Oxford’s best (and only) Doctor Who and cult television magazine
Published by the Oxford University Doctor Who Society
EDITORIAL

Well, here it is at last: OUWho (or DocSoc)'s only issue of Tides of Time for this academic year, and the magazine equivalent of the US-Telemovie - big, bold, brash, new, expensive, and generally total crap. Only joking (I hope). I also hope that you have as much fun reading it as I had making it. Sorry that it took so long. Several thanks are in order:

Thank you to the OUWho Committee (listed on the back cover), for putting up with me even when I succeeded in getting the society kicked out of Mansfield College.

Thank you to all the contributors featured in this issue. It's thanks to you that this mag isn't just a pamphlet of my own deranged meditations. And it's nice to find others as deranged as myself with whom to share these pages.

Thank you to all those who gave contributions that didn't make it to this particular issue - we ended up a little pressed for space, unfortunately. I promise you that you'll be in the next one (coming out next Michelmas, hopefully?). I would be grateful for any new contributions.

Thank you to my computer-literate and generally rather clever brother, Domi, for doing all the brilliant graphics. Hopefully, I'll be able to enlist your help for the next issue as well.

And finally, a big thank you to Dave Martin. Your enthusiasm lives on both in Mansfield and in this magazine. May we enjoy future visits and new piercings from you for many years to come.

CONTENTS

1) EDITORIAL & CONTENTS p.1

2) WINNERS AND LOSERS OF CULT TELEVISION - AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE
   By David W. Battle pp. 2 - 8

3) MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU
   By Sandy Starr pp. 9 - 13

4) DOCTOR WHO AND THE CRIME TRAVELLER
   By Al Harisson pp. 14 - 18

5) STAR TREK IN JAPAN - JUST WHAT ARE THEY ON ABOUT?
   Compiled by Domi Starr pp. 19 - 23

6) IN PRAISE OF PARKIN
   By Sandy Starr pp. 24 - 25

7) BELLUM UMBROSUM - THE HISTORY OF THE SHADOW(Y) WAR
   By Matthew Peacock pp. 26 - 29

8) TO LAUGH OR NOT TO LAUGH
   By Sandy Starr pp. 30 - 34

9) THE DOCTOR'S DARKER SIDE
   By Al Harrison pp. 35 - 40

10) X - RANT
    An impartial investigation by F.B.I. Agent Starr pp. 41 - 42
WINNERS AND LOSERS OF CULT TELEVISION
AN AMERICAN PERSPECTIVE

WINNERS:
DOCTOR WHO
RED DWARF
BLAKE'S 7

LOSERS:
X-FILES
BABYLON 5
STAR TREK
DEEP SPACE NINE

No other medium reveals the cult of personality as vividly as does television. The top-rated programmes reveal the moods, the interests, and yes, the intelligence of their viewers. However, widespread this viewership is, the depth of interest of those watching is typically shallow. Television watchers have traditionally allocated their true-blue viewer support to science fiction programmes. Star Trek, Doctor Who, and The X-Files continue to enjoy a dedicated following. Some of these shows deserve the faithful, diehard support that they've attracted. Some do not. Doctor Who, Blake's 7 and Red Dwarf - all from the BBC - are justly honoured with cult television status. In contrast, The X-Files, Babylon 5, and Star Trek - Deep Space Nine are lacklustre, American-made goo, that primarily owe their success to slick production values and glossy hype.

FILE X BEHIND WHO

The X-Files is very big in America. It is the highest rated programme on the Fox television network there. My best mates adore this show. Why, even my girlfriend happens to be flatmates with the co-producer's daughter! Nonetheless, for me, The X-Files is about as exciting as watching a sick cow die of a venereal disease.

The forced earnestness of the boy FBI agent, Mulder wore itself
out during the first season. Isn't everyone tired of hearing about his poor little sister? When are the writers ever going to add another pitch to girl fed Scully's one-note character? Never, I'm afraid. Or maybe they're saving character development for the proposed big feature X-Files film.

Chris Carter, creator and Grand Poobah of this mess, is a beachbum who made good (money). He's successfully tapped into the mass hysteria of an omnipotent government that wants to keep secrets from you and me. Like they managed to do with Watergate, the Iran-Contra Affair, the Hugh Grant-Divine Brown Affair. Folks, the government is just not clever enough to keep a lid on anything, much less keep secret the phenomenon of flying saucers chasing down little blond girls.

The X-Files is not science fiction, since they could easily remove its UFO element and you'd still have a show. Instead of flying saucers and mean-spirited aliens, they could have the government covering up, say, a secret society of communists, or radical religious terrorists, or even a cabal of angry car park attendants (‘What, no tip?’).

Generally, the show is predictable and witless. One episode, The War Of The Copohages, in which cockroaches decided to stamp out some humans for once, was about as close as this programme has ever come to inspiration. Otherwise, Chris Carter, along with principal writers Glenn Morgan and James Wong, seem content to rely on recycling bits from a better show from the 1970's called The Night Stalker. I have seen every episode of this uniquely frightening programme, in which Carl Kolchak, a journalist, sought to document evidence of supernatural phenomena. The Night Stalker had wit and panache. While some shows were better than others and some of them don't hold up as well today, the show still bests the refried pulp of The X-Files.

Rather than watching videos of old Night Stalker episodes, the staff of The X-Files would be better off looking though the archives of the BBC's Doctor Who. This show is a winner, abundant in wit and intelligence. Unfortunately, no matter what you may hear, Doctor Who is not a household name in America. Its low production values and mix of film and videotape formats turns off many potential viewers (even I tuned out when it first premiered in Los Angeles). But for those who can overcome its technical limitations, Doctor Who presents delightful entertainment. The seven Doctors - tetchy William Hartnell, whimsical Patrick Troughton, debonair Jon Pertwee, toothy Tom Baker, boyish Peter Davison, egocentric Colin Baker, and finally, Sylvester McCoy - have contributed to making Doctor Who a lasting legacy in television entertainment.

The character of the Doctor is unique in that he is neither all-knowing nor all powerful (and William Hartnell’s original interpretation wasn’t at all earnest). He is sometimes presented with genuinely disturbing dilemmas such as seen in the story Genesis Of The Daleks, where the Doctor had to decide whether to commit genocide upon the race of the
malevolent Daleks. It’s hard to believe that this show was originally conceived as a children’s programme.

The best feature of Doctor Who is its creative format. The Doctor and his companions can go anywhere in the universe, at any time in history or in the future. The Doctor’s regeneration ability allows for recasting of the role as last seen in the Fox-BBC co-production of a Doctor Who telefilm. We never know just what we are going to get with every new episode. Unfortunately, several episodes from the vast Doctor Who archive are lost. Hopefully, they’ll turn up, so that ardent viewers will have the opportunity to see more Who. (Don’t be too hopeful - Ed.)

RADIO ALUMNI

Babylon 5 attempts to be as profound as some of the best stories of Doctor Who, but fails. The show purports to be a representation of a darker future, the antithesis of Gene Roddenberry’s utopian Star Trek - The Next Generation. Earth is involved in transgalactic warfare along with chrome-domed, Slavic-accented aliens. The new discrimination is not one of race or gender, but upon those possessing psychic abilities. It sounds intriguing, but unfortunately, it fails in its execution. Every other episode presents one of the regular characters’ It’s A Wonderful Life lesson; or features one of the crew’s mysterious friends from the past who has come just to say ‘hello’ - then we learn they have got a secret (or a weird hairstyle). Rumour has it that this may be the final series of Babylon 5, so this time it may be ‘goodbye’.

In the late 1980’s J. Michael (Joe) Straczynski hosted a Los Angeles radio show called Hour 25. It was a chat show concentrating on science fiction, fantasy, and horror. Straczynski often mentioned that he was working on a series that would be so good that he’d retire from television if he could get it on for five years. I don’t think he’s going to make it.

The show blew chunks from the pilot onwards. The acting is wooden, especially by the first series’ leading man playing Cmdr. Jeffery Sinclair (they sacked him because all the guest actors kept mistaking him for a tree), the computer effects are obvious, and the writing is thinner than the locks on Prince Edward’s head. There are good things about Babylon 5, like... er... almost every episode is in focus!

After the series premiered, J. Michael Straczynski returned to Hour 25 to discuss his new creation. He himself admitted that the first few episodes were just ‘okay’, and promised better ones down the road. Mind you, he
wrote these episodes himself. Come back to radio, Joe, there’s always dead air to fill.

Straczynski aside, the audio medium has produced talented graduates. Former BBC radio writers Rob Grant and Doug Naylor created the winningest science-fiction sitcom there ever was - *Red Dwarf*. This programme continues to present inspired humour and riveting science-fiction. The most innovative episodes feature time travel paradoxes and alternative universe role-playing.

![Red Dwarf III poster](https://tidesoftime.wordpress.com)

In America, NBC made a US version of *Red Dwarf*, but it failed to get on the air. It’s probably just as well. *Red Dwarf* pushes the envelope in every imaginable way. The national airwaves on American television are typically very conservative, and may have tried to tone down the spirited raunchiness of *Red Dwarf*. Why, I bet you can’t even say ‘smeg’ on American network television. Who cares? *Red Dwarf*, as it is, is the best comedy on television.

7 OVER 9

I like *Star Trek*. I do not like *Star Trek - Deep Space Nine*. So is *DS9* really *Star Trek*? The pilot for the series, *Emissary*, was positively one of the most boring outer space adventures ever presented on any screen. It presented lots and lots of talk, and little action or innovation. Continually the new team behind *Star Trek* retreats Frank Capra’s Christmas classic *It’s A Wonderful Life* (as seen in the *DS9* pilot), featuring an entity reviewing a character’s life to reveal that everything happens for a reason, and then advising...
the person to get on with it already.

Several seasons after the pilot, Star Trek - Deep Space Nine continues to disappoint. Its over-earnest characters grow increasingly tiresome, and now viewers need a guide to keep up with the bedhopping. How’s this for a soap opera: Capt. Sisko is dating a convicted felon and traitor to the Federation; Worf, the Klingon is clinging onto Dax, a parasitic alien; Kira is surrogate parenting for the O’Brien family, and so on... they may as well call this show DS90120.

Deep Space Nine does not offend me. It bores me. (Actually, that is offensive.) Sisko’s overripe, barrel-chested authority continually parodies itself week after week. The Odo-Quark comedic banter is desperate and the supposed tension between these prosthetic misfits is unconvincing. Furthermore, if there is another new uniform design on this show, I am going to dig up the remains of Gene Roddenberry and slap him for not leaving his legacy in better hands. The original Trek got through several years wearing the same pajamas, geez!

Okay, okay, there are some kick-ass fight scenes and now there is conflict among the crew (originally forbidden under the Law of Roddenberry) but DS9 still fails, because the stories are uninspired. The writers neatly resolve the plots at each episode’s conclusion. The best of classic Star Trek:

City On The Edge Of Forever, Balance Of Terror, and so on, left viewers with a genuine sense of loss or thought provocation. DS9 leaves viewers with a feeling of desperation. They watch it, not because it’s good, but because science-fiction television is just so hard to come by that they are compelled to watch. I wonder what’s happening on Deep Space Ten...

In 1978, television writer Terry Nation created a programme that many have called Britain’s answer to Star Trek. The fact is, in many respects, Nation’s Blake’s 7 outdoes Roddenberry’s classic series (it certainly beats the Next Penetration spin-offs).
Blake’s 7, in a word, is brilliant. For once, we have a programme in which a rational thinking comrade puts a check on an over anxious do-gooder. Blake, the putative hero, is a space rebel, a freedom fighter for the universe. His crewmate, Avon - a realistic minded computer genius - continually questions Blake’s earnest, but often crude, idealism. Avon once commented:

‘Blake is an idealist. He cannot afford to think.’

This is another show where character development rules the day. Of course, that is perhaps the show’s only flaw. There are possibly too many characters, and some of them get lost in the shuffle. Then again, Nation turned this into a plus when he decided he’d do something unprecedented in a non-soap opera serial television programme - he would kill off regular characters.

That is what makes Blake’s 7 worthwhile; that is its gift: unpredictability. When one of the regular cast members dies early on, viewers begin to realise that, unlike your traditional dramatic series, Blake’s 7 may kill off your favourite character at any time. This will be done with little sentiment or hand wringing - they just get on with it. Viewers feel a genuine sense of tension whenever danger presents itself to the crew. Only one character appears in all 52 episodes of Blake’s 7, and it isn’t Blake.

Even more pleasantly unsettling is the fact that most of the leading characters are sociopaths. Escaped criminals from a prison ship, their loyalties to each other ebb and flow to such a point that they may feasibly kill one another. Whether they do or not, I’ll let the uninitiated see for themselves. You have been warned - this is demanding television. No namby pamby moralising, no do-gooder heroics or earnest self-sacrifices go unchallenged. Blake’s 7 is cutthroat storytelling at its finest. Despite its low-tech production values, the show is about as realistic in
feeling as any programme can get. It is as ‘can’t miss’ as television can get. If you miss *Blake’s 7*, then you lose.

David W. Battle
**MAY THE FORCE BE WITH YOU**

Yes, I know. This is a publication that concerns itself with cult television, and Doctor Who in particular. But as George Lucas’ stunning Star Wars trilogy hits the big screen again, I make no apology for discussing three films whose impact on both cult TV and general sci-fi cannot be ignored.

How many special effects designers, working on Doctor Who post-71, have you heard in *DWM* discussing the impact of Star Wars’ effects and the higher, more challenging standards that they set? Even more interestingly, these are not simple re-releases – they are 'Special Editions'; featuring snippets of extra footage, added computer graphics, and beefed-up SFX. Sound familiar? Yep. Remember the 'Special Edition' of The Five Doctors issued a couple of years ago? Remember the questions that it raised? They are similar for both the epic trilogy and the humble 20th anniversary bonanza.

John Nathan-Turner dismissed the 'Special Edition' in his memoirs, criticising the added footage of being superfluous and the added effects of being spurious. But does anybody care what he thought? I for one do not. Richard Marquand, director of Return Of The Jedi, is no longer alive to dispute the changes to his film and “surprise, surprise” – his is the film that Lucas has decided to give the most extensive overhaul, completely rethinking the performance of the Max Rebo band in Jabba’s palace and adding a shot of the imperial city of Coruscant.

The point here is that for one kind of fan (myself included), neither Doctor Who nor Star Wars are creator-orientated – the internal continuity of each mythos transcends, in both cases, the importance of the directors, writers, and designers. True, this is a far more controversial approach to three big-budget films than it is to low-budget TV. But the fact is that after directing Star Wars, Lucas retreated into his producing role in...
ORDER TO OVERSEE THE DEVELOPMENT OF HIS Vision, AND HARNES THE CREATIVE TALENT OF Others for his own ends. THE DIRECTOR OF A Star Wars Film IS QUITE DEFINITELY WORKING UNDER Lucas, AND NOT WITH HIM. Star Trek’s GENE Roddenberry OCCUPIED A SIMILAR POSITION For a while, WHEN Fandom was at its peak Before his franchise exploded. HIS WORDS in A 1976 LETTER to BJO Trimble, AUTHOR of the Star Trek Concordance, WERE:

'I WOULD LIKE YOU TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT I WILL... USE BOOKS AND OTHER INPUT WHERE THEY ARE IN LINE WITH MY THINKING BUT WHERE THEY ARE NOT, I AM THE FINAL AUTHORITY ON Star Trek IN THIS OFFICE.'

Despite the extremely high regard in which Roddenberry is held by fandom, toward the end of his life his word was hardly law. Later films and episodes did offend his sensibilities, especially Star Trek V - The Final Frontier, Whose back-story history of Spock conflicted strongly with his concept of the character. Now that he has passed away, of course, Voyager and Deep Space Nine are replete with infighting amongst the crew, and writers have free rein.

It is one of Doctor Who's great strengths, as well as its weaknesses, that it lacks the central consciousness of a creator/controller/vision, unlike Roddenberry, The X-Files' Chris Carter, Babylon 5's story-arc, Red Dwarf's Grant/Naylor partnership (recently disbanded), and, of course, George Lucas. The origins of Doctor Who are not the simple story of one man's vision, but are complex; obfuscated (ironically) by the mists of time; the ongoing subject of extensively researched articles. Doctor Who was, from the outset, a matrix of visions - David Whitaker's vision, Terry Nation's vision, and so on. Even the producers and script editors do not warrant the moniker of visionary creators, despite the unity of gothic Phil Hinchcliffe or farcical Douglas Adams eras. Terry Nation's monopoly on the Dalek mythos was superseded by Saward and Aronovitch (although Nation was the visionary creator of Blake's 7), and John Nathan-Turner vies for attention with Saward and Andrew Cartmel with regard to his tenure. besides, whereas Lucas instigates the revision of his own masterworks, Nathan-Turner does not even have the veto on a souped-up Five Doctors.

And rightly not. Lance Parkin has no problems with the canonicity of the 'Special Edition', and his authoritative word is more than good enough for me. But aside from continuity, what are the implications of revised Who? The Star Wars films all feature special effects and picture quality that, however dated, are nonetheless compatible with modern computer graphics. Doctor Who, on the other hand, extends back into the days of grainy black-and-white TV, and, no matter how cliched the expression, has never been a stranger to cardboard sets. Can you imagine? The Gunfighters - Special Edition. The Chase - Special Edition. Black-and-white Daleks exploding in a shower of CGI shockwaves. Episode 4 of The Tenth Planet is missing? Hey, no problem - we'll get the script, computer animate old stills of William Hartnell, sample his voice (I know, the soundtrack does exist), and reconstruct it. We can even take the glossy product and use computer graphics to downgrade it, making the picture quality and special effects look authentically shit.

Obviously, not all Who is suitable for a rehaul. But where to draw the line? Easy. There is a perfect juncture at which to deem Who rehaulable - namely, The Leisure Hive. The Leisure Hive is, in so many ways, a watershed in Who
It represents the arrival of JNT, the beginning of the 80's, and more ambitious special effects (prompted, of course, partly by Star Wars). All Doctor Who stories from The Leisure Hive onwards would benefit from the ongoing process of added graphics, reinstated lost footage, and, one of the most underrated features of The Five Doctors - Special Edition Dolby™ Surround Sound (Doctor Who only had the benefit of any form of stereo sound from Remembrance of The Daleks onwards). Purists will crucify me for this, but I stand firm - the overall effect, as with Star Wars, would be to reinforce continuity in a useful manner. I do realise that The Five Doctors was an exception, in that there was a remarkable quantity of original footage still in existence, but the concept is nonetheless a valid one.

And to finish, a few words on Star Wars, from a fan perspective, for the uninitiated. Star Wars has the most rigidly controlled and consistent continuity of any scifi media mythos in existence. Every single novel, comic book, cartoon, and even computer game, is checked by Lucas' entourage and accommodated into a strict timeline with the films and prospective prequels. This means that Star Wars lacks the vitality of the fascinating discrepancies and worlds of Doctor Who, but offers a vivid universe that can not only be observed by the fan, but inhabited by them.

Spin-offs are often of outstanding quality. Brilliant novels include Splinter Of The Mind's Eye by Alan Dean Foster (who has novelised sci-fi classic Dark Star and all three Alien films), published at the same time as the original trilogy and recently re-released; and Timothy Zahn's trilogy, whose first installment, Heir To The Empire, skillfully kick-started the whole fan

Revival that began a few years ago, as well as setting up the basis for future novels.
(Leia and Han’s Jedi twins, new villain Admiral Thrawn, and the further development of the movie character of Wedge Antilles). In the 80’s, Star Wars comic strips were first published in newspapers, and then Marvel Comics, after adapting the films, began to publish exciting original material. For a few years now, Dark Horse Comics have led the field in Star Wars comics, with mini-series such as Dark Empire I and II, in which Emperor Palpatine is revealed to be one in a long series of clones, and is effectively immortal.

Most ambitiously, The Empire Strikes Back and Return Of The Jedi were recently bridged, the period of time between them documented by the simultaneous novel, comic book, computer game and toy range release Shadows Of The Empire. For the record, this actually replaces an earlier Marvel comic strip that covered the same period, in which the Rebel Alliance faces a sort of square version of The Death Star, and trust has to be rebuilt between Lando Calrissian and the rebels following his betrayal in Cloud City.

It is no secret that the first of the Star Wars prequels is now in pre-production. It is the first of a prospective trilogy documenting Anakin Skywalker’s mastery of the Force and subsequent fall from grace, a battle with mentor Obi Wan Kenobi resulting in the extensive injuries that necessitate the Darth Vader armour. Adverts have already appeared in the USA for child actors to play the young Anakin, and Lucas is directing for the first time since Star Wars IV - A New Hope, 20 years ago now. This first film will be optimistic and magical, but will simply be paving the way for the bleak third film, which will be a tragedy. Already, by shooting the films in this unusual order, Anakin’s dark future will hang over the prequels like an ominous spectre.

For those who care enough to find out more, and want to plunge into the world of fanatic Star Wars fandom, Star Wars Magazine is an excellent monthly publication of the same calibre as DWM. As well as keeping an eye on the spin-off market, catering for collectors, and interviewing both the stars and the bit-part actors of the films, the magazine has provided excellent coverage of the ‘Special Editions’, and will be the source of up-to-date information on the prequels in the future.

George Lucas’ contribution to sci-fi is not limited to Star Wars. If you delve into his early career, you find the film American Graffiti, whose 50s nostalgia is not for all palates, but you also find THX-1138. Initially a short, expanded to a full-length film under the auspices of Francis Ford Coppola’s ill-fated Zoetrope Studios, this stunning dystopian classic is a
MASTERFUL AND ORIGINAL PIECE OF SCIENCE FICTION, DEPICTING A BLEAK FUTURE IN WHICH NAMES ARE REDUCED TO THE BLAND HOMOGENEITY OF NUMBERS. LIKE THE 60’s DOCTOR WHO DALEK FILMS, IT HAS BEEN RELEASED ON VIDEO IN WIDESCREEN ON THE BEYOND VISION LABEL, AND IS ESSENTIAL VIEWING. THE NOVELISATION IS BY RENOWNED SCI-FI AUTHOR BEN BOVA.

THE FUTURE IS CERTAINLY BRIGHT FOR FANS. BUT MY ONLY WORRY, AFTER ALL THIS HYPE, IS THAT THE EWOK FILMS AND DROIDS CARTOONS WILL BE FORGOTTEN. DISMISSED BY MANY AS AN EMBARRASSMENT, THE QUIRKY ENTERTAINMENT TO BE HAD FROM WATCHING THE WADDLING FORMS OF THE ANIMATED R2-D2 AND C3-P0, OR THE PARANOID LAPINES INDIGINOUS TO THE FOREST MOON OF ENDORE, WITH THEIR ELECTRIC PROBOSCES, MUST NOT BE ‘SNEEZED’ AT. ARE CARAVAN OF COURAGE - AN EWOK ADVENTURE AND THE BATTLE FOR ENDORE GOING TO BECOME LOST CLASSICS, RELEGATED TO SALES BINS, OR WILL THE PASSING YEARS EVENTUALLY REWARD US WITH CARAVAN OF COURAGE - AN EWOK ADVENTURE - THE SPECIAL EDITION?

SANDY STARR
'I'll be with you in a moment, Slade,' said Holly as she went to change her clothes for the third time that day.

'Fine,' muttered Jeff Slade in that fetchingly roguish way of his. He opened the door to the spare room which contained the time machine with a newly familiar sense of awe. He was prepared for the sight of the apparatus there, although he had no hope of even beginning to understand the time machine that sent a shiver down his stubble. It didn't look particularly impressive; more like an A-level science project. Yet he knew of its power. Although it hadn't allowed him to win the lottery yet, for some reason he hadn't been able to fathom, although Holly seemed to know why, he felt privileged to be able to use it. It was a mystery to him why Holly hadn't revealed its existence to the world; she would find herself the recipient of fame and sponsorship for whatever research she wished to do. But she seemed happy to help him investigate his own cases. Perhaps she feared that if she told the government about the machine, she would lose it.

Slade was not prepared for the large blue box he saw in the middle of the room, although it did cross his mind that it was extremely lucky for whoever had left it there that Holly's Georgian flat had such high ceilings; anything less would have made it a tight fit. It seemed to be a phone box of some description, although it was dark blue instead of the usual red and was made from wood instead of plastic. As Slade watched a man stepped out of the open double doors, clutching a shoebox-sized piece of technology and holding various wires in his mouth. He was wearing a greenish-black frock coat and cravat, and had long brown curls. The man seemed preoccupied, but once he caught sight of Slade he pulled the wires out of his mouth and beamed with pleasure.

'The inventor, I presume?' he said. 'No, wait, somebody else said that, didn't he? Anyway, I'm the Doctor and I'm extremely pleased to meet you.'

Slade was bemused, but felt an immediate sense of outrage.

'Who are you?' he demanded. 'What are you doing here?'

The strange man moved towards the time machine.

'Well, as I said, I'm the Doctor and this brought me here. It's been playing havoc with the TARDIS systems and I think it could explain a lot.'

Slade opened and closed his mouth like a goldfish.

'Actually,' the Doctor continued, 'I'm a time traveller, you shouldn't have any trouble believing that, and I'm here to investigate this rather interesting device; it seems to have brought me a long way from home.'
At that moment Holly appeared.

'Sorry about that, Slade, but... who's that?'

'Calls himself the Doctor.'

'Doctor of what? What are you doing to that machine?'

The Doctor looked up and smiled.

'Practically everything, Grace, and nothing much, just looking.'

Holly fumed. 'Well, you can “just look” at something else... and what’s a police box doing in here?'

'It’s a time machine', shouted the Doctor from under the desk.

Holly’s jaw dropped. 'A time... Slade! We’ve attracted the notice of observers from the future! The Doctor must be here to learn about how time travel first began. This is amazing!'

The Doctor stood up and glanced at them both sheepishly. 'Actually, I’m not from the future. I’m not even from your dimension.'

Slade pulled his gun. 'Listen, nutcase, I’m taking you straight to the station. You can tell the psychiatrist there all about it.'

The Doctor smiled. 'That proves I’m not from this plane of reality. In the 1997 England of my dimension, even the police have very few guns.'

'How do you know I’m a policeman?' asked Slade.

'Don’t be ridiculous, Slade,' said Holly. 'Look at him, he can’t be a threat.'

The Doctor smiled in such a disarming way that Slade couldn’t help but smile back. He pushed his pistol back into the waistband of his trousers feeling shamed for some reason he couldn’t quite put his finger on.

'You’re from another dimension?' asked Holly, 'My father theorized that such things might exist, but he could never prove it.'

The Doctor grinned, 'An enquiring mind, how nice for him. Oh, I’m forgetting my manners. Jelly baby, anyone? I’ve recently rediscovered them. They’re awfully good for the neuroptides.' He tapped his temple knowingly.

Slade did not take a jelly baby. Now was the time to take charge of the situation. The Doctor, however, had already vanished under the desk where the main body of the machine was placed. 'You see,' he called, 'I’ve suspected for a while that I’ve not been in my own universe. I’ve slipped sideways in time; same place, same time, different reality.'

'You’re a slider?' asked Holly.

The Doctor reappeared and looked at her oddly. 'In a manner of speaking.'
‘Even assuming I believe you,’ began Slade, ‘and I’m not sure I do, what are you doing to our time machine?’

‘It’s not yours,’ flashed Holly.

‘It’s more mine than it is his,’ replied Slade calmly.

The Doctor smiled again. He did that far too much for Slade’s liking. It was obviously a ploy to make people feel more comfortable with the Doctor around. The worrying thing was that it was working. Slade didn’t feel that he could pull a gun on the Doctor for a second time, and he had the most peculiar urge to go and make them all some tea.

‘As I was saying,’ continued the Doctor, ‘for a while I’ve suspected this is not my reality. About the time of my last regeneration...you don’t need to know about that, actually, suffice it to say that some odd things were happening. The TARDIS could erase the influence of a time spillage simply by moving back a few days, sort of like a sponge soaking up excess water, only with time. The point is, though, it shouldn’t have worked but it did. Then there was the ease with which the TARDIS was repaired. No offence, but it’s rather more sophisticated than yours, and even this is hardly an alarm clock.’

Slade glanced at the police box. He found it hard to believe that there was anything more sophisticated than a kettle in there, but decided to take the Doctor’s word for it. After all, he had managed to get it in here, which would have been difficult verging on impossible by any normal means. Then there was the fact that the machine Holly’s father had built didn’t exactly look state of the art, but it worked. Just.

‘At first I thought I might be in the Land of Fiction. I’ve already destroyed it twice but you never know with time travel. But I did some tests in the TARDIS and came to the conclusion that this was a parallel dimension and that this machine might help me to get home. I’ve no idea how I got here, of course, maybe the interdimensional equivalent of a CVE... although you probably wouldn’t want to know about that either. Call it a hole between dimensions and you’ll get an idea of what I mean.’

‘What do you want to do with my machine?’ asked Holly.

‘Well, I could open a rift between the dimensions using the TARDIS, but as soon as I tried to move down it, it would collapse. I need a time machine of some description to hold the passage open at this end as I force my way through it. This ought to do nicely once I’ve solved the problem of compatibility. There are some things here that simply would not work in my universe.’

‘Doctor,’ said Holly, ‘if I allow you to experiment on my machine, I want something in return. I want you to help me to get my father back. He’s trapped in the Loop of Infinity.’

‘That doesn’t sound good. Do you mind my asking what it is?’
‘You don’t know?’

‘Well, different universes, different physical laws, different sweet shops...’

Holly sighed. ‘It’s quite enough that I had to explain it to Slade. When we use the time machine, the way we return to the present is simply to live through the past until we reach the moment we started from. At that moment, we must be in this room or we become trapped in the Loop of Infinity, reliving the same moments again and again.’

‘What happens when you travel to the future?’

Holly frowned. ‘You can’t travel to the future. It hasn’t happened yet.’

‘Oh, yes of course, I was forgetting.’

‘So will you help me?’

The Doctor immediately started to look shifty. ‘Ah, well, I’d love to, really. Nothing like getting your hands into somebody else’s technology, I’ve always said. But the thing is that, even here, there are certain guidelines... Look, there is a governing body, if you like, for time travel. They have some very strict rules and I have no idea what the penalty for interdimensional pollution is.’

Slade beckoned Holly to follow him outside. ‘What do you think?’

‘What do you think I think, Slade? He’s eccentric; look at the clothes for heaven’s sake!

For all that he’s obviously genuine. With his technology he might be able to retrieve my father from the Loop of Infinity! I have to help him.’

‘But he said he wouldn’t, Holly.’

‘He’s a soft touch, you can see it. We can work on him. If all else fails, you could pull the gun on him.’

Slade was appalled. ‘What are you talking about, Holly? Pull yourself together. I can’t hold a gun on a man and say, “bring my friend’s father back or else.”’

‘Slade, you’ve got to help, we could get him back.’

‘Holly, he’s gone, you have to accept it.’

‘Oh, keep the platitudes to yourself, Slade.’

Slade did the mental equivalent of a sigh. ‘Even if he could do it, he obviously doesn’t want to. There’s that ‘governing body’ he was talking about. If it’s anything like the Police Federation he’s probably got a right to be scared.’

At that moment the Doctor appeared at the doorway. ‘Sorry to interrupt, but I thought you might like to know that I’m planning on leaving in a minute.’

‘Doctor,’ said Holly, very calmly, ‘will you save my father?’

The Doctor looked at his shoes. ‘I’m not sure I can. Your ideas about time travel are
very different from mine. I’m not sure I could do it. Breaking a
time loop requires a vast amount of energy, in any case.’

‘Even if you could do it, you wouldn’t, would you?’

The Doctor took a deep breath and let it out again before answering. ‘No, I wouldn’t. I made a decision some time ago not to be as ruthless as in the past, my past, in the decisions I make about time. But some things cannot be changed.’

‘The first rule of time...’ murmured Holly. ‘You know, Doctor, I could have made a grab for Slade’s gun and forced you to help me.’

‘Yes,’ replied the Doctor, simply.

‘But you should be going.’

The Doctor nodded. ‘Yes. If you could simply throw the main switch on your console after I’m inside the TARDIS. I’ve preset the rest of your controls.

You shouldn’t have any trouble removing my modifications to your machine.’

Holly nodded and moved to the console. The Doctor turned to Slade. ‘She couldn’t have pulled your gun on me,’ he said quietly, passing the cartridge of bullets back to its owner.

‘How did you...’

‘Hush...I’ve been in this sort of situation before.’ So saying, he stepped into his police box. Holly sighed deeply before throwing the main switch on the console, and a few moments later the TARDIS disappeared with a noise that the two remaining in the room did not know was customary.

‘I’ve never seen a dimensional rift before,’ said Slade, cheerfully, ‘not very spectacular, is it?’

Holly looked at him for a moment, then rushed out of the room.

Al Harrison
STAR TREK
IN
JAPAN

JUST WHAT ARE THEY ON ABOUT?

When episodes of classic Trek are shown in Japan, the Japanese give them their own titles. Any connection between their title and the original is usually tenuous at best, but there is great fun to be had from translating their titles back into English. Here, then, are the original titles, the Japanese titles, and the English translations of the Japanese titles (courtesy of Bjo Trimble’s Star Trek Concordance). They start off mildly amusing, and become increasingly and hilariously ridiculous. Stories are in order of transmission, not in order of production or of stardate—hence no mention of The Cage, which was never originally transmitted.

Perhaps Sulu knows something that we don’t.
SEASON ONE

1. The Man Trap
   Wakusei M-113 No Kyuketsuju
   (A Bloodsucking Beast On Planet M-113)

2. Charlie X
   Seisasusei Kara Kita Shōnen
   (A Boy From The Planet Thasus)

3. Where No Man Has Gone Before
   Hikaru Medama
   (Shining Eyes)

4. The Naked Time
   Ma No Uchubyo
   (The Evil Disease In Space)

5. The Enemy Within
   Futari No Kāku
   (Two Kirks)

6. Mudd’s Women
   Kyōfu No Binasu
   (Frightful Venus)

7. What Are Little Girls Made Of?
   Kompyūtā Ningen
   (The Computer Man)

8. Miri
   400sai No Shōjo
   (400-Year Old Girl)

9. Dagger Of The Mind
   Akumatō Kara Kita
   (The Lunatic From Devil’s Island)

10. The Corbomite Maneuver
    Nazo No Kyūtai
    (The Mysterious Globe)
    [?!? - This episode is actually about a cube]

11. The Menagerie - Part I
    Tarosusei No Genkaidō Zempen
    (The Menagerie - Part I)
    [Okay - that’s not very funny; I admit]

12. The Menagerie - Part II
    Tarosusei No Genkaidō Kōhen
    (The Menagerie - Part II)
    [neither is that]

13. The Conscience Of The King
    Satukinkī Kodōsu
    (Kodos The Bloodthirsty Ghoul/Felon)

14. Balance Of Terror
    Uchū Kichi SOS (Esu-O-Esu)
    (SOS From A Starbase)

15. Shore Leave
    Okasina Okasina Yüen Wakusei
    (Very Funny Amusement Planet)

16. The Galileo Seven
    Gorira No Wakusei
    (The Planet Of Gorillas)

17. The Squire Of Gothos
    Gotosusei No Kaijū
    (Mysterious Man On The Planet Gothos)

18. Arena
    Kaijū Gōn Tono Taiketsu
    (Duel With The Monster Gorn)

19. Tomorrow Is Yesterday
    Uchūrei Gannen 7.21
    (First Year Of Stardate 7.21)

20. Court-Martial
    Uchū Gumpō Kaigi
    (Court Martial In Space)
    [Fairly accurate, I suppose - it is in space]

21. The Return Of The Archons
    Bēta Suri No Dokusaisha
    (The Dictator On Beta III)

22. Space Seed
    Uchū No Teiō
    (King Of Space)
    [Bit of an exaggeration, I reckon - Khan Noonien Singh may be many things, but King Of Space he is not]

23. A Taste Of Armageddon
    Kompyūtā Sensou
    (Computer War)

24. This Side Of Paradise
    Shi No Rakuen
    (Deadly Paradise)
25. The Devil In The Dark
*Chitei Kaiju Horuta*
(Horta - The Underground Monster)

26. Errand Of Mercy
*Kuringon Teikoku No Shinryaku*
(Invasion Of The Klingon Empire)

27. The Alternative Factor
*Futatsu No Uchû*
(Two Universes)

28. The City On The Edge Of Forever
*Kiken Na Kako Heno Tabi*
(Dangerous Trip To The Past)

29. Operation - Annihilate!
*Denebasei No Kaiki Seibutsu*
(Mysterious Creature On The Planet Deneva)

**SEASON TWO**

![Image of a character]

Hello!? Earth to Sulu!

1. Amok Time
*Barukan Seijin No Himitsu*
(Secret Of The Vulcan)

2. Who Mourns For Adonais?
*Kami Tono Tataki*
(Fight Against The God)

3. The Changeling
*Chôkogatu Uchûsen Nomado No Mazo*
(Secret Of Nomad, Ultra-Small Spaceship)
[Gee, that's pretty small]

4. Mirror, Mirror
*Ion Arashi No Kyôfu*
(Terror Of The Ion Turbulence)
[Yeah, those ions are really scary, you know]

5. The Apple
*Shi No Paradisu*
(Paradise Of Death)

[Aha - Barry Letts is a fan of Japanese Star Trek]

6. The Doomsday Machine
*Uchuu No Kyodai Kaiju*
(The Giant Monster In Space)

7. Catspaw
*Wakusei Pairasusebun No Kai*
(Mystery On The Planet Pyris 7)

8. Mudd
*Fushigi No Uchû Arisu*
(Alice In Wonder-Space)
[What the fuck?!?]

9. Metamorphosis
*Kaireinaru Hensin*
(Splendid Metamorphosis)

10. Journey To Babel
*Wakusei Orion No Shinryaku*
(Invasion Of The Planet Orion)

11. Friday's Child
*Shukuteki Kuringon No Shutsugen*
(The Appearance Of The Klingons, The Enemy Of Long Standing)

12. The Deadly Years
*Shi No Uchubyo*
(The Deadly Space Disease)

13. Obsession
*Fukushû! Gasu Kaijû*
(Revenge! Gas Monster)
14. Wolf In The Fold
   *Wakusei Arugaliasu No Satsujinki*
   (Murderer On The Planet Argelius)

15. The Trouble With Tribbles
   *Shinbu Kuwadotoritikēru*
   (New Species Of Quadruletricale)

16. The Gamesters Of Triskelion
   *Uchū Shirei! Kubiwajime*
   (The Space Directive! Throttling Collars)
   [WHAT?!!?]

17. A Piece Of The Action
   *Uchu Hanzai Shinjiketo*
   (The Crime Syndicate In Space)

18. The Immunity Syndrome
   *Tansaibō Buttai Tono Gekitotsu*
   (Crash With One-Celled Life Form)

19. A Private Little War
   *Kanūso Nonna No Maryoku*
   (Magical Power Of Kanuto Nona)

20. Return To Tomorrow
   *Chitei 160 Kiro No Enerugi*
   (Energy At 160 Kilometres Underground)

21. Patterns Of Force
   *Ekousu Nachisu Kyōfu*
   (Fear Of Egos Nazis)

22. By Any Other Name
   *Uchū 300nen No Tabi*
   (300 Years Of Space Travel)

23. The Omega Glory
   *Sikin Senso No Hate*
   (The Result Of The Bacteriological War)

24. The Ultimate Computer
   *Kyōfu No Kompyūtā M-5*
   (Fearful Computer M-5)

25. Bread And Circuses
   *Mōhitotsu No Chikyū*
   (The Other Earth)
   [For once, the original title is sillier]

26. Assignment: Earth
   *Uchū Karano Shisha Misutā Sebun*
   (Mr. Seven, The Messenger From Space)

**SEASON THREE**

2. The Enterprise Incident
   *Tōmei UchuSen*
   (The Transparent Spaceship)

3. The Paradise Syndrome
   *Shōwakusei Shōtotsu Kōsu Sekkin*
   (Coming Close To Crash Course With An Asteroid)

4. And The Children Shall Lead
   *Akuma No Deshitachi*
   (Apprentices Of The Devil/Evil Spirit)

5. Is There In Truth No Beauty?
   *Bi To Shinjitsu*
   (Beauty And The Truth)

6. Spectre Of The Gun
   *Kipsuippatsu! Ōsē Gokujō No Ketto*
   (Crisis! Gunfight at O.K. Corral)
   [Incidentally, Doctor Who did this better in The Gunfighters]
7. Day Of The Dove  
_Uchū No Kai! Ikari O Kuu!?_  
(Mystery In Space! Eat Out The Anger!?)  
[For an episode about paranoia, that’s about as paranoid a title as you can get]

8. For The World Is Hollow And I Have Touched The Sky  
_Uchū Ni Tayadou Wakuseigata Uchusen_  
(The Planet-Type Spaceship Which Is Floating In Space)

9. The Tholian Web  
_Ijigen Kūkan Ni Haitta Kāku Senchō No Kiki_  
(Crisis Of Captain Kirk Who Was Thrown Into Different Dimensional Space)

10. Plato’s Stepchildren  
_Kironaido No Maryoku_  
(Magical Power Of Kironide)

11. Wink Of An Eye  
_Wakusei Sukalosu No Köosoku Ninngen_  
(High Speed People On The Planet Scalos)

12. The Empath  
_Kosei Minara No Seitai Jikken_  
(Medical Experimation On Living Persons On Minara)

13. Elaan Of Troyius  
_Toroiasu No Ōjo Eran_  
(Elaan, Princess Of Troyius)

14. Whom Gods Destroy  
_Uchū No Sishin Byōin_  
(Lunatic Asylum In Space)

15. Let That Be Your Last Battlefield  
_Wakusei Seron No Taïritsu_  
(Confrontation On The Planet Cheron)

16. The Mark Of Gideon  
_Chōju Wakusei Gideon No Kunō_  
(Anguish Of Gideon, The Planet Of Longevity)

17. That Which Survives  
_Mujin Wakusei No Nazo_  
(Secret Of The Empty Planet)

18. The Lights Of Zetar  
_Shometsu Wakusei Zeta No Kogeki_  
(The Attack From Zetar, The Planet Of Extinction)

19. Requiem For Methusela  
_6,200sai No Koi_  
(Love At The Age Of 6,200)

20. The Way To Eden  
_Jiyū No Wakusei Eden O Motomete_  
(In Search Of Eden, The Planet Of Freedom)

21. The Cloud Miners  
_Wakusei Aadan No Jinaitō Sakusen_  
(Operation Zienite On The Planet Ardana)

22. The Savage Curtain  
_Mikakunin Wakusei No Genseki Ningen_  
(The Rock Being On The Unidentified Planet)

23. All Our Yesterdays  
_Taimu Mashin No Kiki_  
(Time Machine Crisis)

24. Turnabout Intruder  
_Henshin! Kāku Senchō No Kiki_  
(Transformation! Captain Kirk’s Crisis)

And one more interesting piece of trivia. Season Two’s _Patterns Of Force_, the _Star Trek_ episode all about Nazis, has never been dubbed into German or transmitted in Germany. Hmm. I wonder why not?

Compiled by Domi Starr
IN PRAISE OF PARKIN

A History of the Universe from Before the Dawn of Time and Beyond the End of Eternity is not Lance Parkin's first attempt at writing a timeline of the Doctor Who universe. It all began with his "pseudohistories" of various Who-related civilisations and events in the fanzine Matrix. Then in 1994, Seventh Door Fanzines, publishers of Matrix, published his Doctor Who Chronology, reprinting excerpts from Matrix issues 46-50 along with new material. In a glowing foreword, Andrew Pixley, DWM's conscientious archivist, discussed the need for researchers and writers to "watch the bloody programme" rather than relying on novelisations, fan mythology, and existing reference works for information. DWM described the Chronology as a "fascinating, outstandingly researched book and worthy of professional publication."

That "worthy of professional publication" comment did not go unnoticed, as 1996 brought us the History Of The Universe from Virgin books, a further refined and researched timeline by Parkin. He made the brave decision to incorporate New and Missing Adventures into the timeline, but so as not to frustrate fans who dispute these books' canonicity (a problem further compounded by the TV-movie and the imminent expiry of Virgin's Doctor Who license), presents material in different typefaces so as to differentiate between sources of origin. You can include or ignore events in the timeline as you wish, according to your own set of criteria - this proves particularly useful with a section on a story such as The Curse Of Peladon, whose background events were substantially filled in by Gary Russell's NA, Legacy.

As if this wasn't good enough, Parkin's justification for the dating of each story is presented in footnotes, and when a date is fixed arbitrarily, or a theory of his has no evidence to substantiate it, he is perfectly frank about it. For quick and easy reference, these footnotes are not presented at the end of each section, as in the original Chronology, but in the margins. To give an example of his thoroughness, he picks up on the throwaway Quatermass references concerning
"British Rocket Group" in Remembrance of the Daleks and "Hol's Lane" in the NA The Pit, and presents in the footnotes a series of similarities and discrepancies between the continuity of the Doctor Who universe and of the Quatermass universe, for those fans who might wish to attempt a reconciliation of the two.

The book is the equivalent, for Doctor Who fans, of Michael and Denise Okuda's Star Trek Chronology, which presents a complete timeline encompassing classic Trek, the films, ST:TNG, ST:DS9, and Voyager. This reference work, which improves with each new edition, chooses (wisely) to completely ignore Star Trek's increasingly erratic system of star dates, sticking to our present calendar instead. Alternate universes are accounted for in appendices, any story that was suspected to be apocryphal by Gene Roddenberry (stand up, Star Trek V) is noted as such, and obvious discontinuities (such as Scotty's conflicting memories concerning Kirk's death in the TNG episode Relics and in the film Generations) are pointed out. True, the book (controversially) ignores the Star Trek animated series, and, unlike Parkin's History of the Universe, ignores all the spin-off books that have been written. But that's understandable, as the Star Trek book franchise is wildly out of control. Come to think of it, the whole Star Trek franchise is out of control anyway.

But although Star Trek, in its various incarnations, does document different periods of a future history, Doctor Who leaps wildly from one period of history to another between, and even within stories. Its timeline is, by its very nature, incredibly complicated, and rife with discontinuity when examined retroactively. But Parkin, like myself, is one of those fans who adores nothing more than reconciling discontinuities - and of course, as pointed out in the Discontinuity Guide, reconciling discontinuities is always the fans' responsibility, and no-one else's.

Sandy Starr
Someone once wrote an e-mail to J.M. Straczynski, fairly late on in the third season of Babylon 5 which went something like this: 'Oy, JMS - where's that Great War you've been going on about? The Shadows don't start fighting in the open until the end of the fourteenth episode of the third season, Ship of Tears. It stops again almost immediately, when the Vorlons ambush a few Shadow ships in the following episode (Interludes and Examinations). The war in the present then disappears more or less from view until And the Rock..., and by now there are only three episodes of the season left. So here are some thoughts on the Great War that was announced in the season two title sequence. I'll avoid like the plague episodes which haven't been shown in Britain at the time of writing (25/2/97). Rather, looking at the 'Great War' as if Babylon 5 was historiography seems to show something about the nature of the greatest nightmare of our time'. (That's the Shadows, not B5 John.) Of course, it may say even more about the pretentiousness of the author in trying to write an article suitable for the Cambridge Ancient History, Volume 5000 (the mid-23rd century). Please draw your own conclusions on this.

In the season two titles, 2259 is said to be the year in which 'the Great War came upon us all.' The accompanying pictures are of a Narn warship being destroyed by a Shadow vessel. The precise sequence is from the second episode of the season, but it obviously relates to Long Twilight Struggle. The war seems to have lasted eight or nine months, judging by something Garibaldi says in LTS. Throughout, we are regularly reminded of its progress: GROPOS covers an Earth attempt to gain a tactical advantage in case the war should spread. There are Narn fighters on patrol at the beginning of All Alone in the Night, Acts of Sacrifice starts with a major Narn defeat in the war and deals with, amongst other things, Sheridan and Delenn's unofficial attempts to help refugees. Babylon 5 is consequently stamped by wounded Narns in In the Shadow of Z'Ha'dum. If there was to be no further conflict, the Narn-Centauri War would surely deserve the title of 'Great'.

Yet one of the most powerful things about Long Twilight Struggle is the sense of standing on the brink of something far worse. The involvement of the Shadows has a lot to do with this, of course, but just before the end of the episode we find out that the Centauri have started annexing worlds adjacent to Narn space. After the defeat, G'Kar will not let anyone forget what happened (Come the Inquisition). At the beginning of the final Season Two episode, The Long Night, the Drazi and Pak'mora are under attack from the Centauri and, by the beginning of Season Three there seems to be a major war underway between the Centauri and the Drazi. Thus the latter were unable to protect Zagros 7, the colony world at the centre of Matters of Honour. By Severed Dreams, the League of Non-aligned Worlds is no more. They listen to the Shadows out of fear. They are afraid
that if they do not, they will be conquered - by the Centauri; says the wounded Minbari Ranger; but he also makes it clear that at least some of the individual governments wanted to settle old scores, or acquire new territory. Where are the Shadows during all of this? They encourage war, but they stay out of it as much as possible. There doesn’t seem to be any reason to suggest that the Centauri only made as much progress against the Narns as they had before Long Twilight Struggle because of the help of the Shadows. In fact, in the battle shown in Acts of Sacrifice they are doing perfectly well by themselves. All this is absolutely consistent with the view of the Shadows’ aims given by the mysterious Justin in Z’Ha’Dum. Yet it all went, if you’ll forgive the phrase, a bit pear-shaped.

The Shadows’ failure in 2260 (Season Three) was ultimately due to just one person: Ambassador Londo Mollari. Mind you, a lot of their previous success was due to him as well. But he was clearly worried about the further expansion of the Centauri Empire that he heard about on the news at the end of Long Twilight Struggle. It was Mollari who participated in the negotiations with Earth over the non-aggression pact, and he was probably largely responsible for its success. At this time the Emperor, whom Mollari and his political allies had put on the throne, was content to do what he was told (witness the arrival of the Minister in And the Rock, for how that position was to change). People like Refa were presumably not interested in the Earth at that time, though it seems from The Long Dark and basic astronomy that the Centauri are the nearest of the major alien powers to Earth. On the other hand, Earth President Clark, another man who owes his position to the Shadows, was not prepared for war either. So the Centauri fought on other fronts, primarily against the Drazi, until Mollari scuppered that one as well (Ceremonies of Light and Dark), by threatening to poison Refa if the annexations didn’t stop. His comment - ‘Only the heir to the throne of the kingdom of idiots fights a war on twelve fronts’ - may be hyperbole, but it is also indicative of the amount of fighting that must have been going on. We do not hear anything about it between Matters of Honour and Severed Dreams, but that makes the revelation of how far things have been allowed to slide all the more shocking when it comes. Our ignorance mirrors that of, say, Delenn in the latter episode - and hers cannot be explained away by the Earth-Centauri treaty. Or did she know all along?

Anyway, at the end of Ceremonies (Season Three, Episode 11) the war which began in Coming of Shadows reaches its first pause. Mollari’s success is remarkable, but not unbelievable. There is then a little catching-of-breath, in the form of Sic Transit Vir and Late Delivery from Azorlon - whoops - Avalon, both of which are more-or-less stand alone episodes (although the former has a lot to do with the situation on Narn). Quite a lot of people, including me at the time, were annoyed by this. The Shadows were also annoyed, and so, at some time during Ship of Tears (14), they attacked a fairly major race, the Brakiri. As Ivanova said at the end of that episode: ‘They’re not hiding any more’. From the relatively friendly relations existing between the Brakiri and their old enemies, the Gaium, at the beginning of Interludes (the Gaium are the insectoid ones who built the bombs Sheridan eventually took to
The end of Centauri aggression seems to have led to an uneasy peace throughout much of the League - as would seem likely from the Ranger's statement in *Severed Dreams*.

The Shadows clearly had to do something. But attacking the Brakiri was not a good move. The Brakiri may not have been able to defend themselves, but their ships were to be a major asset to the alliance. The Gaiman (another advanced race, hence the bombs) also felt threatened and, it seems, the Shadows only succeeded in driving a high proportion of the non-aligned worlds closer together. Morden managed to convince Mollari that Refa had murdered his girlfriend, but Mollari was later quite able to deal with Refa without Morden's help, in spite of his grief-induced protestations to the contrary at the end of *Interludes and Examinations*. And, in his farewell message, Mollari reminds us that he also wants to get rid of Refa because he murdered the former Centauri Prime Minister, Mollari's close friend. Mollari had found this out entirely by himself, a long time ago (*Knives*), and was never happy with Refa from then on. If there is one thing that becomes more and more apparent, it is how peripheral the Shadows actually are to agendas such as these. They are often used just as much as they use others. Perhaps their name is indicative - they could be thought of as not real in themselves only in relation to others.

In a sort of bastardised Jungian kind of way, the Shadow/Vorlon or Black/White antitheses often resemble little more than metaphor with big guns. The Vorlons are out to deconstruct this, but by getting much more involved with the younger races (creating telepaths, contributing technology to the White Star and its sister ships, etc.).

Mollari was quite ready to use the Shadows, as long as they suited his plans. Without the Shadows, the Narn-Centauri War might not have happened, but it clearly could have done. Mollari never forgave G'Kar for Ragesh 3 (*Midnight on the Firing Line*). In *Long Twilight Struggle*, Mollari says that the Centauri must win their destiny themselves, a belief he has held consistently ever since the pilot episode ('nice sharks, pretty sharks'). When the Shadows tried to force the younger races into wars which they didn't really want to fight, they lost support. Clearly, Mollari didn't end all the fighting (the League never recovered its numbers fully), but still there were enough races on some kind of speaking terms for them to be ready to listen to Sheridan when, in *Late Delivery* during the full in fighting, he formalised the Babylon alliance. The Shadows had lost the kind of support they clearly needed if they were to fulfil their goal of starting fights about Darwinism. By trying to force the other races into war (a rather stupid way of going about things, it is now clear), they also managed to upset the balance of power enough for the Vorlons to feel they had to step in personally. And so, when they played their trump card and sent Anna Sheridan to Babylon 5, it was in the knowledge that they had made a major tactical error. Justin's desperation is more and more obvious as the scene goes on.

This is, more or less, the nature of the Great War to date. There was also a real danger, for a brief time, of a Minbari civil war (*Severed Dreams*, Grey 17) due to a difference over policy regarding the Shadows, but no involvement of theirs in Minbari politics. Whatever else I may or may not have shown, the depth of the series...
is obvious (why is it impossible to say something like that without sounding as if
you are having a go at Star Trek?), But you
can't treat many other series like this, as
you'd think Jean Marc Lofficier would have
realised by now. The fighting in Season
Three occurred spasmodically, and at a
distance from the cameras (i.e. like a lot of
modern wars). There was certainly a lot of
fighting against the Shadows after Sheridan
and the others returned from Babylon Four.
In Walkabout, he locates a Shadow ship for
his experimental telepathic attack from a
Drazi distress call. A Drazi 'Sunhawk'
(quite a big ship, therefore a significant
battle) is destroyed before the White Star can
get there. At the beginning of Grey 17,
telepaths are being hired; at the beginning of
And the Rock they are being sent out to a
vast number of worlds. Perhaps rather
more first hand evidence of the scale of the
conflict - if not during those non-arc
episodes at the beginning of Season Three,
then at least in the last five episodes of the
season - might have calmed down
Straczynski's anonymous e-mailer.
Certainly, Sheridan and his bunch on B5 are,
so far, involved in the war to a rather lesser
degree than one might have expected. Yet
the spasmodic nature of the fighting indicates
one thing above all: that a great many
people amongst the many races of the
Babylon 5 universe really do want - well, if
not peace, at least security. But a large part
of the galaxy is still on the brink, just as it
was at the end of Long Twilight Struggle.

Matthew Peacock
As the *Completely Useless Encyclopedia* hits our shelves, it's time to address once more the problem of reconciling the incredible fun to be had from taking the complete piss out of *Doctor Who* and other cult/SF shows with our everlasting love and respect for them. It was actually terrifying how Paul Cornell, Martin Day and Keith Topping succeeded in maintaining a balance between the two extremes in their *Discontinuity Guide* (almost as terrifying as the collective knowledge and understanding of television, film and literature they display when extensively cataloguing possible roots for the ideas used in *Doctor Who* stories - but then again, these are the authors of the *Guiness Book Of Classic British Television*).

The introduction to the *Discontinuity Guide* is a model of understanding, describing perfectly that moment when you watch a video of an old *Who* story, and feel “as if your childhood has been made counterfeit”. It also takes into account the fact that so much old *Who* was “event-orientated” (i.e. intended to be seen once, and not subjected to intense scrutiny). Most accurately, “We only mock *Doctor Who* because we are here to celebrate the fan way of watching television, a close attention to detail matched by a total willingness to take the mickey.” At *Manopticon* 4, Paul Cornell confirmed my suspicions when he told me that it was extremely difficult to maintain both a healthy sense of humour and a total belief in what was going on onscreen. when he and his co-authors watched every existing episode researching the book. (He also made a surprisingly accurate and funny comment about the preview slides of the US TV-movie we had seen that day, and the fact that Philip Segal seemed to want to slap the Seal of Rassilon on every single object.)

But what are we to make of Chris Howarth and Steve Lyons’ *Completely Useless Encyclopedia*, which maintains a risky sense of humour throughout? Let me warn you that this book does not just mock what we see onscreen, but the whole fan phenomenon as well. (Of the fan reaction to “the kiss”, they are particularly ruthless - “were they simply afraid that they’d no longer be able to identify with their hero if he got to shag a girl, because they never would?”) This is a book born of rage. It voices, and hence exorcises, all the unspoken thoughts, prejudices and fears of every *Who* fan in the world. Instead of the “He’s back... and it’s about time” advertising campaign for the TV-movie, it suggests “He’s back...
but what the hell’s it about?” or “He’s back... but not for long”.

The fact that I knew, without looking, that there would be an entry entitled “Peri’s Tits” (or rather “Peri’s Tits™”) shows that there is definitely some form of empathy going on between author and reader. And no matter how much Howarth and Lyons insult Who fans, they also look after their own. The entry on Star Trek fans is designed to have all readers cheering (although being a Star Trek fan myself as well as a Who fan, it didn’t really help much for me). And how’s this for a comeback the next time someone with nothing better to do is claiming that sci-fi fans lead a lower quality of life than the rest of the world - “Doctor Who was created to entertain, coins to formalise a system of barter, trains as a method of transport, and stamps as a means of funding the postal service. People find entertainment in all four. Which is the most understandable?”

I can, and do, laugh at just about every entry in this book without feeling that I am compromising my integrity as a fan in any way. Even I, however, feel that Howarth and Lyons occasionally cross the line. The semi-humorous comment in the introduction that despite the fact that they submitted an outline for a Doctor Who book neither of them is gay is an unnessesary one (possibly a response to a refreshing Fluid Links article in DWM in which Matthew Jones casually mentioned a boyfriend of his). And their comment concerning the 60’s Dalek movies - “now regarded as charming period pieces; in fact they’re both utter shite” - is quite simply out of order. (For anyone who cares, the 60’s Dalek movies are brilliant. I reccomend the widescreen remastered editions recently released on the Beyond Vision label.)

As with the Discontinuity Guide, the authors’ knowledge of Who comic-strip history is staggering, from the Marvel strips, to TV Century 21, TV Comic, and the short-lived Countdown, and, like me, they mourn the passing of Marvel’s Doctor Who Classic Comics. (Issue 2 reprinted the first ever Who strip, The Klepton Parasites, whose baddies, the Kleptons, could have been more popular than the Daleks if they’d been given airtime. No, really, they could. Stop laughing at me.) They are also well versed in the World annuals and such tomes as the Dalek Dictionary and the Doctor Who Quiz Book of Dinosaurs. However, much to my disappointment, the classic Make Your Own Adventure With Doctor Who books from the eighties do not so much as warrant a mention. For the record, these featured the Sixth Doctor, Peri, Turlough (?!?) and - hey, you, the reader! (As long as you didn’t mind being called “Chris”.) Crisis in Space
by Michael Holt is my personal favourite, and opens with this classic letter to you from the Doctor himself (© Michael Holt, 1986):

Chris, may I have a nanosecond of your time? I am about to go on a new space trip. I shall need a new assistant. I have two very able ones. They are standing over me as I type this on my Word Box, er Processor. Have you met them? Peri and Turlough. Peri's a cool young miss. Dresses with flair and thinks with zip. ("Or the other way round." Peri suggests.) She comes from New England in the US of A. A real Annie Get Your Gun gal! Turlough, now - he went to school in "little ol' England". Good shot with a laser gun. Good man in a tight spot.

My new mission promises to be pretty exciting, so awesome, so terrible, so mind-blowingly Earth-shatteringly (literally!) so - ("Get on with it!" Turlough has just shouted over my shoulder) - er ... well ... that I shall need a new assistant.

Peri's asked me to say: THE DOCTOR NEEDS YOU!

WARNING: Before you decide to accept my offer to join the crew of the TARDIS, beware! Are you ready to have a go? Wherever you are in space, whoever you meet? Dare you pit your strength and wits against that monster of the Milky Way, Garth Hadeez? Dare you look upon Queen Tyrannica? Garth's devoted and beautiful wife? Not too squeamish to face Garth's master slaves, the Golons? Could you bear to rub shoulders with the Golons' slave robots, the slimy black Maggots? Could you square up to a Black Hole?

Not put off? Good! Welcome aboard. Step into the TARDIS and begin the adventure of your life with me, the Doctor.

How could any self-respecting fan refuse such an invitation? I certainly couldn't. Of course, a Missing Adventure needs to be written accounting for where Turlough learned to be a "Good shot with a laser gun" (the Doctor's reluctance to use firearms is countered by the Sixth Doctor's total willingness to use them when it suited him), the circumstances surrounding his return to the Doctor's side, and a good reason for why the Doctor becomes totally incoherent halfway through this epistle. But apart from that, the canonicity of this adventure would appear to be beyond dispute. Oh yes, and Gail Bennett's illustrations for the book are equally brilliant. (The one accompanying section 11 of Crisis in Space depicts a suitably voluptuous Peri, tied to a burning stake, screaming in extreme and obvious pain whilst being leered at by deformed peasants...
on Gallow’s Hill. I do not even need to justify its merit."

Let’s face it. With fans like us, Doctor Who hardly needs enemies. I am not blessed with Mr. Cornell’s ability to see a story in several different ways at once. When I sit down to watch The Chase, I have to make a conscious decision whether I am about to watch an integral part of Dalek history, or whether I am about to watch one of the funniest Who stories ever, consisting of six tenuously linked episodes guest starring the Beatles, Frankenstein, a toy panda called Hi-Fi, a guest appearance by the Daleks’ Louis Marks counterparts (not an uncommon phenomenon in the sixties), a screaming Dalek (the one who falls off the Mary Celeste - the same thing happens when a Dalek gets pushed down a shaft in the 60’s Dalek movie

Doctor Who and the Daleks - and who said only companions scream?), and, most memorably of all, the Mechanoids, in their first and only TV appearance (although their ongoing war with the Daleks could be enjoyed in the Dalek Chronicles comic-strips*).

Even with a less wacky story - the disturbing and intelligent Kinda, for example - I have to decide whether to let the measured pacing, convincing acting and fascinating exploration of Buddhist/Biblical themes be Marada (marred) by the appearance of a pink pantomime snake, collapsing under its own ever-increasing papier maché weight. The fact that a near-identical serpent model was supposed to be a pantomime snake in the sequel, Snakedance, is hardly a vote of confidence. But surely what I am suffering from here is a lack of imagination; an inability to suspend my disbelief. Isn’t it? Of course not. I have the utmost belief in what happens in a Doctor Who story, and its place in the history of the Who mythos. There is nothing to be gained from simply regarding a story as a group of actors parading in front of a camera in a studio. But there is some silly humour to be had out of situations such as the Mara’s physical manifestation, and silly humour is a priority of mine. Whether I like it or not - it is simply a priority that cannot co-exist with my need to believe. So I have to give both priorities an opportunity to be expressed.

Stories such as Crisis In Space, which inhabit the apocryphal twilight zone between the canonical and the imaginary, are easier to laugh at with a free conscience. But paradoxically, there is a similar perverse humour to be had from treating the kind of stories that only make it to cereal packets as utterly serious. Is it just me, or did anybody else find that the Dreadnought comic-
strip on the “sci-fi page” of the *Radio Times*, featuring the Eighth Doctor, was not only more entertaining than the TV-movie, but also satisfied my child-like need for greater continuity, and was even, in its lighthearted and carefree manner, a better exploration of the Eighth Doctor’s character! The same can be said of DWM’s *Endgame* comic strip, which pitted the Eighth Doctor against the Celestial Toymaker, in the latter’s first appearance since the missing season twenty-three story *The Nightmare Fair* and a DWM Brief Encounter that pitted him against Fenric in a game of chess. His assistant in *Endgame* is named Marwood, after the name that was used for Paul McGann’s character in the script of *Withnail And I*, but not in the finished film. Ha ha.

A series such as *Red Dwarf*, of course, which sets itself up as a comedy, absolves its fan-base of the aforementioned funny/serious dichotomy. You can take the series as seriously or as light-heartedly as you want, and still get a kick out of it. The characters of Rimmer and Lister are a perfect foil for this - the perpetual emphasis on Rimmer’s sexual inferiority to Lister (witness Rimmer’s first actions after being transferred to Lister’s body in season three’s *Bodyswap*) allows fans at the extreme end of the stereotypical sci-fi fan spectrum to identify with Rimmer, and those at the extreme end of the stereotypical couch-potato slob spectrum to identify with Lister. The irony is that with his mastery of rhetoric, and particularly of sarcasm, Rimmer has a much better sense of humour than Lister, despite Rimmer’s countless faults.

In the *Smeg Duts* video of *Red Dwarf* outtakes, Kryten is repeatedly heard to tell fans asking pedantic questions to get a life, and Kryten’s moving speech about being treated as a friend by non-mechanoids in *The Last Day* is followed by Lister telling him “Don’t give me the *Star Trek* crap, it’s too early in the morning.” Those *Red Dwarf* fans who actually had a serious concern about the series’ continuity had to slow down the blurb at the beginning of *Backwards* in order to account for all the discrepancies between the second and third seasons, whereas the casual viewer could ignore it at will. Is it any surprise that the authors of the *Completely Useless Encyclopedia* also brought us the *Red Dwarf Programme Guide*?

I consider the *Completely Useless Encyclopedia* to be an essential book for fans. It only to give them some sense of perspective concerning both the *Doctor Who* TV program and the *Doctor Who* fan phenomenon. To use Peter Darvill-Evans’ pull-quote: “The ideal reference work for you, if you’re not a Scarf-Wearing Fanatical Completist (and if you are you’ll have to buy it anyway).”

*Hey, wouldn’t it be cool if the Imperial Daleks, the Renegade Daleks, the Mechanoids and the Movellans all had a massive and pointless space war?*

Sandy Starr
This article began as a re-examination of *The Trial Of A Time Lord* a decade after its transmission. However, after a while, I realised that much of what I was saying had been said better before. I therefore decided to look at the Trial from another perspective, and examine the consequences of the Doctor’s experiences of that time within the context of the Doctor Who universe. As a result, I shall be using some of Virgin’s *New and Missing Adventures*, and shall be treating them as canonical. I make no apology for this; in this decade, Virgin has made a far greater contribution to the continuing saga of Doctor Who than the BBC, or even Philip Segal.

The aspect of the Trial which will lead to the greatest need for exegesis must be the nature of the Valeyard. The
dissolution and reformation of the High Council and crisis on Gallifrey take second place to this. After all, the occasions on which we see Gallifrey are few; we only hear of matters on the planet via the Keeper of the Matrix in Trial. Furthermore, deadeepee on Gallifrey is not a new story, but has been floating around since The Deadly Assassin. Far more immediate to us is the plight of the Doctor, as he is faced with his nemesis, described cryptically by the Master as:

‘...an amalgamation of your darker side, somewhere between your twelfth and final regeneration.’

What are we to make of this? The Valeyard is one of the Doctor’s future selves, but not an actual regenerated Doctor. He is ‘somewhere between’, like the Watcher in Logopolis or Cho-je in Planet of the Spiders, who is a projected form of K’Aboo’s next regeneration. This raises the question that if the Valeyard is a projection, or part of a possible future, must he come about, or does the Doctor, with this knowledge of what his future may be, change it? After all, the Doctor’s Time Lord nature has enabled him to break time loops and change history before, in cases such as Day of the Daleks, where beings with a less developed time sense simply became caught up in it. Most writers since Trial have taken the view that by altering his present actions the Doctor can indeed change his future, despite the inherent time paradox this would create; if the Doctor used his knowledge of the Valeyard to avert his creation, how would he gain his knowledge of his darker side? The initial plan for the Valeyard, that he would be very definitely the Doctor’s final incarnation, desperate to continue his own life (much as the Master is in many of his later stories) makes rather more sense. At any rate it avoids the need for projections and alternative futures. But we must live with the broadcast version.

The chief paradox the existence of the Valeyard creates is the question of how, even assuming that regenerations are transferable from one Time Lord to another, the Valeyard could be given the Doctor’s remaining seven regenerations when, as a version of the Doctor’s future self, these are regenerations he has already had. Any attempt to kill the Doctor, his past self, would surely wipe out the Valeyard as well. An attempt which has been made to explain this is that the Valeyard does not want the Doctor’s regenerations as such, but rather wants the opportunity to influence the Doctor’s future regenerations in order to be sure that he, the Valeyard, is let out of the Doctor’s subconscious at some point in the future in order to inherit a stable body, not a projection. The question of a renewable regenerative cycle has been an issue ever since The Five Doctors, in which Borusa offers the Master, by this time using the body of the Trakenite Tremas, a ‘complete new life cycle’ of regenerations. It is unclear whether Borusa could actually have lived up to his promise; he may have been lying to gain the Master’s assistance. In the same story the Doctor claims that immortality is ‘impossible, even for a Time Lord’. Borusa’s need for Rassilon to grant him immortality does seem to bely his claim to be able to grant a new regenerative cycle. In First Frontier, however, a new
Adventure by Davis Maelstee, the Doctor's claim from The Deadly Assassin that 'there are worlds out there where all this Gallifreyan technology would be nothing but antiquated rubbish' is borne out. In this story, a powerful race known as the Tzun succeed in purifying the Master's body of both Killing and Trakenite DNA and restoring his Time Lord heritage, proof of which is given later in the story when, after being shot by Ace, he succeeds in regenerating. Apparently, then, a new regenerative eye is possible, though presumably not without its risks (and we should bear in mind that by the time of Enemy Within the Master has once again wasted all his lives). This is not particularly surprising if we accept the view of Mare Platt in Cat's Cradle: Time's Creuble, adopted by Lance Parkin in Cold Fusion, that since the time of Raasilon all Time Lords have been genetically engineered 'from the loom.' The Valeyard, however, seems not to have access to such genetic engineering.

The Doctor's dilemma in the stories following Trial is how to avoid becoming the Valeyard. In Steve Lyons' Time of Your Life, set immediately after the Trial (in the Doctor's timeline, anyway, and so without Mel) the Doctor is pressed by the Celestial Intervention Agency to conduct an investigation into unauthorized time scooping for them, but refuses to act for several months on the basis that any action he might take could set in motion a chain of events which would bring the Valeyard into being. To escape this fate he becomes a hermit (again) but by the end of the story has realized that his delay has in fact cost several people their lives. In the Missing Adventure, Killing Ground, written (again by Lyons) to follow Time of Your Life,
transformations: whether of PCs into cloth, computer nerds into Hounds of the Baskervilles, or Mel into an all-powerful ruler. But the most terrifying change of all is the Doctor’s transformation into the Valeyard, as his character is not darkened and becomes the Valeyard’s robes, and at one point the Valeyard uses the Doctor’s regenerative powers to affect a temporary physical transformation. The Doctor eventually comes to the conclusion that he has two Valeyards to contend with; the one he met at his trial, from a possible future, and one created of the fears in his own mind. It is this second, self-created Valeyard with which the Doctor contends in *Millennial Rites*, and with which he is still concerned in Lawrence Miles’ *Christmas on a Rational Planet*.

I’ve given the Valeyard enough opportunities to escape already.

Of course, the Doctor’s worry must be that the second Valeyard will become the first, gaining physical manifestation, and we must begin to wonder what lengths he will go to avoid this happening. Logically, *Millennial Rites* must happen relatively close to the Doctor’s sixth regeneration; he has met Mel, they have dealt with the Vervoid, and we should try to identify the length of the Doctor’s lifespan; for all we know decades pass between the end of *Trial* and the beginning of *Time and the Rani*. The Doctor is quite capable of leaving his companions in a safe place and doing some travelling on his own (as in the *New Adventures*, *Birthright* and *Iceberg*), but by the time of Hinton’s story the end of the sixth Doctor’s life must be near. This makes the optimistic scene by the Thames at the end of the novel peculiarly ironic. Despite his belief that his dark side has been banished and that he himself is a stable incarnation, we may realize that the sixth Doctor is living on borrowed time. The farcical nature of his regeneration is highlighted in *Head Games* when Bernice and Mel discuss the Doctor’s last change:

‘I’ve come to think of him as invulnerable. Yet you saw him die one of him at least. How did it happen?’

‘...Well, he fell over and banged his head on the TARDIS console.’

The question of how such a mundane event could trigger a regeneration leads to some interesting implications. Was it simply a jolt to the Doctor’s brain chemistry that produced the seventh Doctor, who has become the self-styled ‘Time’s Champion’ by the time of the *New Adventures*, or were darker forces at work? The seventh Doctor has a tendency to use time travel to ‘fix’ things for himself. An excellent example of this can be found in *Decalog 3: Consequences*, in which the Doctor alters the entire personal history of an individual in order to borrow a library book. Given this kind of meddling, is it too far fetched to wonder whether the seventh Doctor caused his own creation? In the *Doctor Who Appreciation Society*’s fiction magazine, *Cosmic Masque*, a story by Paul Cornell, *The Ashes Of Our Fathers* was published in which the seventh Doctor links his TARDIS with that of his predecessor and explains that the continued existence of the sixth Doctor risks the creation of the Valeyard. The sixth incarnation willingly gives up his life to avoid this, as his successor programs the TARDIS to begin
the sequence which will cause it, in concert
with the Rani’s interference, to erash on
Lakertia. This explanation for the
regeneration has, to my mind, been
supereceded by *Head Games* in which, thanks
to the influence of the *Land of Fiction*, the
Sixth Doctor is able to confront the Seventh.
Here the implication is that the Doctor
caused his regeneration at some
subconscious level: that the Seventh Doctor,
waiting to be born, ousted the Sixth. The
Sixth Doctor, in this confrontation, is very
clear that his life was taken from him;
unlike in the *Cosmic Masque* story, he was
not a willing participant in his own demise.
And the Seventh Doctor’s claim that the
change was necessary because his
predecessor was ‘unstable’ and risked
creating the Valeyard seems unlikely. Long
before the end of his tenure the Sixth
Doctor was showing none of the arguably
‘unstable’ characteristics of ‘The Twin
Dilemma.’ He was always flamboyant and
eccentric beyond the auspices of any other
Doctor, but hardly unstable. The Seventh
Doctor himself surely risks the incarnation
of the Valeyard more than the Sixth ever
did, a point which the Seventh Doctor’s past
self makes in their fictional confrontation.
He has performed actions of which his
previous manifestations would have been
inexplicable: manipulating Ace in *The Curse of
Fennic* and *Ghost Light*, manipulating
everybody in the *New Adventures*, killing
legion in cold blood in *Deeas(?)*: wiping out a
solar system in *The Pit*, and destroying
whole universes in *Blood Heat* and *Cold
Fusion*. He would argue that he was
justified, of course, but the fifth Doctor is
not convinced of this in *Cold Fusion*, and
indeed the seventh Doctor’s methods bring
to mind one of his past selves’ adages: the
end never justifies the means. As Mel
says in *Head Games*:

‘The Doctor I first knew was
a lot more human than you. He cared for
people!’

And the Seventh Doctor’s
reply:

‘He was halfway to becoming
the Valeyard. He almost killed you, here on
Earth, at Canary Wharf Tower in 1999. He
would have sacrificed you to save his own
soul!’

Having read both *Millepial
Rites* and many other *New Adventures*, it is
difficult to credit the Seventh Doctor’s
dismissive approach to his former self’s
misdemeanours.
By the time of *Enemy Within* the Seventh Doctor seems to be more like his initial self from season twenty four and twenty five than the tortured individual of the *New Adventures*. In the remaining few months before its licensee expires, Virgin Books is going to have to show a transition towards this, in order to have some consistency. This has already begun in Kate Orman’s *The Room with No Doors*, in which the eponymous room is a prison for the Seventh Doctor being prepared in his mind by the latent personalities of his former selves, just as he imprisoned the Sixth Doctor. In this novel, the Doctor makes it very clear that he considers himself separate from the person he will be after his impending regeneration. ‘It won’t be me’, he says. This is consistent with the Doctor’s reaction to his other selves in *The Three, Five, and Two Doctors*. Furthermore, in *The Room with No Doors*, the Doctor resolves to absolve himself from the self-imposed role of ‘Time’s Champion’, a clear shift towards the Doctor of *Enemy Within*. He even decides that he no longer needs to hold captive the remnants of his Sixth personality within his mind as he prepares to start anew; there is even a sense of death and resurrection for the novel which, though perhaps rather heavy on the symbolism, does its job of preparing him for a return to his more innocent, travelling ways. Nevertheless, can the Doctor ever truly banish the Valeyard? He surely cannot prevent himself from thinking dark thoughts, and it is from his subconsciousness that the Valeyard will one day emerge, if he emerges at all.

Al Harrison
Is it just me, or is anybody else thoroughly fed up with Fox’s release schedule for The X-Files? A while back, we were given the first eight episodes of season one on four videos, only for them to be withdrawn and the series stopped (allegedly because it conflicted with the economics of cable-channel Sky). Then we were given something called File 1 - The Unopened File, which turned out to be a compilation of the second season’s conclusion and the third season’s opening (the sequencing of a storyline over a mid-season break having been shown to be economically profitable by ST:TNG’s The Best Of Both Worlds). This storyline was one of the most important components of Chris Carter’s international cable/UFO conspiracy story-arc, and was, in this format, completely out of context for the genuine X-Phile.

This release was followed, somewhat arbitrarily, by a compilation of Squeeze and Tooms from either end of the first season, two stories that weren’t even consecutive (the laughable “one year later” segueing device familiar to us from the editing of episodes of The Flash into sequels to the pilot). These episodes had absolutely nothing to do with the story-arc, and the decision to release later episodes before earlier ones stemmed purely from the desire to arouse initial fan interest with productions untransmitted on terrestrial TV. This caused further disorientation for first-time viewers when the third release, a compilation of season two’s Duane Barry/branched DNA intrigue, contained many of the seeds of events that occurred in the first video. The fact that the three episodes contained on the third video were not conceived as a cohesive trilogy, but merely as a series of loosely related plots, also meant that the compilation version was totally lacking in dynamics and pacing; and compared to Mulder’s flirtation with the grave in the later story, Scully’s earlier coma seems laughable (a flashback to her childhood is one of the weakest and most embarrassing scenes yet witnessed in the series).

And on a lighter note, while I’m in X-rant mode, is anybody else fed up with seeing Gillian Anderson on the cover of every single magazine these days? (Regardless of the kind of magazine - everything from TV Zone to Cosmo) seems to be fair game. How much longer before she’s in Boxing Monthly?) Anybody that is obsessed with her “unconventional” (read “non-existent”) beauty can take solace from the fact that, like New Adventures Of Superman star Teri Hatcher, she has taken time out, either before or during her cult TV career, to do at least one crap film in which she gets all her kit off. Surprisingly enough, their careers have not suffered at all as a result. Maybe cult TV stars this side of the Atlantic would do well to sit up and take notice - come in, Nicola Bryant, your time is nearly up.

As if fandom had not been insulted enough already, a proposed fourth release was postponed to make way for yet more material untransmitted terrestrially, whilst the ridiculous numbering of the videos continued as though this fourth video had been released, leaving a disconcerting gap in the collection of any would-be collector. Season one was eventually made available in its entirety, with whatever bits of “rare” interview material they could scrape up to pad it out, in a box-set of five long-play videos with a price-tag of about £80.00 attached to it. Admittedly, this was a bargain price for a whole season’s worth of stories (in a country where seasons run to a reasonable length, if only because of the dictates of profit), but it was still a bit much to spring on unsuspecting fandom after the preceding debacle. At least Paramount had the courtesy to release all episodes of ST:TNG consecutively and unedited before they started messing around with and compiling them.

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