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The Silent Pulpit
I seem to have an editorial, from which I can vent by deepest concerns, but forgot to actually form any concerns. I write this in the week before The Wedding of River Song and so have no idea what joys/pains Steven Moffat will wreak upon the viewing public to saite our appetites till Autumn 2012 (or whenever Season 7 airs), but for the moment, I’m content. I haven’t been as enthralled with Season 6 as I was with Season 5, but that’s entirely a personal matter about how the stories and characters have melded with me. It's still perfectly enjoyable and unique television, with some lovely character moments, decent effects, and a good variety of stories.

On the one hand, I feel the character of Amy never lived up to the potential I felt she had to be a more damaged companion, made better and then worse by the Doctor during her travels. On the other, Matt Smith is utterly brilliant, realising the madcap exterior of a deeply flawed man that knows the extent of his problem but still runs from them that encapsulates most of my favourite aspects of previous Doctors whilst still being unique. (I, for one, vote we marathon some Peter Davison soon so I can properly evaluate if I still prefer him to Smith.)

Season 6 may not have had a brilliant episode to point at down the years as “The One to Watch”, but, in my opinion, it also never had a horrible one (Curse is fun. Shut up.). I’d obviously prefer the show to always be excellent, but I’m more than happy with how it stands now and the comprehensive viewing figures agree with me.

Adam Povey
Editor

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As a ‘treat’ for their fans, Shadows of the Vashta Nerada was released 3 days before Christmas Day last year so that there would be time to play through it before the festivities and chaos began. Unfortunately, the mediocrity of the previous instalments, including the previous and utterly pointless TARDIS in particular, has drastically reduced expectations for the final release of 2010 and, as such, the tone of the following review will not come as a surprise to those who have experienced the previous entries.

The real problem here is that this episode was produced in the same batch as the previous three entries, which means that without any feedback and positive criticism to act upon, none of the faults which I discussed my previous review will have had any possibility of being fixed and few real innovations are expected to have been introduced since then. Thus, the underlying gameplay has not been changed one iota, the control system is still awkward as ever and, most seriously of all, it’s just... well... not really that much fun to play anymore.

After mucking around inside the TARDIS in the previous episode of the same name, the Doctor and Amy Pond step outside to find themselves in an underwater base at some point in humanity’s future, long after the...
polar icecaps have melted and flooded most of the planet. Oh, and it also happens to be Christmas for no servable purpose other than the fact this episode was released around Christmastime. Today, the base is under attack from three fronts. First, there’s the temperamental alien shark that occasionally smashes into the walls of the connecting glass tunnels whenever it feels like it (and no, it’s not the same flying shark from *A Christmas Carol*. This one has got two tails for a start and it doesn’t break the laws of physics). Secondly, most of the crew have come down with an illness, of which no symptoms are described or shown, other than the patient eventually dying somehow. And thirdly, there’s the Vashta Nerada (as the episode title instantly gives away).

Ah yes, the Vashta Nerada; the deadly invisible piranhas of the dark from Steven Moffat’s superb *Silence in the Library/Forest of the Dead* two-parter in 2008. In theory, the idea of an Adventure Game based around this terrifying monster sounds rather awesome; imagine shadows of death swirling back and forth across the floor, stretching across the room from the darkest corners and creeping towards your feet in silent pursuit; the Doctor and Amy versus the unstoppable hive-mind of a hungry, carnivorous alien force. *Shadows of the Vashta Nerada* does not contain any of these suggestions. Instead, you are forced to run down a large number of dimly lit corridors, within sections lit up for very short periods of time. It is worth remembering that a dimly lit corridor does not invoke the same atmosphere as a completely darkened corridor. In fact, when the lights are out, the corridors look scarcely any different to the brightly lit ‘safe’ areas. The developers didn’t even put in a proper death animation if you remain in one of these dimly lit corridors for too long; all that happens is your character simply stands perfectly rigid, shouts a brief cry of “Huagh!” and the screen fades to black. No flesh-ripping or keeling over and dying occur in what is possibly one of the least underwhelming deaths I have ever experienced in a video game. It’s such a pity they didn’t make the effort here because thanks to the clumsy mouse-based controls, which encourage the Doctor to walk into the nearest wall or constantly face the wrong direction, not to mention the occasional slowdown that can occur on a laptop, the Doctor ends up suffering from rigor mortis on a regular basis. At this point, the Vashta Nerada start drifting away from being your worst nightmare incarnate and towards being a bit of a nuisance.

The other danger the Vashta Nerada pose is the (very) occasional possessed skeleton zombie, again borrowed from the *Silence in the Library* serial, except they don’t repeat any mundane sentences repeatedly. These monsters behave and move almost identically to the Cyberslaves of *Blood of the Cybermen* to the extent that I suspect the developers simply reskinned the former. Skeletor’s distant cousins are encountered a grand total of three times, of which two require some degree of stealthiness to deal with. As I have said in my previous review, these stealth elements are the most enjoyable part of *The Adventure Games* and so to keep these segments to an absolute minimum weakens the games’ greatest strength.

Upon finding and being debriefed by the surviving members of the underwater colony, the Doctor immediately assigns himself as
errand boy and repairman in order to sort things out for them, because he's nice and all that. For this reason, you are required to retread familiar ground for most of the episode in order to get to a specific area where you will be required to activate a switch. Two-thirds of the Doctor’s time consists of running up and down the same corridors repeatedly, much like a classic Doctor Who episode from the ‘80s, only without the irony. At one point, you’re even required to go back and pick up three key items despite the fact you’ve passed these items at least three times each beforehand and there was absolutely no reason why you couldn’t have collected them when you first passed them 20 minutes ago. This is NOT acceptable in this day and age and it makes me very, very angry.

The minigames have now deteriorated to the point where they can no longer be described as “minigames” and are merely basic tasks intended to delay your progress. Most prevalent is an incredibly easy ‘Simon Says’ puzzle, where you have to repeat a single 3-5 digit number on a keypad to open an automated door. Another involves pressing a button at just the right time to turn on the lights for a few seconds. On the plus side, you do get two more of those fantastic Connect the Wires puzzles, which has always been my favourite minigame in The Adventure Games. In fact, they should just make a hundred variations of this puzzle and stick them on the official Doctor Who website instead. I’d be absolutely delighted if this happened and would have had a much more enjoyable time playing such an online browser-based game compared to the whole of Shadows of the Vashta Nerada.

In conclusion, Shadows of the Vashta Nerada is yet another disappointing entry to the Adventure Games series and frankly isn’t really worth downloading unless you have the inclination (or simply want to find all the collectable cards). The episode is basically just a rehash of Blood of the Cybermen, albeit even more frustrating and less inventive the second time round. My greatest fear is that due to a restrictive budget and the guarantee of success regardless of quality, there is a strong danger that there will be no adjustment to the formula and they will end up producing another four episodes of running back and forth with occasional pseudo-stealth elements and tedious minigames. If this is the case, then depressingly, I will not be looking forward to the next wave of Adventure Games with much enthusiasm. Thanks a lot, Sumo Digital.

Some time later, I obtained a copy of Doctor Who: Evacuation Earth. The last time we saw the Doctor on the Nintendo DS was the Top Trumps title in 2008, which was neither more fun nor cheaper than actually buying the deck and playing it with your friends, so pretty much anything released since then would at least be an improvement. Whether it would be worth the alleged £10 million contract Nintendo had signed with the BBC will be a different matter.

When I reviewed The Adventure Games, I
commented that the episodes’ biggest draw was the fact that because their development was funded by the licence fee, they were free to download from the official website, so even if they were mediocre and short-lived, at least you didn’t have to worry about spending money on them. *Evacuation Earth*, on the other hand, is a commercial title and my second-hand copy cost me £14.99 and a reminder of why I don’t shop at GAME any more. Furthermore, the developers happen to be shovelware-specialists Asylum Entertainment, who have never produced a video game of any merit, unless you have a child obsessed with Peppa Pig. Still, I had heard it wasn’t as horrific as *Return to Earth* on the Wii (released at the same time last year by the same company), so I started the game up with cautious optimism, which was quickly dampened by the sloppy and hard-to-select-let-alone-navigate Main Menu.

Perhaps this was a reflection of the title’s relatively low budget, a substantial proportion of which would have been spent securing the rights to the characters, theme tune and talents of Matt Smith and Karen Gillan. Although the back of the box boasts the inclusion of both actors’ voices, the voicework is mostly kept limited to the cutscenes shown between chapters, which aren’t even animated. In fact, the nature of these slideshows is highly reminiscent of the early missing TV serials, which only exist in audio format and are usually played over photographs taken on set. The vast majority of dialogue is conveyed through textboxes and is fairly well written, with occasional moments of wit which fit the light-hearted atmosphere of the programme. The only other time voicework is used is upon completion of a puzzle or minigame, which rewards you with a soundbite of either Matt or Karen saying something along the lines of “That was easy!” or “Nice!”

The gameplay itself is strongly influenced by, if not outright plagiarised from, the *Professor Layton* video game series. For those of you who have ever played any of the DS titles of the latter, you can stop reading now. You already know what this game is going to be like because you’ve pretty much already played it - that’s how much of a clone *Evacuation Earth* is. The only real difference is rather than a gentleman in a top hat and a young lad solving mysteries around London, we have The Eleventh Doctor and Amy Pond doing odd jobs for a small colony based in the Lake District in the future. You see, there’s only a few hours left until some very long-lasting and cataclysmic solar storms are about to wipe out all life on Earth and someone’s managed to nick the TARDIS while The Doctor wasn’t looking. Thus, both Amy and The Doctor decide to join the humans and help them prepare their homemade spaceship for liftoff, so that they can eventually get their TARDIS back from onboard. (Rory does not feature in this game.) Oh, and some Daleks and Silurians appear towards the end to keep things interesting. It’s not the most exciting plot from Oil Smith (author of *Doctor Who* novels such as *Nuclear Time* and *System Wipe*), but it gives us a reason for talking to different people, collecting various items and
solving lots of puzzles.

Since this game is aimed primarily at a younger audience, most of the puzzles and minigames are fairly easy to complete, with only a few tough ones to get stumped on. There’s a good range of different puzzles on offer, such as jigsaws, mathematical riddles, Spot the Difference and the classic sliding-block puzzle. Solving puzzles gives you credits which can be spent on unlocking hints if you get stuck. There’s also three minigames which repeat a little too frequently for my tastes; you have a Don’t Touch The Sides maze, a timing-based lockpicking game and several different circuits to complete. While these activities are enjoyable enough, the real problem is that few of the puzzles make any sense in the context of the script. Why, for example, do all the doors have to be unlocked by Amy with her lockpick when the sonic screwdriver would be more convenient? How does rebuilding a plant pot get the Doctor and Amy any closer to the spaceship?

You’ll have no trouble speeding through each chapter and the entire game can be completed within a few hours, making it only slightly longer than playing The Adventure Games back-to-back. The 2D graphics are less impressive on a technical level in comparison, but still aesthetically pleasing enough, even if most of the sprites are of each character pointing up towards the sky, a habit which I couldn’t stop noticing after first spotting it. Although I found Evacuation Earth more enjoyable to play and with fewer bugs than The Adventure Games, I still couldn’t get myself excited about solving simplistic puzzles and going back and forth to fetch random pieces of technology for the crew. Basically, the storyline is about as slow and uneventful as your average First Doctor serial. Of course, the monsters do eventually turn up, but then the plot suddenly wraps itself up quickly and the game finishes just as things start to get exciting. In the end, we’ve left with another adequate Doctor Who title which doesn’t come anywhere near to fulfilling the show’s potential as an awesome video game, and as such, I can only recommend anyone interested to either rent a copy or find a better deal than I did.
You can believe this subject is a part of the Doctor Who universe. But we don’t.”

This is the canonicity warning that the TARDIS Index File posts at the top of the pages containing information that is not generally accepted as part of the Whoniverse and I feel that I should begin with a similar disclaimer. Canon can be a fan’s worst nightmare with everything from the shortest-lived of programmes to the world record holder for the longest running science-fiction TV show (with at the time of writing has 213 stories spanning a 48 year period, including the Dark Times of the 1990s). Doctor Who canon is, therefore, a minefield. There is no realistic way that even the most fervent of fans can realistically expect writers of 2011 to keep every detail of their stories in line with throw-away comments made by characters in 1963. Writers write to attract an audience out of whom they can squeeze a lot of money and one therefore suspects that maintaining canon for a perfect Whoniverse is not always the highest item – if indeed an item at all – on the list of priorities, much to our disappointment.

The sheer longevity of the show, however, creates happy coincidences from time to time. With the revival of the show, loyal fans can now look back to classic episodes and notice a line or an action that can be seen as foreshadowing events transpiring in the episodes of today. Of course, no such link was ever planned – how could it be? – but it makes us smile and laugh for a second. It is almost comparable to the logic of a million monkeys typing forever at some point producing the complete works of Shakespeare and I fear that the theory I put to you in this article pushes this theorem to the extreme, if not surpasses it completely. The link that fans have made was certainly never intended, but it is a cute little idea that neatly wraps up a little anomaly which otherwise proves to be a proverbial thorn in the paw of canon-obsessed fandom.

It is, however, as follows: the second, half-human Doctor (henceforth referred to as 10.II for ease of reading), who was spawned in Journey’s End from the Tenth Doctor’s regeneration-energy-filled hand which had been lopped off by the Sycorax in The Christmas Invasion, goes off into the parallel universe of ‘Pete’s World’, grows old and becomes the Doctor that we find in the 1965 movie Dr. Who and the Daleks and its 1966 sequel, Daleks – Invasion Earth: 2150 A.D.,
both starring Peter Cushing (or Grand Moff Tarkin for those among us who are awesome enough to be massive Star Wars geeks as well) in the leading role.

Perhaps your initial reaction is the same as mine was: disbelief (at such a wild idea) with a hint of anger (not just because someone dares to try to make the very different Doctor that Cushing portrays one of the Doctor’s thirteen selves, but also because this theory requires us to entertain the horrifying notion of Rose Tyler ... mating ... with David Tennant – sorry, the Tenth Doctor). Thinking the theory over however, I found that it very quickly started to grow on me. Perhaps I’m being self-righteous, but I tend to think of myself as a canon-purist; I do not accept novelisations, audio books or the likes of The Sarah Jane Adventures as canon and certainly not the Cushing movies. They are good fun and a different take on the intelligent Doctor travelling time and space to find the evil of the Daleks, but they were primarily milking the Doctor Who franchise and especially the Daleks for all the money they could possibly produce and from the first time I saw them (which I cannot remember, seeing as I have been brought up in the ways of Doctor Who since birth, despite being born after the cancellation of the show in 1989), I knew, or rather it was programmed into me, that they were most definitely not part of the Whoniverse. Nevertheless, perhaps this is the very reason why I find this theory so appealing; it presents us with a chance to bring the problematic movies into canon and therefore make sense of a moment of soul-selling commercialism.

So, off 10.II goes, hand in hand with Rose, to live on ‘Pete’s World’, which, like the world of the ‘60s movies, is similar but not identical to ours. After ironing out what must be some very, very tricky relationship issues (it wouldn’t be too far-fetched to imagine an angry Rose muttering “He wouldn’t do it like that,” or the likes thereof under her breath when the non-Tenth side of 10.II showed and rubbed her up the wrong way), 10.II finally makes an honest woman out of the council estate girl with peroxide hair. She pumps out a couple of kids and one day, one of their children gives them a couple of granddaughters that are (coincidentally?) named Barbara and Susan. 10.II constructs his own TARDIS and takes them, along with Barbara’s boyfriend Ian (admittedly slightly less likely to be orchestrated 10.II), off on across the cosmos. The combination of the cast changes slightly in the second movie, but this is the basic outline and premise of the theory.

So, how do we evaluate this theory? Do we dismiss it as a fanciful piece of fan fiction or can we seriously consider it as an explanation of the movies’ slightly altered set-up? The sentimental fan (guilty as charged, I’m afraid) may be inclined to accept it as a wonderful, long-awaited explanation of the movies, but there are distinct teething problems with the theory. The world that this Doctor seems to live in, for example, is distinctly ‘60s in style and no prizes for guessing why. This is, however, fairly minor and can be explained away by the likes of returning retro fads and it would be no surprise if the Doctor indeed did have a soft spot for the ‘60s. Similarly easy to account for is the Doctor being addressed literally as ‘Doctor Who’. As far as we know, the Doctor has no surname (indeed, does any Time Lord? [Answers on a postcard. – Editor]) and for the purposes of settling down in a human environment, he would have had to adopt one. The obvious options would have been Smith or Tyler, but perhaps as a little homage to the running joke or simply to his ‘other’ self, 10.II chose ‘Who’.

In the second Cushing movie, the appearance of the Doctor’s niece, Louise, may also cause momentary bafflement. Surely the existence of a niece would imply the existence of a sister or brother and whilst this cannot be the case for 10.II, it can be for Rose. If we cast our
minds back to *Doomsday*, Rose tells the Doctor that her parents are having a baby and in *Journey’s End*, Jackie informs him that she had a son, Tony. Assuming that 10.II married Rose, Tony would be his brother-in-law and Tony’s daughter would be 10.II’s niece (albeit by marriage). The age discrepancy of the Doctor’s niece appearing to be around the same age as his granddaughter Barbara can also be accounted for by this: if we assume that Rose and 10.II didn’t beat about the bush when it came to consummating their relationship (again excuse the conjuring of such a disturbing thought) and settling down, their first child would be only a little younger than Tony. Thus, we can presume that 10.II’s child and Tony would have reproduced at roughly the same time, making the Doctor’s biological granddaughter the same age as his niece by marriage.

This, however, brings us onto trickier, more inexplicable discrepancies between 10.II and Cushing’s Doctor. For a start, there is the simple question of biology. If one ignores the Doctor’s odd claims to be half-human, 10.II is half-Time Lord, half-human – what would the genetic result of such a half-Time Lord, half-human mating with a human be? Statistically speaking, a quarter-Time Lord, three-quarters-human, but we have no idea whether this is even genetically viable, unless we take into account the Doctor’s half-human nature which, whilst proving Time Lord-human reproductive capability, only complicates the statistics, making 10.II and Rose’s child one-eighth-Time Lord and seven-eighths-human.

Then there’s the issue of Barbara’s boyfriend in the movies/‘Pete’s World’. He has exactly the same name as the Doctor’s companion from 1963 to 1965, Ian Chesterton, but the Doctor shows no surprise at hearing the identical name. The recurrence of the name could of course be purely coincidental (seeing as it is nigh on impossible for 10.II to have orchestrated such a situation) or it could even be a case of Ian Chesterton emerging later in the ‘Pete’s World’ timeline than in that of our universe, although it seems unlikely that with ‘Pete’s World’ running ahead of our own, Ian’s emergence should be pushed back. This would, however, also explain the presence of Bernard Cribbins (who played Donna’s granddad Wilfred Mott in the new series) in the second movie, but seeing as he is called Tom Campbell in ‘Pete’s World’, it would seem that his existence is completely unrelated to that of Wilf. It could, however, be a case of ‘spatial genetic multiplicity’ as, according to the Doctor, is also the situation with Gwen Cooper and her ancestor, Gwyneth.

Perhaps the biggest issue with the entire theory is that when confronted with Daleks in the first movie, the Doctor seems not only to not recognise them as the same evil creatures from his universe of origin, but also not to realise that he’s experiencing very similar events to those that his first incarnation did in *The Daleks* (1963-4) and *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* (1964), upon the plots of which the two movies were indeed based. He doesn’t even seem to recognise the Daleks’ home planet, Skaro – the setting of the first movie – but then again, it does have a very different look from the portrayals of it when the Doctor visited it in *The Daleks* (1963-4), *The Evil of the Daleks* (1967), *Genesis of the Daleks* (1975) and *Destiny of the Daleks* (1979) and when it is seen briefly in *Remembrance of the Daleks* (1988) and *Doctor Who* (the 1996 film). On the other hand, within the TV serial canon, these portrayals vary greatly and given that this Skaro is in an alternate universe (if we accept the theory), then it is quite likely to be different from the Skaro in our universe anyway.

The issue of the Doctor not recognising the Daleks or indeed Skaro’s history is less easily accounted for and is therefore a big problem in the way of the 10.II-Cushing theory. Could the Doctor have forgotten his greatest enemy;
the evil creatures that forced his hand in the
destruction of Gallifrey and the Time Lords;
the adversaries that provoke a reaction of
such horror and grief every time he meets
them? Unlikely, I feel. Especially when they
are adversaries whom he faced with his
presumably now late wife, Rose, and who
were the cause of his own creation through
the instant biological metacrisis.

Despite all the positives of the theory and all
the ways in which it seems to fit together
nicely, this stumbling block is a rather big one
that threatens to negate it entirely. The
Doctor in the films seems to be fairly close to
the previous incarnations we know about; he
seems to lack some human social conventions
(like when he thinks Ian’s chocolates for
Barbara are really for him) and is an avid
scientist, creating TARDIS (interestingly, with
no article – definite or otherwise) from
scratch over many years – something aided by
the more advanced technology of ‘Pete’s
World’. He is fun-loving, inquisitive and
mischievous – all characteristics we can
attribute to the Doctors of our universe – but
forgetful? Perhaps with age, but would you
expect a human eighty- or ninety-years-old to
forget the Second World War whilst otherwise
being so compos mentis? No. Perhaps, then,
he chose to forget. It would be
understandable. But you’d still imagine that
he might have at least an expression of
dawning horror and grief creeping across his
face when faced with his time-old foes again.
Perhaps it was something more than
forgetting then; we see in Journey’s End how
the Doctor wipes Donna’s mind of all
memories of him in order to save her. But
even then, she remembers all of her
adventures with him when she sees the
strange goings-on in The End of Time. The
Doctor, however, had implanted a self-
defence mechanism that made her lose
consciousness and later awaken, still not
remembering the Doctor. Perhaps the Doctor
went a step further with himself, completely
and utterly wiping the Daleks from his mind,
but not only does it seem unlikely, given that
10.11 is more human than the ordinary Doctor
and therefore even more feeling and
understanding of the importance of emotion
and memories, but we also do not know if this
half-Time Lord, half-human is capable of this
little trick.

So... how do we conclude? Does it seem
plausible that Cushing’s Doctor is 10.11 just
forty, fifty years on? Even I, the great
sentimentalist, would be inclined the reject
this theory, purely on the basis of the Doctor’s
lack of prior knowledge of the Daleks. There
are a million and one ways that this
discrepancy could be explained away should
anyone want to officially bring the films into
canon, but for now, it is not and is accordingly
a massive problem for the theory. It is,
admittedly, a nice thought, but whether it can
be given any more credibility than that, I’m
not sure. Many aspects of the theory are more
than likely correct: 10.11 probably did end up
with Rose, he probably did ... mate ... with her
(excuse me while I die a little inside) and live
happily after. It would also be hard to imagine
him being content with being stuck on one
boring planet for the rest of his natural life
and a wife and/or family holding him back
from escaping as quickly as possible (after all,
they didn’t on Gallifrey, did they?), but the
thought of Dr. Who and the Daleks and
Daleks – Invasion Earth: 2150 A.D. reporting
this I must sadly deem as being misled. What
happened next to 10.11 and Rose we shall only
find out if the two parallel universes collide
again (please, Steven, please don’t!) or merely
be content with our own fan-fiction musings,
such as this nice, albeit slightly flawed
attempt.
For a series produced on a low budget in a three-camera videotape studio, a system which was already receiving intimations of its mortality, the 1979/80 season of Doctor Who has dated rather well. This contrasts with its reception from much of fandom on broadcast, when it was decried as overly comedic, disrespectful towards the series’ past, shoddily produced, and laying too much emphasis on the charisma of the star. The revival of its reputation has come from the knowledge that this was the last season of the original run of Doctor Who to enjoy high viewing figures; greater appreciation for the lead performances of Tom Baker and Lalla Ward in the season after an ironic mode of acting became more common on television in the 1980s and after; and the quality of the scripts, which bear the unmistakable stamp of Douglas Adams, in his one year as script editor of the programme.

1979 was a year of intense labour and dramatic change for Douglas Adams. He was working on the novelisation of the first series of The Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, published by Pan Books that year; he also had a second radio series of Hitch-Hiker to write, and a television series to consider. The literary success of the book would leave him a much wealthier man at the end of 1979 than at the start. He had also taken the job of script editor of Doctor Who, after his imagination displayed on Hitch-Hiker and his 1978 Doctor Who story The Pirate Planet had impressed producer Graham Williams. Whereas nowadays the role of script editor concentrates on the technicalities of storytelling, ‘the nuts-and-bolts man’ (as Steven Moffat described the job on the 2010 BBC Radio 4 documentary, The Doctor and Douglas) the script editor of Doctor Who in the 1970s not only accomplished this role but, jointly with the producer, determined the overall creative direction of the season and was responsible for finding writers.
appropriate for the series. Steven Moffat has described this role as deserving at least the title of co-producer or 'producer in charge of fiction' and analogous to his own role as executive producer today.

Adams’s year as script editor was the third and final year in which Graham Williams was series producer of Doctor Who, and the third year in which Williams had tried to find a successful direction for Doctor Who beyond the Gothic horror pastiches which had been the signature of previous producer Philip Hinchcliffe and script editor Robert Holmes. Williams's superior, head of serials Graeme MacDonald, sought more authentic science in Doctor Who and more intellectual and dramatic consistency, and had approved Williams’s plan to reform the series' cosmology through the narrative device of the Key to Time and the introduction of the Guardians in the 1978/79 season. MacDonald also saw Doctor Who as a programme which should be made by young people at an early stage in their careers, and it’s possible he hoped that Adams would bring in many of the young writers whom he had first known when a student at Cambridge.

Adams's biographers concentrate almost entirely on the roots of his comedy career at Cambridge, rather than detail what he studied. Given the breadth of Oxbridge courses it’s almost certain that he studied sixteenth- and seventeenth-century literature beyond Shakespeare. His hero in The Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, Arthur Dent, is probably named after a puritan clergyman of the late sixteenth century whose books were among the most popular of the early seventeenth, especially The Plaine-Mans Pathway to Heaven (1601) –‘wherein every man may clearly see whether he shall be saved or damned’. Adams was a student at Cambridge just as conflict was beginning to break out between defenders of traditional text-and-author-centred study of the accepted English literary canon and those who wanted to apply the new critical theory which was emerging on continental Europe. The intellectual concerns of the season involve the place of the individual – the Doctor and his adversaries – in history, the role of free will in the universe, the control of the historical record leading to a prevalent ideology, and knowledge of the self and the external world. These were concerns of literary theorists in the twentieth century as they were of English Renaissance writers, and laid the ground for a renaissance in the writing of Doctor Who which was not carried forward by Adams's successors.

**Daleks: farewell to destiny**

*Destiny of the Daleks* is rooted in an appreciation of the Daleks as historical vectors within both the fiction and the fact of Doctor Who. Douglas Adams watched the first Dalek story as an eleven-year-old. His reference point for the Daleks was not the Second World War (he was the first script editor of Doctor Who not to have lived through any part of it) but the pop cultural phenomenon of the Daleks themselves in the 1960s. This was probably the case for director Ken Grieve as well. It's tempting therefore to identify the depiction of the Daleks in this story in terms of historical artefacts. There's a remarkable shot of them in episode two as they move along a corridor, the camera catching them between vertical slats as if they were part of a Saul Bass title sequence from the turn of the 1960s, such as North by Northwest or West Side Story. Grieve was aware of emerging trends in television drama and shot as much of the story using a single mobile camera as he could, despite the restrictions of the three-camera television studios.

Likewise the script – a collaboration between its credited writer, Terry Nation, and Adams, anecdotally responsible for most of the
dialogue – takes the Daleks from their comfort zone as an overwhelmingly powerful mass, a Nazi regime of outer space, and instead depicts a small Dalek expeditionary force, both archaeologists and weapons researchers at once, whose obsession with recovering their forgotten past turns them into suicide bombers. There is something Second World War about the Daleks’ behaviour in *Destiny*, but wartime Japan is as appropriate a model as Nazi Germany. Both Germany and Japan (and for that matter the Soviet Union) had forced labour camps where prisoners from many different cultures and backgrounds were worked until they died of exhaustion and/or starvation. The Daleks here become kamikaze bombers under the guidance of Davros, their creator-ruler, who is now roughly analogous to the Japanese god-emperor. Two more contemporary parallels become mingled here: the suicide bomber as a variety of Irish republican paramilitary, whether in the Provisional IRA or its more extreme rival the Irish National Liberation Army, both active in 1979; and late 1970s British anxiety about the economic strength of Japan, with a business culture which stressed uniformity over class conflict.

Considered as entities with a gun-stick outside the narrative, and a sucker arm within it, the Daleks have two major problems in this story. Neither of these problems is the Movellans. One is that they are searching for a god figure without having precise plans as to what to do with him. The other is that the Doctor has outgrown them. In looking for Davros they give the misleading impression of being good scholars on the model of the Renaissance humanist, seeking to go back to the origins, *ad fontes*, as a Latinist in 1500 would have said. The Daleks, however, have no desire or ability to fully comprehend those origins, only to use Davros as a resource. As those contemporaries of Adams who remained in academic life and were reading Foucault would have been aware, culture is constructed, and Davros’s role in Dalek culture was to be recast according to need.

It’s intimated throughout that the Daleks we see are entirely mechanical, with all their organic parts superseded by artificial elements. Arguably these are not Daleks, just afterechoes. Seventeenth-century philosophers in the scholastic tradition might have considered that the Daleks, having become machines, no longer had minds as such. To borrow from the most famous and most innovative seventeenth-century scholastic, Descartes, the ghost was no longer in the machine. The Daleks exist as material objects only, their nature a matter of examining their geometry. Both Daleks and Movellans have lost their capacity for free will and can no longer determine their fates, which are constrained by their robotic existences. They are aware of what they have lost but cannot comprehend what it is they are looking for, thus their openness to manipulation and defeat by Davros and the Doctor. In denying and removing what is left of their humanity they condemn themselves to being patterns of force in the universe without being able to perceive, alter and initiate those patterns. They are the created, but have lost the power of creativity themselves. All they and the Movellans can do is destroy; in their competition to find Davros the two groups of robots are nothing more than sophisticated machines looking for orders.
The Daleks embody a cautionary tale which runs throughout this season: the fatal consequences of self-serving selection of evidence when assembling a historical account. The Daleks had erased their creator from the received account of their history; the understanding the slave labour force have of the Daleks is in keeping with the image of the Daleks maintained on Doctor Who from The Dalek Invasion of Earth in 1964 all the way until Death to the Daleks in 1974, before Genesis of the Daleks introduced Davros to audiences in 1975. The replacement of the genetically-engineered Kaled mutant at the Dalek machine's heart with more electronics took this alteration of the record to extremes. Having repatterned themselves by selectively forgetting their origins, they have lost the ability to recover that past without recasting it according to their present circumstances. Changed knowledge of one's past can change one's present in the minds of others as well as oneselfs. The Movellans are not given a backstory, but it's implied their robotic nature is something they keep secret from outsiders. They project the illusion of having selves, and as long as they are successful in this, they convince and conquer. Once investigated and exposed, they fall easily.

Against this background, the much-criticised regeneration scene at the start of the episode makes some sense. The Daleks and the Movellans can't discover themselves without help. Romana can, and does, discover who she is, and sloughs off what's left of the structure imposed by Time Lord society. Romana's confidence now comes from knowing she has the ability to interpret the universe for herself rather than recalling what was instilled in her on Gallifrey; the Daleks are prisoners of their databanks.

Unfortunately Doctor Who was a prisoner of its production conditions. However many times Ken Grieve managed to tape Daleks from low angles with his lightweight single camera, he couldn't disguise that the Dalek casings were in a poor state. The Daleks look most at home in the videoed ruins of the bunker on Skaro rather than in the unforgiving sunlight of location filming. It's appropriate, though; the Daleks have degenerated while the Doctor has grown beyond them. The threat of wholesale extermination is crushed by the Doctor's wit and his wide perspective on the universe. The Daleks are still lethal: see how many of the diversely-costumed and made-up prisoners they kill, even after Tyssan has armed them and made them into a 'fighting force' (just like Bettan did with the mutos and Thal survivors of the bomb in Genesis of the Daleks), but as long as the Doctor can maintain his panoptic view of the situation and prevent Davros giving the Daleks new purpose, they can be contained.

Destiny of the Daleks is a measured launch to the season. There's a tension between Terry Nation's grasp of the old rules of Doctor Who – it's a long time since a Time Lord has needed anti-radiation pills – and Douglas Adams's move away from both postwar anxieties and Gothic trappings towards a romanticism which celebrated rational enquiry as a friend to the imagination. This inspired an idea of fantasy inspired as much by science as it was by the humanities, and which once more consistently celebrated literacy in its fullest sense. Daleks are beaten because they are part of the old world; their argument has reached its conclusion and defeated itself. The rest of the season presented new villains whose pretensions to challenge the Doctor's intellect would seem more threatening because they represented more possibilities than the exhausted Daleks and their Movellan shadows. Most of them display some manifestation of humanity, even if they do not recognize the consequences of their actions for themselves and for others.
The eye of Scaroth

City of Death is justly celebrated, even inspiring academic papers to consider why it is 'the best Doctor Who story'. The script's credit, 'by David Agnew', hides Douglas Adams and Graham Williams reworking a storyline by David Fisher. Revisiting it, the story’s attitude to history and the interplay between the concepts of 'life on Earth' and 'the human race' are prominent concerns. The two are elided in dialogue, but this is probably a deliberate choice, foreshadowing the promotion of the 2005 series of Doctor Who as 'adventures in the human race'. This season in particular is concerned with human beings’ potential to change their environment for the better, normally by contrasting that potential with one individual who has made a bad choice. Scaroth self-identifies as the last of the Jagaroth, but in living across centuries, in fragments, literally within a human skin (which presumably has somehow evolved alongside life on earth, and grows back after he tears it off every so often) and being (as he boasts) integral to human scientific and technological achievement, he has surely nurtured a human race in his own image.

Scaroth is as human as the beings he regards as his tools. Scaroth has been the fellow-labourer, the counsellor, the lover of human beings. He has reason; he is able to make moral choices. Scaroth views his splintered career as a single-minded effort by a sole author, but it is actually one of collaboration, not only between his distinct selves but between Scaroth and humanity. Scaroth only sees the technological advances which would help him, and the Doctor’s visit to Leonardo underscores this. The helicopter blueprint is left to one side, but in mentioning it the script leaves the audience to infer that it’s not part of Scaroth’s plan, as Leonardo has been called away to work on multiple Mona Lisas. For Scaroth, art can be beautiful but is finally a means to an end; for the Doctor, it has intrinsic merit distinct from any material purpose, proclaimed by the scrawling of 'THIS IS A FAKE' on Leonardo’s canvases.

The Doctor’s status as scientist is invoked repeatedly, but he is also emphatically a man of the arts, recognizing a Louis Quinze chair, reminiscing with the absent Leonardo about painting the original Mona Lisa, pointing out his own handwriting as evidence of his editorial role in Hamlet (from which he then quotes) and presenting the TARDIS as an exhibit in a modern art gallery. The Doctor is also more socially relaxed than his opponent. His response to being imprisoned by Scaroth’s Tancredi persona is to attempt to strike up a rapport with the guard, an echo of Doctor Who’s earlier aspiration to concentrate on the ordinary people caught up in events, with the historical personalities kept offstage or to the side. As well as providing black comic relief, the guard helps anchor the scene in sixteenth-century Italy by collapsing the gap between present and past using twentieth-century idiom: 'When you’ve
worked for the Borgias, you'll believe anything.'

Scaroth, meanwhile, is the embodiment of a great man theory of history. Had he been able to stop his earlier self taking off, all other perspectives on human development would have been crushed. The Doctor’s speech to Scaroth, warning him that he can’t change history, recalls his admonition to Barbara in *The Aztecs*, which may well have been watched by the eleven-year-old Douglas Adams. Adams is also aware that since then the historic past in *Doctor Who* has become mutable, as seen in *Pyramids of Mars*. In this context the Doctor is appealing to Scaroth to be content with the life and lives he has already experienced: in what might be a holdover from the script’s earlier form as *A Gamble with Time*, set in the casinos of Monte Carlo, the Doctor tells him he only has one throw of the dice. If someone rigs the tables like Scaroth, the system can be broken, in this case with one punch: Duggan’s. The Doctor’s view of human development is shaped by his belief in listening to and learning from multiple voices throughout history. He pays attention to different interpretations and alternative ideologies while retaining his own moral perspective. Scaroth can hear several voices too, but they are all his own, and his attempt to force his reinterpretation of a crucial event on the world is doomed because of his limited self-knowledge and refusal to acknowledge the agency of those he lives among.

**From the Pit: Gods and Monsters**

*The Creature from the Pit* is also about competing attempts to control the historical record, the opponents being Lady Adrasta and Erato. The latter is on the back foot (if physically possible) for most of the story, but in part four needs to be firmly reminded by the Doctor that it travelled to Chloris from Tythonus for its own good. Writer David Fisher, oppressed as a child by aunts and in the final throes of a disintegrating marriage, had a penchant for authoritarian female villains whose power in part derived from their sexuality. This was interpreted bluntly by the costume designer. Myra Frances, who played Adrasta, refers to the clothes she wore in *Creature* as her dominatrix outfit. Adrasta is flanked by a named female counsellor and a male attendant known only by his job title, ‘Huntsman’, who herds the Wolfweeds which apparently make short work of K9 in part one. Adrasta controls her environment and is established as a match for the Doctor, by putting him in stocks and defining Romana as his ‘commander’.

I’ve always read Adrasta’s name as ironic, a shifting of the ‘r’ in ‘ad astra’, justified as her power depends on her subjects looking to their own world and not to the stars. My classical education is a basic one, and I’d missed that Adrasta is a variant of the name Adrastaea, the nurse of Zeus who hid the infant god in a cave, and also another name for Nemesis, the goddess of retribution. It’s appropriate for all three origins, as – however cynically – Adrasta encourages astrology, a system associated with the ancient world and with the Renaissance. Then again, there’s also a 1634 play by John Jones, *Adrasta: or, The Womans Spleene, And Loves Conquest*, where the eponymous Adrasta is a Lady Macbeth-like duchess. Erato’s planet is Tythonus, named after the Trojan hero Tithonos who became the lover of Eos, titan of the dawn and wife of the titan of the dusk – Astreos. Tithonus was granted eternal life, but not eternal youth, and ended up confined, senile, in a room, and/or turned into a cicada – an insect which spends most of its life-cycle underground. The name is probably even
denser with allusion than Adams and Fisher were aware.

Literary and historical allusions abound. Adrasta’s engineers Tollund and Doran theorize about the ‘object’ in the ‘Place of Death’ by arguing from the corpus of received knowledge. This is reminiscent of mediaeval scholasticism as well as the sunlight-extracting cucumber-philosophers of Laputa in Jonathan Swift’s *Gulliver’s Travels*. As superstition and pseudoscience are woven around the Tythonian’s imprisonment, Chloris (meaning ‘green’, and sometimes associated with a fearful pallor) becomes a society based upon a manufactured ignorance, a denial that an historical event – the landing of Erato – took place. As well as the Greek muse of erotic poetry (phallic protuberances) and goddess of mimicry (the communication ‘shield’), Erato is a genus of mollusc: David Fisher presumably thought of the Tythonians as a race of spacefaring snails. Come to that, *epiphile adrasta* is a type of butterfly.

The script-editing of this story, the first in production, illustrates how Douglas Adams sought to sharpen the series’ focus. At Adams's instigation, Fisher replaced an engineer character the Doctor discovered in the Pit with the astrologer Organon, so adding an extra detail to society on Chloris. *Organon* is the collective name given to the core philosophical works of Aristotle, the foundation of the scholastic system of learning which the Doctor customarily debunks. Aristotle’s syllogistic logic is parodied at the end of *Destiny of the Daleks*, with Davros's thought processes confined by the system by which two premises lead to a syllogism. The Doctor advocates more complex systems which acknowledge that any situation includes a range of variable possibilities which affect the logical outcomes, as he believes most human beings recognise at some level. Organon’s astrological system is constantly rewritten according to new evidence, but Organon professes to believe that he is only finding more information about the cosmic system which determines everyone’s actions. The Doctor's activities refute this passive view of determinism; having the means to gather evidence and the intelligence to develop and change one’s opinions based upon that evidence leads to the liberation of Erato and the end of Adrasta and her system, as well as offering Erato the chance to deflect the summary justice about to be meted out on Chloris.

It’s striking how this story has quietly contributed to recent series and fan lore: K9 is referred to repeatedly as ‘the tin dog’, though with a different emphasis to its use in *School Reunion*, as tin is cherished on Chloris rather than being a symbol of redundancy. Connoisseurs of internet fan fiction might and have punched the air as the Doctor declared that he had identified the ‘object’ as a shell using ‘a teaspoon and an open mind.’ The line celebrates empirical observation, imagination and ambition, virtues which are capital crimes on Chloris but which are fundamental to *Doctor Who*, particularly in this season. In *The Creature from the Pit* the Doctor imposes the question of Leopold von Ranke which haunted my early historiography seminars, *Wie es eigentlich gewesen?* on a deliberately obscured problem, negotiates action reconciling conflicting historical interpretations and overturning misrepresentation, and opens the way to improvement of life on at least two worlds by promoting understanding and stalling a fatal rush to judgement.

**Eden: Xyp code**

*Nightmare of Eden*’s notoriety arises from its uncertain production values and its infamously self-indulgent performance at the
climax from Tom Baker as the Mandrels apparently tear the Doctor apart after he has led them into the Eden projection. Both these are symptoms of a casual interpretation of Bob Baker’s intelligent script by director Alan Bromly, complicated by what became a mutiny of the cast led by Tom Baker. Bromly’s previous story (1973’s The Time Warrior) had been subject to several script changes because he refused to rise to many of its challenges. The unimaginative consumer society depicted in the script is obscured by glittery uniforms and the third use of a comedy accent in as many stories. The decision to rename the smuggled drug Vraxoin, instead of the previously intended and more exciting Xyp (short for Xylophillin; though Xyp creeps through in an early line of K9’s dialogue) apparently arose from concern expressed by Tom Baker and Lalla Ward that Doctor Who should not glamorize recreational drug use. Nightmare of Eden doesn’t celebrate it - the disintegration of Rigg after he is fed Vraxoin is clear enough - but the implication of the script is that its society was adrift and purposeless before Vraxoin addiction became endemic.

As Vraxoin is a symptom of this society’s problems rather than a cause, so the Mandrels are the fruiting body of the threat rather than the mycelium. They rip apart the incurious package tourists, who look at the universe through darkened goggles, huddle inside (ultimately useless) protective clothing, and hector ungratefully rather than look for evidence about their predicament. The Doctor and Romana represent the antithesis of this attitude, and also are par excellence the representatives of the grand tourist - originally a renaissance project, where scholars or noblemen with scholarly interests travelled Europe to experience foreign environments and learning unavailable in England.

Nightmare of Eden is a lesson in what scholarship is and how a scholar should treat their sources, or in the case of a natural scientist like Tryst, their specimens. The CET machine isn’t just a recording device, but rips samples of ecosystems from their contexts, divorcing them from their origins and arguably rendering them worthless as examples of the worlds being studied. CET stands for Continuous Event Transmuter - a postmodern assessment of what the scholar inevitably does in their examination of the past. Tryst is another malign narcissist in the tradition perpetuated by Scaroth and Adrasta, believing that his requirements excuse him from conforming to the moral law of the universe. Tryst’s ambition – explained in a seemingly throwaway line in part one – is to record every single life form in the galaxy. This is not just a matter of cataloguing, because in enabling him to build a microcosm the CET allows Tryst to play God.

Tension in Doctor Who is often provided by the Doctor acting as unwilling agent of an outside force, and at different times in the programme’s history this has been represented as the Time Lords, the White Guardian, the United Nations (under protest) or (more abstractly) the Laws of Time. In season seventeen, the Doctor has expressly rejected the role of agent of outside force by applying the Randomiser to the TARDIS’s navigation system (though this is largely forgotten after Destiny of the Daleks). The Doctor has asserted the independence of his morality from others’ systems, and he applies natural law as he discerns it. This is noticeable because season seventeen is sandwiched between the dominance of the
Guardians in the previous season, and the return of the Doctor, recalcitrantly, to the obedience of the Time Lords in season eighteen. As the Doctor stands outside structures where superior beings enforce their morality as if it were universal from positions of retirement, he rejects Tryst's appeal to solidarity between scientists not only for the self-serving drivel it is, but also because – as he tells Stott and Della by the TARDIS – perhaps (all) human beings have choices after all. The Doctor's defence of interference – 'always do what you're good at' – is a defence of what he chooses to do; in rejecting Tryst's abuse of power (characterised by Tryst as passivity) he is embracing a Renaissance view of active civic virtue and applying it to the universe. Fourteen years before, his first incarnation claimed to be a citizen of the universe, as well as a gentleman; the Doctor's prudent conduct would gain some approbation from a Niccolò Machiavelli or a Francis Bacon.

**Nimon: Horns of a dilemma**

Freedom to choose is one thing; what one does with that liberty is another. One strand of *The Horns of Nimon* addresses wilful ignorance. The Skonnans have succumbed to the promise of renewed military domination over neighbouring worlds in return for forbearing to ask questions about the motives of their benefactor or even the principles of the technology they have borrowed from him. The crew of the tribute-bearing freighter have no idea how the augmented technology on their ship works. The Anethans are little better; the hierarchy on the planet did not question the demands of the Skonnans until Seth, a young man of obscure origins whose claim to be a prince was not subjected to examination, presented himself as their liberator. Teka's clinging naivety is grating but she represents the presumed acculturation of generations of Anethan aristocracy to a simplistic outlook prone to subservience; cringing before Aneth has become uncritical worship of and barely sublimated sexual pining for Seth, even though he is untested. (That this performance is by Janet Ellis, 1980s Blue Peter presenter and centre of an ironic sex cult, has thickened its meaning for a generation of viewers. Yet for many viewers too young to remember Ellis, she is probably little more than a 'strange pouty girl', to quote one recent reaction, thereby stripping away cultural over-layering to reveal, perhaps, something close to the way the character was originally received.)

Seth is the counter-figure to the Nimon; both are outsiders, but the Nimon only feigns innocence. Seth really is of insufficient guile to deal with the situation, and needs the Doctor and Romana to help him: they have experience but crucially retain a childlike sense of imagination. This development is something of a return to the philosophy of the previous season, understandable as *The Horns of Nimon* is written by its script editor Anthony Read. The Doctor and Romana are *deus ex machina* in the traditional Greek sense, intervening to save trapped mortals. Their omnipotence, though, is compromised by the imprisonment of both in the Nimon's labyrinth and that it is K9 who sees through the illusion precisely because he lacks the senses to be deceived.

Integrity comes from continuing to question one's assumptions and the assurances of others. On Crinoth, Sezom achieves a partial redemption because instead of entirely giving himself over to the Nimons' agenda, he continued to experiment with jasonite, and determined that jasonite can deflect the
Nimons' death rays. By doing so Sezom saves Romana, though at the cost of his own life. Dying in the pursuit of scientific truth, political liberty and human decency (three interwoven threads in the tradition of Doctor Who) is presented as a superior goal to living as a reward for propagating others' lies. Without a questioning spirit, one's physical being becomes a desiccated husk and one's environment disintegrates, leading to oblivion; the untruth remains active until it is challenged.

Beneath the highly stylized costumes and deliberately mannered performances, The Horns of Nimon was the best of Anthony Read's reworkings of Greek mythology in Doctor Who. The battle is as much for control of the narrative as anything else. Soldeed hurriedly cries 'In the name of the Second Skonnan Empire!' as the Doctor falls through the CSOed entrance of the Power Complex because he's established that this is the password needed to pass through the non-existent barrier and he can't allow any of the crowd watching to challenge his version of the present. This battle to condition a whole society's response turns in on itself when Soldeed finally realises that the Nimon has played him at his own game and that he has been duped. A loss of self-control, his inability to face the truth behind his delusions – 'My dreams of conquest...' – a final flurry of petty destruction, and death follow. In contrast the Anethan leader, the unseasoned Seth, never forgets that he is not the prince he says he is and is looking to add substance to his assumed identity. The Doctor reveals at the end that he has been aware of the story he is in all along and is glad that the spacecraft the Anethans return home in is painted white. The Doctor is a responsible interpreter of old truths, but even his perception is limited and relies on information. The Nimons are successful conjurors to the end, and it is not for nothing that their minion Soldeed is dressed up like a pantomime Abanazer.

Unfortunately the overwrought costuming is part of the problem with The Horns of Nimon; everyone involved who has understood some of all of the concept has run with what they have found, and the result is a set of clashing interpretations rather than a cohesive strategy. This is often part of Doctor Who's charm, but here The Horns of Nimon, like Crinoth, is falling apart: there's an argument that someone as crucial to events as the Co-Pilot should at least be given the courtesy of a name, if only to suggest a background to his character and character to the inhabitants of Skonnos, even if in practice they are difficult to differentiate from one another and wear uniforms which resemble black bin-liners. Even a society which went rotten centuries ago and which deludes itself that it is not heading for the incinerator deserves a little more detail.

Alternatively, the Co-Pilot's personality has been subsumed in his function because he has always submitted to authority and not taken responsibility for his own enlightenment: his identity is already forfeit and his life follows, both for exposing the gimcrack union of Nimon and Skonnan technology on which his ship depends to an outsider, and also for playing his own part in suppressing inquisitiveness and relying instead on unthinking force. The willing dupe submits to the labyrinth in the Co-Pilot as much as in Soldeed.

**Shada: the missing outcome**

The tension between inquiry after knowledge for the sake of a better understanding of the universe and the control of knowledge by one person reaches its climax in Shada. Skagra absorbs the minds of scientists into a collective and then directs their enquiries towards his own ends. His exaggerated cosmic villainy is contrasted with an idealised academic community in the form of the
University of Cambridge. Cambridge can claim to have been the cradle of English Renaissance humanism in the sixteenth century; and the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth were influential in reintroducing the ideas of Plato, particularly as understood by his Christian medieval European followers, into English philosophical and theological thought.

The only living Cambridge scholar named by the Doctor while he punts Romana along the Cam is Owen Chadwick, historian of religion, whose most celebrated book at the time of Shada's location filming concerned the rise of secularism in nineteenth-century England. This might be appropriate given that first Salyavin and now Skagra sought powers which would end even the illusion of free will.

On the other hand Romana's 'Who?' suggests that this might simply be a Cantabrigian in-joke; Chadwick was vice-chancellor of the university when Adams began his undergraduate studies in Cambridge, and gained a reputation for conservatism and defending the integrity of the dons at the expense of the students. Chronotis, with his wish to have the conversation of students banned, is in part a personification of the way early 1970s undergraduates regarded Chadwick. Chronotis's public persona is a charade; as one gains experience, one realises that all projections of authority are such.

More relevant is what Shada would have established about Doctor Who's concept of natural law. The first part of the story concerns the quest of the villain, Skagra, to locate and possess The Worshipful and Ancient Law of Gallifrey. This book defies spectrographic analysis; it is a book but it is not a book, and time runs backwards over it. Douglas Adams's script could be satirising natural law theory while at the same time placing it at the heart of how Doctor Who views the universe. From Shada we learn that Time Lord judges 'but administer'; convicted criminals are sentenced 'by the power of the law'. This could be interpreted as another case of Time Lord sententiousness masking their inefficiency; but the contrasting fates of the greatest Time Lord criminal of all, Salyavin, and the man who seeks to eclipse him, Skagra, suggest that the Time Lord invocation is to be taken seriously as a statement of how the Time Lord view of the universe works. This is consistent with the Time Lords' policy of non-intervention. Some moral claims are shown to be true. Salyavin's genuine repentance and wish to renounce the use of his powers leads him to escape – be set free – from the Time Lord prison on Shada and retire to Cambridge in the guise of Chronotis. Skagra ends up a prisoner of himself. This is a suitable punishment for a man who does not want to control the universe, but to become it.

Passivity is not a possibility for the Doctor, however. Adams's proposed story about the Doctor's 'solipsistic withdrawal' from the outside world, which he discussed in Doctor Who – The Unfolding Text (1983) would have depicted the Doctor's denial of the reality of claims of the universe on his abilities, only for him to find it was impossible for him to remain uninvolved. Solipsism denies that knowledge of anything except the self is possible, whereas Doctor Who is about exploration of that outer world. The Doctor's role in the universe is to explore, to interfere, to solve problems. The Doctor falls within Thomas Aquinas's definition of a rational being, as he can, like the human beings among whom he moves, perceive the eternal law and his place in it. This is an agnostic
universe, script-edited by an avowed atheist, so unlike Aquinas the Doctor proceeds without reference to God. Indeed, the first substantive intervention Douglas Adams took as script editor was to write the final scene of *The Armageddon Factor*, the last story of the 1978-79 season, where the Doctor rejects and evades the godlike Guardians with an apparent flippancy which would become characteristic of his behaviour in season seventeen. In season seventeen, the Doctor defines himself by his propensity to interfere – 'Always do what you’re good at’ – and declares that he isn’t working, but 'having fun'. This is someone who has found his place in the universe and is at peace with that. He repeatedly offers his opponents the chance to rethink their situations; some do, like Countess Scarlioni, but have not learned how to act on what they are beginning to learn. Others, like Tryst, remain sure that they operate outside the laws which the Doctor, despite his picaresque lifestyle, knows apply to his actions.

**Paradise Lost?**

In his essay on *City of Death* in the book *Time And Relative Dissertations in Space* (2007), Alan McKee remarks that '[Doctor Who’s] philosophical thinking is not one of its most sophisticated points.' This article has not made the case for its being coherent. Television is a collaborative medium produced to deadlines within defined resources. Entertaining and telling a strong story came first. When the story wasn't strong, as in the case of the narrative contradictions within *Destiny of the Daleks* (for much of the second half of the story the Doctor should believe that Davros is dead, but he behaves as if he knows that Davros was not killed after their interview early in episode three) this was not the result of Terry Nation and Douglas Adams deciding in the BBC bar that narrative was a reactionary form and that *Destiny of the Daleks* should subvert it, but the problems of realising a complicated script with a budget being diminished by inflation, and the limitations of having to film some scenes on location before the bulk of the serial was recorded in studio, with no opportunity for remounts.

However, in writing and editing the 1979/80 season, there is enough allusion to suggest that Douglas Adams was interested in introducing layers of meaning into *Doctor Who* which provided a philosophical background for the Doctor's actions. He drew upon several different philosophies at different times and from different time periods, and while principally introducing ideas from the rationalism of the Renaissance and Enlightenment drew from an intellectual environment which was digesting the structuralist and deconstructionist thinking championed by French scholars such as Louis Althusser or Jacques Derrida. There’s certainly enough in the season to suggest that the Doctor, despite his apparent freedom, remains the prisoner of ideology just as Althusser regarded all individuals; his potential withdrawal in Adams's abandoned storyline could be defeated as much by that as by the operation of an atheist's natural law, in which the moral order prospers by the perpetual activity of individuals who have learned what is right through experience and
Graham Williams and Graeme MacDonald might have hoped that Douglas Adams would bring them a long-term renaissance for *Doctor Who*, but it was not to be. Adams was unable to extract a workable storyline from any of his Cambridge circle, though he continued to seek new writers for the 1980/81 season until shortly before he left his post. One of the last storylines he requested was one from Peter Grimwade, which eventually became *Time-Flight* at the end of the first Peter Davison season in 1982. Adams was forced to send an apologetic memo to MacDonald when the final list of commissioned writers turned out to include no new names.

Adams's successor Christopher H. Bidmead inherited the same brief as Douglas Adams, but interpreted it in a way which de-emphasised rationalist thought as applied to scientific problems. Science was interpreted in terms of technology and the specifics of physics, with little sense of its broader relation to other aspects of human experience. While Bidmead scorned the 'magic' in Adams's season, he is the one who shows the universe being sustained by magic spells in the form of chanted equations in *Logopolis*. Adams's season takes pains to give the Doctor and Romana the perspective of time travellers; their technology is drastically advanced and so can only be written about in general terms, while Bidmead tied the Doctor down to the terminology used by a computer enthusiast in 1980, with the result that the scientific content in the 1980/81 season has not dated well. Furthermore, Bidmead's view of the Doctor as an Everyman, to whom things happened, turned the interpretation which emerges from Adams's season, of someone compelled to be actively involved in events and make circumstances better, on its head. The authority of the Time Lords was restored, and eventually, under Eric Saward's script editorship, that of the Guardians as well, though at least the latters' return was brief. The Doctor's cosmological context ossified under Adams's successors because they looked inwards, not outwards, to the jargon of the enthusiast (for computers or *Doctor Who* itself) and not to the broad principles enjoyed in the seventeenth season.

**Author's Note**

I am neither a philosopher nor a scholar of cultural theory, and doubtless this article would benefit from more familiarity with those areas. Melissa Beattie was a great help with pointers both in classical and cultural studies; the mistakes, as the time-honoured formula goes, remain my own. My sources included various online companions to philosophy published by Oxford and Cambridge university presses and by Routledge; the biographies of Douglas Adams by Nick Webb and by M.J. Simpson; the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* for the historical Arthur Dent; and Andrew Pixley's articles in *Doctor Who Magazine*'s *The Complete Fourth Doctor: Volume Two* for production information, as well as the production notes and commentaries on the DVD releases of *Destiny of the Daleks*, *City of Death* and *The Creature from the Pit*. 

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A SURVIVAL GUIDE

Jonathan Nash recently re-watched series five/31/11/fnarg of Doctor Who and observed it shouldn’t have been all that difficult for characters to have survived it.

1. If you are an alien multiform trying to escape from the outer space police, take the time to check you get the right voices coming out of the right mouths. That way, you might be able to fool people you meet, which is, after all, the whole point of changing form.
2. If you are the last of your kind in existence, and you want to give a hand to some dying humans, the one group of people you really don’t want to give your life to is the British government. Or, if you do, at least send them a memo asking them not to torture you.
3. If you are a member of the British government, and the last of the space whales turns up when you need to get your entire country off the planet, at least ask the poor beast if its willing to be your transport before you waste time, energy, and lives in torturing it.
4. Never trust robots who offer to help you destroy the Nazis – especially if they, and their apparent creator, have only just appeared from nowhere.
5. If you have just found some of your worst enemies, and they don’t seem to know who you are, don’t attack them and tell them exactly who you are – it’ll either force them to reveal themselves and try to kill you, or it’ll make them remember who you are and try to kill you.
6. Statues are evil. Steer well clear.
7. Never go off on your own in spooky caves which hold the last of an immensely powerful race of killer statues.
8. Don’t go into the light.
9. However bad the super-destructive big bad is, the super-evil big bad can still kill you, so don’t tempt fate.

10. If your daughter is the most important thing in your world, don’t give her over to a spooky school where you think bad things happen.

11. Old people are evil. Steer well clear.

12. The Earth is evil. Steer well clear.

13. However much she pisses you off, don’t taser the lizard woman who is your only chance of getting your family back.

14. Don’t take a shot meant for the Doctor. He can regenerate, you can’t.

15. If you can regenerate, let your companions know so they don’t die taking a shot meant for you.

16. If you are the only person who can see a monster that’s killing lots of people, throw some paint or something on it so other people can see it and don’t end up dying.

17. Don’t go into someone else’s house just because the residents ask for help, especially if the door creepily opens for you.

18. If your boyfriend suddenly comes back from the dead as a Roman soldier with no logical explanation, don’t trust him and definitely don’t go and give him a hug when he’s telling you to run away because he’ll kill you. He’ll probably kill you.

19. If you think the person who is known for saving the universe is apparently going to destroy it, you’re probably wrong, and the Daleks will probably use you as a tool.

20. I would now do one final one about the Doctor writing himself out of existence, but I’d just feel cruel, and it leads to some the most awesome moments in the series, and it was self-sacrifice, so I think I’ll forgive the idiocy.
Two years this Michaelmas, *Doctor Who* will celebrate its semicentenary and as we approach this milestone in the show’s history, I began to reflect on the fundamental differences that run through *Doctor Who’s* long past. Mulling it over, I realised just how much the show was revamped in 2005, but then it struck me that although there was not much of a physical difference between Russell T Davies’ tenure and Steven Moffat’s (for example, there was no comparable shift with that of 2005 from 25-minute, multi-episodic stories to 45-minute single-episode ones), there seem to have been deep changes to the show. It occurred to me that this thought merited some deeper contemplation along with the follow-on question of how the show might need to adapt in the future in order to avoid another 1989.

Moffat has unquestionably revolutionised the show. For instance, once upon a time, a companion would squeal in a high-pitched voice, “Doctor, I don’t understand!” and the Doctor would either dutifully, perhaps condescendingly explain for his female friend or avoid the question completely with the dismissive, “I’ll explain later.” This was the cue for the audience to suspend disbelief, to accept that the universe works in ways beyond their comprehension so that the plot remained plausible and whilst the Doctor still does have to explain science that would make even an Oxford professor cry and we still do get screaming, slightly slow women in the TARDIS, such ignorance cannot really exist under Moffat and the primary reason for this is that Moffat likes to play with the time travel element of *Doctor Who* – a lot. This, of course, makes his stories more intellectually demanding and Season 6A epitomises this. Playing with the timey-wimeyness of time travel has almost become basic knowledge required for watching the show: the viewer is now expected to fully understand that we do not meet River in chronological order and also be able to deal with layers of complicated plotlines that only the great mind of Moffat can piece together. As ever, the companions reflect the writer’s perception and expectation of the audience: we now have to pay attention and accordingly the Doctor’s fellow travellers now come more independent, quicker to learn. River herself is a case in point: she’s not just sexy, she’s smart – so smart that she’s often at risk of being smarter than the Doctor and she needs to be to keep the plot moving.

But Moffat’s impact does not stop there. Recognising the need for a breather, RTD extended his use of specials at Christmas to the Tenth Doctor’s Specials and arguably, Moffat’s split Series 6 does the same: resting *Doctor Who* for a few weeks to make sure it
does not grow old whilst granting us a time out to figure out what on Gallifrey is going on. The counterargument, however, is that the break is to help balance the books. Rumour has it that Moffat’s team was overspending on Series 6 – so much so that the BBC could only justify the spend by splitting it into two viewing blocks. Either way, it is a big change that seems like it might stick, at least if the rumour about Series 7’s split is to be believed.

But neither of these stands out as the difference that Moffat has made to the show, as opposed to his use of story arcs, which hearken back to the Classics. The stories of Series 6 (well, the first half at least) border on being mere episodes in one great, arching story: that of the Ponds’ daughter, Melody, a.k.a. River Song, and the death of the Doctor. Despite appearing to be quite mundane and nothing more than a slight improvement on RTD’s Bad Wolf or Harold Saxon in that they featured more heavily and that the Doctor actually noticed them, in Series 5, the motifs of cracks in the universe and the eerie prophesy of ‘silence will fall’ turned out to be a building block in the grand plan that the new Chief Executive seems to have for the show. Both arcs panned out into central plotlines that make Series 6 something that may once again be deemed worthy to stand next to the story arcs of the Classic Era which could materialise on an epic scale. Take, for example, Season 16 – The Key to Time – where the Fourth Doctor and Romana spend the whole season (six stories totalling 26 episodes) looking for the components of the eponymous Key. Albeit on a slightly smaller scale, The Black Guardian Trilogy (Fifth Doctor, in the middle of Season 20) and The Trial of a Time Lord (Sixth Doctor, Season 23) are other examples of such vast story arcs and it is these that Series 6 seems largely similar to, if not surpasses: epic story arcs that knit individual stories into a bigger picture with crucial plot developments, helping to keep audiences not just on the edge of their seats on a Saturday evening, but every Saturday evening.

With the arcs of Series 6, Doctor Who seems to be climaxing. All guns are blazing with epic, confounding, expensive storylines and if this is the zenith of the show, where can it go from here? How we watch TV is evolving: with long-term viewing no longer guaranteed to survive, neither is the success or even sustainability of extended story arcs.

Luckily, Moffat has recognised this as Series 7 is apparently returning to individual, monster-based episodes suggests. Variation, I feel, is a good way of keeping the show fresh, but a simple oscillation between multi-episodic, character-based stories and mono-episodic, monster-based stories would not work. I cannot even begin to predict how Moffat might take it from there – especially with the semicentenary (which happily falls on a Saturday) looming and just begging for a spectacle of tremendous proportions – but in writing this, I’ve come to see Doctor Who as a marathon and whilst Moffat’s stint appears to be logging the show’s personal best, it is not the final sprint. Doctor Who has so much more to give (presuming the Doctor does not actually die in Utah in 2011 and that the Gallifreyan law allowing Time Lords twelve regenerations can be circumvented) and consequently, I find myself agreeing with Moffat that taking it back down a gear for a while, excluding the 50th anniversary, would be better in the long run. Then, Doctor Who could go out with the bang it deserves to and not merely fizzle out.
The Gallifrey Rag

First you safeguard history,
Subject to bureaucracy,
Make sure hist’ry marches on
For Rassilon, Rassilon, Rassilon!

Though we are all effete scholars,
Dressed in robes and ornate collars,
Mess with us and you will pay,
Punished by the CIA,
Doing the Gallifrey rag.

Massive tidal forces harm any-
One who sees the Eye of Harmony.
It makes energy, we tap it all
To provide pow’r for the Capitol.
And if your name is the Master,
You can risk a great disaster!
Two, four, six, eight,
Ready to regenerate!

So you safeguard history,
Subject to bureaucracy,
Make sure hist’ry marches on
For Rassilon, Rassilon, Rassilon!

Let the power of the Vortex
Suffuse your cerebral cortex.
Goth, Braxiatel,
Narvin, Maxil, Darkel,
Dancing with Salva-
Vin in an alleyway,
Doing the Gallifrey Rag!

Thomas Keyton
I'd become disenchanted with David Tennant's Doctor during his first series. I enjoyed his performance in the first production block *The Christmas Invasion* and *School Reunion*, both directed by James Hawes but was disenchanted by the smugness and the cloying nature in which the Doctor's relationship with Rose was presented, firstly in *Tooth and Claw* and then predominantly from *Rise of the Cybermen* onwards, with an honourable mention for that scene in *Doomsday* where the Doctor seems very enthusiastic to offload his romantic interest on to the parallel universe version of her father. *The Runaway Bride* I viewed as largely misconceived, *Smith and Jones* patchy (though I presumed the narrative viewpoint of the episode was Martha's) and *The Shakespeare Code* I found very disappointing too. Perhaps I needed to find an episode which I could creatively interpret in such a way as would restore my faith in Russell T Davies's version of *Doctor Who*. That episode was *Gridlock*.

*Gridlock* was set in Russell T Davies's far future, a time so remote from ours that the author feels excused from using it as a Faerie realm, where people like and yet remarkably not like the viewing audience – 'us' – interact in ways both comprehensible and disconnected from our everyday experience. It displayed a coherent argument in its design, its story structure and its performances in a way which I'd not seen up to that point during David Tennant's period as the Doctor. The society of the Motorway of New New York on New Earth was vibrantly diverse and appeared to glory in improvisation. Yet little of its culture was new: its American Gothic lifestylers, its elderly becardiganed lesbians, its flying-helmeted cat, its bowler-hatted commuter, its werewolf and maidens, all appropriated the trappings of earlier times, cultures and subcultures. The Doctor apparently finds a supportive environment in the company of Brannigan and Valerie, and (remotely) the Cassini sisters. The performances of the actors concerned – Ardal O’Hanlon, Jennifer Hennessey, Bridget Turner and Georgine Anderson – help greatly in animating the scenes in which they appear, but the writing gives the performers a strong foundation by concentrating on one or two characteristics per person which differentiate them from each other and allowing actor and costume designer to build on them, something which has been less evident in *Doctor Who* since Russell T Davies left. However, this support
has its limits. The revivalist hymn which they sing as a mark of solidarity (‘The Old Rugged Cross’) has little or no relevance to the predicament of the drivers on the Motorway. They cling to it because it presents an illusion of comfort and show no sign that they understand what the ‘Old Rugged Cross’ of the song was. It’s another appropriation which shows that by turning away from confronting the absurdity of their situation the people of the Motorway are as defeatist as the those they have left behind in the Undercity. Their belief that the police will mediate in disputes is delusional (perhaps echoing Russell T Davies’s own views on religion). New New York deliberately references Judge Dredd’s Mega-City One, but it’s a mega-city where the judges appear to have given up, left and locked the doors behind them. Perhaps they have.

The Doctor breaks his hosts’ prison in a knowingly literal way, by opening the inspection hatch in the base of Brannigan’s vehicle and moving through the gridlocked traffic in a fashion which is both proscribed and which risks his own life. In the thickest of the exhaust fumes, he encounters the Macra, degenerate bestial descendants of the space-conquering crustaceans the second Doctor fought in The Macra Terror (1967). The Doctor doesn’t know the full shape of the puzzle box he is in, and he is prevented from rationalizing a solution by the arrival of Novice Hame from the earlier New Earth story (2006). Whereas the Doctor, seeking to rescue Martha from her kidnappers and then from the Macra, had been working towards the metaphorical centre of the maze, his perspective had been flawed. His rejection of Novice Hame underlines this, and he needs to be forcibly enlightened.

Gridlock’s dismantling of the tenth Doctor’s ascendency was welcome. His flirtation with Martha had been an abuse of power, continually offering himself and then withdrawing, substituting time and space travel for intimacy while at the same time advertising himself as a dangerous potential lover. Martha wants to see the Doctor recognize her as unique, expressing both her sexual desire for him and her frustration with her upbringing as a production line model high achiever. This is dashed when she realises the Doctor has taken her somewhere he previously took Rose. The Doctor’s failure to recognise Martha as an individual is underlined when she disappears among the uniform vehicles of the Motorway. The Doctor’s recognition of Martha as a person begins there, and his shock at realising that he doesn’t really know her, that she has simply been an audience for his display of Time Lord ingenuity, is real. Self-pity remains, but governed by remorse and a desire for practical achievement. This achievement, though, is constantly displaced throughout the episode; when the Doctor saves the day, he does so as assistant to the Face of Boe. Full agency as such is not restored to the Doctor in this episode, though the audience is left to understand that his confession to Martha will do so by relieving the Doctor from the burden of deception. In misleading Martha, he also misled himself; coming to terms with the loss of Rose is a stage in reconciling himself to his destruction of Gallifrey.

While the Doctor’s pretensions to omniscience and omnipotence are exposed in the Undercity, the sole residents of the Overcity are a long-lived non-human, the last of his race, and his medically-vocationed assistant. Russell T Davies seems to have conceived the Face of Boe for The End of the World as a gimmick. By Gridlock he is confirmed as a shadow of the Doctor, trapped in a situation with analogies to the Doctor’s at the end of Doomsday. Where the Doctor had to choose between saving Rose and allowing the Daleks and Cybermen to lay Earth to waste, the Face of Boe can only keep the
Undercity isolated, and lacks the metaphorical extra hand to free the people he and Novice Hame have deliberately trapped. The Doctor becomes the Face’s Pete Tyler, providing an escape route which seemed impossible, though with a price: where the Doctor lost Rose, the Face loses his life. The Face’s last message presages his continuing role in the Doctor’s life, and also that the Doctor has not seen the last of Rose. Gridlock presents viewers with a series of clues to the long-term prospects of the tenth Doctor, as he will eventually be trapped and sacrifice himself in a fashion with some parallels to the Face of Boe; but for the moment the death of the Face provides a part of the catharsis which returns the Doctor to functional heroism in time for Daleks in Manhattan.

Gridlock is about a society on the edge of death, as the series protagonist is in denial about a society which already has died. The diversity of the lifestyles seen on the Motorway appears riotously wide, but it’s really an auto-memorial for the culture whose addiction to ‘moods’ – a self-inflicted emotional blindness – led them to die through lack of motivation. Doctor Who is not preaching a shallow ‘Say no to drugs, kids’ message; as those who have read The Writer’s Tale will know, Russell T Davies’s own experience with drug use would lead him to explore the effect of mood-altering medication on the individual and society and ask the viewer to make up their own minds. The programme expresses pessimism about technological and social progress, as often during Russell T Davies’s executive ship. (Una McCormack has written a chapter on this subject in the edited volume The Unsilent Library, which offers critical essays on Russell T Davies’s Doctor Who.) The Doctor’s rose-tinted (indeed, Rose-tinted) memory of New New York is somewhat idealized given the ethics of the city’s medical service as depicted in ‘New Earth’ the previous year.

The Macra have taken New Earth’s survival strategy of cultural and physical recycling a stage further: progress means post-sentience among the exhaust fumes. Until the Doctor opens the Motorway to the sky, this appears to be humanity’s future too: the Motorway and the Undercity have a culture where few questions are asked and few explanations are given. Interaction between cars is limited and so is co-operation. The audience is led to infer that the Doctor’s gift of the sky restores imagination to the humans of New New York. ‘Abide with Me’ offers a more collective experience of religion than ‘The Old Rugged Cross’. Doctor Who again celebrates that thinking the unthinkable can become ordinary.

This is an episode of enjoyable reversals, and the last one of all is the closing image of vehicles once trapped in the Undercity flying amidst the skyline of New New York, amidst a sky turned burnt orange by the release of concentrated exhaust fumes. (Presumably, the Macra are now finding it somewhat difficult to breathe.) Superficially this is optimistic, suggesting that there is somehow a future to be made from the Doctor’s memories of his world too; but the Doctor is not thrilled by the Face of Boe’s insistence that he is not alone, for reasons which have become clear with hindsight. Russell T Davies presumably knew, too, that ‘Abide with Me’ was written by someone on their deathbed. Hope is underpinned by morbidity; though new and transformative possibilities arise from the extinction of old ones, they are themselves open to destructive consequences.
Week after week, *Doctor Who* has brought the wide and varied wonders of the universe into the homes of anyone with sufficient foresight to turn it on. Many of these wonders may have greatly resembled corridors and the structural integrity of the universe, especially any walls built within it, was observed to be a bit shaky well before The Doctor first stumbled upon a crack in Amelia Pond's wall, but for many, the cheap but imaginative design of the original series is one of its greatest strengths. In some ways, it's easier to suspend your disbelief towards Sutekh the Destroyer's capacity to rein bloody death over the universe from the comfort of a Martian armchair when his robotic minions are clearly men wrapped in gauze. If you open your mind enough to accept that burn-ward patients can tear your arm off, you can much more readily accept any silliness the plot may later throw at you.

With the reawakening of the series in 2005, the production team fortunately chose to continue this tradition. In what seemed a somewhat bizarre move at first, an exhibition of props and costumes from the new series set up shop in a corner of a shopping centre in Cardiff Bay, looking out over what would become (and eventually spectacularly cease to be) the Torchwood Hub. I reviewed the first incarnation of this exhibit in issue 32, but as *Doctor Who* once again became a national phenomenon and commenced semi-continuous production, the exhibition began to cycle its exhibits to reflect the changing show.

In this endless quest to avoid boredom on a Saturday evening, thousands of sets, props, and costumes were produced and, in the eternal diligence of the BBC, many of them were stored against the possibility someone may one day wish to use them. For many years, a spectacular selection of this repository was displayed at an exhibition in Blackpool. If you never managed to visit it, I direct you towards Alex Middleton's review in issue 30.

Adam Povey recalls the most recent Society trip to Cardiff and the new Doctor Who Experience in London Olympia
In November 2010, the Society managed to rather comfortably seat 13 of its members in a minibus directed towards Cardiff. After sampling the beach at Southerndown (i.e. Bad Wolf Bay and crash site of the Byzantium), we visited the last incarnation of the Cardiff Bay exhibit before it’s closure.

In essence, it was still the same exhibit. It hadn't changed in size, still consisted entirely of materials from the modern series, and was designed as a sequence of small stands highlighting a particular story with some props, costumes, and the occasional set piece. A sign at the entrance introducing the “ten faces of the Doctor” hung above the frosted tweed jacked worn by Matt Smith in *Amy's Choice* demonstrated the exhibit knew its days were numbered. In fact, very few items from after Season 4 were featured – an Ironside Dalek and Amy's costume from the same episode stood opposite Lady Christina de Souza's black thievery-enablement garment in sole reminder. On the one hand, this was disappointing for those of us expecting the comprehensive selection of the modern series offered by the initial incarnation, depriving visitors the chance to scrutinise the fine details of stories still fresh in the mind. However, this meant the exhibit felt much less like an advertisement you paid to enter and more like a genuine showcase of the variety and imagination of modern *Doctor Who*, in the spirit of the Blackpool display. And, anyway, we all have HD nowadays and can get our scrutiny done over
lunch on iPlayer.

I would say the years mostly improved the exhibit. Simply having more episodes means the more engaging and surprising elements can be showcased, rather than throwing everything available out on display. Also, they had taken the opportunity to make more interactive exhibits. The memorable of these, and the entire day, was the Dalek control room. You enter a darkened room, dotted with Daleks. All of us being companions at heart, we couldn't resist the urge to press a big red button. Immediately, the Emperor Dalek begins to rise from the floor and illuminates the room in the red haze of extermination. Finding us lacking in the qualities needed to gut a planet and install an engine, the Emperor decrees our death and, to the tune of a dozen Nick Briggs in perfect discord, exterminates all present, with genuine laser beams shooting all about the room. An all together brilliantly silly, but heartily enjoyable death.

I can imagine it was the design of that very room which first inspired the development of the replacement to the Cardiff Bay Exhibit. Open in London Olympia since the Spring, the Doctor Who Experience promised to be an interactive adventure for all the family, including the chance to fly the TARDIS. At a full price of £20, this was obviously trying to move beyond the museum structure of previous exhibits and become an attraction – a day out in the world of Doctor Who. [WARNING: Spoilers for the Experience in the Tides of Time 35 • Michaelmas Term 2011 • 35]
For children, I imagine it succeeds wonderfully. From an ingenious introduction, bringing you onto Starship UK through a cleverly disguised, but very familiar, crack in the wall, the interactive section of the Experience is aimed wholly at children. A recreation of the current TARDIS console room will feel enormous when you’re under four feet tall and the chance to pilot the TARDIS fascinated at least two children travelling with me that day. For an adult, it’s good to walk through the doors of the eponymous police box, but the low lighting and fast pace stop you from properly admiring the madcap design of the new console and other props decorating the walls along the way.

You then stumble onto a Dalek spaceship (running was disappointingly not allowed in the corridor). Whatever I may have said about the redesigned Daleks in the past, I must now concede they serve their purpose perfectly. When the White (Supremist) Dalek glides into view, proclaiming exterminations for all, half the kids burst into tears and the other half were completely enthralled. It was likely the atmosphere of the Experience, but I’d never seen children respond to Daleks like they were genuine threats before. They’d been cool or silly, with the kids trying to get the silliest pose next to a Dalek (even in the Cardiff War Room), but here these kids froze solid. Whatever I may think of the design, I have to accept they work.

In a reassuring moment of plot, we escape the Daleks when another saucer, manned by RTD-era Daleks loyal to Davros, opens fire on our captors. Good to see things haven’t changed that much since the old days.

The Experience then rapidly runs to a close, dragging us through a murky, but unexplained swamp and into a room where, through “safety glasses” we watch the single most gimmick-laden 3D film I have ever seen. If
you'd never seen 3D, maybe this adaptation of the Season 5 cinema trailer would have been enjoyable, but it was otherwise an unnecessary and slightly disappointing end to the interactive part.

It is disappointing, though, mostly in the sense that the time spent watching it is not spent in the company of Matt Smith. He truly makes this Experience work. In the absence of music, editing, or imminent death, the pace of this ride is entirely driven by the energy of his performance. Despite being locked in the Pandorica again (he was ready for it this time), his overflowing sentences and silly-then-serious delivery add charm, tension, and life that is all this experience ever needed.

Once you finish the reason we all came here, you then find the reason we should all stay - the museum. In style, it more closely resembles the Blackpool exhibit, with displays based on theme rather than episode and there is a roughly equal balance between new and old generation with, where possible, the various redesigns of an iconic monster lined up for comparison. Whilst lacking the fine detail provided by either exhibit that died to enable its birth, this museum is still well worth your time, with everything from examples of the production process on an Ood head to a video tutorial on how to walk like a scarecrow working towards a vision of how the show was made rather than just showing you the final products of that work. The main failure, surprisingly for a museum, is the descriptions for costumes. Giving only the briefest context to what you're looking at, this could have been more comprehensive for the young fan curious what this massive metal robot is doing behind a Silent (which, as an aside, was described as “a race of tall enigmatic creatures” which both forgot a comma and
didn’t allow for the Silence to be a religious order of many races without giving away the ghost).

Personally, the highlight was the 70s/80s console. Pictured at the start of the article, it was perfect with coat rack, “proper” roundels, and *that* hum. I know *that* hum is layered somewhere in the new TARDIS interior sound, but it’s not the same. I just sat for a few minutes in the presence of my original console, soaking in that sound. The feeling of pure nostalgia alone was worth the entrance fee, though perhaps it would have been worth booking in advance to save a fiver for the gift shop (where they missed a trick not using one of the “little shop” signs from Tennant’s journeys, though the merchandise on offer seems to be impressively comprehensive otherwise).

Overall, the Experience is much better for children than adults and more engaging for children than the older exhibits, but the museum at the end more than makes up for any differential. I’d recommend going in a group (possibly while on a sugar high) or borrowing a niece or nephew a considerate sibling may have given birth to at some point in the past decade to make the best of your trip.
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