Oxford's Unique Doctor Who and Cult Television Magazine
Published by the Oxford University Doctor Who Society
FIVE YEAR PLANS (David Bickley) 3
The terrible truth about Babylon 5 and Jon Pertwee

HERCULES – A USER’S GUIDE (Penny Goodman) 4

PENALTY PHASE (Matthew Peacock) 7
"The entropy I released destroyed over thirty percent of all lifeforms in the universe. Would your gods do that?"

PURE MATHEMATICS (Matthew Peacock) 9
How much does the BBC make out of Doctor Who? You’d be surprised. Alarmed. And a bit miffed too.

THREE OF FIVE (Dave Howdon) 10
Dave risks a fate worse than death by saying good things about B5’s final season.

THE TIME PROPHET (Alan Whitten) 12
The eighth Doctor and Sam race against time to save the Earth from the evil Gvororoks.

THE SEARCH FOR EXTRA-TERRESTRIAL INTELLIGENCE (Robert Priddy) 14

CRISIS ON PTARMIGAN (Alasdair Prett) 16

REBOOT (Fiona Moore) 18
Time to broaden your horizons.

WORST CASE SCENARIO (William Ramsden) 20
The third Doctor has had enough.

THE MISJUDGEMENT OF LYTTON (Fiona Moore) 22

THE DALEKS: A TWENTIETH CENTURY EVIL (John Wilson) 23

A SECRETARY SPEAKS (David Bickley) 24
Those of you who are easily offended might want to avoid this one. But I could say that about most of this magazine...

THE TIME PROPHET II 26
The action hot up as the Gvororoks descend on Cape Canaveral.

VALE, STEPHEN COLE (Alastair Harrison) 28

CODA (Matthew Peacock) 30
A little interlude with fruits.

HELLWHO! (Matthew Kilburn) 31
Hot news of the DocSoc glitterati.

EDITORIAL

Somebody said that if I ended up President next year it'd be because all the good people had left. But how can you say that, looking at the throng in Wadhams on a Monday night? I was reminded of dribbly old Claudius - he became Emperor of Rome by waiting until all his relatives had killed each other.

So here are some presidents past and future:

Julius Caesar  Julian Mander
Mark Antony  Anthony Wilson
Augustus (beard)  John Wilson
Livia  Corinne Berg
Tiberius  Kevin Donnelly
Caillagua  At Harrison
Claudius  The Editor?
Nero  ???

But I rather think I will be doing Finals, Viva, &c. That’s assuming any of you people actually wanted me (unlikely). But anyway, Good Luck, to the One Who Will Be, and to you all, and a bit to me so that I get to do the D. Pull course I have wanted for so long...

Matthew Peacock

You might also be interested in our sister magazine, The Troglocyte, published by OU Who guru Matthew Kilburn (see left). He can be contacted at:
8 Glastonbury Court, Farrow Lane, London SE14 5EA or
matthew@glasycopress.freerice.co.uk

Published in January 1999 by the Oxford University Doctor Who Society. Reissued online in October 2014 at tidesoftime.wordpress.com. The reissuer acknowledges that copyright in the article texts remains with the original contributors. Doctor Who is copyright © 1963, 2014 BBC Worldwide Ltd. All postal addresses in this issue should be considered defunct!
## Five Year Plans

In a *Tides of Time* exclusive, we reveal the disturbing truth that lies behind the façade of *Babylon 5* – the entire series was modelled on the five years in which Jon Pertwee served as the Doctor. Study this simple table and wonder...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>The Pertwee Era</th>
<th>Babylon 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The first season of the Pertwee era is rather different in style to what was to come. Once disregarded by fans, it has been re-evaluated in recent years.</td>
<td>The first season of Babylon 5 is rather different in style to what was to come. Once disregarded by fans, it has been re-evaluated in recent years.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>There is a major change of personnel as Liz Shaw departs off-screen before the start of the season and Jo Grant arrives. A new enemy for our heroes, the Master, comes to the fore.</td>
<td>There is a major change of personnel as Commander Sinclair departs off-screen before the start of the season and Captain Sheridan arrives. A new enemy for our heroes, the Shadows, comes to the fore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The style established in the previous season continues with the Master continuing to make appearances. The quality of the show varies dramatically with superb stories like <em>The Curse of Peladon</em> rubbing shoulders uneasily with <em>The Time Monster</em>.</td>
<td>The style established in the previous season continues with the Shadows continuing to make appearances. The quality of the show varies dramatically with superb stories like <em>Severed Dreams</em> rubbing shoulders uneasily with <em>Gray 17 is Missing</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>The format of the programme changes dramatically as the action shifts off Earth and onto alien planets on a regular basis. The Master departs from the era in a rather disappointing manner. A leading character, Jo Grant, also leaves, in emotional circumstances.</td>
<td>The format of the programme changes dramatically as the action shifts off Babylon 5 and onto alien planets on a regular basis. The Shadows depart from the series in a rather disappointing manner. A leading character, Susan Ivanova, also leaves, in emotional circumstances.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A new female lead, Sarah-Jane Smith, arrives. The programme seems a little weary and padding like gratuitous action scenes and chases becomes even more apparent. The era comes to an end with something of a whimper, rather than the blaze of glory which had been expected.</td>
<td>A new female lead, Elizabeth Lochley, arrives. The programme seems a little weary and padding like gratuitous anecdotes and second-hand philosophy becomes even more apparent. The series comes to an end with something of a whimper, rather than the blaze of glory which had been expected.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*David Bickley*
Hercules - A User's Guide

Let Penny Goodman be your guide as you enter a time of myth and legend...

This, for me, is one of the greatest strengths of the series. While it has a strong grounding in the mythological exploits of the Greek hero Herakles, the series producers, Action Pack, are no more constrained by a belief that their stories should be consistent, believable or historically accurate than was the average Greek bard, making up the bits of the story he couldn't remember. Even Herakles, a more than usually active hero with plenty more exploits to his name than the famous Twelve Labours alone, couldn't provide enough material for a series now into its fifth season and nearing its 100th episode, and the show's script-writing team have never seen the need to let the respect for the Classics stand in the way of a good fight scene.

Most episodes follow roughly the same basic format - Hercules and Iolaus come across a monster, a raging god / goddess or a major misunderstanding between neighbouring kingdoms on their travels, fight a load of baddies, save the village, deliver some cheesy lines and meanwhile teach everyone to be good and wholesome people and get along together. But there's also plenty of room for 'sillies' - try, for instance, Les Contemplatifs, set entirely in 18th century France, where future descendants of Hercules and Iolaus learn to fight for the cause of the revolution, inspired by the legend of the Greek hero. Or Beanstalks and Bad Eggs, where Hercules starts climbing overgrown plants to reach castles in the clouds...

Hercules and Iolaus wonder what's in store for them this week.

The TV series originally developed out of a series of made-for-TV movies, shot by Action Pack in 1993, during the course of which the basic characters and premise for the series were developed. Hercules and Iolaus were played from the beginning by the droolsome Kevin Sorbo and Michael Hurst, but there were a few other adjustments to be made as things slid into place. For instance, the first film, Hercules and the Amazon Women, featured the then unknown Lucy Lawless,
as Lysia, the second-in-command of a group of Amazons. Meanwhile, *Hercules and the Lost Kingdom* introduced Hercules' future wife, Deianeira, at the time played by Renee O'Connor.

The third film, *Hercules and the Circle of Fire*, ended with our Herc getting married to Deianeira, by now played by Tawny Kitaen, real-life wife of Whitesnake singer David Coverdale, and subject of the aforementioned band's 'Kitten's Got Claws'. They settled down happily to raise a wholesome all-American family, leaving Iolaus to his own devices. And although Hercules did get called away to the odd adventure in *Hercules in the Underworld* and *Hercules in the Maze of the Minotaur*, he always made sure he was back home in time for dinner.

Here, a promising formula could have ground itself right into the Grecian dust. After all, a happily settled family man with no grudges and no enemies provides only limited adventuring potential. But, encouraged by the success of the movies, Action Pack decided to launch a TV series, and solved their plot problem in the first episode, *The Wrong Path*. Hera, who has never forgiven Hercules for being Zeus' illegitimate son, kills his entire family, leaving him free to fight, and giving him a good reason to do it. Whilst on a rampage around Greece, destroying all of Hera's temples, Hercules learns that his friend Iolaus has been turned to stone by an evil she-demon. Herc comes to the rescue, saving not only Iolaus, but a whole host of grateful villagers. And when he sees how much good he's done, he realises that the only way he can ease his grief over Deianeira, and foil Hera's evil plans to boot, is to go around the countryside helping people.

Thus, a winning formula was born, and since then the series has blossomed, introducing a plethora of colourful characters along the way. Hercules and Iolaus will, of course, always remain the central figures, and it is their friendship which provides the key to most of the plots. If one is captured, tricked or somehow turned away from the cause of goodness, the other is never far behind to save the day. Hercules himself is a highly moral character, who can never allow anyone to suffer while there's a chance he could help them, and always (well... almost always) remains faithful to the memory of his wife, Deianeira. He's strong, but gentle (a strength surpassed only by the power of his heart, as the titles have it), and believes that there's some good in everybody.

On his own, this could become incredibly tedious, but right from the very first TV movie, Hercules was balanced out nicely by the wise-cracking, womanising, fun-loving Iolaus. Half-gods can be a little hard to relate to, but the mortal Iolaus is there to act as the audience's voice in the series: 'You're not seriously going to...?', 'Er, Herc, I think we should be going now...', etc. While Hercules is distressingly celibate, afraid of nothing, and always prepared to make any sacrifice to help others, Iolaus seems to have a girlfriend in every village, and is reassuringly apprehensive in the face of certain death. It's also a long-running joke that everyone they meet has heard of Hercules and his great deeds, but no-one can remember Iolaus' name, and this provides for some good plot-lines when Iolaus gets mad about it and decides he needs to prove himself.

Another character to appear early on was Salmoneus, an enterprising toga salesman who sees business opportunities where other men see only horse manure, and has one single all-consuming passion - gold! Salmoneus (Robert Trebor) attached himself to Hercules in the second episode of the TV series, *Eye of the Beholder*, attempting to sell him a pair of sandals with pump-up gut soles. Since then, he has been seen attempting to interest potential customers in wrist-sunds, souvenirs Hercules medallions and a Chamber of Horrors, unfortunately complete with a real Mummy. Where Iolaus retains a healthy respect for danger, Salmoneus is petrified of the tiniest spider, and provides our heroes with plenty of rescue opportunities.

Then, of course, there's Xena. Lucy Lawless had played a few minor parts in Hercules before she finally hit the right one in episode 9, *The Warrior Princess*. Here she appeared for the first time as Xena, an Amazon determined to kill Hercules in order to secure power over the whole of Areadia. Within the space of 4 episodes, Hercules had won her over sufficiently for her to fight side-by-side with him against her evil lieutenant, Darphus, and by end of the fifth (*The Unchained Heart*), they've fallen in love, gone through a series of extremely steamy love-scenes, and Xena has realised that she too must go forth and do good in her own spin-off series to make up for her past mis-deeds. Renee O'Connor, however, the original Deianeira, did not take up the role of the lyric poetess Gabrielle until *Xena: Warrior Princess* was launched.
As a half-god, Hercules also has his fair share of divine friends, foes and relatives. His father, Zeus, appeared in all five of the original movies, memorably portrayed by Anthony Quinn as a slightly absent-minded but well-meaning father, and an indulgent grandfather to Hercules' children. Nemesis appears from time to time as a could-have-been fling of Hercules', and Hades is usually grudgingly prepared to lend a hand so long as it's not too inconvenient. But the slick, leather-clad Ares and his try-too-hard companion Strife always spell trouble for our hero. They, and most of the other nasty characters in the series, are usually acting as the minions of Hera, who never appears herself, but remains a dark presence, continually overshadowing Hercules' finest moments.

Ares is convinced he'll get Hercules this time.

But by far the coolest of the immortals has just got to be Aphrodite! A bleach-blonde beach-babe of a goddess, she appeared for the first time in the season two episode, The Apple, directed by none other than Kevin Sorbo himself. This is basically a judgement of Paris story, except that Iolaus takes the role of Paris, forced to judge between Artemis, Athena and Aphrodite. Naturally, being goddesses, none of them play by the rules. Artemis and Athena dashing off to do work-outs and get their hair done before the competition begins. Meanwhile, Aphrodite (played by Alexandra Tydings) is a little more cunning when she windsurfs up to Iolaus in a giant sea-shell, and offers him a golden apple which will make any girl fall in love with him if he promises to choose her. This is just too much for Iolaus, so he names Aphrodite the winner, arousing the fury of the other two goddesses, who storm off in a huff. Since then, Aphrodite has appeared regularly, working all kinds of mischief over the hearts of men.

Aphrodite takes in a little Windsurfing practice.

Once you've met just a few of these characters, it becomes impossible to resist the weekly invitation to drop in on their world for an hour each week (or even two hours if you're lucky enough to have satellite, since Hercules airs every week at 7 o'clock on Sky, just after the Channel 5 episode has finished). Xena is, of course, almost equally irresistible, although it has to be said that I personally find as a female viewer that Hercules for some reason has a greater attraction... And the latest addition to the family, still to hit the UK but airing now in the States, is Young Hercules, yet another spin-off starring a teenage Hercules who has cropped up in a fair few flashbacks during Hercules: The Legendary Journeys.

Is there no end to it all? Well, with merchandise blossoming, endless Internet sites springing up and a sixth season in preparation, it seems not. Despite experimenting with the cinema in Kull The Conqueror (Universal Pictures' prequel to Conan The Barbarian) in 1997, and chopping off his flowing locks early in 1998, Sorbo (who wore extensions in the first few movies anyway) has shown no signs of tiring of the role. Whatever the future may hold, Hercules has certainly made its impact on the popular consciousness, and is on its way to becoming as legendary in the minds of its many fans as the Greek hero who started it all off.

Want to know more about Hercules and his pals? Check out some of these Internet sites:

http://www.cannylink.com/spacesci-fi/hercules.htm
http://www.angelfire.com/co/greekbard/index.html
http://vickib.simplenet.com/hercbody.htm
http://www/cris/com/~msmoo/sorbo/sorbc1.htm
http://www.blinternet.com/~denisesmither
http://www.mca.com/tv/hercules/siteindex.html
The guards snapped to attention when they saw the Doctor coming. He didn't bother to show them his ID, they didn't bother to ask. They made room for him to stand in front of the door.

"Has he said anything?" The Doctor was whispering, even though the door was quite sound-proof. "Has he asked for anything?"

The senior of the two shook his head.

The Doctor slid back the sphyve cover and peered through. The prisoner was sitting in the shadows, away from the sickly yellow sunlight pooling in the centre of the room. He wore the darkness like a child's blanket. His eyes stared blankly into the deeper shadow. He was the Master. That name had never sounded so ironic. Somewhere else, they were deciding whether to take his life.

* * *

The Master betrayed no reaction when the Doctor came in and sat down on the unused bed. The Doctor tried to make a gentle empathic contact, but the blinds were down. Time Lords could interact on such subtle levels that when they were together in any numbers they had to fight all the time to stop losing themselves in the group mind. That was why so many of their people led a solitary life. It might even have been why the Doctor went on the run in the first place. The Master had been on the run too, but he had refused to bow down when he was caught. Imprisonment had been like a game to him at first. He towered over his captors with effortless, innate superiority. But even he had weakened. At first his attempts to hypnotise his guards were a game because he knew he would win. They became a torture when he realised he could not.

He was a Time Lord of the first rank. His dignity was all he had left. He got up, stretched, and stood facing the Doctor.

"I wasn't aware I was allowed visitors."

"They let me in. They always do. How are they treating you?"

"They aren't. I haven't seen anyone since..." Since the verdict. "Oh well, I suppose that idiot of a lawyer will be turning up again sometime soon. She's going to ask me to fall on the mercy of the court, I imagine." The Master tried to laugh, the way he used to laugh. It didn't sound very convincing.

"The lawyer's gone."

"Where?"

"She... she left. No-one knows where. I've come to replace her."

This time the Master really did laugh. The irony of the situation was too much. "You? You'd see me dead tomorrow."

"Only if you don't listen to me."

Time for one, final game then.

"You could listen to me instead."

"All right."

There was no point in euphemism now, no point in circumlocution. "Suppose... Just suppose, I was to offer you something."

"Your TARDIS" said the Doctor, as if it meant nothing.

"My TARDIS is just the start." There were hours, days before the final scene of the courtroom drama was to be played out. But the Master's words were falling over themselves. "Why did you want to travel in time, Doctor?"

"Well, I..."

"You wanted to help."

"Yes."

"But you soon found out you couldn't."

"I could sometimes."

"You were as powerless against the tide of history as the poor souls you claimed to protect, Doctor! Go on, admit it!"

"I could help sometimes," the Doctor hissed.

"When they let you."

"I fail to see what all this has to do with your case. And what do you mean, when they let me? When who let me?"

"It has everything to do with everything, Doctor! Why do you think they didn't show my future at the trial? That is standard judicial procedure, is it not? They didn't show it because they have no idea what it is. I make my own future, I decide when to change and what to change and I can do it. They have no hold over me."

The Doctor had to listen and the Master knew it. Something of the old twinkle, just a hint, was returning to his eyes. The Doctor had begun by trying to make eye contact with him. Now he was avoiding it, fiddling with his paisley handkerchief instead.

"Mass in motion has momentum, Doctor. Mass moving through time has the greatest momentum of all. You can't change its course by poking it with your finger. But you can if the Time Lords bring their weight to bear. You walk among the peoples of the ancient Americas and claim nothing can be changed. But every time you move an object, you make a change. A slight change, yes, but who knows what will happen further down the line? You saved a priest who would have been tortured to death by the
Spanish. What do you think he did with his new life? He wasn’t that old. Maybe he married. What do you think his descendants did?

“You criticise Ace for leaving 1980’s technology in 1960’s London and then abandon fifty or sixty Dalek travel machines there. But the timeline barely changed. The Time Lords came and cleared up your mess.”

“How do you know this?”

“Because your adventures are common knowledge. They show them on the Public Record Video on Gallifrey! The Time Lord establishment shows them to inspire their subjects. You think you’re a rebel but you do their bidding every minute of every day. If you go to a place where there is something they want changed, they isolate it from time and let you work. It takes the entire resources of Gallifrey to smooth out the changes to the timelines – all of Gallifrey, Doctor, just for you. That’s why the Time Lords don’t intervene. There’s only enough power for one at a time!”

The Master paused to let that sink in. Then he pressed his argument home.

“If you go somewhere where they want things to stay the same, they minimise the effects of your stay and let history, more or less, take its course. Or they might redirect your TARDIS altogether. You convince yourself that your journeys are random but every stage in them has been precisely worked out. They knew where your first and second incarnations were all along. They didn’t exile you to Earth in the interests of justice. To them, it was nothing more than an interesting bit of plot development.”

The Doctor stared blankly ahead.

“But it doesn’t have to be like that, Doctor. You can be the master of your own destiny. As I am.”

“How?”

“Release me and I’ll tell you.”

The Doctor - the seventh Doctor - got up and went over to the door. Then he turned. “I could be my own Master,” he said. “But that’s the kind of power no-one was meant to have. I can’t predict the results of my own actions. Even my TARDIS hasn’t got the processing power to do more than guess. Maybe it’s better for everybody if I have a safety-net.”

The Master looked scornfully at him. “You want to be a slave forever? You want to be a pawn?”

“Even if I had all that power, I couldn’t go everywhere and do everything. And if nobody watched me any more, what would be the point? I can’t go everywhere but maybe my name can. Maybe my image can. And maybe that in itself can do some good. You’re offering me a life of nothing but darkness. I want people to see me in action. My greatest fear is what might happen when they can’t.”

The Doctor put his finger on the switch which would signal to the guards that he wanted to be let out. “And if I am the hero of the Public Record Video,” he said, “then have you ever thought that you might be the villain of the piece? You might be a character too.”

“If that were true, Doctor,” said the Master, “then those Time Lords you serve so faithfully would be responsible for all the evil that I have done. Do you remember Logopolis? The entropy I released destroyed over thirty percent of all the life forms in the universe. Did they let it happen? Would your gods do that?”

The Doctor pressed the switch. “I’ll do what I can for you,” he said. The door closed. The Master slowly drew the blankets on the bed around him.

Outside, one of the guards stopped the Doctor. “What did he say?”

“It doesn’t matter,” said the Doctor. “He’ll say anything to save his own skin.” He almost sounded convinced. “I must go.”

They say he listened calmly as his list of evil crimes was read.

Seven Doctors attended the trial on Skaro LXIV. The third spoke in the Master’s defence. It was a long and impassioned speech but the court wasn’t in a mood to listen. The Master was dragged out to the place of sentence. An dispassionate medic injected him with muscle relaxant, but there was no need. He hadn’t struggled, he hadn’t said anything since the trial had resumed.

He was put into an execution chamber.

Somewhere in the distance, a handful of disarmed Daleks cried out in vain as they awaited transport to the Time Lords’ eternal prison.

Millions watched.

Matthew Peacock
“Mathematics Cannot Lie”
(the Doctor, The Claws of Axos)

Well, hope you enjoyed *Penalty Phase*. Sorry it’s me again but I decided the best thing to do would be to get as much of my stuff as possible out of the way as early as possible. Also, one must split up the ranty articles a bit. So here goes.

A question: how much money does the BBC make out of Doctor Who? I must stress that what follows is no more than an exercise in common sense. It is in no way meant to give anything more than an extremely general idea of the way in which a programme which we like a bit has been treated by the organisation which owns it since it was taken of the air in 1989. And, I hope, it isn’t libellous.

There are, approximately, two BBC novel releases a month. In addition to this, there are usually about half-a-dozen videos for sale in any year. Say a book costs a fiver and a video a tenner. Do the multiplication and you discover that you don’t have to be a dedicated fan, by any means, to hand over £100 in folding money to the BBC in a year. And of course, there are higher-priced special releases, books and video.

Now, I don’t even pretend to know how much the average novelisation or video takes to manufacture. One would suspect *The Ice Warriors*, anybody? not a lot. Considering that a dedicated fan could well buy everything released in a year, an average profit per fan per year for the BBC is about £100. Of course many of us don’t spend anything like that kind of amount, myself included, but bear with me.

Each book or video has an average print run of about 20,000 copies, so if you multiply 20,000 fans that the BBC thinks will buy its releases by £100 then you get 2 million oneeners profit from Doctor Who in a year. Of course, not all of those videos will sell out, but then some have higher print runs (*Tomb of the Cybermen* sold over 110,000 copies worldwide). And when you add in those foreign sales, special releases like those awful boxed sets which the BBC released to capitalise on the 30th Anniversary, the fees some at least of the magazines we buy in Smiths pay to use official BBC photographs and even to mention Doctor Who, foreign TV companies buying the rights to screen Doctor Who, use of Doctor Who brands in advertising... Two million pounds a year seems like a reasonable figure, doesn’t it?

But Doctor Who hasn’t been on TV for ten years. At two million a year that’s TWENTY MILLION POUNDS. The BBC has made an eight-figure sum out of a show which it can’t be bothered to make any more. Like the Axos creature, the BBC is sucking everything it can get out of us. Boy, some people somewhere must be laughing. They have us fans over an absolute barrel. And do we get more Who on TV? Yeah, right.

What could you buy for 20 million quid? Several ‘bonnet’ dramas. One pretty decent Hollywood film. Or the screening rights to *The Next Generation*, *Deep Space Nine*, *Voyager*, *Sliders*, *The Outer Limits*... The kinds of shows we quite like, but wouldn’t give a second’s thought if there was Doctor Who on the other side.

I’m not saying you shouldn’t buy BBC products. I’m not saying anything against Steve Cole or BBC Worldwide (who would love to make Doctor Who if they could). But next time, when you lift that weirdly-covered eighth Doctor novel off the shelf just take a moment, imagine some faceless BBC executives, and think “**** ‘em.”

Matthew Peacock
THREE OF FIVE

- well its a lot better than 7 of 9, isn't it? Dave Howdon picks three episodes from Babylon 5's final season that might be worth another look...

(1) A View from the Gallery

This episode is in many ways reminiscent of early season 1. There seems to be little overt development of the arc and indeed a general stand alone feel to the episode. The story follows the actions of two crew members, Bo and Mack, onboard the station during an alien attack. We follow these two workmen from place to place about the station as the station is prepared for the forthcoming attack, which is ultimately repelled.

As with the season 1 episode By Any Means Necessary we get to see behind the scenes and look at the individuals responsible for running the world in which our heroes operate. The use of new characters allows us to view from the outside those with whom we are familiar and gain new insights into them.

The episode also serves well in the developing of the characters added in Season 5, Elizabeth Lochley and Byron. Tracy Scoggins performs her part well here, as a competent commander in control of the situation. It is a shame that she was not restricted to those aspects of the role that she plays well rather than trying to branch out into more emotional areas as in the lamentable Day of the Dead.

Robin Atkin Downes as Byron also turns in an interesting performance muddying somewhat the impression we have of his character dislike of 'mundanes'. Byron of course still has a part steeped in pseudo-mystical nonsense, which can easily become intrusive, but the development of Byron's somewhat reverential attitude towards death will prove important in his eventual suicide. It is also the Byron scenes that convey one of the few arc points contained in this episode. As we later find out in Phoenix Rising Byron was trained by the Psi-Corps as, inter alia, a star-fury pilot and that makes the scene where he shows Bo a Starfury pilot's eye view of the battle a nice piece of foreshadowing.

Where this episode perhaps fails is in the rather unresolved nature of its parts. Who were the aliens that attacked and why was nothing further done about them than to chase them from the station. A bit more interlinking with other episodes, even if just a casual reference later on, would make this episode feel more like part of an on going story rather than the disjoined entity it was.
In the Kingdom of the Blind

I would hope that it is not necessary for me to complete the above quote in order to make the obvious point of a reference to G'Kar. However a more plausible reference is to the 'keeper' implanted on the Regent since there is little sense in this episode in which G'Kar is 'king'. Of course if you wish to go further you could claim that the title is a reference to the HG Wells short story of the same name which shows that the apparent advantage of sight is not actually beneficial in a society designed for the blind, and thus the episode is a reference to G'Kar whose clear-sightedness does not actually help to prevent the problems associated with the Drakh presence on Centauri Prime.

There are two main plot points to this episode. On Centauri Prime Londo and G'Kar start to uncover hints of the Drakh intervention in the world. As always, Damian London turns in an excellent performance as the Regent. Given that this aspect of the plot is basically telling us nothing that we have not known since War Without End - Part II it is interesting to note how captivating these scenes still are. Because we saw the Regent before his rise to power and saw what a trivial character he was it is that much more poignant to see him driven to the edge of despair by the Drakh and his 'keeper'.

The second plot element is a development of the Byron, telepath rebellion, plot line. Showing a singular lack of political intelligence Byron issues a threat to the interstellar alliance in the belief that this will help him achieve his ends. All he succeeds in doing is causing resentment against his people and alienating what support he could have received from the command staff. Given what we later learn about Byron in Phoenix Rising however this makes a lot more sense, Byron is not seeking a peaceful solution, he is seeking to die in order to atone for his crimes as a Psi-Cop trainee.

All-in-all In the Kingdom of the Blind is a good arc development episode, reminiscent of season 2 or 3 of the show.

The Corps is Mother, The Corps is Father

Another episode that works by taking the point of view of another set of characters as opposed to our 'heroes'. Whilst both episodes that do this in season 5 are very successful it is certainly possible to argue that the necessity to do this shows a lack of arc material to go into season 5.

The episode focuses on two Psi-Corps trainees, Chen and Lauren, who along with Alfred Bester come to the station to track down an escaped telepath trainee. It is interesting to note the respect that the interns hold for Bester who is seen as a benevolent figure protecting his people. Throughout most of the episode, right up to the last scene, we see Bester as a decent individual in a world filled with anti-teep bigotry. Zack "tolerance" Allen's comments when Bester appears on the station being a good example. However with the last scene, a casual disregard for the life of mundanes is displayed which again kicks Bester back into the villain role.

The Psi-corps base shown is interesting in its rather institutional format. Given that this is where the telepaths live you would expect it to be a bit more attractive, although inside the rooms of telepaths there is room for expression a beauty. The signs on the walls of the HQ have been seen by many as a reference to 'The Prisoner' a show which JMS greatly admired.

All of this however misses the best aspect of the show, the re-mastered title sequence. The Psi-Corps logo in the place of the 'sword and shield' emblem is a wonderful shock to the viewer and, best of all, the graffiti on the end of the station has been removed.

Dave Howdon
THE TIME PROPHET

Set between the BBC Novels The Eight Doctors and Vampire Science, this story features the eighth Doctor and Sam.

The TARDIS was infinite, or at least that's how it seemed to Sam. She was thin and wiry, with blue eyes and close-cropped fair hair. She had recently joined the Doctor on his adventures, and now he was giving her a guided tour of the TARDIS.

"Just how big is this ship?" Sam asked, for what seemed the umpteenth time. The problem was, the Doctor wasn't really bothered. As long as this obsolete Type Forty Time Transport capsule carried on working he didn’t care too much about its inner dimensions.

"I thought I'd explained it to you" said the Doctor. "You did" said Sam. "But not clearly."

The Doctor looked at Sam's bright young face and for a moment saw her as Victoria, someone who travelled with him some time back in his second incarnation. He sometimes wondered how she was getting on in her new life with the Harrises.

"The TARDIS is dimensionally transcendental, which means it is bigger on the inside than the outside."

"I can see that" said Sam. "But how?"

"How should I know?" said the Doctor. "If you want the answer to that, then you should ask Omega." He chuckled. "When he's in a good mood, that is."

On the planet Gallifrey, President Flavia entered the Council Chamber. She had only recently come through yet another regeneration. Like all her incarnations, this one was tall and dignified. She now had a mop of curly brunette hair and hazel eyes.

"Well?" she asked. "What is the emergency?"

Councillor Joanne chose his next words carefully. "The Ancient Star Charts have been stolen, Madame President."

"Stolen?" exclaimed Flavia. "How? When?"

"I don't know," said Joanne. "But they are missing from the Panopticon archives."

"For Rassilon's sake," said Flavia. "I suppose we'll have to summon the Doctor yet again."

A large ship was suspended in deep space. A tall, white-haired, bearded man stood on the flight deck. Once, he had been known as the Master. At the end of his thirteenth incarnation, he had been pushed into the Eye of Harmony by the Doctor. The powers of the Eye had transformed the Master into the next stage of Time Lord evolution. He had become Estrolabous. A Time Prophet.

"SPEAK!" said the Gorvorok leader, his reptilian eyes fixed on the Time Prophet.

"I have the star charts as instructed" said Estrolabous.

"THAT IS GOOD" said the Gorvorok leader. "For your services to the Gorvorok empire, you will be handsomely rewarded."

The Gorvorok were as infamous as the Daleks, only they were ten times worse. For centuries they had ravaged countless planets in their quest for galactic supremacy. Empire after empire had crumbled under the Gorvorok onslaught. Eventually they had reached the limits of their own galaxy. That was when they had come to the attention of Estrolabous. He offered them the ancient star charts: drawn up in the days before the first TARDIS, they listed stable wormholes and dimensional gateways that made intergalactic travel possible for more basic craft.

Estrolabous fed a silver-coloured disk into the ship's computer. Instantly, the charts for local space appeared on the screen. "With these star charts," said Estrolabous, "the universe is yours for the taking." He roared with uncontrollable laughter. "When you fulfil your side of the bargain, you get the full set."

"WHICH GALAXY IS THAT?" asked the Gorvorok leader.

"Andromeda" said Estrolabous. "The perfect place to begin your take-over."

Inside the TARDIS, Sam noticed a light was flashing on the console. She turned to the Doctor and said, "Doctor, is that light supposed to be flashing?"

The Doctor gazed at the flashing light for a moment and said, "No again! Can't they leave me alone?"

"Who?" asked Sam.

"My own people" said the Doctor bitterly. "The Time Lords! Well, what do they want now, I wonder?"

On Gallifrey, inside the Panopticon Hall, a wheezing groaning sound shattered the peace and the Doctor's TARDIS materialised. The TARDIS door opened and the Doctor emerged, followed by Sam.

President Flavia rushed in. "Ah, Doctor. You've arrived" she said.

"OK, what's the problem?" asked the Doctor.

Flavia chose her words carefully. She knew only too well that the Doctor resented the recall circuit being used.

"The Ancient Star Charts have been stolen from the Panopticon Archives. Find out who took them, and get them back. I know how much you hate being asked to do anything for us. But will you do it?"

The Doctor let out a deep sigh. "All right."

"Thank you, Doctor" said Flavia. "I knew we could count on you."

Back inside the TARDIS, Sam asked, "Who would want to steal those star charts?"

"I don't know. But it's down to us to find out," said the Doctor.

Estrolabous had been staring intently at the readings on the console of his TARDIS. He hurried out onto the Gorvorok flight deck. "The Time Lords have discovered that the star charts are missing," he announced.

"WILL THEY SEND ANYONE TO FIND THEM?"

"They already have," said Estrolabous. "They've sent the Doctor."
"THE DOCTOR" said the Gorvorok leader. "WE KNOW OF THE DOCTOR'S REPUTATION. HE MUST BE DESTROYED AT ONCE, BEFORE HE CAN THwart OUR PLANS."

A smile appeared on Estrolabous' face, and he chuckled, "Don't worry, my friends. I'll deal with the Doctor in my own way."

The Time Rotor rose and fell steadily. Sam turned to face the Doctor, who by now was busy at the controls.

"Doctor," asked Sam, "How far back do these star charts go?"

"Back to the days of Rassilon himself," the Doctor replied. He activated the scanner control. The image that appeared was that of the Gorvorok's ship. The Doctor stared intently at it and let out a huge sigh that sounded like a demented steam engine.

"The Gorvoroks," said the Doctor, "Yes, I should have guessed."

At the Kennedy Space Centre, Cape Canaveral, Colonel Jim Henderson marched back to Mission Control, where his team of were making the final pre-launch checks. He was a tall man with short brown hair and a neatly trimmed moustache.

"Lieutenant Mitchell? Are all systems OK?"

The lieutenant nodded, "Yes sir, the countdown can now begin at T-minus twenty minutes."

"Now, if I'm right," said Estrolabous, "and I usually am, that space shuttle is going to blow up just after launch."

"HOW WILL THAT HELP US TAKE OVER THE GALAXY?" asked the Gorvorok leader.

"It won't," said Estrolabous, "but it will get the Doctor off your back."

The Gorvorok leader looked suspiciously at Estrolabous for a moment. Could they trust him? Did he have a plan of his own?

"IF YOU FAIL US, YOU WILL BE THE FIRST TO DIE," he said.

Inside the TARDIS, Sam looked at the Doctor and said, "Who are the Gorvoroks, Doctor?"

"A race of reptilian mutants."

"What would they want with the star charts?"

"Well," said the Doctor, "let's go and ask them, shall we?"

Inside the weaponry hold on board the Gorvorok ship, a wheezing groaning sound shattered the peace and the TARDIS materialised. Sam and the Doctor emerged and looked around the room.

"It's spooky" said Sam nervously.

"Yes, it is rather" said the Doctor. "Perhaps it's the décor that gives the spooky impression?"

The Doctor wandered over to the row of weapons in the corner of the room, and began checking them.

"I say - I had no idea how advanced Gorvorok technology was" said the Doctor, "this really is impressive."

Just then, the door of the Weaponry Hold slid open and in came the two Gorvorok troopers. Sam noticed them out of the corner of her eye and called out to the Doctor, "Doctor!"

"In a minute, Samantha, I'm finding these weapons fascinating" said the Doctor.

"Doctor" said Sam again "we've got company."

The Doctor looked up from what he was doing and said "Oh yes, so we have." The Doctor held out his hand to greet the troopers. "How do you do," he said, "I'm the Doctor. And this fair-skinned beauty is my companion, Samantha Jones."

"YOU WILL COME WITH US TO THE FLIGHT DECK" said the first trooper.

When they got there, the Doctor noticed Estrolabous at once.

"Ah yes. A Time Prophet."

Estrolabous smiled. "Believe it or not, you and I were once friends at the Academy."

The Doctor let out a deep sigh. "Well, well, well! You were once the Master" said the Doctor. "So I take it that you were responsible for stealing the Star Charts."

"Yes, Doctor" said Estrolabous "to help my friends here to take over the universe."

The Gorvorok leader turned to face Estrolabous and said "WE ARE READY TO DEPART FOR OUR FIRST DESTINATION."

"Good" said Estrolabous. "Let's get on our way then."

He programmed the destination into the computer. The Doctor edged closer to find out the destination of the Gorvorok ship. "Earth," he thought. "What a surprise."

"Doctor?" asked Sam curiously. "These Time Prophets, are they all evil?"

The Doctor shook his head. "Oh no, they're rather pleasant company on the whole. They keep themselves to themselves while predicting future events" said the Doctor. "Mind you, Sam, you do get the odd one who is corrupt."

Estrolabous turned to a couple of Gorvorok troopers. "Lock them in the detention area. And guard them."

The Gorvorok troopers led the Doctor and Sam away. The Gorvorok leader turned to Estrolabous and said "THE DOCTOR MUST BE DESTROYED."

Estrolabous chuckled. "He will be. Eventually."

"BUT HE KNOWS OUR DESTINATION" said the Gorvorok leader.

"Of course he knows," said Estrolabous. "That's the whole point of revenge."

The Doctor paced up and down the room.

"What do you think they're going to do in 1986?" asked Sam.

"January 1986. The Doctor was silent for a moment and finally replied "Estrolabous could've predicted that some terrible disaster."

Sam thought for a moment. "Doctor. I remember my parents telling me of a disaster involving the Space Shuttle."

"Of course, that's it!"

"So, he travels to 1986 to see if his prediction comes true. Then what?"

The Doctor, as usual, wasn't listening. "But why steal the ancient Star Charts from Gallifrey? And how will they help the Gorvoroks to take over the universe?"

"Could it be more than a disaster, Doctor? Could he have predicted an astronomical event?" asked Sam, trying to be helpful.

The Doctor stopped dead in his tracks. For a moment it looked as if he was going to jump down Sam's throat. "Sam! You are brilliant!" he said, giving Sam a hug and planting a huge kiss on her lips.

Sam was taken aback by this, and stared intently at the Doctor.

"Doctor, I am fifteen you know."

"So?" said the Doctor. "I'm only nine hundred and ninety."

"Doctor, are you saying there was an astrological event in 1986?" Sam asked.

"Yes" said the Doctor. "It was the reappearance of Halley's Comet."

"According to my calculations" said Estrolabous to the Gorvorok leader, "Halley's Comet will pass within a few miles of Earth. We will make sure they collide."

END OF PART ONE
Robert Priddey is currently a doctoral astrophysicist at Churchill College Cambridge, which means he divides his time between a very big computer in Cambridge and a mind-numbingly large telescope up a mountain in Hawaii. I recently asked him to write something for Tides of Time explaining current scientific thinking on the existence of extraterrestrial life, which he has been interested in since at least the time he was looking through his telescope at home and thought he saw an orange UFO orbiting the Moon. So, take it away, Robert...

In 1992, US Congress voted to cease funding NASA’s High Resolution Microwave Survey (HMRS) programme, the latest, most systematic incarnation of the Search for Extra-Terrestrial Intelligence. They cited their reluctance to squander $100M of taxpayers’ money on a vain search for little green men. This judgement failed to perceive the scientific legitimacy of the question of whether or not intelligent civilisation thrives elsewhere, and the ability of modern radio-astronomical technology to detect it. Yet one wonders how appropriate and feasible are the traditional SETI search strategies, now employed by NASA’s privately-funded Project Phoenix, dating as they do from the birth of the SETI concept in 1959.

The fraction of newborn stars which favour emergence and persistence of life ($f_0$)

Low-mass stars are too cool and faint to support life; high-mass stars are too hot, bright and short-lived. Most stars are members of binary or multiple systems, so any planets they possess will lie on dynamically-complex orbits which are probably unstable. While life could persist in such an environment, its evolution might be constrained by being forced to adapt to the caprices of the host planet’s chaotic orbit.

A biology like that of the Earth requires elements heavier than the primordial hydrogen and helium of a young star. Carbon, hydrogen and oxygen are the most important (for organic chemistry to take place) but heavier elements like iron are vital too. Perhaps, also, a planetary geology capable of providing a stable environment for life requires the presence of the heavier elements. They are produced via nucleosynthesis in stars. When these stars go nova, the crucial elements are dispersed into the interstellar medium – where they may condense into new stars and planets. So there must already have been previous generations of stars, if planets are to form with the right composition for life to exist on them.

There are constraints upon the position of the star within the galaxy, too. It must form in the spiral disk, to satisfy the youthfulness criterion. However, an orbit which takes it too close, too often, to the spiral arm itself, sites of enhanced star-formation, risks killing any life which may have formed through exposure to a high rate of nearby supernovae. Our own Solar System, and life on Earth, may suffer this fate in 3 billion years or so. Thus extraterrestrial life will only be found on young Sun-like stars in “cautious” orbits in the Galactic disk, or to external galaxies which are sufficiently old that biology has had a head start over the Milky Way.

Average Number of Earth-like Planets per System ($n_p$)

This is difficult to estimate. Many gas-giant planets have already been detected in other solar systems. Low-mass, rocky, “terrestrial” planets orbiting near to their stars will be difficult to detect. Their existence is easy to justify with planet-formation theories, but it is not known what the margins of error are for life to be possible. For example, what orbital radius is necessary to avoid a cold Martian or a hellish Venusian fate? Simulations indicate that an error of only 5% on the Earth’s orbit is allowed, beyond which liquid water will not exist for any length of time.
Most extra-solar planets so far discovered have peculiar orbits, indicative of complex dynamical histories for their systems. Our Solar System seems to be exceptional in this respect. It is not known how critical the planet's rotation rate is for life to form and survive, nor what range of mass and composition permits a geology capable of regulating a moderate climate and the carbon cycle.

(The Day of the Daleks US edition cover) Terrance Dicks’ only equation for the existence of extra-terrestrial life was that it should occur in a book exactly 128 pages long.

Water: for this, the whole system must, seemingly, cooperate. The giant, gaseous planets, such as Jupiter, are giant largely because they formed from the condensation of vast quantities of proto-solar water, which is too volatile to have condensed within about the orbit of Mars - the terrestrial planets must, initially, have been very "dry". Comets and other objects, rich in organic chemicals and ice, reside in the Oort Cloud at about a light-year from the Sun. Occasionally, the nearby passage of a star or a giant molecular cloud "perturbs" them, sending them into the inner Solar System. If they are not absorbed by Jupiter's enormous gravity, they may suffer collisions with inner planets, thus depositing their water-ice to make oceans, and their organic molecules to seed life. The collision rate was presumably very high in the Earth's early years, but very low subsequently (isn't there a mathematically non-negligible chance that an asteroid is going to wipe us out in 2030 or so? Ed.).

Giant planets, with their many characterful moons, are like Solar Systems in miniature, having formed through runaway accretion onto the massive icy cores of the proto-Jovians. It is harder to explain why the Earth has such a substantial natural satellite in the Moon: the favourite theory is that a Mars-sized, primordial "planeteesimal" collided with the infant Earth: some of the consequent debris was captured in orbit, and coalesced into the Moon. It seems odd that this rare case of a "double planet" should be the only system on which life is abundant. Perhaps the Moon is essential for terrestrial life? It certainly acts to stabilise precession of the Earth's rotation axis, against disruption by the other planets: without this, we would go the same way as Venus with its retrograde rotation and weird seasons. Perhaps, too, the lunar tides have played a significant role in the evolution of intelligent species.

All these processes must conspire to provide conditions favourable to life. In the absence of evidence that our Solar System or our own Earth is at all normal, but with mounting evidence to the contrary, I would prefer to assume that the number of planets like ours is very much smaller than is conventionally assumed.

Fraction of Earth-type Worlds on which life actually forms (f0)

Conventional biology can't shed much light on the inevitability or otherwise of this event. It may not be necessary to build systems as complex as enzymes or RNA/DNA initially. These might have emerged later, after much more rudimentary life-forms had evolved to a complex-enough level for the synthesis of nucleic acids to be "easy". We can almost imagine Darwinian selection operating on every level down to the molecular: how could life have emerged from a chemistry less fertile than that based on carbon, hydrogen, oxygen and nitrogen? Complex organic molecules have been detected in interstellar nebulae and in comets; and meteorites have even shown traces of amino acids.

The most ancient fossils are about 3.8 billion years old: given that the Earth was hospitable for at least the first 0.5 billion years or so after its formation, it seems that life formed and evolved into the organisms which we see in the oldest microfossils as soon as it could possibly have done so. Its subsequent evolution was much slower. If even the slightest trace of even the simplest organism were ever discovered elsewhere in the Solar System (Mars? Europa? Titan?), we would be strongly encouraged to believe that f0 is approximately equal to 1.

In summary, there is still much space for speculation concerning the significance of even the better-understood processes contributing to the emergence of life, so I advise caution when interpreting the Drake Equation. I have advocated a somewhat extreme view here, arguing on the one hand that the emergence of life is almost inevitable - that it is merely the most intricate of the universal structure-forming processes, which began, soon after the Big Bang, with the gradual collapse of tiny primordial fluctuations produced by microscopic physics. On the other hand, I have suggested that the number of sites which allow life to flourish is minuscule.

* * *

Contemplating the science of SETI consists of far more than the saccharine fantasies of Spielberg, the new-age wish-fulfilment of the Danikenites, or the vaguely weird horror of the "X-Files". It forces us to consider seriously the mystery of our own existence, to respect the awesome complexity of organic phenomena, and to take responsibility for its persistence into the far future. The sociological relevance of SETI, and, conversely, the significance of world politics for the far future of life in the Universe, shall become acutely apparent when we consider the remaining terms of the Drake Equation, as I hope to do in a future article.

Robert Priddey
CRISIS ON PTARMIGAN

"There's nothing we can do, Captain. I'm sorry."

The Captain cursed inwardly, but as soon as the warning message had flashed on the screen, he'd known what the situation would be.

"It doesn't matter, boys. We'll just have to pick up a better-than-average cargo at Trantak, that's all."

"What should we do with the carcasses, Sir?" asked Darek, his features just discernible through the visor of his space suit.

"Hang onto them. The bay is in a vacuum now, so they won't go off, and we can sell them as animal skins and fertiliser. We'll make a heck of a loss on the run, but our reserves should see us through. Now, you'd better get back inside, we don't have too many spare cylinders for those suits."

The captain of the cargo vessel Ptarmigan was on the wrong side of middle age, and had developed the straggly, greying hair and rotund form that seemed almost part of the uniform of traders throughout the galaxy. He and his twelve-strong crew had been making this run between the farming world of Liseppi and the more industrialised Trantak for over a year now, transporting animals and food to Trantak, and returning to the farming planet with computers and farming robots. It wasn't the most profitable route he knew, but at least it was legal, and the two systems were fairly safe from pirates.

He'd known that he ought to get the ship overhauled fairly soon, but with the Ptarmigan costing so much to service, he'd wanted to make a few more runs, just to cover himself in the event of a problem. Besides, it would take about a month to get to Earth anyway, and a month back, and that was two months when he wouldn't be earning revenue. He insisted on getting all major servicing done on Earth. Trantak, although the most industrial system in this sector, was nevertheless quite backward compared with the Solar system.

Now, of course, he had a problem. Once one system failed, it was just a matter of time before others followed suit. It was unfortunate that the cargo bay life support unit had fused on the one run it was needed - had they been outbound from Trantak, it wouldn't have affected the cargo at all. As it was, their expensive cargo of food was now a cheap cargo of soil and rugs. The ship needed servicing immediately, before something vital broke down, such as the autopilot or the jump engines. And with the loss he was going to make on this run, he could not quite afford the service charges that the Earth engineers would demand. They would need to make one more run back to Liseppi before the three-jump trip to Earth. Four weeks when any system could fail, and cripple the ship and its crew.

He glanced up as he saw the young woman approach.
"How bad is it?" asked Jennifer.
He turned to his navigator and smiled. "I'll all be fine. Just as long as we don't have any more problems."

The hyperspace wormhole their Jump engines had created dropped them on the outskirts of the Trantak system, about 900 million kilometres out.
"What's the activity like?" he asked.
"Well..." began Darek, sat at the Communication station, "...Trantak Station reports several blips between them and us. Class 2 fighters, by the mass readings."

The captain stood up, and crossed to Darek and Jennifer, stroking his beard. "Class 2, you say? Could be a problem. Max, Sarah, you'd better get out and warn the turrets up. I suspect we'll need them."

The two turret gunners left the control room in the direction of the airlock.
"Any other blips, Darek?"
"No sir. Just those three."
"Well, that's a relief, at any rate. Can we pick them up ourselves yet?"

Sonya turned to face him. "I've got a target lock on one. 22 million kilometres off, more or less. Distance is closing, but that could just be us."
"No, if they are Ospreys, then they'll be coming for us." He slumped back into his command chair. "This is just what I didn't want to happen. All hands, prepare for combat."

The attack came two hours later. The three fighters swooped in and strafed the Ptarmigan from different angles. Sonya swung round from Tactical. "Tac-Scan reports them as Ospreys, Sir."
He nodded. "I was afraid of that. How are the shields holding up?"
"Shield strength at 90%, and rising. They don't seem to be able to do too much damage."
"No, but they move like lightning. They're almost impossible to hit."

Certainly, Sarah and Max were having a hard time getting a bead on their attackers. The 20MW beams stabbed out, threatening instant annihilation to the fighters with even a glancing blow; but the little craft seemed able to fly rings around the deadly radiation.

"Sir, one of the fighters is moving off at high speed!" yelled Jennifer, sounding scared.
"Sonya, give me missile control. Arm me a Naval missile and lock onto that fighter!" He was an experienced trader, and there was only one reason that a craft would disengage like that. Sure enough, as he spoke, he watched it loop round and charge.
"Missile armed. Can't get a lock."
"Time to impact 5 seconds." Jennifer was beginning to panic.
"Sonya..." he roared.
"Still no lock!!"
"3 seconds..."
"Forget the lock! Fire!"
The naval missile appeared briefly in their viewscreen, streaking towards the Osprey. Then, the Osprey filled the
screen, and the two craft collided.

Sarah, in the upper gun turret, was trying to bring down a fight off their stern when the *Ptramigan* bucked as though kicked by a giant foot. It proved strangely fortuitous, as the jerking beam sliced through the enemy fighter, vapourising it instantly. She swung the gun round, to look forwards, and gasped as she saw the mangled mess that had been the prow of the ship.

"But," piped up Jennifer, "surely you need a permit to enter Draladon?"
"That's why I've got that barrel in the hold. Personal delivery, permit provided."
"Green light from Trantak," called Darek.
"Ok. Mr Philips, jump."

They knew there was a problem immediately. The ship bucked and threw them about the control room like leaves in an autumn wind. As soon as the deck began to stabilise, the captain hauled himself across to the navigation desk.

"What's happened? Where are we going to end up?"

The first question was rhetorical - he knew he had a mis-jump on his hands.

"I can't tell. The wormhole hasn't stabilised."

The problem with using controlled wormholes to traverse between systems was that, occasionally, if the jump engines were old, control of the wormhole could be lost. Not much was known about mis-jumps, however, as much of the time, a ship that mis-jumped was never seen or heard from again.

It was two days later when they finally emerged into normal space. Immediately, Jennifer began a scan, to try and determine their position. The discovery that they had overshot Draladon by some 60 light years or so did not go down well. Miraculously, the jump engines had not been damaged by the mis-jump, and so, with the large fuel load they had, they could just make the two jumps it would take to get back to Draladon. Assuming that nothing else went wrong.

The captain and Douglas were taking a tour round the cargo bay, checking that there was no damage to the precious cargo. It seemed to have fared very well. All except the barrel.

There was a gaping hole in the side of it.

"Captain, that hole was made from the inside. What was in there?"

"I was told it was someone's pet."

"Well, it's loose on our ship now. And from the look of those gashes in the plastic, it's rather angry."

That was all he needed. Financial ruin, a ship that was tearing itself apart, and a cargo of black-market goods he could just about cope with. A raging animal as well...

The two men strode on, cautiously, through the bay, alert now for any warning signal. Turning a corner, they stopped short. There, in a corner, stood a tall, blue box. A pale light flashed on and off on top.

The captain slumped against one of the crates, and slid to the floor. His face had turned grey, and his eyes shone with a despair that was too much for him to bear.

"Hell," breathed Captain Turlough. "Now I know we're in trouble..."

*Alasdair Prett*
THIS LOOKS GOOD... VERY GOOD....
(and the animation isn’t bad either...)

Fiona Moore on why you should be watching the groundbreaking animated series, Reboot.

Fully computer-animated cartoons are definitely the in thing these days. With Antz and its pathetic imitator (parisian, mo?) A Bug’s Life currently taking it in at various box offices, and with Toy Story still doing pretty well in the video shops, and with the press about to break the news that Leonardo Di Caprio is in fact a clever series of model shoes, it’s worth having a look at one of the places it all started: Reboot, the low-budget, small-screen creation of Mainframe Inc. of Vancouver, B.C.

One of the things I find myself spending a lot of time doing in the UK is convincing people that they will actually like Reboot. This is a hard task because nobody’s ever heard of it, even though it was shown on ITV in 1995 and again this past July, because it’s a hard show to summarise in five minutes, and because of the tendency for people’s eyes to glaze over at the word “Canadian.” There’s not much one do in a situation like that other than, perhaps, to sit down and write something for Tides in an attempt to fully explain oneself.

Reboot is, if you haven’t guessed, the world’s first fully computer-animated cartoon programme. It was originally done as a prime-time cartoon, following on the success of The Simpsons and its ilk, although Reboot, while not stinting the satire (watch for the wealth of clever visual jokes in the backgrounds), is probably the first such cartoon with an action-oriented approach. However, Mainframe Inc. made something of a mistake in accepting the American group ABC Television as co-sponsors; while it appeared in the 8:00 PM time slot in Canada, in the USA, it ran in the “kiddie-cartoon” Saturday morning slot, which caused some ultimately destructive clashes over content.

The programme is best known for its innovative use of computer animation, and it is worth watching for this alone. While any sort of special effect dates rapidly, and consequently the first series, screened in 1994, already looks naff, the quality improves with each successive episode, and some of the moving-fractal sequences of the third series, screened in 1997, still look amazing nearly two years later.

As with all good cartoon series, however, there are other reasons to watch it than just the visuals. When searching for a premise, the team came up with probably the most self-referential idea they could find: to take seriously the oft-voiced folk belief (and don’t tell me you haven’t entertained this notion yourself once or twice) that there are people inside your computer, responsible for all its quirks and glitches. The series’ characters are “sprites,” personalised computer components for whom running programmes is a job, the Net and the Web are foreign countries, and games are feared natural disasters. Any being trapped in a game must, to survive, “reboot” as one of the “evil” characters and defeat the User; failure usually means death, transformation into a Null, a sort of overgrown slug, or else, if one is lucky, being trapped in the game, forever to be transferred from system to system.

Bob, the original hero of the series, is the Guardian of the system known as (what else?) “Mainframe.” As a Guardian, Bob’s role is, firstly, to play games and beat the User, thus protecting everyone else from danger, and, secondly, to serve as a virus-protect programme. He is apparently not that good at the second part of the job, however, as the two viruses infecting the computer at the beginning of the series, Megabyte and Hexadecimal, continue to steal the show from him until almost the final episode. Bob’s friends seem more successful: Dot Matrix, a tough businesswoman, her annoying kid brother Enzo, the inevitable dog, Frisket, and a BASIC programme, Phong (second to none at Pong). They are joined by Mouse, a mercenary hacker who is a cross between Xena Warrior Princess and Mae West, and AndrAIA, an artificial-intelligence (geddit?) girl of Enzo’s age who is a refugee from a game, as well as such numerous secondary characters as software pirate Gavin, the Crimson Binome, dwarf continuity announcer Mike the TVI, and arch-enemy hacker Hack and Slash.

The female characters, perhaps surprisingly, are probably the best-drawn of the lot, in both senses of the term: the animators can’t resist giving the full-grown ones figures that, while not quite Lara Croft standards, raise questions at ABC. That aside, there is a fair amount of stereotype subversion: while Dot provides an obvious love interest for Bob, their romance takes second (well, to be honest, third or fourth) place to Dot’s various careers, and she takes the heroic role as often as she does in an early episode revolving around a sword-and-sorcery RPG. Bob charges through various perilous to rescue a damsel in distress, thinking that it is Dot, only to find that it is Enzo in drag-and that both of them have to be rescued in the end by Enzo’s sister, in shining armour. Mouse is also her own woman, although a bit of a shadier character, and even AndrAIA, whose role initially consisted only of asking questions and flattering Enzo, surprises everyone, including the viewer, by proving indispensable in a crisis. Most amazing, however, is Hexadecimal, a lunatic dominatrix who inhabits the town of Lost Angles (did I mention the pun?), lives to create chaos, and expresses herself through a series of carnival masks, which she swaps around in quick succession according to her moods.

The men are more conservatively developed, but never so much as to become completely predictable. Bob, although in many ways a standard heroic lawman, is no John Wayne. Dressed in blue, and sporting silver dreadlocks, he would much rather attempt to fix his motorbike car than ride the strange skateboard-like things that are the main mode of transportation around Mainframe than fight viruses, and he
was apparently named for Gabrielle Glaister's transvestite character in Blackadder. Bob also supplies most of the series' catch-phrases, including "This looks bad, very bad," and "I don't think so." Phong, the closest Mainframe has to an authority figure, is so obviously a candidate for the wise-old-mentor role that most stories involving him are written so as to thoroughly take the mickey out of that genre. Megabyte, Hexadecimal's brother, is, as a villain cursed with idiotic henchmen, the most stereotypical of the lot; however, there are certain mysteries in his past which the series never explores beyond a few hints. All these characters, perhaps surprisingly, undergo radical changes over the course of time, although none more than Enzo: over three years, he goes from being a sports-mad, hero-worshipping ten-year old to being a bitter, scarred veteran, deeply damaged by an adolescence in exile.

The first series started out fairly slowly and most of the episodes were driven by the concept, focusing around the notion of life in a computer. Once a few popular computer games, such as Dungeons and Dragons and Jurassic Park, had been thoroughly skewered, the stories began to get more than a little self-referential, involving stories in which, for instance, the opening scene of one character but Enzo is reduced (causing them to appear as two-dimensional, eight-bit images to Enzo's eyes), or in which a system upgrade goes terribly wrong (causing Dot, at the climax of the story, to do a Sigourney Weaver impression that defies description). Reviews, however, were good, and the programme, having garnered two Gemini awards (the Canadian equivalent of the Emmy) continued.

The second series, however, became somewhat too clever for its own good. It is here that we get some of the most innovative and best-done stories, including a four-part serial about a creature from the Web getting loose in Mainframe, an experiment best remembered for the fact that one of the stories was a shameless X-Files parody, with Gillian Anderson herself a fan appearing in the role of Data Nully, partner of Fax Modem, and that another mercilessly sent up the Jerry Anderson puppet series. The stories also began to get metaphysical, with several plots drawing heavily on Hindu mythology.

It was also at this point, however, that strains between Mainframe and ABC began to appear. ABC regularly censored scenes for depicting "excessive violence" (an opinion treated with amusement in Canada, where similar objections are voiced about American shows), or innuendo, such as a scene in which Dot, modelling her new body armour, asks Mouse if it makes her look "too butch." (the line, along with the above-mentioned "violent" scenes, remained in the Canadian version), as well as complaining that the adult women (interestingly, not the men) were too

realistically drawn. Mainframe refused to change the house style— and in fact worked a few not possible jobs at ABC into the stories; not surprisingly, ABC refused to carry the third season. Mainframe survived by going public, and, with the backing of Alliance Canada (satirised in a later episode as the "Unholy Alliance"), carried on.

Without the censors on their backs, the third and final series was both darker and more creative than the first two. At the end of the second series, Bob had been sucked into the Web, and the rest of the heroes found themselves under siege in a half-destroyed Mainframe in which Megabyte is rapidly taking over and in which the only sprite with anything resembling Guardian programming is Enzo. This situation is short-lived, however, as Enzo and AndraAla are trapped in a game with Frisket, and when we next see them, they are adults, eking out a life as computer hitch-hikers, riding from terminal to terminal in games in search of both Mainframe and Bob.

This series is also the most interesting for SF fans, as it is here that the parodies of cult genres really take off: James Bond, Star Trek and the "new edition" Star Wars are all savaged, as well as The Prisoner, in a truly bizarre episode that plays with series continuity in McGoothanesque fashion. More innovative animation is also the order of the day, with the episode "Firewall" starting with a stunning Bond-style part of the title sequence, and later there are some clever sequences of sprites literally web-surfing.

Although there has been some demand for it, a fourth series seems unlikely, partly because most of the loose ends were effectively tied up by the end of the series. While room for future development is possible, it wouldn't be Reboot as we know it. More importantly, however, Mainframe has moved on: although occasional Reboot spin-offs, including an Imax movie/ride and a PlayStation game, are still being produced, Mainframe's current project, "Shadow Raiders" (no relation) is doing well and there are a couple of other, totally different, projects in the pipeline.

While it may not have much international cachet—yet—Reboot manages to be successful both as an experiment in animation and as a cleverly-plotted series already being considered "cult." So keep your eyes open for it— and spare a thought for the poor hard-working folks in the computer.

For more Information:
The Unofficial Reboot Homepage
(www.imwap.com/mf/reboot)
Mainframe Inc. Homepage (www.mainframe.bc.ca)
"In a worst case scenario..." read the scrap of newspaper blowing in the radioactive wind.

The newspaper blew past devastated buildings and once-solid concrete that had gone the consistency of porridge; past the corpses of those who had believed it would never happen, rumbling, bleached bones, flesh bubbling around them. The tiny fragment blew through the air, twirling around the toe of the boot of a tall, grey-haired man who was surveying the scene with an expression of untold sadness etched into his deep, craggy face. He'd tried to protect these people so much, thrown himself into his 'sentence' with such enthusiasm that now, his captivity over, he had been drawn back to twentieth century Earth with a force stronger than the most powerful force-field. Perhaps that had been the Time Lords' design. Perhaps this was what they wanted for him. At this moment he really couldn't care.

Oh yes, he'd read the newspapers, heard how desperate things had been. All those precious peace conferences Styles had arranged had come to nothing after all. Humans! Unreasoning rage momentarily blocked out his pain. He'd protected them on Earth for six years, protected them from themselves as well as others, and now, at the first chance they got, the first time he and Jo left the planet for more than a few seconds, it happened. They blew themselves up. For a moment the Doctor's rage blanked out the sick horror... but only for a moment. UNIT headquarters? How could one tell? Whole buildings could have been lifted up and thrown for miles by the nuclear blast.

He caught a voice, calm and emotionless, and turned to see Jo standing on the threshold of the TARDIS. She seemed to be chanting. He listened, trying to catch the words.

"Mike Yates John Benton Carol Bell Don Campbell Jimmy Turner..." it went on. The Doctor sought for some comforting word, some consolation: but what could he say? He was supposed to stop this sort of thing. Senseless... insane! Damn! Blast! He stood there in that wasteland, trying to curse, to somehow express what he felt, but it was inexpressible. Jo just stood there, eyes blank, open windows looking on her world which had been destroyed.

Jo looked at the Doctor's face quizzically as he corrected the slight lurch in the ship's motion. Light gloved in the Time Rotor and glinted off what looked oddly like a tear on his lined cheek. It was time. They both knew it. Earth. Not what she'd said... She'd asked, begged to go home hundreds of times in the past, and they'd done so. Not always directly, perhaps, but they'd always gone home. No, it was the way it had been said. They both knew that it was nearly time to say goodbye.

She almost felt upset that he was taking it badly. Nothing had been said, after all, but it was time. Time for the fledgling to fly, as he would say. He'd taken a young agent, and taught her all that he could - not all that he knew, certainly, no one in the world, not in any world could do that, but all that was in him that would make her a better person. She sighed. The Doctor looked up, a shining smile cracking his almost severe face into an infectious grin.

"And why so great a sigh, Jo?" He chuckled, twirling gently in his arms. "You're going home. Earth. No Daleks, no Ogrons, and not a Drašhig to be seen."

"Safe?"

"Well... I wouldn't quite go that far."

"The Master?"

"Oh, somehow I doubt that."

He didn't tell her what he'd seen in the Master's mind in that sudden moment of telepathic communication, the surge of empathy that he had shared with his adversary on the Ogron planet. He'd shot the Doctor down in error; then came the surge of fear, concern, pity... No. The Master was going away, going away to think, and it would be a long time before they met again, if ever. The Doctor rapped a button on the console, grasping three aligned levers in a particularly alien gesture - or rather a naturally alien gesture, Jo corrected her subconscious.

He grinned at her again as the familiar Wheezing Groaning Sound signalled their arrival. He'd busied himself at the instruments. Since Jo had known him, he had, on occasion, opened the doors practically before the rotor had stopped moving. She suspected that this, like his constant fiddling with the controls when he had nothing better to do, was really little more than a nervous tic. She took down her coat from the hat stand, thankful to be free of the unpleasant atmosphere of Spiridon. She grinned at the Doctor encouragingly.

"Well?" and there was a hint of challenge in her voice, "Earth, or some planet on the wrong side of the universe?"

"Earth, late twentieth century, London. Home, Miss Grant."

He'd beamed like a proud father, Jo remembered, his protégé having fulfilled her task with aplomb. Then he'd tweaked the door control in a manner with more than a little arrogance in it.

"Don't get complacent," she'd admonished him, walking to the doorway.

"Jo, stop!" The command had come like the crack of a whip, and there had been no possibility of disobedience. She remembered the Master's hypnosis,
and saw that in that moment, she had briefly glimpsed the true alien power inside her friend. She had looked back, to see him, face creased with worry, staring at one of the instruments on the panel.

"What is it?"

"It's my radiation detector... something's wrong. Something's very wrong." Jo had peered at the figures, trying to remember the alien language and measurements.

"But Earth can't be that radioactive... we must have missed."

"No." The Doctor looked at the other controls. "This is Earth. London."

"But how could it be?"

The Doctor had stared at her for a moment, his face as puzzled as her own. Suddenly his expression changed. Jo could still remember it. His face went absolutely white, his eyes widened, and all the camaraderie and bluster suddenly and terrifyingly vanished. She'd seen him frightened before, but this was more. He'd turned the light out and heard the thing he most feared in all the world creeping up behind him. His lips formed a single word, not a command or exclamation, but a plea, almost a supplication:

"No!"

* *

The sand is hurting Jo's eyes now. She knows the anti-radiation drugs from the TARDIS will protect her from any real harm, but the sand stings her eyes none the less. This isn't real, of course. Any minute now the Doctor will turn, dash into the TARDIS and shout out that they made a wrong turning at Jupiter, and everything will be all right again. Except it isn't like that. The Doctor is holding out a piece of paper to her. She takes it. "In a worst case scenario..." she reads, but the rest was destroyed in the blast. She recognises the corner of a masthead symbol, just visible on the charred edge. A fragment of a newspaper, she realises - the first two weeks after she and the Doctor left Earth.

It is real, of course. It isn't real, of course.

It's the Master. He has placed her in some kind of dream world, a terrible hallucination in order to attack the Doctor. Well, now she knows, so now she's in control, she can break out, make the journey back to the real world. Except she can't.

* *

He felt hatred burning inside him suddenly, not rage but pure hatred. Even if it couldn't be changed, he was going to find the person responsible for this; the one who had let death out of the kennel. His hand tightened around an imaginary pistol. He'd always hated guns, but Lethbridge-Stewart had insisted he know how to use one properly. Lethbridge-Stewart. He had persuaded the Doctor in the end, as usual. He'd simply pointed out that, in the highly unlikely situation of the Doctor actually having to use a gun, he would have a far better chance of injuring, rather than killing, his target, if he knew how to shoot straight. Now Lethbridge-Stewart was gone, one more insufferable military idiot boiled away to nothing in nuclear fire.

He had to find the man responsible for this, find the one who had thrown away 5.5 billion years of planetary evolution for the sake of some military point. And when he did find him, the man would learn precisely how each one of his victims had felt, thousands of times over. There was no point. The man was dead. Everyone was dead. He could go back, find the man before he let death fly.... But wouldn't that cause a time paradox? Killing him before he did that which would cause the Doctor to kill him? Didn't the Time Lord have a wider responsibility? He looked back at Jo. She stood there, cold and afraid, and suddenly the fury within him boiled out of a different channel. Damn the laws of time! He remembered Barbara and the Aztecs. "You cannot rewrite history. Not one line!" Suddenly his face twisted with 740 years of bitterness. Damn history, this was more important than history, more important than anything. He wasn't going to rewrite it, he was going to take it by both corners and rip it to shreds. He was going to do anything he had to do to save the Earth.

General Michaels walked through the White House, his face set in black fury. The Communists had gone too far this time. A sub-orbital spy plane over the Pentagon itself. He was going to the President. The President was about to leave for peace talks in London, but that would have to wait. Peace? The word infuriated Michaels. How could they have peace while the Soviet bloc existed? The only way forward was one of war, nuclear war, a war which would leave them the victors.

Of course there would be losses, strategic losses. Perhaps only one American would survive... but no Russians would, and they would have won. Michaels wanted war, and now he would have it. It had to be now though. If this came out while the President was at the conference those British cowards would talk him out of it, a whining little communicant to the Kremlin, nothing more. No more diplomacy. Nuclear strikes. "War."

He wasn't aware he'd said it aloud, none the less a voice echoed him from a corner. A tall guy with grey curly hair and a British accent. A chill fear suddenly, and unaccountable, gripped Michaels' heart.

"War," the man in the velvet jacket echoed, slowly taking a strange-looking gun from his pocket and levelling it at General Michaels' chest. "I don't really think we need it."

William J. Ramsden
THE MISJUDGEMENT OF LYTON: IN DEFENCE OF THE SIXTH DOCTOR

These days, it seems, Attack of the Cybermen has gone from being the story everyone cites as a good reason to give Colin Baker the axe to being seen as one of the better stories of the Sixth Doctor’s tenure. In keeping with the general mixed feelings about this period, however, this assessment is usually followed with a list of things that went wrong with it. One of the most often cited of these is perplexity with the Doctor’s final line: “I don’t think I’ve ever misjudged anyone as badly as I misjudged Lynton.” As Cornell, Day and Topping, rightly ask, “Is he really that nice anyway?” Since this question still remains unanswered, I propose to tackle it here.

On the face of it, this is a pretty good point. Lynton is not a nice guy. Over the course of the two Lynton stories, we get a convincing portrait of a self-centred soldier, one willing to kill his own men in order to ensure his own survival, who takes pleasure in tormenting Griffiths and Peri, and who generally seems to fit the Doctor’s description of him as someone “who would shoot his own grandmother to keep his trigger finger supple.”

One might note, however, that the Doctor does not say anywhere in the last few scenes of Attack that Lynton is a nice guy. He says that he misjudged Lynton; he does not say in what way he misjudged Lynton. Cornell and company to the contrary notwithstanding, he does not follow up his remark with, say, “he was on the side of right and good all along.” So, leaving aside the knotty question of whether or not the Doctor has had previous acquaintance with Lynton (which is one hypothesis recently advanced), let’s break down the story a bit.

Firstly, I would point out that Lynton has been misjudged in other ways, outside of the canon. A lot of guides to Doctor Who refer to him as “sadistic,” “cruel,” or “evil”; one online guide describes him as a “moustache-twisting villain.” Other guides, however, refer to him as “complex,” “enigmatic,” or “Machiavellian,” and these may be closer to the mark. Even in Resurrection of the Daleks, we do not see Lynton acting cruelly, but selfishly. He could have ordered Davros’ technician tortured; instead, he monitors his communications. When he kills one of his own men in order to escape from the warehouse, or watches the two policemen gun down the ship’s crew, he does not seem to be deriving sadistic pleasure from killing, or even acting out of cruelty, love of chaos, or anything other than a desire to ensure his own continued survival. Lynton thus appears to be, not so much a sadist, as an experienced soldier who has come to the conclusion that the only winners in war are the ones left standing at the end of it.

Lynton’s baiting of Peri in Attack is also interesting: he is not simply making her feel uncomfortable for the fun of it, he is pointing out her hypocrisy in talking about compassion and feeling when she does not care about the fate of aliens. Lynton, by contrast, may seem to Peri to be cold and dispassionate, but his dying remarks to the Doctor tell another story: “I did my best... kept my word.” We never see Lynton break a contract, suggesting that on some level, he does have a code of ethics: unlike, say, the Master, he does not simply make and break agreements as they please him. He could have abandoned the Dalek ship as soon as he worked out that things were going pear-shaped; instead, he waited until the very last minute to run. Unlike Peri, furthermore, he keeps it consistent. Again, Lynton appears to be a practical professional who treats his job, repugnant though Peri may find it, as a business.

Now contrast all this with the Doctor’s behaviour in Attack. The way the Doctor treats Lynton suggests that he, like the critics mentioned above, has, on their short acquaintance, pegged Lynton as a villain along the lines of Davros or the Master: someone who in a sense embodies evil, whose actions stem from a love of chaos, or a desire for self-aggrandizement. It is easy to picture Davros or the Cyberleader tormenting Peri in order to assess her reactions, or the Master doing the same thing for the sheer hell of it. The Doctor, based on his experience of such beings, assumes Lynton’s actions to stem from innate cruelty. His remark that Lynton should be “very happy” with the Cybermen also suggests that the Doctor assumes
Lyton either to be the sort of person who, like the Cybermen, would kill and torture without a second thought, or who, like Tobias Vaughn or the Master, would make a deal with the devil in return for power.

Peri and the Cryons' revelations, however, cause the Doctor to sharply reassess this judgement. Lyton was not, on either of the two occasions when they met, working for the sheer love of doing evil, but for payment: if the bad guys are paying the bills, Lyton has to do what the bad guys want him to do. He had gotten involved with the Cybermen, not in order to become the supreme force in the universe, but from a wish that the Doctor could probably understand: to return to his own place and time. So the Doctor, at last, is forced to see Lyton, not as a pantomime villain, but as a human being: a flawed human being, true, a not terribly admirable human being, definitely, but a human being nonetheless.

A good parallel might be the famous scene in Genesis of the Daleks in which the Doctor debates the morality of blowing up the embryo Daleks. Up until now he has been obediently following the instructions of the High Council to destroy the Daleks before they get dangerous. At this point, however, he finds himself questioning whether he can, in all conscience, cold-bloodedly destroy living beings with a history, a culture, and potential, likening it to whether one can kill a baby even if one knows it will grow up to be a dictator. In Attack of the Cybermen, the Doctor only considers the dictator, not the baby: he sees Lyton's actions as purely evil, and thus feels justified in condemning him to death. But at the end, he is forced to realize that what he has in fact done is the equivalent of blowing up the Dalek nursery—he has directly caused the painful death of a sentient being which is potentially capable of good as well as evil.

The Doctor's remorse, then, is understandable not as regret at the death of a "good" man, but as remorse over having forgotten his earlier ethical principles on the sacredness of life, even flawed life. The Doctor's misjudgement was not the wrong assessment of Lyton's morals, but of his own.

Fiona Moore

---

The Daleks: A Twentieth-Century Evil

John Wilson, former society President and noted wag, returns from 'across the water' with a stimulating little thought...

It's received wisdom in fandom that the Daleks, surely the best-known Doctor Who creation, are a representation in a science-fiction context of twentieth-century totalitarianism in general, and the particular twentieth-century totalitarianism of Nazi Germany in particular. This is of course most clear in Genesis of the Daleks, voted the best Who story of all time (whatever that means): the black uniforms of the Kaled military, Nyder's salute, and Davros' exterminationist megalomania, have all been commented upon.

Yet it struck me recently, watching the BBC2 series 'Cold War', that the design of the Daleks, their appearance, is representative of a very specific twentieth-century creation: the tank. The tank, in its crudest form an enclosed metal box mounted on twin tracks, was invented in the First World War as a means of crossing No Man's Land without being torn to shreds by machine-gun fire, its human occupants sheltered by its metal shell. The parallels with the first-world-war scenario of 'Genesis' are clear. Fictionally, the Daleks were devised by Davros for similar reasons as must have motivated the designers of the tank in reality, and I would not be surprised if Terry Nation (in 1963) and Robert Holmes (later, in 1975) were aware of this.

What is most striking though, is Nation's prescience in realising that the tank, as an inspiration for the Daleks, would feature in many of the century's defining images. You can see the mechanistic, inhuman essence of the Daleks in footage of the tanks heralding the Soviet invasion of Hungary, before Doctor Who began, and in the year the programme ended, in the crushing of the student protests in Tiananmen Square in China.

That's why they're still remembered, and have passed into the language: they're still out there, and their rationale can be seen today in Indonesia, Afghanistan and Serbia. They're tanks. They're tanks.
A Secretary Speaks

In which our hero, David Bickley, considers writing a measured, even-handed farewell article, an article reflecting his usual mind-numbingly cautious attitude towards everything to do with the Society, and then decides to sod it and have a rant instead... Yay!

Doctor Who fans are a curious breed — that goes without saying. As a Doctor Who fan you have to accept the fact that 99% of the people you meet will never have a clue why this bizarre programme holds such a place in your heart. You will also shortly learn that, of that 99%, most, on learning that you’re a fan, will give up on you there and then. The rest will shake their heads patronisingly and treat your being a fan as a phase which you’ll give up on some day — that is, once you’ve discovered more adult pleasures like drinking yourself slowly to death, driving fast cars or working 8 to 6 in a sweat-shop of an office.

Even if you try to take the wise option and conceal your sorry affliction, the truth has an unpleasant way of outing itself. In Oxford, for example, one of your friends — probably one you’re trying half-heartedly to impress — will eventually ask you what it is you do on a Monday night and you’ll be forced to say

“Mumblemumblemumble
IgototheDoctorWhosociety
mumblemumble,”

and all will be lost...

But what the hell? Life without any strong passions or interests would be dull indeed and had I not, over four years ago, decided to try out the Oxford University Doctor Who Society I would not have been lucky enough to meet some of the nicest people I’ve ever met and made some of the best friendships I’ve ever made (To be fair I’ve encountered some of the most unhappy creatures in God’s creation through the society as well but they’re a very, very small minority). Doctor Who has, on the whole, been a force for good in my life: it taught me basic, if misleading, astrophysics (“what, you mean the universe isn’t really the same thing as the galaxy, after all? Bummer.”); it taught me how novels should really be written (i.e. Terrance Dicks-style) and how many pages they should run to (i.e. 128 pages — burn any books you have that aren’t exactly that length!); it even prompted me to attempt my very own Doctor Who novel, The Vaults of Herdoc, which was halfway to completion when my old Amstrad PCW decided to save mankind a lot of pain and crashed permanently. Even as recently as last summer, seeing a reconstruction of Marco Polo prompted me to go out and learn as much as Sutton Coldfield public library would let me know about the Mongols and Polo, just as The Massacre once got me interested in the French Wars of Religion and the rise to power of Henri IV. Above all, Doctor Who is immense fun: a show which has given me hours of entertainment and provided a welcome retreat from GCSEs, A-levels, Mods, Finals or anything else that was getting me down at the time.

In short, I’m quite fan of being a fan.

However, as Paul Cornell commented in his collection of fan-written pieces, License Denied, fans also tend to exist in a permanent state of war with one another, whether it be the Al & Mat routines we get at DocSoc or the — sometimes quite vicious — sniping on newsgroups like rec.arts.drwho.

Fandom can be split into umpteen factions: those who love Pertwee vs. those who hate the man; those who dismiss the TV movie from their own private canon vs. those who give it pride of place vs. those who frankly don’t give a toss, and so on... And, so long as the arguments don’t transform into actual violence, this is all very healthy: once
something stops being discussed with passion then you know its days are numbered. Besides, just think how bored we’d be if we liked every single aspect of every single Doctor Who story.

Despite that, there is one element in Doctor Who fandom which I, for one, am not prepared to be quite so liberal about and that’s those people who go out of their way to laugh at the show. 

Note that I say laugh at and not with. Laughing with the show is great – one of the nicest movements to have emerged in fandom in recent years is the revaluation of the humour and joie de vivre of the Williams era and I love to see Pat or Tom clowning around as much as anyone. It’s also great fun to follow the example set by The Discontinuity Guide and keep an eye out for all the programme’s faults: that hand on Sutekh’s cushion, groping the god for all eternity; that expression on Zaroff’s face at the end of The Underwater Menace Part Three; “No... not... THE MIND PROBE!!!” and many, many more.

* * *

If we adopt an attitude of pious reverence towards the show we risk ending up becoming akin to the many JMSophiles who inhabit Babylon 5 fandom: check out some of the pages of The Lurkers’ Guide to Babylon 5 to get a blast of that – it will frighten you.

But everything can be taken to extremes and the extreme version of irreverence is the tendency to watch Doctor Who for its faults and for its faults alone. The fan who adheres to this philosophy laughs hysterically whenever Bill Hartnell fluffs a line; he jeers when a top-heavy monster ambles around a corner; and he sneers at every visual effect in Doctor Who which doesn’t quite match up to what can be achieved with a Star Wars or Trek budget and, let’s face it, that’s an awful lot of effects to sneer at. It’s a trait that’s become prevalent at the Society in Oxford and if I were coming to the society as a Fresher and not as a hard-bitten Post-Grad who has nothing better to do on a Monday night, the chances are I’d be so put off by the sneering attitude that I wouldn’t bother to come again.

It’s reached such a peak that the strangest things in the programme find themselves becoming objects of derision. You remember The Ice Warriors, a Pat Troughton story shown last term? At one point a wild bear, prowling through the tundra, menaces our heroes, Jamie and Penley, and the moment this image came on screen there were dismissive cries from the society of “stock footage!” and a certain amount of laughter. But the thing is, it wasn’t stock footage at all – it was, according to Doctor Who – The Television Companion (yes, I admit it, I bought a copy), a sequence specially filmed for the series. Simply because some people wanted to sneer at anything they could, they chose to see it as stock footage and laugh at it accordingly.

In a similar vein, during The Reign of Terror, what was, I thought, rather a nice model of 18th century Paris was derided and, judging by the hysterical reception that the simple screen caption “Paris” received, someone outside the room might have thought we were showing an Eddie Izzard video and not an early Sixties children’s show.

And, I ask myself, what on earth is the point of having this attitude towards Doctor Who? It’s not perfect – nothing on this earth ever is. It doesn’t boast the greatest visual effects and it certainly never had an adequate budget (apart from the TV Movie). It’s an acquired taste and being a fan can be something of a heavy burden to carry, as I argued earlier - Doctor Who fans are generally regarded by the outside world as nothing more than a bunch of inadequate anoraks with no lives and a very sad existence indeed.

And if all the pleasure we can ever get from the show comes from obsessively noting and laughing at every slight flaw in its production, then, quite frankly, the outside world will be absolutely right.
Inside the detention area, the Doctor finally got out his Sonic Screwdriver. He went over to the door and said "Sam, I'll have us out of here in two shakes!"

The Doctor held the Sonic Screwdriver against the lock of the door and within seconds, it slid open. No guards were around.

"Now back to the TARDIS" said the Doctor, "We’ve got to get to Earth before Estrolabous and the Gorvoroks."

"So you know what they're planning then?" asked Sam.

"My dear girl, I'm the Doctor! I am the one that all the wartlike aliens have nightmares about."

Inside the TARDIS, the Doctor set the controls for Earth in 1986. With a wheezing, groaning sound the TARDIS faded away.

Jim Henderson watched as the astronauts boarded the Space Shuttle. Their big adventure was just beginning.

Commander Scobee spoke finally into his communication unit. "OK Space Control, we will now make the final checks."

"OK Commander," said Henderson.

The TARDIS materialised near the launch pad. Sam and the Doctor rushed up to the Shuttle. The Doctor started examining the fuel pumps.

"Doctor?" said Sam, who was eyeing the thruster nozzles on the Shuttle orbiter rather nervously. "What are you doing? You can't prevent this disaster, you know that."

"My dear girl, I'm not trying to prevent it. I couldn't, even if I wanted to. Unless it was due to alien intervention. And then..."

"Then," said Sam, "what are you doing?"

"Finding out what caused the disaster in the first place."

"I think my parents told me it had something to do with the thrusters on one of the solid fuel rockets."

"Well, I can't see anything wrong," said the Doctor.

"Just then, a security guard came up to them and said, "All right you two, what do you think you're doing?"

"Just checking the rocket thrusters for you," he turned to face the security guard and said "You don't think we're saboteurs, do you?" The look on the Security Guard's face gave the Doctor the answer. "Oh – you do" he said.

"You two are coming with me," said the guard.

On board the Gorvorok ship, Estrolabous had completed his calculations. He turned to face the Gorvorok leader and said, "The comet will strike Earth. One huge explosion and then the universe is yours for the taking."

"EXCELLENT!" said the Gorvorok leader.

A Gorvorok trooper entered the flight deck and went over to the leader. "LEADER, THE DOCTOR AND THE EARTH FEMALE HAVE ESCAPED. THEIR CRAFT IS NO LONGER ON BOARD."

Estrolabous smiled. "We must get to Earth. Now."

The Doctor and Sam were taken to Mission Control.

Henderson looked up. "Who the Devil are these two?"

"Well, I'm the Doctor and this is Samantha Jones," said the Doctor.

"Smith and Jones at your service," said Sam, and a cheeky smile appeared on her young face.

"Where did you find them?" asked Henderson.

The guard stepped forward and said, "I found them on the launch pad, sir."

"What?" exclaimed Henderson. "Saboteurs?"

"Yes," said the guard.

"No," said the Doctor.

Henderson stared at the Doctor and Sam for a moment, then finally he said, "So what were you doing to the shuttle?"

"Trying to prevent an awful tragedy," said the Doctor.

The countdown reached zero and the Space Shuttle surged upwards into the sky.

"Well," said Henderson, "Another shuttle successfully launched."

Seventy-three seconds into the mission, the Shuttle exploded in a ball of fire.

"Right," said Henderson, staring at the Doctor, "You two are under arrest for sabotage."

At that moment the sound of rocket thrusters shattered the peace outside. They rushed out. Henderson was awe-struck at the sight.

"What is it?" said Henderson.

"A Gorvorok ship," said the Doctor, "The real saboteurs!"

The door opened and the Gorvoroks emerged, followed by Estrolabous.

"YOU WILL PLACE YOURSELVES UNDER GORVOROK RULE!" said the Gorvorok leader. "WE ARE YOUR NEW MASTERS."

Colonel Henderson looked defiantly at the Gorvoroks and Estrolabous and for a moment he was speechless.

"You'll never rule this planet," he said defiantly. "You'll find we can put up a lot of resistance."

"EARTH AND THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE, WILL BE OURS FOR THE TAKING!" said the leader. "VERY SOON."

The Doctor turned to face the Colonel and said, "Now perhaps you'll believe we're not saboteurs."

"OK," said Henderson, "For the time being I'll trust you."

Estrolabous turned to face the Gorvoroks, and beckoned them to follow him. They went off to find somewhere to set up their equipment.

Sam turned to face Henderson and said, "Do you have a weapons store or something?"

Henderson nodded and pointed to the other end of the airfield. "Yes, it's right over there."
The Doctor gave Henderson a stern look and said, “I hate to worry you, Colonel, but that’s exactly where the Gorvorks and Estrolabous are heading for.”

Henderson, the Doctor, Sam and the guard captain returned to the control room.

“Doctor,” said Henderson, “What exactly are they planning?”

The Doctor let out a deep sigh, “Halley’s Comet. They’re going to cause it to collide with the Earth.”

“What!” exclaimed Henderson, “We’ve got to stop them!”

Sam had an idea. She raised her hand.

“Yes, Sam, what is it?” asked the Doctor.

“Maybe we can get into the Weaponry Store without the Gorvorks seeing us.”

The Doctor thought for a second. Then he whispered something to her. Colonel Henderson looked at her. Then he turned to one of his troopers.

“Take her to the weaponry store. And bring whatever you can back here.”

“Will do, sir,” said Lieutenant Carter. “Come on, Miss.”

Colonel Henderson turned back to the Doctor, who was gazing at the replay of the launch.

“Doctor, do you think these creatures had anything to do with the destruction of the shuttle?”

The Doctor shook his head. “No. It was more than likely caused by a fault in the rocket thrusters.”

“But that’s impossible. Both SRBs have been used on previous missions,” said Henderson.

“I am right,” said the Doctor. He replayed the video footage of the launch and froze the image at T-Plus fifty-nine seconds. “Now, look closely at the right hand SRB.”

Henderson looked and saw to his horror a spillage of the M3 variant.

“Anyway,” said the Doctor, “our immediate problem is Estrolabous and the Gorvorks.”

Inside the temporary base of the Gorvorks, Estrolabous was checking the instruments he had brought with him. All at once, he peered closer to the readings. He beckoned the Gorvork leader over. “A momentous moment has just occurred in this planet’s solar system.”

“What is it?” asked the Gorvork leader.

Estrolabous was silent for a moment, as if carefully choosing his words. Twelve centuries ago the Great Time Prophet had prophesied that the planet Mondas would return to the Earth’s solar system in 1986. This prophecy, however, had been disputed by Haggia, who in time would form the Cyber Archives.

“Centuries ago,” said Estrolabous, “Earth had a twin planet called Mondas. It drifted away to the edge of space. Now it has returned, just as the Great Time Prophet said it would.” A smile appeared on Estrolabous’ face, and he chuckled. “Something else for the Doctor to worry about.”

In Mission Control, the Doctor and the Colonel had also detected Mondas on the instruments. The Colonel gazed at the instruments with a bewildered look on his face.

“This may sound daft, Doctor, but isn’t that a new planet out there?”

“It is,” said the Doctor.

A technician looked up from the console and said “Shouldn’t we contact Snow Cap sir, and tell them about this new planet?”

The Doctor shook his head. “Why in God’s name not?” said the Colonel.

“Because Snow Cap will already have it on their screens.”

The door opened and in came Sam and Lieutenant Carter, with a handful of tear-gas grenades. They had been loaded with thinned-down hexachromite paint from a rigger’s store.

“Will these deal with them, Doctor?” Sam asked.

The Doctor let out a deep sigh – he hated the idea of using hexachromite. But it was all they had. He, Sam, the Colonel and Lieutenant Carter set off for the Gorvorks’ temporary base.

Estrolabous had completed the co-ordinates on the gravity weapon supplied by his allies. “The task is now complete. We can leave and watch as the comet totally obliterates this planet.”

“And you will give us the charts. The universe will be ours for the taking!” said the Gorvork leader. “That is what we agreed.”

At that moment, the Doctor and his friends rushed in.

“Stop!” shouted the Doctor.

“You’re too late, Doctor” snarled Estrolabous. “The destruction of Earth is now inevitable.”

“Over my regenerated body,” said the Doctor as he lunged forward, grabbing the evil Time Prophet by the throat.

All around the room, the Gorvorks were dropping like ninepins as the hexachromite bombs exploded.

“You won’t get away with this Doctor!” roared Estrolabous, pushing him violently across the room.

“Carter, stop him!” ordered the Colonel. But it was too late. Estrolabous had gone. Seconds later, the Gorvork ship roared off into the sky. The Doctor went over to the computer console and put the comet back on course. And he produced the disk that he had fished from Estrolabous during the fight.

“I’ve got a feeling,” said the Doctor, “the Gorvorks aren’t going to need these.”

The Colonel went over to the Doctor and said: “Thank you, Doctor, we couldn’t have defeated those monstrousities without your help.”

The Doctor smiled. “Oh, don’t mention it.”

Back inside the TARDIS, the Doctor stood in front of the console, with Samantha at his side.

“First of all, Sam, we’ll pop back to Gallifrey and return the star charts” said the Doctor. “And then, I’ll show you the universe.”

Sam looked up at the Doctor, her young face bright with excitement.

“I think I’ll enjoy travelling with you, Doctor” she said.

“The Gorvorks weren’t that bad.”

“My dear girl,” said the Doctor, “you ain’t seen nothing yet. The universe is full of dangers. Vampires, Daleks, Cybermen, even Sontarans. Believe me, my dear, the Gorvorks are just the tip of the iceberg.”

The Doctor pressed the dematerialisation button.

The Time Rotor began its rise and fall. Whether Sam liked it or not, she was on her way to new and terrifying adventures in Time and Space.

Alan Whitton
Vale, Stephen Cole

On Monday 23\textsuperscript{rd} November 1998 Stephen Cole, an honorary member of OU Who, stepped down from his position as BBC Worldwide’s \textit{Doctor Who} supremo. Until then, he had been responsible for every aspect of the marketing of \textit{Doctor Who}, from choosing the photos for the covers of the videos to developing characters in the books to setting up the recordings of audio books. Although he still has an editorial position on the eighth \textit{Doctor Who} books, Steve’s departure splits up the production of the video and publishing arms of the \textit{Doctor Who} empire, representing an apparent turnaround on behalf of BBC Worldwide.

When the organisation claimed the license to print original \textit{Doctor Who} fiction from Virgin in 1997, it decided before long that the task of editing the range could only be taken on by a fan: someone with the requisite knowledge of continuity, as well as relevant experience. The first few books of the new series were commissioned by one of Steve’s colleagues, Nuala Buffini. The first novel directly commissioned by Steve was Lawrence Miles’ \textit{Alien Bodies}, the sixth in the eighth \textit{Doctor Who} series. It is as much a tribute to the editor as the writer that this work pleased as many readers as it did: it has a phenomenally tight structure (particularly when compared to Miles’ rather shapeless \textit{Christmas on a Rational Planet}). \textit{Alien Bodies} got Steve’s tenure off to a flying start.

Non-literary \textit{Doctor Who} fans also seem to have benefited from Steve’s presence at Worldwide. The video releases of the remainder of the \textit{Doctor Who} archive have shown a good range, and have been of remarkably good technical quality. This has been the case especially with regard to black and white episodes, which the Restoration Team has cleaned up beautifully. The copies of The Ark and The Ice Warriors look superb. It’s difficult for those of us without technical knowledge to know to what extent the quality of the finished product is dependent on the quality of the original archive footage, but compare any of the recent b/w releases with those of the early nineties (e.g. Daleks: the Early Years), and the difference is easy to see.

When Steve came to speak to the society in January 1998, he told us that the increased care that was being taken over \textit{Doctor Who} releases was being applied throughout the processes of making the tapes, since the Restoration Team found it galling to see the work they had done on cleaning up the prints (in particular, \textit{The War Machines}) defeated by poor duplication of the commercial tapes. As a result, said Steve, the distributors had undertaken not to use “sprinters”, high-speed dubbing machines, when producing \textit{Doctor Who} tapes.

Steve’s presence at Worldwide, and frequent comments in DWM for the news-stand pundits, have helped to make fans feel secure. The removal of the Who books from Virgin to the BBC took place at a sensitive time: only a year after the TV movie had been broadcast, it was not totally unreasonable to think that the BBC might have a mind to make more new \textit{Doctor Who} for television, and would perhaps be looking for a new co-production partner after Universal’s option on the format ran out.

If this had been the case, it would have been only natural for the BBC to want to hold on to the spin-off book property. Even the sceptics, who even then suspected that there would be no new \textit{Doctor Who} forthcoming, could become excited about the prospect of a new line of books (the new \textit{New Adventures}?) featuring the new Doctor, without the excess baggage of the continuity that Virgin had built up for itself. Regular readers of the Virgin novels started speculating about how the two series could be linked after all, in order to rescue that continuity. It is to Steve’s credit that his statements on the marketing and “the future” of \textit{Doctor Who} were clear and unambiguous throughout his tenure, reporting the facts without descending into speculation. As a result, the authority of the \textit{Doctor Who} office at Worldwide was uncompromised.

So how will Steve be remembered, and what are the implications for Doctor Who at BBC Worldwide now that he’s gone? First of all, he’s still here: he does the preliminary reading on the Eighth Doctor manuscripts. Some of his recent comments on the future of the Eighth Doctor line are exciting to read,

‘Next year [1999] we’ll be making things tougher for him - that honesty will put him in some difficult positions, and true heroes can’t be hypocrites - he will be taking some decisions that will shock regular readers. I also want to engender the feeling that things are somehow getting away from him...’ (DWM 272, December 1998, p.36)

Worryingly, though, it may be that one of the reasons that this scheme sounds exciting is that the Eighth Doctor range as of January 1999 is rather insipid. To some extent this is a result of attempting to base 11 books a year on a character we have seen on screen for well under 90 minutes, with the result that the Eighth Doctor runs the risk of becoming an amalgamation of qualities of all the previous Doctors.

On the other hand, the Seventh Doctor as presented by Virgin was not really the Seventh Doctor who had been seen on screen. He was a development of the character seen in \textit{Remembrance of the Daleks}, \textit{Ghost Light} and \textit{The Curse of Fenric}, but not \textit{Dragonfire}, \textit{The Happiness Patrol} or even \textit{Survival}. One aspect of that character was focussed on (perhaps to excess), giving the series a distinctive flavour as a result. Nothing comparable seems yet to have been found for the Eighth Doctor novels.

Similarly, the companion introduced for the new Doctor by Terrance Dicks in \textit{The Eight Doctors},
Samantha "Sam" Jones, seems to be a figure in desperate search of a character. In retrospect, perhaps the character seemed too familiar: a teenage girl (Vicki) from Coal Hill School, Shoreditch, London (Susan) in the late 20th century (Ace) wanders into the TARDIS (Dodo) and starts asking lots of questions even before leaving home, family and friends behind (companions ad nauseam). Subsequent attempts to flesh out the character look ever more desperate, such as her crush on the Doctor or three years apart from him doing her own thing (for which, compare Ace in the New Adventures, especially Deceit and Lucifer Rising).

Given the time it takes for creative decisions to filter through the publishing process (on the basis that even if you’ve had a brilliant idea, you still need someone to go away for six months and write it for you) I rather suspect that Steve Cole’s most significant effect on “new” Doctor Who at BBC Worldwide will only become clear months after he has left. The introduction of the new companion, Fitz Kreiner, in The Taint (February), and the exit of Sam in Interference (August) might just give us Steve’s idea of Doctor Who, without the paraphernalia attendant on it when he took over.

With Steve’s departure, Doctor Who marketing at BBC Worldwide has been split up again between books and videos. It is easy to see this as a negative point, but it doesn’t need to be. What it could equally mean is that each arm of the merchandising will be receiving the full attention it deserves. This is not to say that either arm has been neglected up until now: they haven’t. On the other hand, it is difficult to see any real advantages to having all the merchandising under one roof: there have not yet been any promotional offers between the ranges (e.g. “Buy The Face of Evil on video and get the new Chris Boucher book at a discount!”) and there is nothing wrong with specialisation. It could be seen as a retrograde step by the BBC, losing any pretence at a single identity for Doctor Who as a living product, and relegating it to archive status. But it could equally be seen positively, as an attempt to make each sector of the merchandising shine on its own.

So, goodbye Steve Cole. Probably the best thing he’s done over 1997-8 has been simply to be there: to be a familiar name on whom we’ve been able to rely to get the product onto the shelves. Not since 1989 has there been such an authoritative BBC voice on precisely what is happening to Doctor Who. With time the memory of that will fade, and all we’ll be left with to remember Steve’s contribution to the series will be half a shelf of books and a Dalek voice over the front of a few video tapes. It’s ironic that with the upcoming changes in personnel in the books, Steve’s biggest contribution to a vision of Doctor Who might occur after his official departure. He couldn’t make our dreams come true forever, but he could do it for a day.

Alastair Harrison

To live in interesting times: the return of The Lion

In 1969, the BBC wiped The Lion, the first episode of David Whitaker’s four-part historical drama, The Crusade, featuring the First Doctor, Ian, Barbara and Vicki. Paul Soones, the NZDWFJ coordinator, reported that a 6mm film print of this episode was discovered in Auckland, New Zealand in January 1999 and returned to the BBC on January 12th.

According to Paul, "The complete film print was bought at a film collectors’ fair in Napier, New Zealand in June 1998. It was purchased by Auckland film collector Bruce Grenville from another collector who was unaware of its rarity and sold it to Bruce cheaply as an 'incomplete Doctor Who story'.

"Bruce was equally unaware that the episode had any special significance, and regularly screened it for his friends. One such friend, Cornelius Stone, mentioned to Neil Lambe, a member of the New Zealand Doctor Who Fan Club, that he’d seen the film of a Hartnell historical episode set in the time of the crusades."

Lambe learned that the episode was apparently The Lion. Following up on this lead, he and Soones visited Grenville on 3 January and viewed the film to verify this. Grenville was surprised to learn of the rarity of his film print, and readily agreed to loan it to the BBC’s unofficial Doctor Who ‘Restoration Team’ to be cleaned up and duplicated. Paul Soones contacted Steve Roberts of the ‘Restoration Team’ and handled the safe dispatch of the film to the UK.

It is likely that the print was received by the New Zealand Broadcasting Corporation from the BBC around late 1967. Although NZBC records show that the New Zealand censor rated the story suitable for broadcast, it remains one of several sixties stories that were received by the NZBC but never screened.

The Lion is the only lost Who episode so far found in New Zealand. Although Grenville (who is a regular visitor to film collectors’ fairs in NZ), says he has not yet come across any other Doctor Who film prints, this find raises renewed hope that further lost episodes may still exist, just waiting to be rediscovered." Episode three of The Crusade also survives, and has been released on The Hartnell Years videocassette. The last discovery of this magnitude took place in 1992, when the complete Tomb Of The Cybermen was unearthed in Hong Kong.

Once the original print of the film is returned by the BBC (after making their own copy), the New Zealand Sunday Star Times reports that Grenville plans to auction it off on the Internet, and is expecting bids of up to NZ$12,000. Although some questions were raised as to the legality of Grenville’s ownership of the print, and hence his right to resell it (NZBC was to supposed to have either returned the print to the BBC or destroyed it, so it may technically be stolen property), BBC Engineer Steve Roberts states, "The BBC have decided that, as Bruce bought the print in good faith, he should be allowed to sell it on if he wishes. Obviously this does not mean he has any rights over the actual programme material however."

[Based on a piece from The Doctor Who News Page at www.physics.mun.ca/~sp/swhonews.html]
Down on the farm with the sixth Doctor: a story by the mysterious Derek Haywood

It was piece work, but it was better than nothing. Especially if you’d overstayed the welcome on your visa. Some of the other pickers were getting the dole, or on the sick. A little extra cash, no taxes, no traces, the electric got paid on time and everyone was happy. Walking up and down the rows of raspberries, strawberries and currants with their armfuls of flimsy card baskets, they had plenty of time to think. Sometimes that was good.

Tom Sullivan reached the top of the field, where the railway line was. The public didn’t normally bother to come all the way up here. Too much like hard work. The sun was at its fiercest now. Time for lunch. He set his clutch of baskets down carefully and stretched out beneath one of the big old trees.

“Mind if I join you?” said a bloke with a posh, friendly voice.

Tom looked up. The bloke in question grinned at him. He was a big chap with a mop of curly, fair hair and he was wearing this really stupid pair of yellow trousers. He’d seen some pratts from the city but this one took the cup.

“Suit yourself,” he said. Then he noticed the bloke had a stack of baskets like his. “You’re not – one of us?”

“I’m afraid so.”

“Come off it, mate. What the hell’s someone like you doing in a shite job like this?”

“I need time to think.”

Tom could understand that. “Don’t we all.”

They munched their cheese and pickle.

“You’d better just call me the Doctor.”

“Tom Sullivan,” said Tom, and they shook hands.

“So you’re another one who won’t tell anyone his full name, are you? Trouble with the courts, is it?”

“You might say that. They dropped the case. Now I need a break.”

“Me too,” said Tom. “Two months eight days and a morning in Wimmon Bloody Green. Then they tell me they’ve got the wrong bloke. ‘Sorry mate, we’ve screwed up your life. Now sod off and don’t call us unless you’re thinking about tопping yourself.’”

He reached for an apple. He could have had some raspberries but he’d been doing this job for three weeks and couldn’t stand the sight of the bloody things any more. They were all covered in pesticide anyway.

“Did you have a job, er, before?”

“I – well, I suppose I was a sort of policeman.” The bloke looked amused at Tom’s reaction. “But really I just like travelling. Meeting people.” He shifted onto his side and said conspiratorially, “It’s amazing who you can meet doing a job like this. There’s a woman picking strawberries over there who swears blind she’s from a minor planet near Sirius.”

Tom laughed.

“Daft, isn’t it?” said the bloke. “Last week I was picking fruit on a minor planet near Sirius and met a woman who swore blind she was from Earth.”

Tom stopped laughing for a second. Then he said, “Oh, I get it,” and started laughing again (if a shade less convincingly than before).

“The problem is,” said the Doctor, “wherever I go I always get mixed up in something.”

“You’re just walking along a street, minding your own business, and then, well…”

“Exactly.”

Tom heard yet another train in the distance.

So did the Doctor. He rummaged in one of his baskets of raspberries and fished out a plastic bag with something in it.

Tom stared at him open-mouthed.

“Now this,” said the Doctor, “is a radiation wave meter.”

The train was moving very fast. It was also very short: just a locomotive and a couple of wagons loaded with containers. Probably headed for the Tunnel, though Tom off-handedly.

The Doctor was studying the reading on the meter.

“I’d better be going,” he said. He stood up and pointed at his baskets. “Do you mind taking these in for me?”

“Not at all. Hey, thanks very much.” A full day’s haul and it was only half twelve. He went over to where the Doctor was retrieving a mad patchwork coat from behind a bush. “What’s going on? I want to know.”

The Doctor shook his head absent-mindedly. “No.” He walked a short way and stopped.

“Look, I probably shouldn’t be telling you this either, but, well, they picked somebody up this morning. He confessed.” He waved and went off to find the TARDIS.

And maybe I could have found him before he found that girl, thought the Doctor as he walked away.

I have to get more organised.
The very first editor of Tides of Time, Louise Dennis, took time off from artificial intelligence in September to wed Edinburgh University lecturer Bill Sellars. The couple met at Edinburgh, where both were actively involved in the role-playing games scene. Louise and Bill will continue to live in their tenanted flat in Edinburgh, despite Louise's new job in Glasgow.


The ceremony and reception were held at the rustic venue of Lains Barn near Wantage, an ancient building now used for social functions. The wedding breakfast was held at the Bear in Wantage, and the couple honeymooned in Scotland.

Several old members of the Doctor Who Society were present during the celebrations. These included Sarah Sturz (now Wells) and Liz Humphry, who like Louise were both among the founders of the Oxford Tolkien Society; OU Who's second president Adam Stephens; sometime vice-president Matthew Elburn; and ex-secretary Alice Drewery.

Novelist Daniel Blythe married Rachel Tilford on 1 August at St John's Church, Hucknall, Nottinghamshire. Dan read French and German at St John's from 1987 to 1991, and was a member of the Doctor Who Society. Since leaving Oxford he has read for a PhD at Sheffield University - where he met Rachel - and, of course, had three novels published. Two of these, Two Dimension Revers and Infinite Necktie were for Virgina's Doctor Who New Adventures series. Dan has now moved on to Penguin who published his saga of alienated youth in a seaside town, The Cut. His next novel, Losing Faith, appears in January. The "powerful second novel follows the lives of a group of friends who meet at university during the twilight years of Thatcher and go on to become the Nineties E-generation", according to the blurb. Good luck from Hell who!
I feel so pleasingly masculine

Tides Of Time
Will Return