The Daleks* and *The Giant Robot* would swiftly follow. The black and white images within struck a chord and filled me with a little fear, particularly Azal, the cloth-covered *Tenth Planet* Cybermen and chilling images from both *Terror of the Autons* and *Colony in Space*. And who were these men "other" than Pertwee and Baker represented as the Doctor? Luckily my Dad filled me in. I still can't believe the 50p price tag roughly £5.99 in today's money.



- 2) The brand Corgi and its rivals Dinky and Matchbox were all equally prolific in producing some of the most truly iconic and detailed reproductions of some of the best Sci-Fi/Fantasy -TV/Film vehicles ever made available to children of the generation and even to this day. Ranging from beautiful interpretations of die-cast metal cars in all sizes, they also saw all fans catered for which would include fans of comic book heroes, cop shows, Sci-Fi and cartoon characters, particularly Hanna-Barbera and even the Muppets!

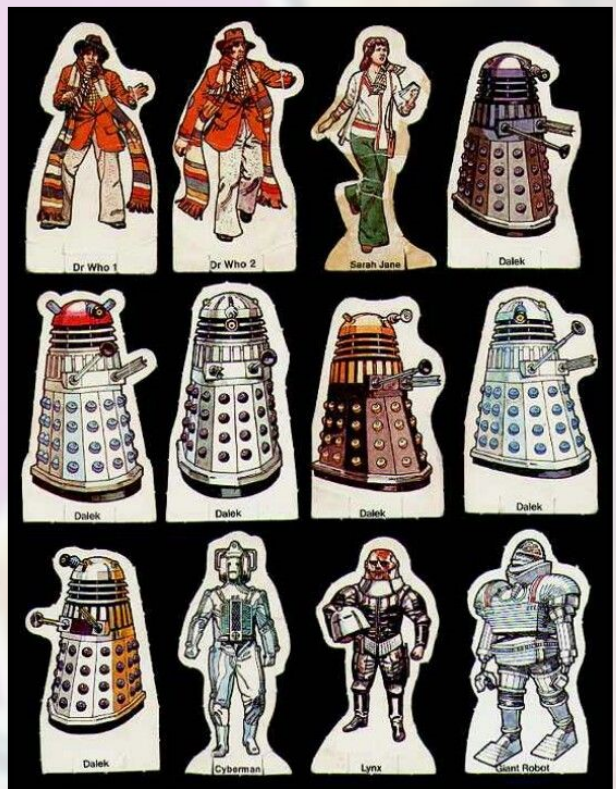
Most notable to my childhood were the 1960s version of the Adam West TV *Batman* Batmobile which was acquired in a swap. The largest version featured two plastic seated figures in the front and torpedoes firing from the rear. A smaller Matchbox version was produced with a trailing Bat Boat.

A plethora of Gerry Anderson vehicles were abundant during the late 60's/early 70's, thanks to the wonderful Dinky range, which could be played with and temporarily exchanged in after-school play-time. Stand outs were the *UFO Shado 2* Interceptor (tank-like with firing missile), the *Captain Scarlet* SPV and Thunderbirds pink Lady Penelope FAB 1, Rolls-

Royce and green Thunderbird 2 housing a small yellow Thunderbird 4. My absolute favourite, which sadly I never owned (but got to play with via a friend) was a beautifully made "Eagle" from Space 1999 complete with extending legs and opening hatch. Other worthy mentions include scale models of everything from 007's Aston Martin and his Lotus Esprit from *The Spy Who Loved Me* (Corgi's wonderful car/submersible with a black button at the back which released the fins!) and a quirky looking *Chitty, Chitty, Bang, Bang* with its extending wings and tiny figurines which was still knocking about from the 60's, thanks to friends with older siblings. Another particular fave of mine gained in another canny swap, was the *Pink Panther's* "Panthermobile" with cat figure from the title sequence of the animated series. The underside contained a very large rubber wheel at the back with a smaller plastic wheel at the front of the conical, sloping frame. It also came with a black pull cord that was inserted to propel the vehicle along at speed, working to the same principle as the Evel Knievel drag-car released around the same time. Later toys included everything from Kojak, Starsky & Hutch, the USS Enterprise and most surprisingly *Blake 7's* Liberator but sadly for me no Whomobile; someone, somewhere missed an opportunity!



3) The freebie giveaway was a big marketing ploy, guaranteed to reel 70s/early 80s kids in and help increase sales for many a product. Mostly used to launch first issue or ailing comic book sales and Jamboree sweet bags (a mixed surprise assortment retailing at 10p from your local Forbuoys). The idea was best utilised by breakfast cereal packs. Weetabix had cornered the market here. Their free stand-up figure card sets and packs, were covered in make-shift board games, spinning wheels and beautifully executed dioramas, that your figures could stand in front of, and were a wonder for a very young child to own. Like a modern Victorian children's theatre set they included themes ranging from Disney characters, *Asterix the Gaul*, Hanna-Barbera, DC Superheroes, *Doctor Who* (twice), *Star Trek* (the motion picture) and finally *The Flash Gordon* movie. Most had artwork by the wonderful Gordon Archer, but the real thrill was putting your hand inside the box between the pack to retrieve the fresh, sealed flat set of cards; two in a 12 pack, three in a 24 pack and six in a 48 pack! The only drawback was feverishly attempting to eat Weetabix three times a day in order to acquire another box.



4. The 12" action doll was most noted for *Action Man/GI Joe* for the boys or *Sindy/Barbie/Action Girl* for the girls...until 1975. Lee Majors was a huge star in the 70s/early 80s playing two major (no pun intended) roles. *The Six Million Dollar Man's* Steve Austin and *The Fall Guy's* Colt Seavers. (He was also married to an original Charlie's Angel, so respect!). Kenner/Denys Fisher capitalised on the runaway success of the bionic man with an action doll to rival *Action Man* for the next two Christmases. Equipped with a removable left arm, bionic eye that could be looked through via the back of the head, removable rubber on the right arm revealing robotic components and an additional engine block that emphasised his strength, it retailed at £3.95. There were also accessories in the form of a bionic transport-repair station that doubled as a rocket ship selling for £5.95 and additional dolls:



Maskatron and *Big Foot* (enemies) and *Boss/Super surgeon Oscar Goldman*?!! I dropped some clues and some hints that fell on deaf ears, but I was rewarded two years later, when at Christmas '77 I received the Denys Fisher,

Tom Baker and Leela dolls, a red talking Dalek and a large Tardis to house them. Subsequent Christmases brought me a talking K9 and a silver-blue talking Dalek too.

5) The regular Christmas hardback annual was a must-have as a child. Starting with *Rupert the Bear* and moving onto everything from *Scooby Doo* and *Planet of the Apes* to *Star Wars*, *Bladerunner* and *The Black Hole*. From '77 to '85 it was all about World Distributors and their *Dr. Who*, *Dalek* and *K9 & Co.* annuals. Sometimes quirky, surreal artwork, sometimes just plain weird. But, overall great stories and unique exciting content. Some annuals in the 70s would include quizzes, crosswords and supposed "factual" accounts of how by the year 2000 we'd all be eating pills instead of meals and taking regular trips to a station on the moon.



6) In 1975 Palitoy launched *Little Big Man*, an affordable, cheaper, smaller 8" doll to appeal to fans of *Action Man/GI Joe*. Usually located on revolving racks in toy shops beside the Remus play kits and parachuting soldier figures. The canny, smaller size was picked up by Mego in the US (Palitoy UK) to launch a range of *Planet of the Apes* dolls in the same year.



Featuring accurately detailed and well-clothed figures relating to the short-lived TV series of 1975. The quaint range depicted dolls of astronaut heroes Burke and Virdon, Galen, Zira, Zaius, Urko and numerous Gorilla guards/soldiers. Additional accessories included a wonderfully accurate and detailed fortress, tree-house and jail sets. Mego also launched 8" action dolls of *Star Trek - The Animated Series* around the same time. Equally, some awful looking and crude, unlicensed dolls were also issued at this time to cash in on Mego's success with *Planet of the Apes*. Cheap rack toys by Azrak Hamway Intl. featured a range of ugly and poorly executed 8" "*Action Ape Men*". Some found their way into East Ham market and thanks to my Nan, a couple of these cheaper dolls fleshed out my collection to sit alongside my only two Mego dolls – Dr. Zaius and one Gorilla soldier.

7) Before the days of computer games, virtual reality and even the Atari there were *Action Transfers*. Introduced by stationery manufacturers Letraset, action transfers were a flat-pack including a blank scene/diorama and set of rub-on transfers. So, you could relive scenes and recreate action sequences for anything from *Batman*, *Kojak*, *Sport/Athletics*, *Space 1999*, *Starsky & Hutch*, *Star Wars* and particularly the brilliant *Doctor Who/Dalek Invasion* featuring Tom Baker and Sarah-Jane Smith fighting Daleks and saucers in Trafalgar Square. Truly magical.



8) 1978 was all about *Star Wars* and in particular the range of Topps trading cards. PG and Typhoo tea had dominated the trading card market with their free card giveaways at the bottom of their boxes. Typhoo had had extraordinary success with a *Doctor Who* series while PG Tips had dominated the playground swap culture with their exciting ranges of: Aviation, The Space Race, Dinosaurs, Wildlife and Olympic Athlete series of cards (among others) with their postal offers of A5 book and wallchart. *Top Trumps* card games had also made a playground impact. But all that changed due to the phenomenal success of *Star Wars* during 1978. Based on the football star card phenomena that included various cards and a stick of gum, Topps Cards included “framed” scenes from the *Star Wars* movies, initially in border colours of blue and red and latterly yellow, green and orange with quotes and texts on the front and reverse. Some reverse cards featured part of an image that when assembled with others created a larger jigsaw-like image. The packs also included a single sticker as well as the gum.



9) Kenner/Palitoy were swift to move into action following the recent success of *Star Wars*. One of the first fully licensed toys to be released in October '77 was one that I owned. *The Escape from the Death Star* board game was fun, and quick and easy to play. Escape the Death Star via the compactor and reach the

rebel based on Yavin 4. It included board, spinning wheel and cards awarding benefits and penalties and featuring character scenes/photos from the movie. You had to help the protagonists escape from the base, choose the correct route to take, turn off the tractor beam, then pick up some secret plans. The short route could risk encounters with the force but could ultimately lead to escape through Tie-fighters via the *Millennium Falcon* to reach the rebel base and win and make it home in time for tea. What was not to like?



- 10) The *Star Wars* 3.5" plastic figures revolutionised toys. The sacrifices made to collect them were ingenious. Foregoing bus journey money for the arduous mile and a half trek to and from school on cold winter mornings and evenings, as well as going without school dinners to utilise the money to buy a new figure. OK, technically theft but my Mum got her own back when some years later my collection of figures residing in a biscuit tin in our shed had mysteriously vanished. 'Oh, I gave them



to Brenda's boy as you don't play with them any more'. 'What...? Noooo...!'. There were a few rarities in that tin, the Bounty Hunter Dengar and the three-legged R2-D2. To this day I regret not keeping the tin under my bed in the safety of my bedroom. Still, it wasn't all bad, in 1980 while briefly living in London a new toy shop opened in East Ham High Street which was opened by Darth Vader himself! I took the bus journey alone and shyly and quietly stood at the back. He pointed to me and I nervously approached with my heart pumping. I got my first figure - Ben Kenobi signed on its packaging. Also worth mentioning, were the various battle scenes and dioramas contained within your parent's catalogues. Notably for mine, Grattan. *Action Man* and *Star Wars* had some incredible set pieces in the Autumn/Winter selections particularly, *Empires...3.5"* ice planet Hoth range!

- 11) Library books were a great way of enjoying escapism and fantastical imaginings on a shoestring budget back in my youth. The library bus was also a great way of accessing books in remote areas out of school season. Other ways to enjoy books were the school library shop partial payment schemes, where you could purchase a brand-new shiny book after the final payment and Christmas/Birthday gift voucher presents (a regular from my Aunt). The library also allowed the opportunity of going with a sibling or friend and taking out all your allotted books between the two of you and choosing titles you both enjoyed and could swap and share during your three-week rental period, so you could effectively double your reading quota. Books enjoyed in this period included everything from *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*, *The Famous Five*, *Herge's Adventures of Tin-Tin*, *Asterix the Gaul*, *Lucky Luke* and *Emil and The Detectives*. Books bought, enjoyed in class or handed down from friends and siblings included; *The Iron Man*, *The Moomins*, *Stig of the Dump*, *The Phoenix and The Carpet*, *Doctor Who's Target range* and *Star Wars - Splinter of the Mind's Eye* and *Hans Solo at Star's End*.





Craig aged 11 and the splendid TARDIS birthday cake made by his sister for his 11th birthday

Around about this time I celebrated my 11th birthday. I received several officially licensed *Doctor Who* Dennis Allen related gifts between my birthday and that year's Christmas. Posters, Birthday Cards and the wonderful "Zygon" swamp scene jigsaw (and its gloriously atmospheric artwork) with the Games workshop's *Dr. Who* role playing game featuring as my main gift. My 16-year-old sister made me a fantastic Tardis Birthday cake! In Summer '79/'80 Terrence Dicks came to East Ham Central Park and I queued to meet the legendary author.

Co-incidentally, around the same time a celebrity all-star cricket match took place at East Ham's Flanders cricket field and pavilion, including, unknown to me at the time, soon-to-be *Doctor Who*, Peter Davison. East Ham was definitely the place to be at this time and the connection was to continue, when in the mid 80's *The Who Shop* landed in East Ham's High Street North, from its previous location in Wapping. Now in Upton Park, I still make visits from Hampshire where I now live. Even more coincidentally, while meeting Terrence Dicks my Mum had a lengthy conversation with him in which she revealed that as newly-weds, she and my Dad rented their flat from his parents in the mid to late 60's. A tenuous link to the great man, but it impressed me no end, regardless. [And very poignant now—Ed]

12) Even bath times could be a joyful experience for Sci-fi fans

back in the day. Some kids favoured Matey for a bubble-bath experience but for a generation of children in the late 70's bath time was made enjoyable thanks to Cliro and their range of character soaps and bubble baths. Obtained through Mum's Avon catalogue, usually selling alternative versions of cosmetics and toiletries with their own takes on Dad's *Brut 33* and *Old Spice* aftershaves or Mum's *Tweed*, *musk* and *Charlie* perfumes. The Christmas catalogue included stocking fillers for the kids. Cliro produced a range of toiletries from '78 including Darth Vader, Chewbacca (and for some odd reason a silver-bodied Artoo-Deetoo) in shaped character bubble bath bottles and yellow character shaped soaps featuring the droids C3-P0 and Artoo-Deetoo. Other bath time toiletry purchases would include a shaped black and yellow Dalek and Tardis bubble baths.



13) *Viewfinder/Viewmaster* and film reels - the 3D stereoscope manufactured/sold by Sawyers was invented in 1939 by Kodachrome. Allowing the viewer to see scenes and images of their favourite films, TV series and pop stars by placing a round reel into a thick set of glasses/goggles and activating a trigger mechanism which would allow the images to be seen in a 3D slide show. In the 70's/80's everything was available from slides of Disney movies to TV, such as Tom Baker's *Full Circle* episode of *Doctor Who* and Peter Davidson's *Castrovalva* or even pop video/live performance images from the likes of *Adam and the Ants* and other top pop stars of the day.



14) The *Mork and Mindy* - concept 2080 - egg-shaped transistor radio was an Xmas present from my Nan and Grandad in 1980/81. A delightful object with a Mork from Ork figure sat inside his egg-shaped spaceship. Capitalising on the enormous success of the brilliant Robin Williams, *Happy Days*, Sci-Fi comedy spin-off. A much-loved object, I literally played it until it stopped working, it also doubled as a toy.

15) Panini sticker albums are still available today. Long before the premier league existed it was all about first division football teams and their stars which were eagerly collected, swapped and traded in the playground. I also collected Disney's *The Rescuers* series and completed my only album full of stickers with *The Empire Strikes Back*.

Stickers, cards, marbles and coins or any manner of small toys could be gambled, lost or won in a daring game of "penny up the wall", where friends would take turns to throw their items against a wall. After a series of throws, the person with the object closest to the wall won the lot. Harsh for the loser, victorious for the winner.



16) A visit to the cinema was a true treat and something of an event 40 years ago. Early cinema outings included The Saturday Morning Pictures showings of BFF double features and interludes with Looney Tunes and Disney's short cartoons. Later progressing to *Warlords of Atlantis* and the blockbuster event movie and local back to back showings of the two Peter Cushing *Dr. Who* movies and the original Star Wars trilogy. At this time a programme would be sold at the box office kiosk promoting the film. Notable purchases included *Clash of the Titans*, *Superman II* and the *Star Wars* saga.



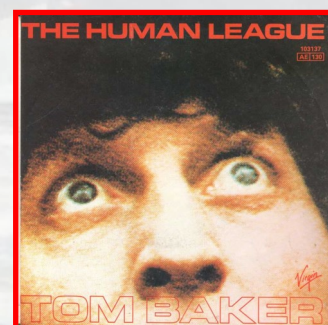
17. Comic books were a mainstay of my diet from as early as I can recall. I have a vivid memory of *Laurel & Hardy* and *Tom & Jerry* comic strips as an infant. Starting with the *Beano* and *Dandy* and absorbing everything from *Whoopee! Whizzer & Chips*, *Warlord*, *Victor*, *Conan the Barbarian*, *The Hulk*, *Spiderman*, *The Fantastic Four*, *Planet of the Apes*, *Star Wars* and *Hammer Horror*. I can clearly recollect finding the artwork in *Conan* and *Planet of the Apes* to be very mature in execution for my young age. I also loved the bumper summer specials. when I was very young my Dad would have our choice of comics delivered with the papers at the weekend for me and my sisters in the early 70's. Later as I grew older my Grandad would bring a comic home once a week and mix up the selection. In October 1979 Marvel UK released *Doctor Who Weekly*, later evolving into a monthly magazine. My ten-year-old life revolved around my Mum bringing the latest issue home every Thursday. Featured favourite strips would include *The Iron Legion*, *The Time Witch*, *The Neutron Knights*, *The Tides of Times* and the wonderfully, glorious epic *Voyager* series. Featuring wonderful characters and creations such as *Abslom Daak: Dalek Killer*, *Beep the Meep*, *Shayde* and *Frobisher* the shape shifting penguin (actually, an alien Whifferdill), with beautifully executed locations like the picturesque village of Stockbridge. Finally, my junior life was complete. I could never have imagined it would still be in production 40 years later. Hats off to the persistent vision of Dez Skinn, the originator and first editor!



All images © Copyright



18) Vinyl records were the main source of home entertainment for every household during the whole of the 1970s and 1980s. Early soundtrack LP's included a family copy of a London stage interpretation of the songs from *The Wizard of Oz* and in 1978 every household was not complete without a copy of the Star Wars soundtrack, my first owned long-playing record. Additional vinyl included audio LP's of both *Genesis of the Daleks*, *Doctor Who and the Pescatons* and *The Empire Strikes Back* While a visit to a friend's house introduced me to Jeff Wayne's *War of the Worlds* which completely blew my mind. Later acquisitions included *Doctor Who: The Music I & II* and the two brilliant BBC Radiophonic Workshop sound effects LP's. Another excellent LP enjoyed and worth a mention was the Neil Norman and his cosmic orchestra all-stars – *Greatest Sci-Fi Hits* Accurate interpretations of popular Sci-Fi themes such as *Doctor Who*, *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* and some less obvious choices such as *The Time Tunnel*, *Dark Star* and the ultra-cool and funky *Space 1999* theme. 7" single highlights included Decca's original version of Ron Grainer's *Doctor Who* theme, Peter Howell's interpretation of the same on BBC records with a Tom Baker picture cover and the Human League's B side with picture cover, *Tom Baker*. Although not vinyl, Pickwick's tape cassette of Tom Baker's reading of his *State of Decay Doctor Who* episode was also enjoyed at this time.



- 19) A profile of the 1970s/early 1980s would not be complete without mention of the children's own "Junior TV Times LA-LA-LA-LA-LA-Look-In!" as the TV ad proclaimed. The magazine boasted covers painted by Arnaldo Putzu, responsible for the design of many 1960s cinema posters, particularly the *Carry On* movies and featured comic strips, interviews, crosswords and posters associated to the most popular TV, films and pop stars of the day. Comic strip adaptations covered everything from *Freewheelers*, *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea*, *Catweaze*, *The Tomorrow People*, *Kung Fu*, *The Six Million Dollar Man* (him again!), *Space 1999*, *The Bionic Woman*, *The Man from Atlantis* and *Logan's Run*. But sadly, for me, no *Monkey* which was very popular, and which I enjoyed immensely around this time. Whilst celebrated pin-up stars featured everything from *Star Wars* to *Dick Turpin* and *Worzel Gummidge* and to pop stars of all genres ranging from David Cassidy to Blondie.

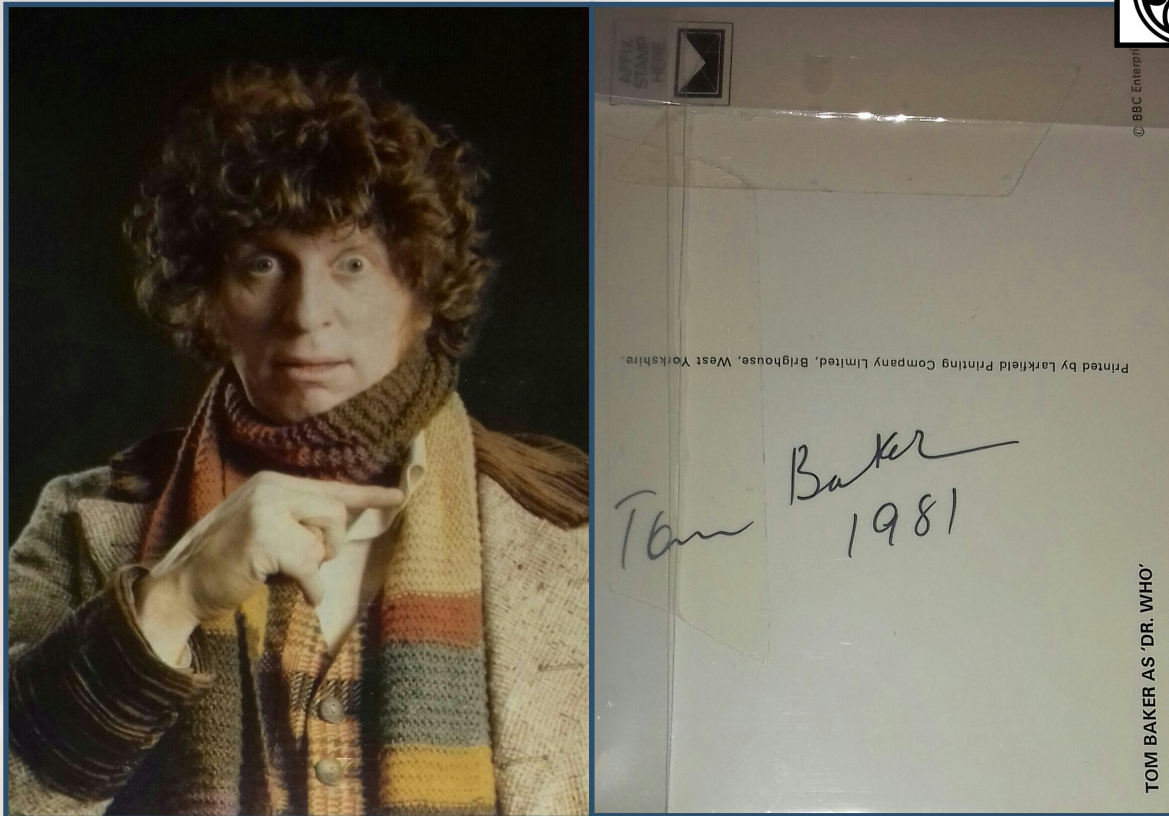


Mention must also go to DC Thomson's short-lived answer to *Look-In*; *Tops Magazine* and particularly its wonderful and colourful, beautifully drawn *The Fantastic Adventures of Adam Ant* comic strip. Featuring the titular pop star in his own time-travelling, Sci-Fi/Fantasy adventure series. A kind of *Doctor Who* meets *Time Bandits* affair.



20) Lastly, my final category is another freebie, just costing me the price of a SAE. In 1981 I acquired my first of many BBC signed photos. One morning as I left for school with a friend, the postman handed me an envelope with a *Tardis* stamp mark on the front. Inside was a signed BBC promotional postcard of my childhood hero Tom Baker! I was ecstatic and took it into school to impress and show my fellow classmates. Many more letters were sent thereafter and many more signed postcards amassed and some obscure autographs were acquired, beginning a life-long passion that carries on to this day and brings me as much joy as the very first did nearly 40 years ago in my formative years as a fully fledged Science Fiction/Fantasy child of the 1970s/early 1980s.

As with childhood itself, much of what I owned back then is long gone. Either passed on, exchanged or given away as times and interests changed. Much in life is about letting go and moving on. I sold the majority of my childhood *Doctor Who* collection in the early 1990s and these days I am now very selective in my purchases. Thanks to the arrival of the Internet, much of these long gone and buried memories can be reawakened, accessed again and resurrected either by Ebay or via nostalgic Google searches, which help bring alive these long-gone magical moments once again, even if only fleetingly or momentarily.



"Nostalgia is about time-travel, time-travel backwards – not in any other way, it can only go backwards – to a time when we could run upstairs, or when our hearts beat with love for someone. It's to be a child again, in a sense, or certainly to be young again."

- Tom Baker

Out of the Vortex

News, Reviews and Previews from the Sci-Fi and Fantasy Multiverse

The Darkness Descends!

His Dark Materials, Jack Thorne's adaptation of Philip Pullman's acclaimed series of novels, will have its global premiere on **Sunday 3 November** on BBC One and BBC iPlayer.



The eight-part adaptation tells the story of Lyra, the young protagonist who lives in Jordan College, Oxford, in an 'alternative' version of our world. Placed there at the request of her Uncle, Lord Asriel, she lives a sheltered life amongst the scholars and college staff while under the watchful protection of The Master and Librarian Scholar Charles.

When the glamorous and mesmeric Mrs Coulter enters Lyra's life she embarks upon a dangerous journey of discovery from Oxford to London. Here she meets Father Macphail, Lord Boreal and journalist Adele Starminster at a glittering society party where she first hears about the sinister General Oblation Board.

Lyra is subsequently thrown into the nomadic world of the boat dwelling Gyptians - Ma Costa, Farder Coram, John Faa, Raymond Van Geritt, Jack Verhoeven and Benjamin de Ruyter who take her North in her quest. Once in the North she meets

charismatic aeronaut and adventurer Lee Scoresby who joins them on their epic journey and who becomes one of Lyra's closest allies.

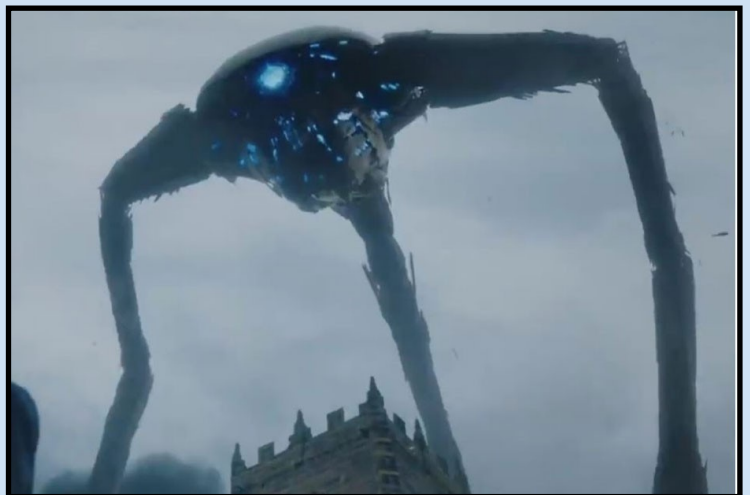
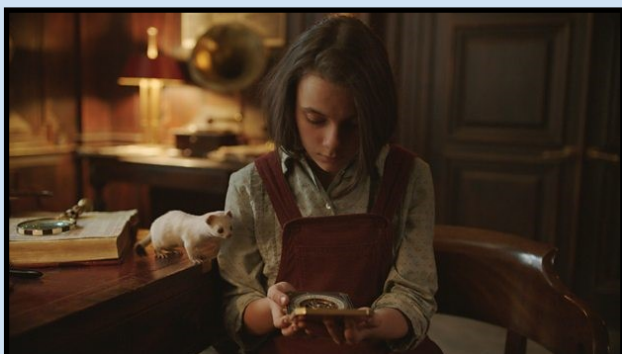
The stellar cast for *His Dark Materials* includes Dafne Keen as Lyra, Ruth Wilson as Mrs Coulter, Lin-Manuel Miranda as Lee Scoresby, James McAvoy as Lord Asriel, Clarke Peters as The Master of Jordan College, James Cosmo as Farder Coram and Anne-Marie Duff as Ma Costa, with Will Keen as Father McPhail and Ariyon Bakare as Lord Boreal.

His Dark Materials is produced by Bad Wolf and New Line Cinema for BBC One and HBO.

The Martians Are Coming!

Eighty years after Orson Welles' infamous radio broadcast of *The War of the Worlds* supposedly sparked a mass panic that the world was *actually* ending, the BBC is gifting us with a brand-new adaptation of the HG Wells sci-fi novel. Eleanor Tomlinson, Rafe Spall, Robert Carlyle and Rupert Graves will star in the three-part series, written for television by Doctor Who's Peter Harness.

'It's fantastic to have Rafe and Eleanor leading such a brilliant cast of British acting talent in the BBC's faithful adaptation of H.G. Wells' legendary story,' said Tommy Bulfin, BBC commissioning editor, in a statement.



The War of the Worlds (1897) is a novel by English author HG Wells, who also wrote *The Time Machine* and became known as the father of science fiction. It's one of the earliest books to tell the story of a conflict between mankind and an extraterrestrial race – in this case, Martians.

When a strange object lands in the heart of England and hatches, the inhabitants of Earth find themselves under attack from ruthless aliens inhabiting Tripods – huge, three legged machines, armed with heat rays and poisonous smoke.

Unlike Steven Spielberg's 2005 movie adaptation starring Tom Cruise and Dakota Fanning and the George Pal 1953 movie, the BBC's version will be true to the original period and setting.

'HG Wells' seminal novel has been adapted for the screen many times, but it's always had a contemporary (and American) setting,' director Craig Viveiros said. 'This is the first version to be set in London and [its environs] during the Edwardian period.'



However, George and Amy – Spall and Tomlinson's characters – are a new addition. Writer Peter Harness added: 'The version of *The War of the Worlds* that I wanted to make is one that's faithful to the tone and the spirit of the book, but which also feels contemporary, surprising and full of shocks: a collision of sci-fi, period drama and horror.'

War of the Worlds is due to air on BBC1 "this Autumn" – so not too long to wait, folks! Keep watching the skies...

The Omens are Good...

Amazon Prime released *Good Omens* earlier this year, but the series, which was co-produced by the BBC will air soon on BBC2. The BBC have not confirmed a precise air date yet but according to Showrunner Neil Gaiman, the series is coming in November or December to BBC Two.

This is the second time the BBC has released a version of *Good Omens*. BBC Radio 4 released a six-part radio version of *Good Omens* in 2017 starring Peter Serafinowicz as the demon Crowley and Mark Heap as angel Aziraphale.

The official Amazon Prime synopsis for *Good Omens* reads: "The End of the World is coming. A fussy Angel and a loose-living Demon who've become overly fond of life on Earth are forced to

form an unlikely alliance to stop Armageddon. "But they have lost the Antichrist, an 11-year-old boy unaware he's meant to bring upon the end of days.

"This forces them to embark on an adventure to find him and save the world before it's too late." *Good Omens* on Amazon and BBC has an all-star cast lead by David Tennant as Crowley and Michael Sheen as Aziraphale.



Also starring in *Good Omens* is Jon Hamm, Jack Whitehall, Benedict Cumberbatch and Miranda Richardson among many others.

The series is based on the novel *Good Omens* by Terry Pratchett and Neil Gaiman, who has written and acted as showrunner on the show.

All six episodes of *Good Omens* are currently streaming on Amazon Prime.

*** See Also Veering Off this issue, on page 14**

Farewell To...

In the past few months we've had to say goodbye to many stalwarts of the genre. Let's remember them here:

Paul Darrow who played Avon in BBC's *Blake's 7* died on 3rd June, aged 78. His obituary and tributes appear in this issue.

Terrance Dicks, former *Doctor Who* script editor and novelist died on 29th August, aged 84. His obituary and tributes also appear this issue.

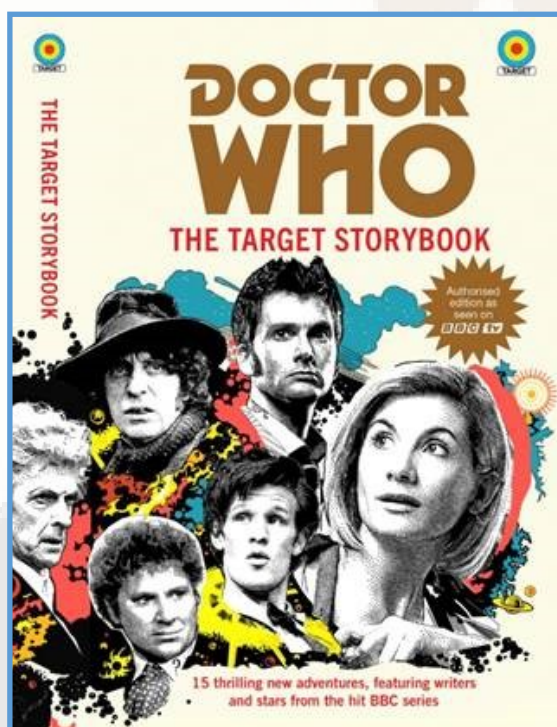
Stephen Thorne, perhaps best known for his *Doctor Who* roles of Azal, Omega and Eldrad (as well as an Ogron) died on 26th May aged 84. His many television credits included *Crossroads*, *Z-Cars*, and *Doctor Who*. On radio he gave voice to Aslan in *The Magicians Nephew*, and Treebeard in the BBC Radio 4 adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*, and also in the BBC adaptation of Terry Pratchett's *Guards! Guards!* in which he portrayed Sgt Fred Colon and Death.

Peter Mayhew, who played *Star Wars* hero Chewbacca the Wookiee, stalwart hairy buddy of Han Solo died on April 30th, aged 74. He played the iconic character of 'Chewie' in all of his live-action appearances from the 1977 original *Star Wars* to 2015's *The Force Awakens* before his retirement from the role.

DOCTOR WHO: THE TARGET STORYBOOK

**Published in Hardback by BBC Books |
24th October 2019 | £16.99 | ISBN 9781785944741**

A brilliant new collection of spin-off stories from famous episodes throughout the history of *Doctor Who* – and a new format for the successful Target publishing range.



In this exciting collection you'll find all-new stories spinning off from some of your favourite *Doctor Who* moments across the history of the series. Learn what happened next, what went on before, and what occurred off-screen in an inventive selection of sequels, side-trips, foreshadowings and first-hand accounts – and also look forward in time, with a brand new adventure for the Thirteenth Doctor.

Each story expands in thrilling ways upon aspects of *Doctor Who*'s enduring legend. The book includes fifteen different stories, with contributions from show luminaries past and present – including Terrance Dicks, Colin Baker, Matthew Waterhouse, Mike Tucker, Joy Wilkinson, and Vinay Patel – and bestselling writers such as Jenny T. Colgan, Jacqueline Rayner, Una McCormack, Steve Cole and George Mann. With spectacular artwork from Mike Collins and cover art by Anthony Dry, *The Target Storybook* is a once-in-a-lifetime tour around the wonders of the Whoniverse.

***Doctor Who: The Target Storybook* is published on 24th October 2019 by BBC Books, priced £16.99.**

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Colin Baker is an English actor who became known for playing Paul Merroney in the BBC drama series *The Brothers* from 1974 to 1976. He went on to play the sixth incarnation of the Doctor in the TV series *Doctor Who*. He reprised the role for the 1993 Children in Need special, *Dimensions in Time*, and the 1989 stage show *Doctor Who – The Ultimate Adventure*. He has also voiced the Doctor for over 140 *Doctor Who* audio stories for Big Finish Productions.

Steve Cole is an editor and children's author whose sales exceed three million copies. His hugely successful *Astrosaurus* young fiction series has been a UK top-ten children's bestseller. His several original *Doctor Who* novels have also been bestsellers.

Jenny T. Colgan has written numerous bestselling novels as Jenny Colgan, which have sold over 2.5 million copies worldwide, been translated into 25 languages, and won both the Melissa Nathan Award and Romantic Novel of the Year 2013. Aged 11, she won a national fan competition to meet Peter Davison (the Fifth Doctor).

Susie Day is the author of the *Pea's Book* and *Secrets* series from Puffin. Her latest novel for children, *Max Kowalski Didn't Mean It*, is about dragons and toxic masculinity. Between books, she works as a copywriter in Birmingham. Susie currently lives in Coventry with her partner and two silly cats.

Terrance Dicks worked on scripts for *The Avengers* as well as other series before becoming full Script Editor of *Doctor Who* from 1968. Dicks worked on the Jon Pertwee Third Doctor era of the programme, and returned as a writer – scripting Tom Baker's first story as the Fourth Doctor: *Robot*. Terrance Dicks novelised many of the original *Doctor Who* stories for Target books, and has written original *Doctor Who* novels for BBC Books.

Simon Guerrier is co-author of *Doctor Who: The Women Who Lived* and *Whograpica* for BBC Books, and has written countless *Doctor Who* books, comics, audio plays and documentaries. He has been a guest on *Front Row* and *The Infinite Monkey Cage* on Radio 4 and, with his brother Thomas, makes films and documentaries – most recently *Victorian Queens of Ancient Egypt* for Radio 3.

George Mann is the author of the bestselling *Doctor Who: Engines of War* and Newbury & Hobbes steampunk mystery series. He's also written new adventures for Sherlock Holmes, a collection of *Star Wars* myths and fables, and the supernatural crime series *Wychwood*. He lives near Grantham, UK, with his wife, son and daughter.

Una McCormack is a *New York Times* bestselling author. She has written four *Doctor Who* novels: *The King's Dragon* and *The Way through the Woods* (featuring the Eleventh Doctor, Amy, and Rory); *Royal Blood* (featuring the Twelfth Doctor and Clara), and *Molten Heart* (featuring the Thirteenth Doctor, Yaz, Ryan and Graham). She is also the author of numerous audio dramas for Big Finish Productions.

Vinay Patel is a playwright and screenwriter. His television debut was the BAFTA-winning *Murdered By My Father* and for *Doctor Who* he has written *Demons of the Punjab*. His latest play, *An Adventure*, ran at the Bush Theatre in 2018. Elsewhere, he contributed to the bestselling collection of essays, *The Good Immigrant*.

Jacqueline Rayner is the author of over 40 books and audio plays, including number one bestseller *The Stone Rose*, the highest-selling *Doctor Who* novel of all time, and two *Doctor Who* 'Quick Reads' for World Book Day. She lives in Essex with her husband and twin sons, and writes regularly for *Doctor Who Magazine*.

Beverly Sanford's first Young Adult novel, *The Wishing Doll*, was published by Badger Learning in 2014, followed by *Remember Rosie*, *Silent Nation* and two non-fiction books. A BBC Writer's Room semi-finalist (2011) and an Editor's Choice in the Jim Henson Co/Penguin *Dark Crystal Author Quest* (2014), Bev is currently working on a screenplay for Sun Rocket Films and a children's fiction series.

Matthew Sweet presents the BBC radio programmes *Free Thinking*, *Sound of*

Cinema and *The Philosopher's Arms*. He has judged the Costa Book Award, edited *The Woman in White* for Penguin Classics and was Series Consultant on the Showtime/Sky Atlantic series *Penny Dreadful*. His books include *The West End Front* and *Operation Chaos: The Vietnam Deserters Who Fought the CIA, the Brainwashers and Themselves*.

Mike Tucker is a visual effects designer and author who has written several original *Doctor Who* novels as well as fiction for other shared universes. He has also co-written numerous factual books relating to film and television, including *Impossible Worlds* and the *TARDIS Instruction Manual*.

Matthew Waterhouse played Adric, companion to Tom Baker and Peter Davison's Doctors from 1980 to 1982. Since then, he has worked extensively as an actor in theatre. His published writing includes a memoir, *Blue Box Boy*, three novels and a book of stories. Recently he's appeared in episodes of the audio version of *Dark Shadows* and numerous *Doctor Who* audio projects, including an award-winning one-man play, *Doctor Who: A Full Life*, and a forthcoming quartet of new adventures starring alongside Tom Baker.

Joy Wilkinson is an award-winning writer working across film, television, theatre and radio. She was a *Screen International* 'Star of Tomorrow', a two-time Brit List nominee and has had her work widely produced in the UK and internationally. For television, Joy has written the *Doctor Who* episode *The Witchfinders*, and her other credits include BBC One's critically-acclaimed drama *Nick Nickleby*.

DOCTOR WHO: STAR TALES Published in Hardback by BBC Books | 5th December 2019 | £12.99 | ISBN 9781785944710



To celebrate the return of Doctor Who in early 2020, BBC Books will publish a unique collection of name-dropping historical adventures inspired by Jodie Whittaker's first series as the Doctor.

The Doctor is many things – curious, funny, brave, protective of her friends... and a shameless namedropper.

While she and her companions battled aliens and travelled across the universe, the Doctor hinted at a host of previous, untold adventures with the great and the good: we discovered she got her sunglasses from Pythagoras (or was it Audrey Hepburn?); lent a mobile phone to Elvis; had an encounter with Amelia Earhart where she discovered that a pencil-thin spider web can stop a plane; had a 'wet weekend' with Harry Houdini, learning how to escape from chains underwater; and more.

In this collection of new stories, *Star Tales* takes you on a rip-roaring ride through history, from 500BC to the swinging 60s, going deeper into the Doctor's notorious name-dropping and revealing the truth behind these anecdotes.

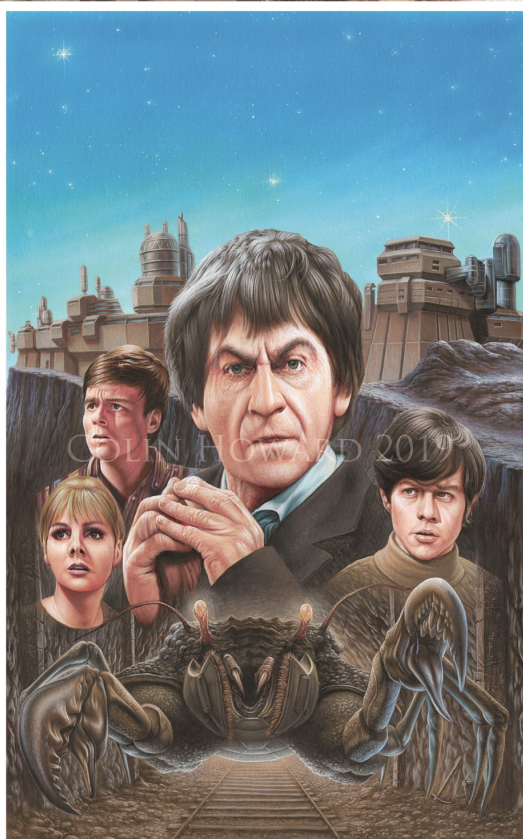
The book will feature 6 brand new stories, detailing the Doctor's untold adventures with famous figures in history - Audrey Hepburn, Elvis Presley, Harry Houdini, Amelia Earhart, Albert Einstein and Pythagoras, written by Steve Cole, Jenny T Colgan, Jo Cotterill, Paul Magrs, Trevor Baxendale and Mike Tucker. For those who can't wait until 5th December, two chapters will be available for download as e-shorts a month prior to publication.

Doctor Who: Star Tales is out 5th December 2019.

COLIN HOWARD

COVER ARTIST
& ILLUSTRATOR

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THE HOURLY TELEPRESS....

What YOU said about *Gallifrey*, *The Long Way Round*...

Great Entertainment!

I just spent a very pleasant two hours reading through the latest issue of *Gallifrey*. (Ish #3) Once again, brilliant work everyone! I am impressed with the quality of the writing, the diversity of content, and the amazing artwork and design. This fanzine obviously has the benefit of highly professional editors, writers, artists, and contributors. It is entertaining from start to finish. I feel like I should be paying something for it.

A few specific comments: I must run out immediately and order both *The Women Who Lived* and *Scratchman*!

It was fun revisiting *Primeval*, which I loved. Makes me want to go re-watch those episodes. I must confess that I glazed over and couldn't read the whole article. A gentle suggestion: perhaps such lengthy features would be better broken up in future issues?

I haven't seen *Blakes 7*, and now I am really intrigued to see Servalan in action. I am sorry to hear of "Jack's" untimely death.

The fanfic throughout this issue is first rate. That alone would make it worthwhile to pay something for this fanzine.

Veerle Kik's contribution had me laughing out loud. Thanks, Veerle, I never thought about Superman wearing his underwear outside his costume before. Now that bell cannot be un-rung!

On the whole, great entertainment, excellent quality, thank you all and **congratulations** on a very fine job.

Judy Hake, Maryland, USA

High Praise From Down Under for Ish #3

...The editorial is great, linking it to Xmas and Apollo 8 is a stroke of genius...I really enjoyed the piece on *The Daleks Master Plan*: It provides a new, and to me valid, interpretation about the story...Love the idea that *Celestial Toymaker* should have been a TV series...*The Savages* to me is all about the ending. Stephen deciding to stay and help is something that stuck indelibly in my memory as a young 11 year old...*The Series 11 Review* - I could spend a long time

discussing this, but all I'll say that the comments about too many things buried in the UK is always going to occur nowadays, as the show goes on and on and on, you either have to drop that idea all together or accept the *Doctor Who* universe is a crowded place with the Doctor seemingly always bumping into things he has met before or knows of...

Dallas Jones, Sydney, Australia

Late Bloomer

I am a late bloomer to the sci-fi genre. Growing up in rural Southwestern Ontario Canada had its limitations to television. We had some access to *Star Trek* and *Thunderbirds* and the like but as a kid...I had bedtime limitations and wasn't allowed to stay up late to catch "those shows" like my older siblings got to watch.

So whining aside...along came cable television a few years later and its plethora of popular shows. Well that had its limitations as well. Life and trying to be an adult needed attention so again my trek to science fiction was placed firmly on the back burner. I still hadn't heard of *Doctor Who* at this point and it had already been on television for 20 years. Sad really.

Just recently your magazine caught my eye. It is just the ticket for readers who need to get more than the shows can offer. Granted, some of the series that are discussed I have never heard of, but I do read the articles for concise information in case I am ever able to come across those shows. Sometimes an article can be a bit long-winded and speak a bit over my head as it reads like something in a scientific journal.

But that being said, it really is well done. I have learned a great deal already from the few issues posted and for that...I thank you. Well done, my dear editors. A great read and a valuable resource for newbies as well as long-time supporters of this terrific thing called Sci-fi.

Edy Marlatt, Ontario, Canada

Thanks Folks! More of your communications next ish! - The Editors.





THE BACK OF BEYOND

UNLIKELY CONVERSATIONS #43



"Look, I keep telling you, Mr Varga, I don't KNOW where the screws and nails are, I don't work here at B & Q!"

SECRETS BEHIND THE SCENES #11



Anneke and Michael are horrified when they see just how bad the BBC actor's pay rates really are!

UNLIKELY CONVERSATIONS #105



"Psst! Don't look now my boy, but those two birds at the bar—I think we've pulled!"

UNLIKELY CONVERSATIONS #69



"Just a few minor adjustments, War Chief and you we can fix you up with a nice Beatle mop top, just like me and Jamie."

Coming soon! Issue #5 (Winter/Spring 2020):

Loads of great features ! Maybe even something written by YOU?

See You Soon! (Maybe sooner than you think!)