MYCELIAL NETWORKER

Fungal reproduction and the Time Lords • Allegory in Ghost Light
The Twelfth Doctor as storyteller • Twice Upon a Time
Varsity Quiz 2018 • Jodie Whittaker • Colin Baker • Big Finish
The Tides of Time

Published by the Oxford Doctor Who Society

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Sarah Jane Smith thinks Tides doesn’t have enough women writing for it. We can only agree. Please help us rectify this. Ideas, articles, stories, poems to the address which appears twice on this page already (whichever gender you might be).
HERE WE ARE ONCE AGAIN, TWO TERMS OLDER, AND POTENTIALLY WISER, FROM OUR LAST ISSUE. Quite a bit has happened since last time, not least elections and a Christmas special! Firstly, the society is now under (not entirely) new leadership, with Cameron having taken up my former post as President, while Philip, Francis and Alfred have also joined us as Secretary, Publicity Officer and IT Officer respectively. Everyone seems to be off to a good start so far, and preparations are underway for next term’s freshers fair! As well as the new students who have joined us, we also have a series of new honorary members, including Katy Manning and Colin Baker. They join the already illustrious company of Sophie Aldred, Toby Jones, Murray Gold and Matt Fitton.

We’ve also had a few society firsts this year, in addition to my first time editing Tides! We’ve hosted our first Mega Quiz with other university Doctor Who societies from across the country, including Gloucester and Sussex in addition to Cambridge; something that we hope to expand in the coming year! We have also just taken part in our first Quiz of Rassilon, coming a respectable fourth, while we also contested a tightly fought Varsity Quiz (more on that within!). A new meeting idea has also been tested to great success, with a random Tom Baker story selected from among those that haven’t been seen by the society within student memory! We’ve even been featured in the student press, writing an article summarising our opinions of Twice Upon A Time for The Oxford Student! Our website has had a Tenth Doctor-style vanity regeneration, with a series of new banners by the ever-talented Sam Sheppard.

All that is left to say is that I hope you enjoy the latest incarnation of Tides!

AFTER THAT REPORT ON CHANGE FROM JAMES, SOME NOTES OF CONTINUITY FROM ME. No, not that sort of continuity (white-coated representatives of the Old Fans’ Asylum for the Continuity-Obsessed adjust their vortex manipulators and disappear).

This issue of Tides of Time has been another enjoyable issue to edit, and I’ve been glad to be co-editing with James this time round and for the foreseeable future. I didn’t expect this number of Tides to be as long as the last, but I had ideas and James had ideas and other people had ideas and here we are, with about twenty pages of copy held over for the next issue, either already delivered or near to delivery. So we might be back as early as Michaelmas with a shorter issue than this one, when you will finally see James’s article on comics, some consideration of Kill the Moon, more on the new novelizations, perhaps a look at the Twitch stream (ongoing as we go to press), and some first impressions of the Jodie Whittaker era. Further ideas for articles are welcome - one of James’s first innovations was the Tides of Time e-mail address as seen in a prominent place on page two, and please contact us there.

As for Tides 41 - a new Doctor and a new masthead. Goodbye Della Robbia and a look deliberately echoing the title captions of late 1970s Doctor Who, hello a heading based on the new series logo (thanks to the Doctor Who Logo Generator at http://pepperpot.fr/DWLogoGenerator/index.php ) and Gotham Book. Also hello to Bethan, Matthew, Michael, Philip, Ryan and Stephen, all of whom make their Tides debuts this issue, with particular thanks to non-Oxonians Matthew and Stephen. Welcome back to Adam, Andrew, Georgia, Ian, John S, John W, Jonathan, Rogan and Will. I think we have a strong range of voices and subjects this time. Watch out for Andrew’s edited collection on the Twelfth Doctor, Twelfth Night, which will be appearing in October from I.B. Tauris.

I’ve mentioned my Black Archive book on The Time Warrior in my last two editorials. It’s now close to being completed and it’s out in October. More on that next time, I expect.
You may have noticed that when Jodie Whittaker was announced as the Thirteenth Doctor that the reaction was not entirely positive. Similar, though less strong reactions, had also greeted the regenerations of the Master into Missy and the General (recently named Kenossium by the DWM comic strip), with the idea that an individual could change gender as part of their life cycle being something that sparked hostility from some sections of fandom. Even here on earth, there’s plenty of scientific basis for this idea, forming a pantheon of species to which the Time Lords are just the latest addition.

The pinnacle of this ability surely lies with fungi. Fungi don’t have genders in the strictest sense, having multiple mating types instead. Many just have two, a and α, but occasionally more. For example, *Schizophyllum commune* is a fungus that has over 10,000 mating types! These mating types allow different fungi of compatible types to mate, making them heterothallic, but some fungi, the homothallic ones, may also do it by themselves, fusing two compatible nuclei produced from within itself. What allows it to produce nuclei is the ability of fungi to change mating types. In the case of a typical fungus genome with a and α mating types, there is a mating locus, or MAT, which determines the mating type. It separates two silent loci, Hidden MAT left (HML) which codes for a and Hidden MAT right (HMR) for α. Upon beginning division, the HO gene is activated, which produces an endonuclease, which is an enzyme able to cut the bonds within the DNA chain. It causes a double strand break, and this break is repaired using either the HML or HMR. To ensure that a mating switch occurs, a specialised enhancer, which affects how easily DNA can be replicated, is used to ensure the opposite locus is selected. This can happen regularly, once every division, if the HO gene is dominant, or once every 10,000 divisions if it is recessive. In *S.cerevisiae*, or yeast, this produces a mother and daughter cell of opposite mating types, as the daughter gets an original copy of the mother’s genome as well as an mRNA transcript that codes for a HO inhibitor. The mother, meanwhile, can switch as her HO gene has already been activated during the cell cycle. Hypothetically, this could be a valid explanation for a regeneration changing sex, it would just require the absence of the switching enhancer so that each HO activation randomly selected a mating locus.

Another possibility encompasses the process found in vertebrates, which makes use of change on a hormonal rather than genetic level. The two key hormones are testosterone, resulting in masculinisation, and oestradiol which results in feminisation. Clownfish are protandrous, which means that the loss of the dominant female leads to the dominant male changing to replace them. In this situation, the aromatase enzyme converts testosterone into oestradiol, leading to the restructuring of the testes into ovaries. Conversely, the blue-streak cleaner wrasse is protogynous, with the dominant female becoming male in response to inhibition of aromatase. The reason for these changes is thought to be due to increasing the fitness of an organism by allowing it to have more offspring. In the wrasse, males maintain a harem of females, so becoming male enables the mass production of sperm to have more offspring with multiple individuals. Those that change also have an advantage...
over other males to begin with, having larger testes to increase their competitiveness. In the clownfish, only a pair of individuals reproduce at one time, so being female means that an individual can select for the male with the best attributes and have offspring that are fitter. Other species, such as the bluebanded goby, can change sex multiple times depending on their social position. This explanation perhaps ties in better with some of the Twelfth Doctor’s statements, such as his hope that the future is ‘all girl’, and the possibility that his conscious/subconscious thoughts brought about this change through the facultative production of the aromatase enzyme.

The final mechanism that can induce a change in sex is the temperature of the environment. This can occur in the eggs of particularly reptiles, but also some birds under certain conditions. Both sets of organisms use the ZW Sex determination system, where females are the heterogametic sex (ZW) while males are homogametic (ZZ), in opposition to our XY system. The sex chromosomes can be overridden, with certain temperatures inducing the expression of the opposing sex to that indicated genetically. In an experiment using the Australian bearded dragon, ZZ females that had changed in this way were mated with ZZ males at low temperatures (28˚C) during incubation. Their offspring were completely ZZ male. From 28-32˚C, the sex ratios were equal, and above 32˚C, the offspring were almost entirely male, despite their sex chromosomes. In the case that the period of regeneration and incubation are analogous, you could argue that the energy released during the repeated destruction/crashing of the TARDIS in recent regenerations could be a valid reason for this switch. Of course, the destruction of the TARDIS during this regeneration occurred after the regeneration had completed, while the destructions during the Tenth and Eleventh Doctor’s regenerations did not cause the Doctor to become female earlier, so this can be discounted as a possibility.

I’ll admit that when the concept of a female Doctor was first broached, I wasn’t overly keen. However, I came to the conclusion that the Doctor, as a Time Lord, and an alien, is probably unlikely to share our concepts of gender and reproduction, something that brought me around to the idea. While this article has been an attempt to scientifically explain the process of sex change during regeneration, it doesn’t change the fact that the Doctor is now female. At the end of the day, Doctor Who should be something that brings us together, and I look forward to see how Series Eleven develops the ongoing saga of the Doctor.

Bibliography


Part One: Listen!

The Address to Camera, of course, is not a new technique. It's all over the Hartnell era, and Tom Baker famously does it in *The Face of Evil*. There are echoes of it in Troughton's famous monitor-peers (copied by Davison and McCoy, among others). It's a technique to highlight the programme's artifice, as well as emphasise the Doctor's control over the medium — the monitor peer in *Paradise Towers* is a classic McCoy wind-up, and the pre-Leela section of *The Face of Evil*, like much of the post-Sladen Baker years, is focused on its star's imperiousness.

With all this precedent, it's no surprise the technique should pop up in the Capaldi era, which got so much mileage out of updating the classics. What is surprising is that it should appear so liberally. Whether in the world-beating *Listen*, the messy and unsettled *Pyramid at the End of the World*, or the flaccid and ill-conceived *Before the Flood*, Capaldi's Doctor has addressed the camera across all the major tonal settings of *Doctor Who*, a spread of episodes so varied as to make the technique an era standard, deserving of analysis beyond its use in particular stories.

It's a technique rooted in theatrical traditions, a version of the Aside in early modern theatre, or the direct addresses of Brechtian theatre, although the technique appears often enough in early film as to constitute its own precedent. (If nothing else, Oliver Hardy looks to camera often enough to encode this kind of media awareness into popular film comedy). In drama television, the address to camera had largely fallen out of favour before the Capaldi era arrived, though it was surprisingly prevalent in TV comedy in the years prior. *Miranda* addressed the camera constantly, and the explicitly mediated format of *The Office* and its copycats meant it was ubiquitous in shows such as *Parks and Recreation*.
This generic uncertainty, where the address to camera was simultaneously the stuff of Shakespeare and of sitcom, was perfect for the Doctor, who, while nominally a dramatic lead, has generally been more successfully cast from a comedic background. Capaldi’s delivery in *Listen* and *Pyramid* feels appropriate for *Hamlet or King Lear*, but both are counterbalanced with the absurd, be it a blowfish obsession or an electric guitar. It’s a generic uncertainty, in other words, that Doctor Who is very well-suited to exploiting. (For where this goes wrong, look no further than the groan-worthy ending to *Before the Flood*—an obnoxious cliche with nothing to counterbalance it).

But Capaldi does more than simply soliloquise; he narrates. *Listen* has him brainstorming a Doctor Who monster so thoroughly as to terrify himself. *Before the Flood* gives him reheated Heinlein (the “bootstrap paradox” being named after Robert Heinlein’s 1941 novella ‘By His Bootstraps’). *Pyramid at the End of the World* sees him narrate another person's story entirely. This coincides with a sharp increase in voiceover during this period, and unlike *The Sound of Drums* or *The Day of the Doctor*, the Doctor is not necessarily narrating his own experiences. The fable in *Smile*, the introduction to *Heaven Sent*, even the Star Trek parody at the beginning of *Oxygen*, none of them can be straightforwardly read as the Doctor’s experiences in the moment. They only make sense as embellishment and illustration; as narration. This comes to a head in *Hell Bent*, which not only has the Doctor diegetically narrating, but even lets him provide the soundtrack.

“Stories are where memories go when they're forgotten.” Of course, this is partly a rewrite of “we’re all stories in the end.” But notice the new emphasis on ‘forgotten,’ implying a much more uncertain fate than before. (We also, notably, have a feminised alternative to stories in the form of songs, but let's not get ahead of ourselves.) Stories can be forgotten too, after all. Remember *The Girl in the Fireplace*? The Doctor doesn’t.

This, it seems, is a risk of storytelling. Never again will a single Doctor Who story be told as if it’s the only one. Having established, then, that narration carries a duty of care, what are the implications of making the Twelfth Doctor a storyteller?

**Part Two: Tyranny**

*The Lie of the Land* has precisely one brilliant idea. To find it, we need to examine its source material. In the first chapter of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, we are told that:

The telescreen received and transmitted simultaneously. Any sound that Winston made, above the level of a very low whisper, would be picked up by it, moreover, so long as he remained within the field of vision which the metal plaque commanded, he could be seen as well as heard. There was of course no way of knowing whether you were being watched at any given moment. How often, or on what system, the Thought Police plugged in on any individual wire was guesswork. It was even conceivable that they watched everybody all the time. But at any rate they could plug in your wire whenever they wanted to.
So to recap, Big Brother is a character who, while perhaps not literally everywhere at once, can very easily be anywhere at any time, and who gets there via the medium of television. Once this is borne in mind, the brilliance of *The Lie of the Land*’s initial conceit is thrown into sharp relief. For all the shit Toby Whithouse gets, much of it deserved, the observation that Doctor Who is interchangeable with Big Brother is outright genius.

(That Russell T Davies had already made his own version of the same basic observation in *Bad Wolf* is, depending on your view, either the greatest tragedy of Toby Whithouse or the perfect encapsulation of his style).

It’s all the more fitting that it should fall in this Storyteller Doctor’s final season, emblematic of an anxiety underlying this self-conscious narrative approach. If the Doctor is now, not only the hero, but also the narrator of the show, who is to stop him abusing his power? The whole of *The Lie of the Land* feels like a narrative breaking point; the Doctor is now able to switch off his own death, and he laughs maniacally as he ploughs the hulk into the docks. The episode’s climax leans into this hard, with the Doctor boasting about his own cleverness (and over his own theme music) as Bill does the actual labour of saving the day. If *Journey’s End* is the point where the Tenth Doctor’s hubris finally goes too far, *The Lie of the Land* is where the Twelfth Doctor’s ability to control the narrative finally tips over into vice.

Because this anxiety is present in Capaldi’s Doctor from his very first episode; how does one become a storyteller without also becoming dictatorial?

**Part Three: Subversion**

“Your simulation! It’s far too good!” Now, what are we to make of this line? Surely the ability of a subroutine to send an email should not have all that much to do with the quality of the computer program it finds itself in. Why should a program’s email function have any kind of direct relationship to its verisimilitude?

Jacques Derrida might help clarify things. Starting in the mid-Troughton era, he pioneered the literary theory of deconstruction: the ways in which the content of texts ends up running counter to their ostensible intent. He coined the famous phrase “il n’y a pas de hors-texte”, or “there is no outside-text” (sometimes translated as “there is nothing outside the text”). This does not mean that individual texts should not be considered with reference to other sources, or to historical and political contexts. Rather, it points out that humans have no way of understanding the world other than through language; through text. And since language is fundamentally impure, contingent, and unstable, all texts implicitly contain the means of their own subversion; texts can be made to deconstruct themselves.

This is partly why demagogues fetishise simple language and clear, unobstructed thinking: the more complex a text is, the easier it becomes to subvert. In turn, this is how the Doctor usually avoids becoming a demagogue in his storytelling; by finding an existing textual paradigm and subverting it. *Listen* ends up being an implicit rejection of the standard ‘Moffat Monster’ framework. *Extremis* is explicit in its rejection of the supposed triviality of fiction. You don’t have to be real to be
a deconstructionist. As long as you never give up. As long as you trick the bad guys into their own traps.

Alternatively, there is the option to simply reject a story outright. In Smile, the Doctor relays the classic fable of the Magic Haddock, a story applicable the episode's own events. He then rejects the fable, stating that his favoured chess strategy is to kick over the board. This rejection of prevailing narrative is standard for the Moffat era — Elizabeth Sandifer calls it “narrative substitution” in her essay on A Good Man Goes to War — but the phrasing in this case is a straight lift from The Curse of Fenric: a game requiring the player to break its own rules. A text requiring its own deconstruction.

(The other obvious classic series precedent, The Mind Robber, sees the Doctor fighting a literal Master narrative, another postmodern bugbear. Again, the Doctor offers a kind of subversive play in the face of a rigidly predefined narrative).

There are dangers to this approach — one of them being that the deconstruction of narrative risks becoming itself a narrative, postmodernism's own weeping angel — but for the Twelfth Doctor there is a more potent danger. If he specialises in narrative subversion, and is increasingly aware of his own narrative status, there comes a point where it is necessary for him to subvert himself.

**Part Four: Melancholy**

You don't have to be real to be the Twelfth Doctor. You just have to suffer lots of horrifying pain and sadness. More than any other new series Doctor, Twelve is defined by a kind of cosmic melancholy, to the point where 'The Peter Capaldi Being Sad in Space Show' feels an appropriate moniker for his era. And perhaps this is why; the more aware one becomes of narrative, the more one has to grapple with endings. Where Eleven sought, almost childishly, to avoid endings, Twelve seems positively obsessed with them.

To talk about endings, of course, inevitably means talking about death. Look at this speech from The Pyramid at the End of the World:

> The end of your life has already begun. There is a last place you will ever go, a last door you will ever walk through, a last sight you will ever see. And every step you ever take is moving you closer. The end of the world is a billion, billion tiny moments. And somewhere, unnoticed, in silence or in darkness... it has already begun.

This is an interesting framing, stolen almost entirely from this passage in Thomas Hardy's Tess of the D’Urbervilles (which also inspired David Nicholls’s bestselling novel One Day):

> She philosophically noted dates as they came past in the revolution of the year; the disastrous night of her undoing at Trantridge with its dark background of The Chase; also the dates of the baby's birth and death; also her own birthday; and every
other day individualized by incidents in which she had taken some share. She suddenly thought one afternoon, when looking in the glass at her fairness, that there was yet another date, of greater importance to her than those; that of her own death, when all these charms would have disappeared; a day which lay sly and unseen among all the other days of the year, giving no sign or sound when she annually passed over it; but not the less surely there. When was it? Why did she not feel the chill of each yearly encounter with such a cold relation? She had Jeremy Taylor’s thought that some time in the future those who had known her would say: ‘It is the —th, the day that poor Tess Durbeyfield died’; and there would be nothing singular to their minds in the statement. Of that day, doomed to be her terminus in time through all the ages, she did not know the place in month, week, season or year.

There are many reasons why this is an inspired choice of source material. Consciousness of death is appropriate, not only to this narrativising Doctor, but to the life of a time traveller generally. The Doctor lives, in a sense, outside of history — to him, every single person in the universe is already dead. As he says himself, “A life this long... It’s a battlefield... and it’s empty. Because everyone else has fallen.” No wonder he’s so sad. He moves, as Clara tells him, through a world of ghosts.

But the Doctor also has access to all of time and space. Here another bit of media theory comes to hand, specifically Friedrich Kittler’s observation that “the realm of the dead is as extensive as the storage and transmission capabilities of a given culture.” The Doctor has access to the ultimate storytelling engine, in the form of the TARDIS. The universe, in effect, is his own library. (Marc Platt’s Unbound audio Auld Mortality [2003] goes one step further, imagining the Doctor as a novelist, using a Possibility Engine to create diegetically fictional worlds). But if to live is to be aware of one’s own death-date, hiding somewhere in the calendar (an “un-birthday” as Nicholls calls it), then the Doctor can never truly be alive himself. Unbound on both sides, his past mysterious and his future infinitely extending, the Doctor is trapped in a form of living death. His increased awareness of story only makes him more aware of his own story’s inescapability. He may ask to be switched off, but he can never truly stop.

But in all this angst, there is another important aspect to this literary riff: the nature of its protagonist. Tess Durbeyfield, after all, is a million miles away from the highly-qualified and competent Erica, who is herself a long way off from the adorable, hugely intelligent, but still approachable Doctor. Yet here the Doctor is, sharing a perspective with both of them. Never again will a single Doctor Who story be told as if it’s the only one, and it is this malleability of viewpoint that allows for the final piece of this puzzle.

Part Five: Awareness

The Doctor spends the Capaldi era with three extraordinary women, each of whose story is allowed to conclude with an alternative to the final, Dramatic Death. Clara, River, and Bill; each of them is allowed to come to the decision that one more lifetime wouldn’t kill anyone. It is easy to draw a line from this to the conclusion of Twice Upon a Time, although it is perhaps more fun to observe that the Doctor spends the Capaldi era with three queer time-travelling women, and ends it by becoming one.

Implicit in this is a widening of what kinds of heroes Doctor Who can support. Clara and Bill’s final stories both contain injunctions to this effect. Clara breaks into the Doctor’s head to tell him that “you are not the only person who ever lost someone,” while Bill gently reminds him, “You’re not
the only kind one in the universe.” The Doctor is not the only one burdened with narrative, and the Twelfth Doctor’s flaw, ultimately, was in forgetting that, and in forgetting that other types of narrative exist.

This is the conclusion of Twice Upon a Time; Testimony was only doing what the Doctor always did, and indeed, doing it better. The Doctor simply lacked the framework to adequately respond. He doesn’t know what to do when it’s not an evil plan. (That this conclusion is itself a restatement of The War Games Episode Ten implies that, in future, the Doctor needs to emulate a little less of the letter of the past, a little more of the spirit).

This, then, is the end of the Twelfth Doctor, the greatest storyteller in Doctor Who. Because the mark, ultimately, of a great storyteller is their willingness to engage with others, to hand over the pen, or microphone, or sonic screwdriver, to somebody else. Never again will a single Doctor Who story be told as if it’s the only one. The Twelfth Doctor is aware enough to know he can still be visited — our culture’s storage and transmission capabilities are such that he will always, somewhere, to somebody, be the Doctor.

But he also knows that it’s someone else’s turn now. A new audience’s chance to have a Doctor. A new storyteller’s turn round the fire. A new woman’s voice on the television. He walks offstage, hearts heavy with the weight of narrative, as a new song begins.

THE END
(INsofar as there can be)

HAiku FOR SMiLE
William Shaw

We’re the ones who made
This optimistic city;
Smile! You’ve been replaced.
‘Nobody here but us chickens’

The title of the first episode in this two-parter gives us a pleasant throwback to the first Doctor Who episode aired, An Unearthly Child. The similarities between The Empty Child and An Unearthly Child do not extend greatly beyond that. However, the connections that can be drawn between them do. We have the familiar London setting, and the accidental/not so accidental temporary kidnapping of Rose by Jack, echoing Ian and Barbara’s by the Doctor. Of course, Jack thought Rose was a potential customer and the whole ‘strange potentially-an-alien person has me on board his futuristic ship’ vibe doesn’t last long – Rose has been there, done that, but not quite got the t-shirt yet.

The episodes, despite the upbeat resolving scene, are as harrowing as they are dark. An Unearthly Child aired just under a vicennial after the end of the Second World War, amidst multiple other ongoing conflicts, and thus takes an escapist approach. It is noteworthy that the first episode takes the viewers back in time, despite its demonstration of a myriad of futuristic technology. The Empty Child also throws us as viewers back in time, albeit to a time existing within living memory, also combining the past and the future to create an enthralling plot line.

Of course, The Empty Child is an episode in which ‘nobody dies’, and yet it is entrenched in the very concept of death. As Dr Constantine notes; ‘Before this war began, I was a father and a grandfather. Now I am neither. But I’m still a doctor’, to which the Doctor asserts that he ‘knows the feeling’. Seconds earlier in the same scene, Dr Constantine informed us that his mutated patients had no cause of death, for they are not dead. The Doctor’s response, claiming to ‘know the feeling’ is one of the first references to his ‘family’ in the rebooted series, and suggests an awareness that Susan is dead; despite having remained on earth.

Dr Constantine himself is a complex myriad of properties that the Doctor simply isn’t. His name can be considered a reference to the first Roman Emperor to convert to Christianity. On the other hand, Eccleston’s Doctor is already on route to becoming the grandiose Doctor
Tennant portrayed. That is, with the Time Lords gone (at the screening of this episode they are considered dead), the Doctor believing that he destroyed them to end the Time War (bringing about an apocalypse of sorts), the Doctor answers to no higher power, not even a spiritual concept of morality.

This destructive grandiose thinking (from his absorption of the Time Vortex, challenging a form of Satan himself, and the brilliant imagery in Voyage of the Damned) leads to the (false) conclusion that; ‘the Laws of Time are mine, and they will obey me!’. The Doctor realises in The Waters of Mars that he has ‘gone too far’, immediately breaking down as his god-complex deconstructs. Going against the ‘Laws of Time’ is an explicit crossing of boundaries. A subtler crossing of boundaries can be seen in the choice of ‘villain’ during the episode: the Flood. As the Doctor notes: ‘water is patient […] water just waits. It wears down the clifftops, the mountains, the whole of the world. Water always wins!’. Water is an unwavering force of nature, and though Time Lord technology is just that (technology), it works within the rules of the Doctor Who universe; just as real technology makes use of scientific rules, as going against them would be seemingly impossible. The TARDIS itself is suggested to be somewhat organic, the Time Vortex a sentient being. To fight against water itself (albeit malicious water), after the Doctor himself has acknowledged its patience, is to take on nature itself.

Dr Constantine is also constant. He remains with his patients, unlike the Doctor who offers short term solutions before disappearing. When the patients are cured, Dr Constantine once again takes charge. Unlike the Doctor, who overjoyed at the victory, must continue on his travels. The Doctor’s inability to commit is highlighted in An Unearthly Child: he cannot allow Susan to at least complete her education, choosing instead to kidnap her teachers and lead them into a dangerous series of adventures. The ‘NewWho’ Doctor is consistently inconsistent. Rules apply to him arbitrarily. His decision of who to mock and who to humour varies by episode. Even Matt Smith’s Doctor, who remains on Christmas for hundreds of years, is not patient, unable to form long-lasting bonds (although a minor cause of this is the differing life spans of those around him). Perhaps it is noteworthy then, that it is only in Heaven Sent that we discover that Peter Capaldi’s Doctor has finally learnt to embrace his own fables. It is therefore ironic, that each ‘copy’ of the Doctor is quite literally a new Doctor (albeit identical to the one that first arrived in the confession dial).

However, The Empty Child is not a story resolved by an attempt on behalf of the Doctor to subdue nature. Rather he encourages Nancy to embrace nature and the complex nuances regarding the necessities of motherhood, in a rather hypocritical manner (that is when he himself is unwilling to do so). But Nancy does embrace her son, and thus The Doctor Dances closes with a reminder that technology and nature are not mutually exclusive, but both can have horrific consequences when not in balance with the other.
RUNNING TOWARDS THE FUTURE

John Wilson is filled with hope by the new BBC Books Target novelizations

Between 1973, when the first books in the series were published, and some time towards the middle to end of the 1980s, when VCRs started to become affordable (‘affordable’ being very much a term which varies according to circumstances), the Target series of Doctor Who novelizations was the primary way in which Doctor Who fans could experience the Doctor’s previous adventures. The first three novelizations in the series were republications of William Hartnell stories first published in hardback between 1964 and 1966, but Target began to publish new novelizations in 1974 and would continue until after the BBC had ceased to make new television adventures in 1989. When I became a fan of Doctor Who in the early-to mid-1980s, there would be a new Target book published every month, but the TV show would only be on for three months every year. Doctor Who Magazine would review that month’s Target before it came out, and the book’s eventual appearance on the shelves would be thrillingly anticipated. And, moreover, once you had brought it home to put on your own shelves, it would stay there, to be reread at any time, whereas once a TV episode was broadcast, that was it. So, for a whole generation of fans, Target books were nearly as much a part of being a Doctor Who fan as the actual programme. (The full history of the Target Who books can be found in the marvellous The Target Book by David J. Howe, including an evocative reproduction of the cover art from every edition.)

Of course, some of that generation of Doctor Who fans are now writing episodes and books for and about the programme, and in two cases actually showrunning it. And BBC Books have, magnificently, succeeded in commissioning four new novelizations of key stories from the 21st century

The four books John discusses in this article, balanced on some cushions. Our photo shoots are sophisticated here.
The Tides of Time

incarnation of the programme: Rose by Russell T Davies, The Christmas Invasion by Jenny T. Colgan, The Day of the Doctor by Steven Moffat, and Twice Upon A Time by Paul Cornell. There’s also an abridged reissue of James Goss’s novelization of City of Death, but for this article I’ll be concentrating on the new series books. All four of these stories are, in one way or another, about regeneration. For a time the original Target books carried the legend ‘The Changing Face of Doctor Who’, to explain to readers why the Doctor featured in that particular story might be different from the one currently on screen, and these new books return to that tradition and have some fun with it. In fact, one could draw a certain parallel between this mini-series of books and ‘The Five Faces of Doctor Who’, a series of repeats of stories featuring the first five Doctors in November 1981 to introduce viewers who had only known Tom Baker as the Doctor to the idea of regeneration (the stories shown were An Unearthly Child, The Krotons, Carnival of Monsters, The Three Doctors and Logopolis). I like the idea that these new series Targets may in some way reassure more traditional fans who may still be slightly wary of the forthcoming Doctor, of the tremendous scope and breadth of possibility the series has always enjoyed, by presenting 21st century stories in a comforting 20th century format.

Descent into Terror

The first Target proper was Doctor Who and the Auton Invasion by the great Terrance Dicks, a novelization of the TV story Spearhead from Space. It’s a brilliantly written adaptation of a fast-paced, action-packed story that introduces a new Doctor, a new companion, has the iconic Autons as the main adversary, and takes the opportunity, with the benefit of hindsight, to work in some small but significant changes to the TV version to reflect how the programme developed in the years between the story’s original broadcast and the book’s publication. And all of that is also true of Russell T. Davies’s novelization of Rose. Of all the new books it’s the most like the classic Target originals. If some terrible technological catastrophe destroyed all the recorded Doctor Who ever made, and you had to explain to someone who had never heard of the programme why you were a fan of it, you could give them this book (just as you could give them a copy of Doctor Who and the Auton Invasion) and they would glean a pretty good idea of what Doctor Who is all about. But even if, like most of us, you’ve seen Rose many times, there are additions and tweaks to make the textual version of a familiar story fresh and newly exciting, such as the creation of the ill-fated Bernie Wilson (no relation), a character not seen on screen who is introduced and then brutally dispatched in the opening chapter to introduce the story’s monster, much in the same way as the tragic Shughie McPherson in Malcolm Hulke’s Doctor Who and the Dinosaur Invasion, or the much greater attention Davies is able to give to Mickey Smith’s backstory and his friends’ band ‘No Hot Ashes’ (probably not named after the 1980s Northern Irish rock group). The Autons’ attack on London is more violent and destructive than it appeared on the time- and budget-constrained TV episode, and the links between Rose and Davies’s first published Doctor Who story, the 1996 New Adventures
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novel Damaged Goods, in which the inhabitants of a London council estate are caught up in the effects of an ancient Time Lord war, are more prominent.

Naturally Davies takes full advantage of the opportunity to work in ten seasons’ worth of continuity references from the new series that the TV episode of Rose so giddily kickstarted. Rose’s meeting with Clive in his shed retcons a wide range of established ‘new series’ icons, from Torchwood to the Thirteenth Doctor in a future adventure, as well as further hypothetical incarnations… Clive’s father is revealed to be one of the UNIT soldiers killed by the Daleks in Remembrance of the Daleks, and there’s also the first in these books of two references to Professor Bernard Quatermass. But British Rocket Group has its own problems.

The climax of the book incorporates some nice ideas which had to be lost from the televised episode due to budget, and the whole climax has generally more of an epic feel. But I think that the most interesting, and successful, aspect of this hugely enjoyable read is the way the whole story is told from the point of view not of the Doctor, but of Rose Tyler herself. Rose is the main character in this book, just as Ian Chesterton was of the first Doctor Who novelization ever, Doctor Who in an exciting adventure with the Daleks, published in 1964 by Frederick Muller, and republished by Target in 1973. Ian Chesterton narrates that book in the first person, and he, rather than the Doctor, is very much the John Wyndham-esque hero of the story (David Whitaker even gives him a brand new origin). Just as there was with the episode itself, and just as there is in both Doctor Who in an exciting adventure with the Daleks and Doctor Who and the Auton Invasion, there’s a beautiful, gleaming newness about Rose, a sense of a journey or, indeed, an exciting adventure just beginning. It’s fresh like new paint.

A Spaceman Came Travelling

Jenny T. Colgan has a much harder job with The Christmas Invasion. For most of the episode the Doctor is comatose after his regeneration, so instead of seeing the Doctor through a new companion’s eyes, the focus of the story is on how Rose copes in the absence of the Doctor in the face of the Sycorax menace. Reading this just after Rose allows you to see how Rose has changed after a season travelling with the ninth Doctor; this experiencing of stories in non-chronological order is something that classic Target readers had to get used to, as the Target you read next depended on such whimsical factors as the availability of the books in your local bookshop or library (no Amazon in those days) and the publishing schedule itself, which hopped about in the Doctor’s own timeline in much the same way as the First Doctor’s TARDIS hopped around Earth’s history. Colgan therefore expands the guest cast, introducing a sweet if doomed romance among the Guinevere ground crew (as befits her day job as a romantic novelist) and succumbs to the understandably irresistible temptation to indulge in a bit of retconning, setting up the UNIT base in the Tower of London nicely for the next book in the series, and giving Nigel Kneale his due. However the Hitch-Hiker’s Guide to the Galaxy reference (which apparently had to be specifically authorized by the Adams estate) is a bit gratuitous, and I regretted that the opportunity to mention a certain Harold Saxon as a rising star in the Opposition is
sadly missed. But giving Harriet Jones a persistent cough as well as having her look tired at the end is a neat 2017 touch.

Both Rose and The Christmas Invasion, then, are straightforward novelizations in the classic Target tradition, as is appropriate for stories that were first broadcast nearly thirteen years ago. The Day of the Doctor is more recent, and Steven Moffat’s adaptation is the most ambitious (and longest) of these new series Targets. As the Target range matured in the mid-1980s, the trend was for the books to become longer, and, increasingly, to be adapted by the original script writers (who of course had first refusal!). Robert Holmes’s splendid book of The Two Doctors (the 100th Target to be published) and Terence Dudley’s novelizations of his two Peter Davison stories Black Orchid and The King’s Demons, which greatly expanded, and improved upon, the short two-part original TV adventures, are notable, but perhaps the outstanding Target of this period was the late Victor Pemberton’s splendid novelization of Fury from the Deep. This was submitted as a much longer than usual manuscript which the Target editor at the time Nigel Robinson decided not to cut as it was so well written, and instead published as a ‘bumper volume’ at the then princely sum of £1.95. Highly recommended, if you can find a copy, and all the more so because the story - at the time of writing - is absent from the archives. (The role of the Target books in preserving and promoting the missing stories in the minds of fans probably deserves its own article.)

Dearest Petronella

Towards the end of the same decade, Nigel Robinson’s eventual successor, Peter Darvill-Evans, was aware that the Target range was running out of stories, and as the TV series itself was in an ever more precarious position at the BBC, began to think about a new series of original Doctor Who books, pitched at an older readership than the Targets had ever been. That would become the Virgin New Adventures, and they really do deserve a separate article of their own, but Darvill-Evans encouraged the writers of the remaining Targets on his list to experiment as much as possible, almost as prototypes for what the New Adventures would become. This bore the most fruit in Target no. 148, the novelization of Remembrance of the Daleks by Ben Aaronovitch, who scripted the original TV series and is now best known as the bestselling author of the Peter Grant series of urban fantasy novels. (They’re excellent, by the way, and full of Who references.) Aaronovitch’s novelization of Remembrance, released at a time when VHS recorders were finally becoming widespread and therefore allowed repeated viewings to expose the paucity of the budget the BBC allocated to Doctor Who and fan criticism to become more caustic, was highly praised and (along with Marc Platt’s novelization of Battlefield) demonstrated that there was a space for the New Adventures to fill.

All of which historical digression is to say that The Day of the Doctor is now also a bumper volume, and if Rose and The Christmas Invasion harken back to the classic style of Terrance Dicks in his golden age, then Day has more in common with the wilder, more experimental, end of the Target range. However, Day is notable for going where even the New Adventures were expressly forbidden to go, in that, except for a few key scenes, it is narrated by (the various incarnations of) the Doctor
himself. Or even herself… Steven Moffat makes the brave decision not to distinguish between the different incarnations of the Doctor by referring to them as the Tenth, Eleventh, or War Doctors. Instead, the reader is left to infer which incarnation is speaking—or even narrating—by context, and in this hugely ambitious narrative sleight of hand Moffat succeeds brilliantly. The highlight for me was Chapter Three (the chapters are not presented in numerical order, another cheeky but entirely appropriate conceit), the scene when the War, the Tenth, and the Eleventh Doctors are locked (or not) in the Tower of London. On TV it’s three actors arguing in a room. Admittedly three extremely talented actors bouncing fantastic dialogue off each other, but compared to the spectacle of the rest of the story (Gallifrey exploding, the TARDIS dropping in Trafalgar Square, Zygons invading, etc.) it’s one of the more visually minimalist scenes. Yet in the novelization the shifting viewpoints of the Doctor across his different incarnations, characters, and narrative voices, as he considers the consequences of the last day on Gallifrey, is quite spectacular.

It’s also heartwarming to see the YouTube-released The Night of the Doctor incorporated into the story itself, although ever so slightly disappointing to see that the Eighth Doctor still does not mention Grace in his list of companions, possibly due to legal reasons. This is one of only two criticisms I have of the book—I’ll come back to the other one later. The Doctors saving Gallifrey at the end of the book is considerably expanded and a lot more epic (thus showing that Targets can still improve upon budget limitations even for the 21st century series!). And yes, there is the inevitable retconning, here involving the Doctor’s relationship with the successive generations of the Lethbridge-Stewart family - but this is appropriate, as the Doctor’s first ever meeting with the Brigadier was in fact a bit of Target retconning by Terrance Dicks. In the TV story of The Web of Fear (1968), the Doctor first meets (the then) Colonel Lethbridge Stewart off-screen, but when Dicks came to novelize the story (1976) he knew that the Doctor and Brigadier’s relationship had become too significant to let the moment pass unremarked, so he put in a scene specifically to explain the momentousness of the occasion! (Oh, and to come back to Remembrance of the Daleks, it’s the Hand of Omega that the General is about to mention on page 217.)

It’s well known that The Day of the Doctor is rightly regarded by fans as one of the best Doctor Who stories ever, dethroning even Genesis of the Daleks in a DWM poll. So it’s actually quite something to say that Steven Moffat’s novelization genuinely improves upon and expands the TV original and leaves a reader with a new appreciation of the story as a whole. It’s one of my favourite pieces of Doctor Who fiction ever published, and can stand alongside the very best of the original Targets, New Adventures and BBC Books Eighth Doctor Adventures as a perfect demonstration that Doctor Who in prose can be as thrilling, inspiring, exciting, and moving as Doctor Who on television.

**A Dance to the Music of Time Lords**

Speaking of the Virgin New Adventures, the series was launched in 1991 with a story arc about a monster called the Timewyrm. Of the four books in that mini-series, only one—the conclusion, Timewyrm: Revelation—was written by an author
who hadn’t contributed to the Target range. He would go on to write many more New Adventures, including some of the very best, and eventually contribute to the new TV series after it relaunched. Now Paul Cornell has adapted Steven Moffat’s script for _Twice Upon a Time_, and unlike the other New Target books, Cornell has had to work from scripts rather than a broadcast episode, as this novelization was written before the TV episode was finished, let alone broadcast. This has happened once before in Target history, when Terrance Dicks novelized his own script for the 20th anniversary story _The Five Doctors_ as it was being filmed, and some copies of the novelization went on sale before the story was shown, much to the then producer John Nathan-Turner’s annoyance. (So leaks happened in the days of classic _Doctor Who_ as well!) There are (deliberate?) references to _The Five Doctors_ in _Twice Upon a Time_, not least in that multiple Doctors try to reach a mysterious Tower, Borusa does get name-dropped, and the chaps are indeed splendid. Nevertheless, this is the shortest and arguably the lightest of the New Targets, and very possibly the most restrained piece of _Doctor Who_ fiction Paul Cornell has ever written. But the minimalist approach Cornell takes (in contrast to _The Day of the Doctor_) in this book works rather well, as the story itself is rather minimalist, a gentle coda to the Moffat era of _Doctor Who_. It’s about the distance the Doctor has travelled between his first and twelfth (well, thirteenth really) incarnation, and the relationship between them, and in his characterization of them both Cornell is spot on. There’s relatively few additions to the broadcast episode, although he does embellish the Twelfth Doctor’s namedropping of celebrities to insult his earlier self, for the benefit of younger readers who may not be familiar with Mr Pastry or _Dad’s Army_.

I’ve written a lot (too much, some of you may well be thinking) in this article about references and parallels between the classic series Targets and these four new ones. But that’s because, for a middle-aged fan like me, that’s part of the joy of reading them, and, one suspects, part of the joy of writing them for the authors. So here’s one last one: at the end of _Twice upon a Time_, the about-to-regenerate Doctor warns his future self not to eat pears. The Doctor not liking pears officially became continuity in the TV story _Human Nature_, but this was taken from the 1995 Seventh Doctor New Adventure from which the TV story was later adapted. So Cornell is novelizing a little bit of continuity that he invented twenty-two years ago, and which began in _Doctor Who_ prose fiction before becoming a part of canonical _Doctor Who_ on screen.

Although the novelization of _Twice upon a Time_ is describes the Doctor’s thoughts and feelings from the third person perspective rather than the first like _Day_, the book captures very well the twelfth Doctor’s struggle to decide whether or not to go on being the Doctor, or to give up, to refuse his regeneration. And as I said at the start of this article, there may be some older fans who are tempted to give up, and refuse the regeneration that happens at the end of _Twice_. I hope these books may persuade them to reach the same conclusion as the Twelfth Doctor. I also hope that they also allow younger fans, who have no intention of giving up, to imagine what it was like being a _Doctor Who_ fan three or four decades ago, when reading Targets was an essential part of experiencing the programme. Now it is an essential part of experiencing the programme once more, for which I am profoundly grateful to these books’ four authors. Splendid chaps, all of you.

Finally, for my other criticism of _Day of the Doctor_: although most of Steven Moffat’s retconning is justified, I can’t agree with the scene in Chapter Nine when
Imagine there’s a fairground with a roller coaster you’ve been waiting to go on all day. You’ve stood in the queue for hours as it winds its way back and forth, but finally you’re on the ride. Even the climb to the top takes an age, but now you’re approaching the peak, and waiting to rush away along the ride. At the exact moment you feel the car start to lurch to go over the hill however, it jams, and so you find yourself hanging in mid-air for hours on end. For me this is exactly how every regeneration story feels. There is so much of the old to see, and yet so little of the new I’ve been waiting so long for.

*Twice Upon a Time* was no exception to this. ‘It’s not an evil plan,’ the Doctor declares at one point, but that made me notice the sheer sparsity of the plot even more. After fifteen minutes, in the Chamber of the Dead, our potential villains arrive, only to be explained away in their absence, twenty-five minutes later, by the Doctors’ anticlimactic library research on Villengard. The episode removed the requirement to have the Doctor defeat a menace, in order to make way for a One meets Twelve character study. This potentially engrossing prospect turned out instead to be a somewhat dated comedy double act, with Twelve as the stooge and One as the comic. Its main source of ‘humour’ was a ghastly misogyny that the real First Doctor never had. Only in their separate conversations with Bill (and their final respectful goodbye) did we see the slightest flicker of warmth from the two men, as she extracted some rare insights into who the Doctor is and was.

Of course, the regeneration we were waiting for this time was the most important since that from Hartnell to Troughton. Countless female Whovians, having decided to accept and love a programme where the hero would always change but always be a man, would now see themselves reflected in the face of the title character. It was practically impossible for me as a fellow fan not to get caught up in their excited jubilation as the moment grew ever closer. So as we all wait to see all that Thirteen can be and do, it is the moment of transition, the jolt before the free fall, that captures my imagination the most.
If saving the universe over and over was ‘like a treadmill’ for the world-weary Doctor, then writing Twelve's final words was a less onerous copy-and-paste for Steven Moffat as he recycled his goodbye to Clara in the perhaps seldom-rewatched Hell Bent. This included references to running, laughing, Terrance Dicks’s oft-quoted ‘never cruel or cowardly,’ and the still unfunny pears joke from the Human Nature DVD extra and book. I believe that Moffat is the only writer who could ever be compared to Robert Holmes in greatness but nevertheless, he can still make mistakes. Although Capaldi’s performance is flawless, I wish something less derivative had been written as a farewell for the man who opened Oxygen and Heaven Sent with such spellbinding voiceovers, and who captivated us with his intense plea to ‘stand with me’ in The Doctor Falls. I must instead console myself with the splendour of the speech he makes immediately before he enters the TARDIS, a sermon on the impact of ‘a life this long’.

While Steven Moffat’s legacy, though already assured, is not improved by this episode, Murray Gold and Rachel Talalay do an excellent job of cementing theirs. Gold’s ‘The Shepherd's Boy’ reminds us of Capaldi’s greatest moment in Heaven Sent, with the endless dying within the Confession Dial. Its reuse suggests that it is also an endurance to ‘keep on being somebody else’ as he put it in The Doctor Falls. The secret of the track’s success seems to be the same as that of Ravel’s Bolero: a compelling melody repeating in a loop, without variation, so the listener is forever immersed in the flow, neither at the start nor the end. In addition, the use of ‘The Doctor's Theme’ after the regeneration captures so very well the mystery of the Doctor, and it is great to hear Murray Gold’s first recurring theme play one last time. This time, however, the wonderment is felt not by a future companion like Rose but by the Doctor herself as she tries to work out where and who she is. The sense of calm after the storm is reinforced by the contrast between Talalay’s swaying camera, as Capaldi wrenches himself in pain off the floor, with the Doctor’s new, steady point of view post-regeneration. The succession of images we see, such as the morphing eyebrows, falling ring and initially-obscured face, are a visual treat that do justice to the importance of Whittaker’s arrival. Rachel Talalay, also responsible for Heaven Sent and five other episodes but not involved with Series Eleven, will be remembered as the greatest director of the Capaldi era.

Having thought about this scene a lot in the days after broadcast, I was interested to see what Paul Cornell would do with it in his novelization. The most important and fundamental question is this: why does the Twelfth Doctor even regenerate at all? This was certainly not a question I asked at the time, because I was so impatient for it to just hurry up and happen. The whole story is clearly about him coming to terms with his need to change after all. While the First Doctor has just regenerated, setting history back on its correct course, his successor certainly doesn’t seem inclined to follow
suit just for the sake of symmetry. He asks Nardole why he can’t rest, and appears to argue with the TARDIS just as he did at the end of *The Doctor Falls*.

It is here that the novelization, at whatever level of canonicity you wish to assign to it, makes a huge contribution to our understanding of the episode. Between the ‘it’s a treadmill’ quip and the ‘one more lifetime’ sigh of resignation, the Doctor goes through a fascinating two page interior monologue. I think this passage both explains his next move and teases yet more profundity out of a scene that is already one of the episode’s most poignant.

He starts by reflecting on his time as the Twelfth Doctor. For him, each incarnation lasts at least as long as one of our lifetimes, and so he thinks of his successive forms in those terms. He has known love, with twenty-four years of lasting happiness with River Song on Darillium, and he is clearly reminiscing about that time when he says that ‘love is always wise’. He has died a meaningful death defending the people of Floor 507. He has even discovered a new ubiquitous form of immortality for humans called Testimony, by which they can live on through their stories and memories. After all, ‘we’re all stories in the end’, as Eleven put it in *The Big Bang*. After these experiences, he believes that he has nothing more to do as the Doctor. But then he remembers the conversation he had with Bill, 1500 years before as the First Doctor. As he explained to her, he left Gallifrey to find out what gives good the edge over evil and we, as the audience, work out that in doing so he became that difference himself. The First Doctor, however, does not realise this, and eventually has to dismiss the question as a ‘conundrum that could never be solved’. The notion of ‘some bloke ... putting everything right’ has slept in his mind as just a ‘fairy tale’. But in a flash of inspiration, he realises that the universe still needs the Doctor even though he is finished with being the Doctor. That is the reason why he changes.

During the speech itself, he thinks of his successor as the next ‘old or young pale-skinned man’ because as a ‘stuck-in-the-rut’ Time Lord he always gets ‘the same model of body’. Then, in a shift to gender neutrality, the Doctor thinks of the children his future self would meet ‘that would be inspired by him, by ... Them?’ This also helps to redeem the wince-inducing ‘children can hear your name’ claim that I, but not others, have long since managed to forgive. It turns out that it was actually a heart-warming answer given by Peter Capaldi to a nine-year-old fan at a convention that worked its way into the script. He then sees someone ‘in his mind’s eye’ described, again, as ‘them’ and realising who he will be, he is ‘suddenly filled with ... Hope’. Some more negative fans interpret the TARDIS malfunction as a rejection of the Doctor’s new form, but Cornell makes it clear that the Doctor sensed the warning signs before then, even though we don’t see this on screen. Finally, as someone who really doesn’t enjoy explosive regenerations and thinks them unnecessary, I enjoyed the minimalism of ‘He let the fire take him’.

It seems certain that this regeneration scene will be watched and rewatched for many decades to come so it is great that we have written narrative counterpart to the feast of light and sound we witnessed last Christmas. Thank you to Paul Cornell for giving it to us.
A Stone’s Throw
by John Salway
Part Three

Previously...
A long time ago, the Doctor (with a long scarf and curly hair) was tasked with finding a sacred relic, the Heart Stone, that had been stolen from a tightly guarded government facility. While he did succeed in retrieving the stone from the thief, it was then... misplaced during one of his many journeys through time and space. Now, Nyssa’s life depends on the Doctor (currently with blonde hair and a cricket obsession) somehow retrieving the relic from wherever in history it ended up...

The assassin had chosen his moment well. The famed warrior and chieftain Calista was not in the habit of making herself vulnerable. But tonight was different. Tonight, she was getting married.

The bridal tent was a small, modestly sized space where the bride-to-be could gather her thoughts in private before the ceremony. In accordance to custom, it lay at the furthest point of the bay, its back side just touching the tip of the tide, so that the water’s strength could push her forward towards the future. The long metal pegs that held the tent down had been driven down with great force into the pebbles and rocks that covered the shoreline.

It had been child’s play for the assassin to ‘borrow’ a small rowing boat from the next village along, and row it around the coast, effortlessly dodging the checkpoints that had been set upon the road. Then, when within site of the large camp that had been established on the beach, he had discarded the craft, and started swimming towards his target. He dived below the surface, and using a small snorkel to breath, he was practically invisible to those on land as he drew closer.

Now, as he emerged silently from the waves, he drew a large knife from his belt, and carved his way through the canvas. Raising the knife high above his head, he stepped through the gap, ready to strike.

Calista had been sitting, quietly contemplating her future, on a large wooden chair that had been awkwardly wedged into the shingle, when she had heard the sound of ripping fabric behind her. Rising to her feet, she turned and saw her
attacker step through into her tent. In one hand, she saw the large knife glisten. The other casually tipped over the chair that had separated the two of them.

Alone and defenceless in the cramped, musty space, and without enough time to call for help, Calista knew the odds were against her. But she also refused to die. As the assassin’s blade sliced through the air towards her chest, she dived onto the ground. Sharp pain cut into her limbs as her body dashed against the pebbles, but she realised that she was not entirely weaponless. In one swift motion her arm arced towards the stones, grabbed a particularly jagged specimen, and hurled it with great force towards her attacker.

The rock crashed into the assassin’s chest with a sickening crack, knocking him backwards off his feet. Calista leapt forward, on top of him, ready to try wrenching her attacker’s weapon away, but she felt no resistance. She knew as the killer’s limp arm dropped to the floor that the danger was over - her attacker was dead.

Calista’s aim had been true, and the stone she threw with such force had struck just above her target’s heart, felling him with a single blow, on the same day that her own heart would (according to traditional wisdom) be completed by marriage. Thus on this day, the legend of the Harath, or Heart Stone, was written into the pages of her people’s history, never to be forgotten.

That same night, four miles down the coast, a large blue hut was spotted by a local woodcutter where no blue hut has been seen before. A head of light, straight hair emerged from halfway up the structure, twisting quickly as it scanned the landscape for movement. Satisfied that all was well, the rest of the body stepped out into the cool breeze, crouched down to scrutinise the many rocks and pebbles that lined the shore, and decisively grabbed a large, roundish stone. The figure then quickly shuffled back into the incongruous box, which promptly vanished.

The legend of the Mystic Hut, though enthusiastically spread by the woodcutter, was not destined to catch on quite as well.

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Inside the TARDIS, the Doctor enthusiastically displayed his newly acquired rock to a bemused Tegan.

‘Is that it? After all that fretting, you can’t have found the stone that easily!’

The Doctor was examining the rock through his spectacles. ‘No, of course not, Tegan. But this rock does have many similarities with the Heart Stone – it’s from the same time period, and the same general area, though I will have to age it up a bit with some sort of temporal, er, gizmo. It doesn’t do to have a centuries-old relic look this pristine, after all.’

‘So we’re going to give that stone to the Adjurra, and hope she mistakes it for the real thing?’

‘Wrong again, I’m afraid. She’ll have all sorts of photos and measurements for the real stone, and I’m afraid this lump won’t cut the mustard.’

‘Then what’s the point of it?’
‘It may not fool the Adjurra, but it could easily deceive a less critical eye. For instance, the sort of near-sighted lunatic that could lose a priceless artefact somewhere in the space-time continuum.’ The Doctor whipped off his glasses and beamed at Tegan, as if he had just solved everything.

‘You mean the other you, right?’

‘Indeed. I’m afraid I’m going to have to partake in a little act of self-deception.’

Tegan sighed wearily. ‘I think I’m already confused.’

The Doctor drew a deep breath, preparing to explain his plan in full detail, but Tegan quickly interjected. ‘No no, I wouldn’t bother, you’ll only make my brain hurt even more. Just get on with it!’

* * *

From the outside, and indeed, from most of the inside, the government archives simply looked like a regular apartment block, with the neon lighting and curved shape that was characteristic of this sector of the city. But the occupants of those apartments were all government employees, all trained to follow a very strict set of rules and regulations designed to protect the secrets of the underground information stores below.

As such, if those in the know saw a suspicious figure in black go out the front door after midnight, it would be very clear that something was wrong. If that figure was also wearing a large black rucksack, it wouldn’t take a genius to guess that something very important was in that bag.

There were, however, actually two geniuses waiting for such a figure that night. The first, with curly hair and a large grin, was quietly concealed on a balcony across the street. As he saw the thief and his spoils leave the building, and start to head in a westerly direction, he gave a small nod, patted the unusual metal dog next to him on the head, and whispered to it, ‘After him, boy.’

The second genius, and his somewhat less intelligent friend Tegan, were concealed more haphazardly, behind some large bins.

The Doctor had landed his ship on the very night that this whole sorry nonsense had began - the night that the Heart Stone had first been stolen, and subsequently reclaimed from the thieves by his younger self. Now that he had a suitable replacement rock, he planned to switch it for the real Harath, before the scarfed
fool had the chance to misplace it. Rather than losing a priceless relic, the irrespons-ible oath would harmlessly drop a piece of bric-a-brac. And the older, far more responsible Doctor could proudly return the cultural treasure, and rescue Nyssa from a rather unpleasant fate.

As far as he could see, there were two options for the changeover; he could break into the secure and highly advanced government facility before anyone else did, and switch the stones there (which seemed like a recipe for disaster); or he could wait for the Harath to be swiped by the thieves, follow them, and switch the stones from under their nose before his younger self arrived on the scene (which seemed merely very difficult). Naturally, he had plumped for the lesser of two evils.

So far, everything seemed to be going quite well. His chosen surveillance spot, while smelly, was much closer to the action than the balcony he remembered choosing last time. That would give him a head start in this race to the Heart Stone. Not to mention that his younger self’s insistence on using that charming, but rather impractical K-9 unit as a sniffer dog was bound to slow him down. Now, he needed to get after that thief and his bag on the double.

‘Look, over there! There’s another one!’

Tegan’s sudden exclamation startled the Doctor. She pointed to the right of the complex. ‘I saw another man, dressed in black. He went round the corner.’

The Doctor had been too focused on the first figure, and had seen nothing.

‘I’m sure it was nothing, Tegan. Besides, we need to follow that bag, and quickly!’

‘But what if they’re in it together! They could have swapped the stone.’

‘Tegan, I’ve been here before, remember?! I know who’s got the stone!’

‘Well, I’m going to make sure!’ Tegan dashed out from round the corner, and started off in the direction of the second mysterious person.

‘Tegan, wait! We haven’t got time for this!’ The Doctor tried to protest, but Tegan was already picking up speed, in the opposite direction to the Heart Stone. ‘Oh for goodness—’

He didn’t have a choice. If he went after Tegan now, he might miss his chance to swap the stones, and Nyssa’s life would still be in danger. Reluctantly, he followed his original plan. Follow the stone.

He hoped Tegan could look after herself.

* * *

Well, this was a change, Tegan realised. She had spent a good portion of her life since meeting the Doctor being chased by villains, monsters and all sorts. Now, finally, she was the one doing the chasing.

She didn’t like it much.

At first, she had hoped to follow the black-clad figure in a quieter, slower sort of way. Unfortunately, she had paying so much attention to staying out of sight that she had failed to notice the large glass bottle on the ground before her foot crashed
down on top of it. Cover instantly blown. And then, naturally, her friend the mysterious stranger decided to leg it, so she had no choice but to leg it after him as well. After following him down numerous unfamiliar streets and squares, her breathing had grown very heavy, and her legs were begging her to stop.

There was one point in her favour however - her target seemed to have no idea where he was going. The chase had taken them forwards and backwards, and she could have sworn they’d passed the same cafe filled plaza at least four times.

Tegan began to doubt herself. Surely a thief would have an escape route planned in advance? What if this person had nothing to do with whatever was supposed to be going on? What if she was chasing after a random tourist who happened to like the colour black? Get a hold of yourself, she admonished. It was too late to back out now! Nyssa’s life could depend on this!

The thought of Nyssa had been like a red rag to a bull, and Tegan’s pace began to quicken significantly. She was narrowing the gap, coming closer to her prey. She could… almost reach out her hand… and grab—

The figure suddenly darted to the right at a sharp angle, and Tegan’s arm flailed uselessly in mid-air. She quickly drew it back, and re-oriented herself to continue the chase. The twilight grew even darker in front of her, and she realised that a tall building loomed in front of her.

By sheer dumb luck, she had managed to corner her prey in a blind alley. That was good, right? She had wanted to catch the fellow after all. Then... why did she suddenly feel so nervous?

* * *

It was now or never.

Having briskly (but carefully) followed the Heart Stone and its carrier to their destination, the Doctor found the rather dejected looking building in front of him returning to his memory. The place was a mess – a small, squat office building that had clearly been abandoned for quite a while. He wasn’t surprised - the building’s boxy nature made it quite an aberration in the modern, flowing city that surrounded it. A nice, quiet spot for shady business to go unnoticed.

He waited a few minutes, until he saw the same black figure that had entered the building come back out, this time sans backpack. He had done his job, and placed the goods in the designated collection point, the Doctor theorised. Now was the moment to snatch it before anyone else could.

If he had the time, he would have investigated the building more carefully before heading inside.

But every second he wasted was a second that his younger self and the metal dog would get closer to him, and since he didn’t remember such a meeting, it was imperative that it didn’t occur and create one temporal disaster or another.

The Doctor moved to the side of the building, and pushed through the rusted, squeaky door, entering into a concrete stairwell that extended the full length of the...
building’s four stories. The interior was just as shabby as the outside, with large piles of sand and dust having blown into the corners through the many shattered windows.

He seemed to remember that he’d previously found the stone on the top floor. Was that really true? Well, regardless, it was as good a place as any to start, and at the moment he didn’t have time for second-guessing, so he started bounding up the stairs two at a time.

Once he’d reached the top, there was only one way forward – a large metal door. He pressed his ear against the keyhole. Was there anyone inside? While speed was imperative, it really wouldn’t do to be careless. Hearing nothing, he straightened himself up, and confidently pulled the door open.

He had just enough time to perceive a large, man-shaped object in front of him before a heavy blow struck him just above the eye, and he collapsed into a cold, hazy darkness.

* * *

Meanwhile, many streets away, Tegan was already beginning to regret her hasty action. She had succeeded in cornering her quarry, true, but now the only route to freedom was through her. And she knew absolutely nothing about this person she had impulsively decided to chase – probably a criminal, for all she knew a murderer. How did she get herself into these messes?!

Now seeing her face, the figure seemed to sense her unease, and started slowly advancing towards her. She darted back instinctively, all courage gone, ready to make a dash for it, but now the figure stopped. They waved their arms around, gesturing for calm, before playing their hands on their head.

‘Tegan! Thank goodness it’s you!’

As the familiar voice of the figure rang out, he started to pull off his dark hood, and a mane of blond hair flipped up from under it.

The Doctor, his face now covered in small cuts and bruises, and with a large black eye, sighed, rubbing the side of his forehead. ‘I’m afraid things have become a bit complicated.’

END OF PART THREE
The 2018 Varsity Quiz

Written by James Ashworth and Matthew Kemp Compiled by James Ashworth

On Sunday 13th May, the fourth annual Doctor Who Varsity Quiz match between Oxford and Cambridge took place at Worcester College, Oxford. Going into the quiz, Cambridge had won two quizzes while Oxford had won one. Having won last year’s quiz in Cambridge, Oxford were looking to continue their winning streak.

The teams first met for lunch at Buongiorno e Buonasera. After lunch, we convened in 24 Beaumont Street; Oxford with a team of seven and Cambridge with a team of five. Due to Oxford’s larger size, team members randomly alternated out between rounds to match Cambridge. The teams were then presented with twelve rounds exploring the breadth of the programme. Except for the soundtrack round, here is the 2018 Doctor Who Varsity Quiz! You’ll find the answers at the end.

1. What is the name of the Master of the Fifth Galaxy in The Daleks’ Master Plan?
2. When Commandant Gorton finds out the Doctor is not a prison inspector in The War Games, what does Zoe do to stop him?
3. Dematerialising at the conclusion of Inferno, where does the Doctor end up after calling the Brigadier ‘a pompous, self-opinionated idiot’?
4. Who played Jamie when Frazer Hines contracted chicken pox during The Mind Robber?
5. In a one-off performance taking place at the Goodwood Motor Circuit, Sarah Jane Smith and the Whomobile defeated an alliance of the Daleks with which beast?
6. Name the serials from two consecutive Doctors that occur on the same day:
7. Named for a companion, a mixture of benzene, ether, alcohol, acetone and epoxypropane makes what?
8. A staple of Doctor Who location filming, in which serial were scenes shot in a quarry for the first time?
9. What, in terms of broadcast order, was the most recent episode of Doctor Who to be returned to the archives?
10. Which notable director was originally meant to direct The Edge of Destruction, instead of Richard Martin and Frank Cox?

Screenshot Round
Throughout the article, identify the episode or serial that the screenshots come from.

Doctors 1-3
1. What is the name of the Master of the Fifth Galaxy in The Daleks’ Master Plan?
2. When Commandant Gorton finds out the Doctor is not a prison inspector in The War Games, what does Zoe do to stop him?
3. Dematerialising at the conclusion of Inferno, where does the Doctor end up after calling the Brigadier ‘a pompous, self-opinionated idiot’?
**Doctors 4-6**

1. What sign does the Doctor claim he was born under?
2. What did Tegan eat when she was three but didn’t like the taste?
3. Apart from a gun, what does the Doctor use to destroy the Cyberleader in *Earthshock*?
4. Which old friend and mentor does the Doctor meet on Jaconda?
5. What’s the title of the story with the following number of letters in each word (hereafter Title Hunt)? 3,9,5
6. Title Hunt? 3,5,9
7. How old does Romana believe the Doctor is when she first meets him?
8. How old does Romana tell Duggan she is?
9. What is the name of Orcini’s squire?
10. What is the name of the highland games champion duplicated by the Zygons?

**Doctors 7-9**

1. The Doctor came first in jiggery-pokery; Rose failed at what?
2. Which opera has Grace gone to see when she gets called out to operate on the Doctor?
3. What is Ace’s job when she first meets the Doctor?
4. What’s the Doctor’s prize for being the toll-booth’s ten-billionth customer?
5. Title Hunt? 3,9,5
6. Title Hunt? 6,2,6
7. What do time and tide do, according to the Doctor?
8. What alias does Grace give the Doctor?
9. Which friend of Jackie’s received £200 in compensation because a man at the council said she looked Greek?
10. What does Adam get installed at the same time as his infospike?

**Doctors 10-13**

1. Which companion of the Doctor auditioned for the show under the anagram Mean Town?
2. Which of the Doctor’s rules for Martha in the televised version of *Human Nature* does not appear in the novel?
3. Which story was originally a fake title given by John Nathan-Turner to *The Caves of Androzani*?
4. What remains do the Boneless leave of PC Forest in *Flatline*?
5. To which year was the Doctor aiming to take Rose in *Tooth and Claw*?
6. A variant on which moniker of the Doctor was used for the Moment’s interface in Steven Moffat’s original draft of *The Day of the Doctor*?
7. At the climax of *Twice upon a Time*, what colour is the button the newly regenerated Thirteenth Doctor presses, triggering a TARDIS systems crisis?
8. According to Clara in *Hide*, the opposite of bliss is which English city?
9. Nardole reached which rank in Tarovian martial arts?
10. In which library did Donna work as a temp for six months, allowing her to solve the mystery behind the war on Messaline?
Spinoffs: Sarah Jane Adventures, Torchwood, Class, K9 and Company, the Dalek films

1. When April sees Ram’s dead girlfriend Rachel return in *Nightvisiting*, which singer completes her exclamation, ‘Holy Mother of’?
2. What species is Mr Smith, Sarah Jane’s computer?
3. In *They Keep Killing Suzie*, what does Jack give as Suzie Costello’s final cause of death?
4. In the opening of *K9 and Company*, which newspaper is Sarah Jane Smith reading?
5. What ‘Glittering, Galactic Gifts’ are bestowed upon Sarah Jane and company in *From Raxacoricofallapatorious with Love*?
6. What links Susan Who, Ernie Clements and Alonso Frame?
7. Who is behind the scheme, discovered by Captain Jack and Angelo, to introduce a brain parasite into Franklin D. Roosevelt in the 1920s?
9. From what race is Ballon, the father of Andra’ath/Miss Quill’s Child, from?
10. What is the name of the active ingredient in Torchwood’s memory loss drug?

Read, Listen, Play!

1. What kind of creature is Ramsay?
2. What is particularly unusual about the character Eleven?
3. In 2017, Big Finish Productions released Volume 1 of *The Lives of Captain Jack* which consisted of four stories - *The Year After I Died, Wednesdays for Beginners* (featuring Camille Coduri), *One Enchanted Evening* (featuring Russell Tovey), *Month 25* - put them in chronological order from the point of view of Captain Jack.
4. The Master has been played by many actors in TV and audio - put these actors’ incarnations of the Master in chronological order from the point of view of the Master - Geoffrey Beevers, James Dreyfuss, Derek Jacobi, Alex Macqueen.
5. From 2009 to 2011, before Tom Baker started recording for Big Finish, he starred in three series of audio plays produced by BBC Audio. The titles of each series had two words each, the last of each rhyming: Nest, Quest and Crest. What were the respective first words?
6. What is the name of the Twelfth Doctor’s companion from the *Doctor Who Magazine* comics who is an art history student from Brixton?
7. What vessel did Jenny, the Doctor’s Daughter, pilot for the majority of Titan Comics’ series *The Lost Dimension*?
8. In the *TV Comic* series, the First Doctor travels with his two grandchildren - what are their names?
9. The *Doctor Who: Adventure Games* series features collectible cards of Doctors, Companions, Friends, Enemies and Jelly Babies. Name five out of the ten flavours of jelly babies, you can have three incorrect ones.
10. In the game *Lego Dimensions*, which character from another fictional universe must
the Doctor be paired with so that the character states that the Doctor’s friend looks familiar?

**Where Are They Now?**

1. Which TV chef was formerly a make-up artist on *Doctor Who*, working on Sil among others?
2. In which episodes will you find a future Spider-Man?
3. And in which serials will you find an Alfred Pennyworth?
4. From which historical figure met by the Doctor is Baines/Brother of Mine descended from in reality?
5. A future Sherlock Holmes, Jonny Lee Miller, first appeared uncredited in which Peter Davison serial?
6. Which actress, now best known for a heist far away, formerly conducted one as the Unicorn?
7. The actor/actress behind which companion is a member of the Grand Order Of Water Rats?
8. Nicholas Hoult, now an X-Man, was originally going to appear in which episode?
9. Which Time Lord actor has the distinction of being the sixth most prolific performer in the *Carry On* franchise?
10. Name the episodes in which the actresses behind the eponymous detectives Scott and Bailey appear.

Not a screenshot, but the competitors! From left to right: Laurence Routledge (Ox.), Sam Davies (Cam.), James Ashworth (Ox., Quizmaster), Kieran Kejiou (Cam.), Philip Holdridge (Ox.), Emilia Ames (Cam.), Ian Bayley (Ox.), Francis Stojsavljevic (Ox.), Sarah Williams-Shealy (Cam.), Peter Lewin-Jones (Ox.), Thomas Musgrove (Cam.) and Rogan Clark (Ox.). Not pictured: Cameron Spalding (Ox.), and Matthew Kemp (Cam., Quizmaster). Photo by Katrin Thier (Ox., Assistant Quizmaster)-Used with Permission
Identify the titles of the books whose covers appear above, and their authors. Award half a point for each.
### Word Wall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terry Warner</th>
<th>Irbed</th>
<th>Cinder</th>
<th>Ercus</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mrs Poggit</td>
<td>Mr Stone</td>
<td>Lynda Moss</td>
<td>Bucephalus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Susan</td>
<td>Trojan</td>
<td>Erporns</td>
<td>Weeping Angels</td>
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<tr>
<td>House</td>
<td>Alice Watson</td>
<td>Restac</td>
<td>Arthur</td>
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<th>Shav</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Krail</th>
<th>Silas</th>
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<tr>
<td>Caves</td>
<td>Three</td>
<td>Spaceship</td>
<td>Revelation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helen</td>
<td>Gilbert</td>
<td>Rise</td>
<td>Jarl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blood</td>
<td>Priscilla</td>
<td>Earth</td>
<td>Talon</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Tiebreaker 1: How many celestial bodies were moved into the Medusa Cascade by the Daleks?
Tiebreaker 2: What is the first unit of time the Doctor mentions he has moved forward by in *Heaven Sent*?
On the day, Oxford and Cambridge were both tied on a score of 43 at the end of the quiz. The alternating choices of Oxford had been costly, with team members seemingly always being sent out before their specialist subject! Tiebreakers were required. The first, hastily thought of, one wasn’t enough to separate them, with both teams getting the correct answer. With tension reaching fever pitch, another tiebreaker was asked. Oxford went with 12,000, while Cambridge went for 1300. When the answer was revealed, Oxford were the winners, only 700 years closer than their rivals. The overall score is now levelled at two all between the universities. Thanks to all the competitors for taking part, and also my quiz-writing partner Matthew Kemp for the time he put into his questions. For now, the Geek Quiz will have to tide us over until the Fifth Varsity Quiz arrives!

Typos-Humorous Answers from the Books Round

For Q7: The Tiger That Came to Eat by Russell T Davies (Oxford)
For Q8: Maxil-The True Story by Commander Maxil (Cambridge)
For Q10: K9 Without Company by Terrance Dicks (Not very funny for Cambridge-this cost them the quiz!)
For Q11: Kill the Earth by Peter Harness (Oxford)

Answers


Word Wall 1: Horses in Who: Arthur (The Girl in the Fireplace), Susan (A Town Called Mercy), Trojan (The Myth Makers), Bucephalus (The Crystal Bucephalus)

One-off companions: Alice Watson (Destiny of the Doctor), Lynda Moss (The Parting of the Ways), Terry Warner (The Pellet), Cinder (Engines Of War)

Deaths of Rory: Restac (Cold Blood), Weeping Angels (The Angels Take Manhattan), House (The Doctor’s Wife), Mrs Poggit (Amy’s Choice)

Anagrams of Peladon stories: Curse=Ercus, Monster=Mr Stone, Prisoner=Erpornis (Also a bird species), Bride=Irbed

Word Wall 2: Cybermen in The Tenth Planet: Krail, Talon, Shaw, Jarl

Characters from The Happiness Patrol (without the last letter): Helen (A), Priscilla (P), Gilbert (M), Silas (P)

Last word of Chris Chibnall-written titles: (The Hungry) Earth, (Cold) Blood, (Dinosaurs on a) Spaceship, (The Power of) Three

First (main) word of Graeme Harper-directed titles: (The) Caves (of Androzani), Revelation (of the Daleks), Rise (of the Cybermen), (The) Age (of Steel)

Tiebreaker 1: 27

Tiebreaker 2: 7,000 years

All Screenshots in this article remain copyright of the BBC
THE SPACE MUSEUM

William Shaw

Glass reassembles
A silent exhibition;
Time comes rushing in.

Coerce the Doctor,
Don't be surprised when he says
I am the walrus.

Alien canteen
The ideal planning venue:
Revolution truth!

A light bulb delay:
The mechanical logic
Of time re-forming.
"When precisely did did we develop the capacity to regenerate? Did we emerge from the primordial soup with thirteen lives? Or did Rassilon sit in his tower, playing with test tubes and Genetic Looms until he had woven just the right cocktail?"

~ A Brief History of the Time Lords (BBC Books, 2017)

Regeneration. That quirk of Doctor Who that allows the BBC to get away with cast changes on the show and prevent it being brought to an untimely end. It can explain away Ill health, a desire to move on, or even a sacking. Alternatively, it brings a whole new personality to the Doctor, and sets the stage for the series to come. Whatever you feel, it must be accepted that Gerry Davis’ idea was a masterstroke, becoming one of the key concepts of the program as a whole.

With this idea of the Time Lords escaping death, it was perhaps inevitable that one day thoughts would turn to their birth. Freed from the demands and constraints of the BBC, the Doctor’s origins, rooted in the Cartmel master plan of seasons Twenty-Five and Twenty-Six, would be explored by the Virgin New Adventure (VNA) novels, which culminate the Seventh Doctor’s arc with Lungbarrow. Written by Marc Platt, it began life as the storyline reworked into Ghost Light, eventually being given the opportunity to be worked into the VNA range, now with a few other companions including Chris Cwej and Leela. While Looms had previously been referenced in other novels, like Cat's Cradle: Time's Crucible and Cold Fusion, it was Lungbarrow where they finally made their big debut. They are the devices through which Time Lords are made. They produce Time Lords as children in an adult’s body, who then gradually mature over time.

This idea has become quite controversial in all the years since its creation, probably not helped by the scarcity of copies of Lungbarrow and therefore the establishment of a divide between both sides. Representatives of each side have agreed to argue their case for or against Looms. They are:

For the Defence: Stephen Bell
Stephen is a lifelong Doctor Who fan. He is particularly fond of Virgin’s New Adventures Series. This is his first article for Tides. He is told he lives in Dublin, but he would not be surprised if this was Time Lord propaganda.

For the Prosecution: Rogan Clark
Rogan is a physicist at St Catherine’s College, Oxford, and membership secretary of the society. His experience of Doctor Who began with Christopher Eccleston, and he is now too far gone to consider not being obsessed with the show.
THE ARGUMENT FOR LOOMS – BY STEPHEN BELL

The Doctor: A human scientist. He built his time and space machine Tardis, to escape his own people, who come from the planet Jewel and were destroyed in a great space war he cannot remember.

The Doctor: A Time Lord of noble rank. A pioneer amongst his own people, despite being half human on his mother’s side, this Loom-Born from the House of Lungbarrow is one of 45 cousins. There are of course no parents on his home planet, Gallifrey. He stole a Type 40 TT Capsule known as a TARDIS to escape his own people when he saw a prophecy of a Hybrid between two warrior races that would destroy time.

Needless to say, the Doctor’s origins are shrouded in confusion, contradiction, and mystery. There is no ‘right’ or ‘definite’ answer, and I don’t want you to think that’s what this article is about. This article exists to bring just one of these origins into the limelight, to show why I love it so much. Perhaps one of the most unfairly maligned of them all, this article will discuss Looms and other facets of the Cartmel Master Plan, including the Pythia, and just who exactly that Other guy is…

A BIT OF THE OTHER

Before we get onto Looms themselves, some context is needed. For those who don’t know, the Cartmel Master Plan was the brainchild of Andrew Cartmel, Ben Aaronovitch, and Marc Platt back in 1987. In an attempt to bring some mystery back to the Doctor’s character (which was felt to have been missing in the previous decade), the basic premise they came up with was that the Doctor was a reincarnation of one of the three founding fathers of Gallifrey, along with Rassilon and Omega, but had been forgotten through the millennia. This person, whose name had even been lost to the mists of time, simply became known as the Other. And although the Doctor had no direct memories of being the Other, the truth would gradually be revealed to him as time went on. One of the biggest misconceptions about the Other is that the Doctor is just the Other; the person we got to know over the years was merely an act. But, as the Doctor himself says towards the end of Lungbarrow: “What do you want me to be? Shall I reveal my blazing power? Might that not fry you to a crisp? Shall I sweep away evil and chaos? Reorder the stars in their courses? Banish burnt toast forever? Well, I won’t. I wouldn’t if I could. Who do you think I am? I’m me. The Doctor. What I have been, someone might have imagined. What I will be, how can I tell?”

Before I read Lungbarrow, I was extremely sceptical of the Other, just as I imagine you are. However, after reading it, I realized that the Doctor being the Other reincarnated makes sense of *so* much contradictory detail in the show. Far from creating continuity errors, the Other actually solves many of them! From the Doctor being ‘a pioneer amongst (his) own people’ in The Daleks, to the Doctor’s age varying from 450 (The Tomb of the Cybermen) to ‘several thousand years’ (Doctor Who and the Silurians, The Mind of Evil). These are his vague memories of being the Other. Remembrance of the Daleks and Silver Nemesis both make flagrant references to the Other, with the man himself even appearing in the novelization of the former! And of course, if the Doctor technically had a life before being William Hartnell, then that would explain the faces in The Brain of Morbius... There’s a very good reason both this article and Lungbarrow both start with a quote from that scene!

Sarah saw that the Doctor’s face was twisted with effort. Drops of perspiration covered his forehead. A face appeared on the screen, the debonair white-haired features of the Doctor, as Sarah had first known him. ‘You are going Doctor, going!’ roared Morbius triumphantly. ‘How far, Doctor? How long have you lived?’ Yet another Doctor appeared on the screen – a dark-haired little man with a whimsical expression. Then another face... a proud-looking old man. ‘Your puny mind is powerless against the strength of Morbius!’ Sarah had a confused impression of even more faces on the screen. ‘Back! Back to your beginnings...’

~ Doctor Who and the Brain of Morbius (W.H. Allen/Tar

It was a chance encounter with the Book of the Old Time that first nudged the Doctor’s own thoughts back towards his world’s archae-barbaric past. A suspicion had been reincarnation. Some memories might be more than

THE ARGUMENT AGAINST LOOMS - BY ROGAN CLARK

Looms are one of the more controversial elements of *Doctor Who* lore, but I find it hard to see why. To me, they are one of the worst ideas that the show has ever had, including concepts such as the moon being a giant egg or Colin Baker meeting his demise through an exercise bike. I have three main reasons for this. After I have taken you through them, I hope you'll agree why looms should most definitely be struck from *Doctor Who* canon.

**THE MAGISTER PLAN**

Firstly, Looms seek to fill in a gap that never needed to be filled in in the first place! *Lungbarrow* is the culmination of a set of ideas dreamt up by former *Doctor Who* Script Editor Andrew Cartmel, who gave his name to the eponymous ‘Master Plan’. The intention was to add more mystery into the Doctor’s character, returning the show to an earlier point when we didn’t know the entirety of their backstory. This can be seen in several sections of the McCoy era, most notably in *Silver Nemesis*. For those who can’t remember, Lady Peinforte claims to know some great secret about the Doctor’s past. Unfortunately for any viewer interested in knowing, the Cybermen don’t care about any such things, and so she takes it to her grave without letting on.

The grand finale of the Master Plan, *Lungbarrow* by Marc Platt, is where we learn most about Looms. Despite the reverence and weight attached to them, they still feel to me like the polar opposite of the Master Plan’s intention. By providing a semi-scientific explanation for how the Time Lords (in particular, the Doctor) are made, and making the Doctor the reincarnation of an ancient Time Lord, the Other, it feels like a misstep to introduce such a major revelation when your goal is to avoid this in the first place. Perhaps this is just the expression of my natural aversion to knowledge about the Doctor’s early life – a similar moment in *Listen* made me dislike that episode, especially upon a second watching – but it seems that the Doctor’s birth should be kept just as mysterious as was originally intended. You could argue that it’s meant to be a *War Games* type moment; the point where we find out all the answers, but this seems counterintuitive to me. While the Moffat era has proved to me some questions need definite answers (like what is a hybrid, if not a type of car?), there is a difference between a story arc that builds to something, and intentional hints meant to mislead and misguide. For example, compare the various story-arcs to the mysterious past Captain Jack is given upon his debut.

The first is a build up to a grand finale, the second lends itself to more obfuscation. For example, the introduction of John Hurt’s Doctor in *The Name of the Doctor* is roughly analogous to that of Lady Peinforte in this situation. Of course, Looms aren’t the main problem here, just a symptom of a fandom’s innate desire to leave no mystery mysterious, which is why the gap in Captain Jack’s memory is gradually being filled by Big Finish.
See what I mean about things being wrapped up? It doesn’t just work on a continuity level either, as knowing about the Doctor’s past changes how you view certain stories. After reading Lungbarrow, I could look at stories from Remembrance of the Daleks, to The Brain of Morbius, to even The Sensorites in a new way! More on the latter two stories later.

THE FRUIT OF THE LOOM

In the days before Rassilon, the Gallifreyan Empire was ruled by the Pythia, a group of mostly female seers that could foretell the future (whose leader is, confusingly, also called the Pythia), who ruled Gallifrey using magic. Gallifreyans were telepathic, and constantly immersed in a gibble-gabble of thoughts and feelings. There were no secrets on Gallifrey. But the days of the Pythia were numbered. After an experimental time-craft crashed into the Doctor’s TARDIS (Cat’s Cradle: Time’s Crucible), the next Pythia in the line was snatched away from Gallifrey. The current Pythia went insane, as it could no longer tell the future, and had no successor. Rassilon took this opportunity to overthrow her, and rule Gallifrey using science instead. As the Pythia fled from Gallifrey to Karn, to become the eponymous Sisterhood, they cursed the world to silence and isolation, rendering Gallifrey barren. As the harsh winter swept in, Rassilon, in a desperate attempt to save his people, created the genetic Looms. The people rejoiced. However, after a while, Rassilon went mad with power. He ordered that every naturally born person on Gallifrey be executed, and that only the Loom-Born shall inherit the legacy of Rassilon.

That is the briefest explanation I can give as to why Looms exist in-universe. Obviously I’m trying to sum up the plots of more than a dozen books in a paragraph, so I had to leave a lot out, but these are the essentials.

I love the idea of Looms. The idea that a race of people are created by artificial means really adds to the idea of Gallifrey and the Time Lords being stagnant, never changing, which works incredibly well in my opinion. However, there are a number of misconceptions about Looms. Loom-Born Gallifreyans aren’t born as any specific age, they can be fully grown babies, children, or indeed adults, the usual option. One of the reasons why the Doctor was such an outcast was not only because he was Loomed as a child, but because he had a belly button, a genetic throwback to his heritage as the Other. In order to escape Rassilon’s purges, the Other threw himself into the Primary Distributor of all Looms and was eventually reweven as the Doctor. Like a LEGO set, The Doctor is formed of the same pieces as the Other, but assembled differently. Another common misconception is that the Doctor never had any parents, or brothers and sisters. While that is technically true, the Doctor’s Cousins are essentially his brothers and sisters, and the two leaders of his House, Satthralope and Quences, fulfil the ‘father’ and ‘mother’ roles admirably. The Doctor was Quences’ favorite ‘son’, as he saw a great amount of potential in him, the one finally able to rise above the servants and petty

"I have no cradle. I have no grave. I was born at Otherstide, Southern Gallifrey. Waiting to be born, strung out, spread really thin. Unable to think, unable to assemble my thoughts, I couldn’t wait to get out. They were there. All forty-five of my Cousins. Satthralope smacked me so hard I could barely walk, and..."

‘You are Loom-Born?’

‘Unambiguously.’

~ Cold Fusion (Big Finish Productions 2016)
ALIEN BODIES?

So now, we move onto the problems inherent to Looms. One of these became apparent in an argument first posited to me by my opposition – that being loom born makes the Time Lords sexless, and thus inherently more alien. This is certainly one point of view, but I am inclined to disagree. Throughout the classic series, and continuing into the RTD era of the show, the Time Lords are shown to be a lot more corrupt, and ‘human’ (for lack of a better word) than they would ever admit to. From *The Deadly Assassin*, the first story where the Doctor is in contact with them for a considerable amount of time, we are shown that they can be as corrupt and greedy as any other. Future stories take this further, showing the Time Lords of Gallifrey as a few decent individuals working against a very corrupt system. *The Trial of a Time Lord* paints them as no better than the Daleks, willingly committing mass genocide against the Earth in order to cover up their own lax password security.

Looms, therefore, are meant to restore some of the alienness to them, by ensuring that reproduction may only occur through machines. The first parallel to me is biblical; it implies that the Time Lords, having not been conceived naturally, are without sin, or at least as little sin as aliens from the dawn of time can have. It also seems to imply that, free from any undue sexual activity, it makes them somehow purer, being born of science alone. I’m aware that they only turned to this after becoming sterile, but this feels like a conceit added later, as if the author realised that no species like this could arise naturally. However, my point is that removing this element of humanity seems to go against what the 70’s and 80’s presented as an overall theme for the Time Lords. In essence, that they are just humans, given stupidly powerful technology, and a self-imposed exile. Add to that their haughtiness, and a general disdain for non-Time Lords, and it seems to me like the first thing to go down between loom- and womb-born Time Lords would be some kind of imposed class system, with the womb-born at the top. We can even see this in the way they treat Time Lords who defect from the Capitol, like their treatment of the Outsiders in *The Invasion of Time*, for example. To me, it feels far more fitting of these themes for Time Lords to only be able to sexually reproduce, and to be ashamed of this. They see it as beneath them, as if the act of sex somehow betrays their position as a ‘higher’ species by reducing them to a lower state. That’s not to say I am against the idea of an asexual Time Lord, as anyone who knows me is aware. I just feel like removing the ability of the Time Lords to reproduce, while in keeping with their nature as creatively sterile, betrays the direction of the classic series of making them just like us. On the other hand, perhaps we don’t even need to know how Time Lords reproduce. Not knowing allows us to come up with all sorts of
clerks that make up the rest of the House of Lungbarrow. But when the Doctor told him we only wanted to be a, well, Doctor, Quences cast him out of the House and the Family. On the appointed Deathday of Quences, the entire Lungbarrow family were invited to the reading of his will, to see who would inherit the Lungbarrow House and Estate. Glospin, one of the Doctor’s older cousins and his longtime childhood bully, wanted to ensure that he would inherit everything, and so investigated the Doctor’s abnormal genetics. He went to where the Doctor was working at the time, and threatened that if the Doctor were to attend the reading of the Will, he would take the information he discovered to the High Council. The Hand of Omega turned up at this point to protect its ‘master’ the Doctor, and burned Gospin’s right arm, leaving a scar that would never heal, not even after a regeneration.

By now, the Doctor was already bored to death of his life on Gallifrey, and so now that his life was under threat, he decided to steal a TARDIS and leave. The Hand of Omega took him back to the one place the Time Lords couldn’t track him down, Ancient Gallifrey. There he meets the Other’s granddaughter, Susan. She is the last naturally born child on Gallifrey, and is being hunted down because of it. The Doctor recognizes her due to his latent memories of being the Other, and Susan recognizes her Grandfather despite his change in appearance. The Doctor decides to take her with him, to explore the universe.

Meanwhile, back in the House of Lungbarrow, Quences refuses to read his will until his favorite ‘son’ arrives, and Satthralope, the Housekeeper and voice of the House, decides to bury the House with all forty-five Cousins inside until the Doctor can arrive, and the Will can be read. It took him almost 700 years to return.

THE BOOK OF THE OLD TIME

Since Doctor Who came back in 2005, there has been very little reference to anything I’ve outlined here. Although you can still fit the Lungbarrow version of events into the New Series continuity, it’s very clear that the current production team have no interest in sticking to something mostly relegated to obscure tie-in books published in the 90’s. However, does this mean that all this is irrelevent in a modern context? Of course not! Lungbarrow, Looms, and the Other are frequently referenced in Big Finish audios to this day (Cold Fusion, the most overt with its references, having been made as recently as 2016), and in-universe reference books like A Brief History of the Time Lords make frequent mention of these concepts, albeit not in great detail. Heck, even the recent novelization of The Pirate Planet slips in a reference to Lungbarrow! The story may have been finished a long time ago, but its legacy carries on to this day.

Overall, I still utterly adore this version of the Doctor’s backstory, and it makes me sad that it’s so unfairly maligned. I hope I’ve explained everything clearly, cleared up a few misconceptions, and most importantly, encouraged you to check it out for yourself! If you’re looking for good starting points, I can recommend the novel Cat’s Cradle: Time’s Crucible (which you can still find quite cheaply online even today) and the Big Finish adaptation of Cold Fusion. These stories, along with Lungbarrow, are masterpieces (or, should I say, Doctorpieces?) and I love them.
theories, of which Looms are but one. In this case, keeping more of a mystery would allow for more logical storytelling, keeping with what the Time Lords have been shown to be on screen.

**CONTINUITY ERRORS**

Finally, I’m going to argue about how Looms, in light of all other evidence, and regardless of my personal feelings, don’t seem to fit within the rest of the *Doctor Who* universe. We won’t be bringing up Susan, because I’m aware that *Lungbarrow* offers an explanation – that she is the Other’s granddaughter, adopted by the Doctor. I’m not really satisfied with that, but I’ll accept it for now. Since then, however, we’ve had numerous references to family relations that seem to contradict *Lungbarrow*’s assertion that the entire species is formed of Loom-born cousins. What of Missy’s allegation in *The Magician’s Apprentice* that he stole the President’s daughter? What of the Bernice Summerfield’s reference to the Doctor’s brother, or the Ninth Doctor’s own claim of having been ‘a parent and a grandparent before the war’ in *The Empty Child*? Furthermore, the Eighth Doctor, and the TV Movie in particular, also provide evidence against Looms. He claims to have seen a meteor shower with his father as a youth, and also to be half-human, on his mother’s side. Is this all metaphorical, or did he have a family back on Gallifrey, perhaps including Susan? If so, how did this happen at a time when the Time Lords were supposedly sterile, unless he and his companions were engaging in some post-watershed things off screen (*The Dying Days* aside)?

Arguing over canonicity in a show like this, where change is such a factor, where time can be rewritten on an author’s whim, may seem pointless, but if our main character’s backstory isn’t even consistent, why should we care what happens? If any story can simply be ignored by future authors, where are the consequences? We argue about this kind of thing because, as people whose lives are inherently linear, we like structure to things. It’s why *Empress of Mars* is most well known for Alpha Centauri coming back – people like things to line up. Some mystery is good, as I argued earlier, but not outright contradiction. You can’t have your cake and eat it, like some later books attempt. The variety of excuses offered, including the Doctor being confused as to whether he was loomborn or not, or saying his timeline has been changed, make having a history at all pointless. And this still doesn’t answer the question as to whether the Doctor has a family or not! To this end, you have to decide for or against Looms, and in my mind, the one with the most evidence is that the Doctor was born, and eventually fled Gallifrey with his granddaughter to live life amongst the stars. Perhaps Susan is the President’s daughter Missy spoke of? It’s just another mystery, and one I hope doesn’t get answered. A little mystery can go a long way.

Overall, my disagreement with Looms comes mostly from an ideological point – *Lungbarrow* as a story seems to be perfectly serviceable, even with them included. They take away a fair amount of mystery surrounding the Time Lords, and give off unclear messages about sex and its place in a supposed “advanced society”. By contradicting this, and many other pieces of evidence that the show has dropped throughout the years, Looms simply are a step too far.
Of Cyberman’s first appearance, and the Fruit
Of that Mondas Tree, whose metal taft
Brought immortal life, and all our woe,
With loss of Adric, till one good Doctor
Restore Flast, and regain the dry-iced Tombs,
Sing Pedler and Davis, that at Riverside
On rueful Thames, didst first inspire
That Martinus, who first made the Tenth Planet,
In the Beginning how the doppel-earth
Rose out of Chaos: Or if Peter’s World
Delight thee more, where John Lumic made steel
Gods; by the word of Tom MacRae. I thence
Invoke thy aid to my uncanoned Song,
That thus unlicensed will soar high
Above th’ Fanfiction Mount, while it pursues
Things unattempted yet in screen or audio.
And chiefly Thou O Yartek, that dost prefer
Before all Created Conscience the truth,
Instruct me, Voord; Thou from Serial Five
Wast present, and with rubber arms outspread
Eel-like swamst brooding in the Acid Sea
And mad’st it bloodied: What in me is Voord Illumin, what is low raise and support;
That to the highth of this great Fan Effort
I may assert Eternal Providence,
And justify the ways of God to Cybermen.
Say first, for Arbitan hides nothing from thy view,
Nor the Conscience Machine, say first what cause
Mov’d two Companions in that happy Ship,
Favour’d of Gal’fry so highly, to fall off
From thir good Doctor, and transgress his Will
For one restraint, Lords of all Time besides?
Who first seduced them to that foul revolt?
Th’ infernal Adric; he it was, whose guile
Stir’d up with Envy and Revenge, deceiv’d
Our Turlough and Tegan, what time his Pride
Had cast him out in Earthshock, with all the Host
Of foul Cybermen, in whose doom aspiring
To set himself up as Companion True,
He trusted to know that he was right.
If he oppos’d; and with ambitious aim
Against the Will and Dignity of Five
Rais’d impious War in the Stars above
With vain attempt. In truth, the Fifth Doctor
Hurl’d Adric flaming from th’ Ethereal Skie
With hideous ruine and combustion down
To a prehistoric Earth, there to dwell
In Adamantine Chains with the dinosaurs,
Who durst deifie th’ Victorious to Arms.
Nine times the Space that measured six Seasons
To normal men, he with his Cyber-crew
Lay vanquisht, rowling in the fiery Gulfe
Confounded though immortal: But his doom
Reserv’d him to more wrath; for now the thought
Both of past episodes and lasting pain
Torments him; round he throws his marl-brown eyes
That witnes’d huge Confusion and Delay
Mixt with obdurate pride and stedfast hate:

[Here breaketh the Manuscript.]
The Bedford Boys

Firstly, Ian Bayley discovers there’s nothing he can do to prevent the catharsis of spurious morality...

‘IT MEANS GETTING RID OF FALSE MORALITY’. On a Bedford theatre stage, the Sixth Doctor faced us as he unpacked the words ‘catharsis’ and ‘spurious’. Unbelievably, he was now actually volunteering to explain the inexplicable: the Valeyard’s notorious, much-memed gloat from the end of *The Trial of a Time Lord*.

I wondered at how he could possibly have got here in just a few minutes. The convention organiser, Simon Danes, had only asked Colin Baker what must be a familiar question for any actor: how much of him was in his on-screen persona? The first thing that had come to Colin’s mind was his, and the Doctor’s, deep love of language. He enjoyed expressing himself with long words that other people would need to look up, and the part of the Sixth Doctor gave him that opportunity!

The other facets he saw in the Doctor were by no means less interesting. Common to many Doctors, and often necessary to the plot, was an anger at injustice, captured most perfectly in his stirring ‘In all my travellings throughout the universe’ speech in *The Ultimate Foe*. Enraged recently when his daughter’s electricity was cut off for no reason, he took to Twitter to shame the energy company responsible, achieving the reconnection he wanted a few days later.

However, coupled with this most Doctorly of virtues is a certain recklessness, which I felt I saw most often on screen in his frequent brashness. He feels, for example, that he wouldn’t be a bystander if he saw violence done to another person. Although thankfully this hasn’t happened, he did tell us that this led to him performing his own stunts on *Doctor Who*. While holding onto a chain that was yanked away from him in *The Mark of the Rani*, he injured his finger, and it remains crooked today!

The floor was then opened up to questions from the audience, some of which covered ground familiar to many fans of his era. Inevitably, his outfit came up, and he recollected telling the BBC...
that other than budget, there’s no reason why the Doctor should have a “costume”. If he did though, it should consist of dark clothes so that he could blend in inconspicuously when visiting new worlds. Despite this, he loves the fact that his multi-coloured coat has ensured that his action figure is now a favourite for many of the younger fans.

He also discussed preliminary chats with the producers that led him to believe he would have the role for four years, allowing a novel character arc for his Doctor where he would mellow with time. He finds initially-misjudged heroes by far the most fascinating in literature; the two examples he gave were Jane Austen’s Fitzwilliam Darcy and JK Rowling’s Severus Snape. Big Finish, which I have only just begun listening to, is the audio demonstration of what the Sixth Doctor’s legacy would have been had his time not been unjustly terminated and he said that they gave him “the best regeneration ever”.

As we moved on to the quick fire questions, Colin continued to shine. He revealed his favourite story is *The Empty Child/The Doctor Dances* because he remembers witnessing playground chants of “Are You My Mummy”, confirming to him that the 2005 revival would be a triumph. He can’t recommend a favourite of his Big Finish audios, however, as he loves them equally; he listens to them on long drives again and again. His favourite potential companion is Leela, because she would be more than a match for his Doctor, while his favourite potential monster is the Slitheen, because they fart a lot!

If there was a take-home message from the session, it must have been that you never know what opportunities life may give you. As a law student, he had sat transfixed on the stairs of his shared flat as *An Unearthly Child* was first broadcast, never imagining that Hartnell’s role would one day be his. Colin Baker has a great passion for life and, when he was asked why the Doctor keeps on going, he knew at once the reason because he would do so too.
Mad Dons and TARDISfolk

For the second in his series *Who on Earth*, James Ashworth explores this magazine’s home city of Oxford

‘There’s a city out there where the sky is burning, where the Isis is asleep and the spires dream, with people made of smoke and chapels made of song.’ Had *Doctor Who* been set exclusively in Oxford, the Seventh Doctor, played by Kevin Whately, may have spoken these words as he walked off to adventures unknown. While this may have not come to pass, The Doctor has come to visit this fair city many a time, more so than his well-known visit to ‘the Other Place’. Don your academic gown, and join us on our tour of the undercurrent of *Doctor Who* permeating the city.

Beginning in Radcliffe Square, you’ll find yourself in the very heart of what Oxford is perhaps most well-known for, a certain university. Like the Doctor’s past, the origins of Oxford University are uncertain, with its own website tentatively giving 1096 as the earliest date that teaching was known to be taking place. From his perspective, the Doctor, in his fourth incarnation, first visited the city in 1278 with Nyssa in the novel *Asylum*, although this was a Nyssa from some time after she had left the Fifth Doctor in *Terminus* (1983). While there, he may have noticed a church near the centre of the city, that of St Mary the Virgin. The church provides the south side of Radcliffe Square, but it is far older. For at least two centuries, the church was the administrative hub of the university. Its many roles included serving as the meeting point for the Convocation of senior university.

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1 Written by Peter Darvill-Evans; published by BBC Books, 2001
members until 1637, another part of it being used as the university library and another as the university court. In 1488 the books moved to the new library, Duke Humphrey’s, named after King Henry V’s brother, the Duke of Gloucester. It’s now the oldest part of the Bodleian Library, so named after the university library was refounded by Thomas Bodley in 1602. Its buildings fill the centre and north side of Radcliffe Square.

The Radcliffe Camera in the middle of the square is a firm favourite of any of the Doctor’s trips to Oxford, whether it includes battling the Kreevix, whose iterative time machines litter the square in the audio Destiny of the Doctor: The Time Machine (2013) by Matt Fitton (himself formerly of Exeter College), or the Garvond in the novel The Dimension Riders (1993) by Daniel Blythe (formerly of St John’s). The Time Machine also introduces the Gladstone Link, below your feet under the square’s cobbles, with its suitably space-age corridors and mix of modern and nineteenth-century book shelving (the latter designed by Liberal prime minister W.E. Gladstone). There, it becomes the perfect hiding place for the TARDIS, a time machine with the same dichotomy of appearance. The Doctor, Amy and Rory were also once Trapped in the Pages of History here by the Buukvirm, who sought to consume them along with the book they were trapped in. They were able to use the Index Jump to leap from book to book, eventually reaching ‘The History of the Metropolitan Police’, using the Police Box within to return to reality. After escaping, they were able to trap the Buukvirm within ‘Pudget’s History of the Teabag’, and safely ensconce it within the TARDIS library. To your right you’ll observe All Souls College, best known in the Whoniverse for one of its fellows, Marcus Scarman, the noted archaeologist who accidentally released Sutekh from his prison in Pyramids of Mars (1975).

Continuing across the square, go through the archway and into the Old Bodleian. Entering Schools Quad, keep an eye out for Les. More than a rival for Wilkin of St Cedd’s in Cambridge (as met in Shada [1980]), he controls access to the library, bowler hat firmly on head. Among the books he so steadfastly will protect include those by the author Colin Dexter, among others. A noted favourite of the Time Lord Epsilon Delta, sometime president of St Matthew’s College (in The Dimension Riders - more on that later), he attended Cambridge before he joined the staff of the university and began to write about the investigations of one Endeavour Morse.

Exiting under the grand arch on the east side of the quad and into Catte Street, you’ll find yourself admiring the Bridge of Sighs, as Bernice Summerfield once did (again, in The Dimension Riders) while hunting for Professor Rafferty, chair of Extraterrestrial Studies (unfortunately, as far as I’m aware, not a real position). Heading out onto Broad Street, you’ll see the King’s Arms ahead of you. It is owned by Wadham College, which educated Anna Hope, the actress behind Novice Hame in New Earth (2006) and Gridlock (2007).

Turning left, you may want to pop into the Museum of the History of Science. Chief among its many artefacts is a preserved whiteboard on which Albert Einstein wrote his model of the universe during a series of lectures given at Rhodes House in 1931. Albert Einstein has appeared twice in Doctor Who, first as one of the kidnapped scientists in Time and the Rani (1987), where he admired the Doctor’s TARDIS. Presumably using the deductions made from this trip home, he is later seen in Blue Peter special Death is the Only Answer (2011) through his own attempts to develop a time

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1 A comic strip in Doctor Who Adventures issue 241
2 The Time Machine
machine. Both the whiteboard and *Death is the Only Answer* contain conversion errors, the former featuring an error converting the Hubble constant, while the latter features Einstein’s inadvertent transformation into an Ood!

Ahead of you is Trinity College, with its imposing walls and blue gates. Since Mortarhouse College is described in the BBC Books Eighth Doctor novel *The Banquo Legacy* (2000) as having views of the Sheldonian Theatre, Trinity seems likely to be the Whoniverse equivalent of Mortarhouse. Mortarhouse’s dean in 1883, the Reverend Ernest Matthews, appears in *Ghost Light* (1989), while *The Banquo Legacy* features the Natural Sciences Professor Sowerden, who like Matthews is a fellow of Mortarhouse, in addition to his former student Gordon Seavers.

Continue past Balliol College on the north side of Broad Street. Balliol’s past students include Louis Marks, author of *Planet of Giants* (1964), *Day of the Daleks* (1972), *Planet of Evil* (1975) and *The Masque of Mandragora* (1976). Then turn left into Cornmarket Street, take the first right onto St Michael’s Street, and look for the bookshop named Arcadia on your right. Iris Wildthyme, transtemporal adventuress and sometime ally/flame of the Doctor, once owned a bookshop named after herself on this street, containing rare books collected from many times and places.1 Its clientele included Alice Liddell, the ‘Alice’ of Wonderland fame, whose author Lewis Carroll - a pseudonym for Christ Church mathematician Charles Dodgson - is also noted for having been a photographer, with Victoria Waterfield numbering among his subjects.2

Crossing the street, behind the red brick wall, you will see the Oxford Union, the noted debating society founded in 1823. It’s perhaps best known to the Oxford Doctor Who Society for visits from the great and good of *Doctor Who*, including Steven Moffat, Mark Gatiss and Murray Gold. In the Whoniverse, it has played host to the Brigadier as a speaker defending Britain’s military, while a certain Time Lord also makes full use of its whole life membership in *The Dimension Riders* (1993).

At the end of the street, turn left, and walk until you reach the Westgate shopping centre. Turn right, and continue along New Road until Oxford Castle emerges on your left. Now part hotel and part prison museum, the castle has been a part of the Oxford landscape since 1071, when a motte and bailey castle (of which the motte remains today) was built by Robert d’Oilly. It was also where Empress Matilda found shelter during her war with King Stephen in the twelfth century. Another Matilda was lady of the castle in 1278, with the Doctor and Nyssa witness to her grand gardens in the

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2 according to Virgin Missing Adventure *Downtime* (1996) by Marc Platt.
bailey (though these didn’t exist in our world). A further Matilda became beatified after seeing an alien spaceship crash in 985, and a college was later named after her. The Doctor and Leela investigated the disappearance of students there in 1977, when the college was destroyed after the buried spaceship exploded. New Road, which you are currently walking along, cuts through this outer area of the castle, and as you turn right into Worcester Street at the west end of Nuffield College, you may imagine the neatly regimented flowers and plants that could have existed 800 years ago.

Cross the road by Nando’s, and follow the stone wall up towards the set of traffic lights. When you reach them, the edifice before you is Worcester College. This has considerable pedigree as the alma mater of Russell T Davies, who studied English Literature here between 1981 and 1984, and also of Gemma Chan, Mia Bennett in The Waters of Mars (2009). Follow the road around to the right as it becomes Beaumont Street. There is a plaque on the north-west corner commemorating the births of King Richard I in 1157 and King John in 1167, both in the royal palace that once stood on the site. The Doctor met Richard I in The Crusade (1965) and appeared to meet John in The King’s Demons (1983), before discovering that this king was actually the shape-changing android Kamelion. Continuing along the south side of Beaumont Street, and towards the end of the street, you may find yourself greeted by a doorman of the Randolph Hotel, where Bernice Summerfield stayed during her time in Oxford.

Cross the road at the traffic lights and head north up the west side of St Giles’, past the Ashmolean, keeping an eye out for a golden eagle against a blue background, the sign of the Eagle and Child. The pub is best known for its connection to the Inklings, a literary set whose members include C.S Lewis and J.R.R. Tolkien, and also parodied by Paul Magrs as the ‘Smudgelings’ in his BBC Books Eighth Doctor novel Mad Dogs and Englishmen (2002). While he would never live to see it, dying on the 22nd November 1963, C.S Lewis in particular is owed a debt of thanks by Doctor Who. As An Adventure In Space and Time (2013) puts it, the Doctor is ‘C.S Lewis meets H.G Wells meets Father Christmas’, and the concept of the TARDIS certainly took inspiration from the land of

1 Asylum
2 According to the audio The Cloisters of Terror by Jonathan Morris (2015)
3 The Dimension Riders
Narnia within a wardrobe. Indeed, the Whoniverse is something of the opposite, with the Doctor
and Amy, as members of the Inklings, critiquing Lewis’s early draft of *The Lion, the Witch and the
Wardrobe* in *The Professor, the Queen and the Bookshop*. Indeed, the Doctor himself suggests the
wardrobe over a transcendental bookshop, later providing a similar adventure for the Arwells in *The
Doctor, the Widow and the Wardrobe* (2011).

Make your way across to the east side of St Giles’, and to the Lamb and Flag. Perhaps the biggest
place present in the Oxford of the Whoniverse, but not in reality is the college of St Matthew’s,
introduced in *The Dimension Riders* (you may be noticing a theme developing). Its geography is
somewhat uncertain, certainly existing on St Giles’, and in the interests of fitting everything in we’ll
say that it exists where St John’s Kendrew Quad stands. Further extrapolating, let us presume that
when the land of the former St Bernard’s was sold by Christ Church, it was divided into two lots, the
more southerly of which developed into St John’s while the more northerly became St Matthew’s. It
certainly seems to be a college of the old school, what with its many quads, Latin graces, and wood
panelling. Indeed, the histories of figures involved with *Doctor Who* itself may have changed, with
the Hinchcliffe building suggesting that perhaps one producer never attended Pembroke College,
Cambridge. (St John’s has a Holmes building…) As for the college that actually occupies the site,
you will see the walls of St John’s College stretching away down St Giles’. The Eighth Doctor first
met Alan Turing here, as the latter gave a lecture on computable numbers in December 1944, before
the two undertook an adventure in occupied Europe.²

Continue along Lamb and Flag Passage and Museum Road, and
cross Parks Road to the University
Museum of Natural History, the
scene of the famous 1860 debate
between Thomas Henry Huxley
and Samuel Wilberforce on the
theory of evolution. Given his
interest (in disproving it), it seems
likely that Reverend Ernest
Matthews was present. Charles
Darwin himself fought alongside
the Sixth Doctor against the
Silurians on the Galapagos
Islands.³ Behind you is the red
brick façade of Keble College,
where Frank Cottrell-Boye, writer
of *In the Forest of the Night* (2014) and *Smile* (2017), once studied.

Follow South Parks Road into the science area, and stop when you reach a striking stone and
glass building. This is the Earth Science Department, temporarily taken over by the Physics
Department and Professor Chivers during his construction of a time machine provided by the

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¹ comic story, *Doctor Who Magazine* 429, 2010
² see *The Turing Test* by Paul Leonard (BBC Books, 2000)
³ in the audio story *Bloodtide* by Jonathan Morris (Big Finish, 2001)
Kreevix. Further down the road, you’ll come to a large, gated road entrance. To the left of this is the Geography Department, perhaps home of the Travers Building, named after the former professor of the University associated with the incursions of the Great Intelligence.¹

Continue to follow this road as it turns right to become St Cross Road, and past the concrete building formerly known as the Zoology Department. Keep going until you eventually come to a former church by the junction with Manor Road. If you choose to turn left, you can visit St Catherine’s College. With apologies to our membership secretary, it is described by *The Dimension Riders* as ‘a glorious example of what should not be done with glass and concrete’. Keep following St Cross Road as it becomes Longwall Street, until the crenellated wall runs out at the High Street. Turn left and cross the road, until you reach a gap in the low hedge. In here are the Oxford Botanic Gardens, the oldest in the United Kingdom. Inside, stare into a pool while contemplating your existence, as the Seventh Doctor once did. Sitting on Lyra’s Bench, you may want to wonder about parallel universes in the spirit of Philip Pullman, perhaps those of *Inferno* (1970) or Pete’s World as seen in four episodes in the Tenth Doctor’s first series. You will probably see some punts on the river, providing further evidence of why the Doctor was wrong when he said (in *Shada*) that ‘with something as simple as a punt nothing can go wrong’.

Turning around and heading back up the High Street, you’ll encounter St Edmund Hall up Queen’s Lane on the right. Like Worcester College, you won’t find it in the Whoniverse, but it nonetheless provided the education of Ian Marter who played the Fourth Doctor’s companion Harry Sullivan as well as novelising several stories, Roland Oliver who played Neman in *The Keeper of Traken* (1981), and comics and BBC Books writer Dan Abnett. Returning to the High Street, continue along until you find St Mary’s Church once more. Across the road is Oriel College, whose alumni include Peter Harness, author of *Kill the Moon* (2014), *The Zygon Invasion/The Zygon Inversion* (2015) and *The Pyramid at the End of the World* (2017). Rounding the corner to the left, you’ll find yourself back in Radcliffe Square.

Having returned to the beginning, consider all the other references to Oxford men and women in the Whoniverse. Luke Smith went to study here, accompanied by K9 Mark Four, and his anxieties about such led to the manifestation of the eponymous Nightmare Man of the *Sarah Jane Adventures* serial. Meanwhile, it’s been said that Ian Chesterton was himself an Oxford student, a contemporary of Professor Rafferty, and was also the science teacher of the future Professor Chivers.² I hope that you’ve enjoyed a tour through the Oxford version of the Land of Fiction, and we can but hope that *Doctor Who* proper will visit sometime soon!

¹ *The Time Machine*

² In Matt Fitton’s *The Time Machine* again - as much a theme as *The Dimension Riders* really.
Only a few hours after I heard Colin Baker recall the infamous ‘catharsis of spurious morality’ line from the closing minutes of Season Twenty-three, I listened to a talk by the man responsible for its memorable opening. The six-foot-wide model of the Time Lord space station Zenobia which captured the TARDIS was the work of Mike Tucker, who is still working for Doctor Who over 30 years later. His talk covered two stories in particular: Thin Ice, and the latest incarnation of Shada. In both cases, I had made an assumption about what I was seeing which turned out to be staggeringly wrong.

Twenty-one minutes into Thin Ice, we witness the Doctor jumping into the icy waters of the Thames after Bill, who has just fallen in. From a camera placed beneath the ice, we watch him break the surface and sink downwards past the camera. This takes no more than four seconds and it’s exactly what stuntmen are for, or so I thought. In fact, that was a 1:3 model of Peter Capaldi, painstakingly carved from a reference photo of him in a diving suit. The face was made by a Madame Tussauds sculptor to the exacting standards you’d associate with them; I was amazed at how realistic it was! All this was despite the fact that we never see the model clearly, as it moves fast through murky water. It was fitted with an armature that enabled it to match whichever pose Capaldi was to adopt when he jumped through the ice. Further work was required to make the easily breakable fake ice that gives the story its name, enabling them to drop the model straight through it.

As you may know, the latest version of Shada consists of live-action footage combined with animation to give us the best vision of what the serial would have looked like, had it not been for the strikes. It was a good thing that the sequences with the Think Tank space station and Skagra’s spaceship were all in the can by then. But none of them were! The models were built for the production but after its hiatus and cancellation they were destroyed without being filmed. However, surviving photographs enabled Mike Tucker to reconstruct the models, using parts that would have been new in 1979. Such parts included, in an unexpected franchise crossover, parts of an X-wing from Star Wars and a (Space: 1999) Eagle transporter. Airfix girder bridges were also added in order...
to provide surface detail. Moving beyond the world of model kits, a Bic razor was used as a landing gear for Skagra’s spaceship, whereas the hangar bay of the space station was made with seed trays. He had previously made hangar bays like this on *Red Dwarf*, where he was also responsible for the iconic “Lister paints the letter F” title sequence.

Both space stations and space ships still require one other key component: space itself! To produce a field of stars, a light is shone through a black cloth that has been punctured by knitting needles of various widths. This effect was famously used for the title sequences of Seasons Eighteen to Twenty-Three, beginning with the next story after *Shada, The Leisure Hive*. In order to create the illusion of models floating in space, an invaluable trick of the trade was used. The models were hung with steel wires, coated to minimise glare, but suspended upside down. Turning the camera upside down as well will make the viewer look for the wires in the wrong place, so keep an eye out for this next time!

I doubt that anybody above the age of ten ever looks at *Doctor Who* and thinks it is anything other than make believe. We all deliberately suspend our disbelief, but we never stop to think about the illusion presented to us until we are lucky enough to have it explained. Even the seemingly obvious can be just an illusion. Perhaps, after all, that is the mark of true visual effects genius.
HELLO AND WELCOME TO THE FIRST INSTALLMENT OF THE BIG WHO LISTEN! We’re a group of WhoSoc members here to listen to and talk about the Main Range of Doctor Who audio dramas produced by Big Finish Productions, as well as have some fun along the way. We’re starting off, naturally, at the very beginning (it’s a very good place to start) with The Sirens of Time, by Nicholas Briggs. It’s the first in the range, released all the way back in July 1999. Each of our eight reviewers have listened to the full story and their thoughts are presented here in a random order, but let’s start with the official synopsis, courtesy of the Big Finish website...

“Gallifrey is in a state of crisis, facing destruction at the hands of an overwhelming enemy. And the Doctor is involved in three different incarnations - each caught up in a deadly adventure, scattered across time and space. The web of time is threatened - and someone wants the Doctor dead. The three incarnations of the Doctor must join together to set time back on the right track - but in doing so, will they unleash a still greater threat?”

Rogan Clark

So, we have Big Finish’s first ever Doctor Who release, from 1999. It brings together the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Doctors (plus the Fourth Doctor’s theme tune, for some reason), for the first time in 10 years, to fight the eponymous Sirens of Time. And it’s not very good. It’s not terrible, but it fails to stand out to me very much.

To summarise briefly, we spend 25 minutes with each Doctor, watching them get involved in a little situation, only for them all to be brought together at the end, with a framing device of Gallifrey being conquered by aliens that are more of a plot device than anything else. While this works in theory, to keep the story moving along at a brisk pace, it also backfires. The individual parts themselves suffer from being entirely contained to their one part, which means, once they’re over, they basically stop mattering, except for a little resolution to make them seem like they mattered. What’s worse is that the smaller stories, to me at least, are the interesting parts. Hyper-advanced aliens conquering Gallifrey, apart from feeling like a call-back to The Invasion of Time (which, given all the other intentional callbacks to previous Gallifrey stories, might be on purpose), also feels like an attempt to make the story seem bigger than it needs to be. We’re supposed to think its big and dramatic, when in fact, the story
could take place nearly anywhere. Maybe I’m burnt out on the idea after seeing it done terribly in other fan-based media, but it makes me roll my eyes. My main interest goes to the individual stories, which aren’t given enough time to shine. McCoy’s section is probably the worst, with a lot of pointless cackling, and repetitive insults that made it hard to sit through, but there’s a good idea at the core which is mainly brushed under the rug. Davison’s is the best, with an interesting atmosphere and secondary cast, even if they have to come up with a quick excuse about Tegan and Turlough being stuck in the TARDIS. I’m sure that’s the last time we’ll see any weird continuity wrangling in these audios. The set-up was so good, I almost wanted to see it in an actual adventure, not just as backdrop to another, ”bigger” story, which feels like its very much cut short. Baker’s is where the overarching plot starts to intrude, and his side characters aren’t quite as likeable, but his charm is enough to make you want to know what’s going on, even if where it ends up isn’t quite as good. The resolution, featuring all three Doctors coming together, complete with 70’s ”Contact!”, feels like it’s meant to be a twist, but maybe I’m just too good at guessing, as it didn’t really surprise me. In any case, the finale (and speech from Six) feels more like a kickstarter for future character arcs – almost like Big Finish’s way of announcing where its going with the characters, which I can respect.

Overall, while I think the plot might have been novel when first released, after more than a decade of New Who, and its time bending shenanigans, it doesn’t come off as well. The Doctors are certainly played well, and I want to see them in other adventures, where they can shine individually, but as a whole, it’s a bit of a let down that tries to be too timey wimey, and misses the ball.

**Ian Bayley**

SO MY BIG FINISH JOURNEY BEGINS WITH A MULTI-DOCTOR STORY! Having watched all five such televised stories, and having thought hard while procrastinating for weeks before listening, I felt I knew exactly how this was going to go. There would be banter centring around a comic relief caricature of a past Doctor but eventually the ”main” Doctor would get the other two to work as a team to face the biggest of big threats that he can’t sort out on his own. It would be my chance to witness the palette of vulnerable Five, brash Six and sly Seven blend together to form something unique and unrepeatable. All I needed was a straightforward plot so that I could spend the whole two hours savouring that chemistry which would clearly be the major selling point.

In fact, first Seven, then Five, then Six have separate but closely analogous adventures, each an episode long and each ending on an apparently unresolved cliffhanger. Each time, the TARDIS experiences a time distortion and lands, the Doctor saves a young woman, they get into trouble and he tries to get back to the TARDIS and can’t. There is a Gallifrey-based frame story that impacts on each of these escapades.
McCoy’s adventure takes place in a nebulous setting, similar to Karn with its crashing spaceships, but unlike Karn, it has a pointless pantomime witch whose irritating voice is painful to listen to and often indecipherable, security robots with the same problem, and an old man she is guarding for a reason that is revealed in the end without making you care first. Davison’s adventure, by far my favourite and seasoned with sumptuous atmospheric music, takes place in and around a German U-boat. You sense his exasperation as he seems genuinely hurt that people distrust and wish to kill him when all wants to do is to get back to his TARDIS. This, of course, follows on in recording order from his superlative Androzani swansong. Finally, Baker is also not Mr Popular with the locals either, as he and his companion become two survivors of a spaceship crash, but he’s loving it, as suits his personality, when the third and final survivor, a hostile android, interrogates him.

It’s only at the start of episode 4 that the three of them finally get together. There’s no time for the traditional banter though as the crisis has become urgent at that point. It is the extrovert Sixth Doctor who becomes the main "boss" Doctor but choice words about their respective personalities play a crucial role in saving the day. Only in episode 4 do we discover what the Sirens of Time are, while we also process the Temperon, the Knights of Velyshaa, and various backward references that justify the previous three episodes, and yes (did you see my cunning setup in paragraph one?) the tangled complexity completely ruins everything that I had hoped to get from the entire story.

**John Salway**

*Having finally obtained the license to produce Doctor Who audio dramas in 1999 (after first dipping their toe into the Whoniverse with a set of Bernice Summerfield book adaptations), Big Finish aimed to make a splash with their first official Doctor Who release. A multi-Doctor story seemed a great way to grab the fans’ attention and show off the three Doctors that they could bring to the table, but can The Sirens of Time live up to the expectations that such an event creates?*

In the first three episodes, each Doctor tackles their own separate adventure, which is sure to disappoint those expecting a full-length multi-Doctor story. This does, however, allow Big Finish to show how subsequent releases set in the past or future might sound, sort of like a Doctor Who demo reel. These short, rather minor plotlines certainly feel more like vignettes than complete tales – but saying that, they are quite entertaining vignettes and construct new characters and settings very efficiently. The second episode, set aboard a submarine, is a particularly good demonstration of how well sound effects and music can bring a location to life.

Each of the Doctors is well presented, with Peter Davison and Sylvester McCoy rather effortlessly recreating their TV roles, while there seems to have been a rather deliberate effort to “rehabilitate” Colin Baker’s Sixth Doctor,
whose sharp, prickly nature is softened at the edges for a warmer, far more likeable presence than was seen on 80s television sets. Indeed, if any Doctor can be said to be the hero of the piece, it’s this one, which is a nice gesture for a Doctor whose era is often maligned, fairly or unfairly.

Unfortunately, the decision to make the first three episodes more or less completely separate from each other means that the final episode must work overtime to weave the disparate threads together, while also pressing onwards with its own invasion plotline, which seems like too much weight for one episode to sensibly bear. As such, it becomes a very talky finale, with endless scenes of characters explaining the story to each other, and a disappointing conclusion where the Doctors do very little in a story that is ostensibly all about them!

In the end, The Sirens of Time is a story that feels hamstrung by its own format, but it does demonstrate in its first three episodes that Doctor Who suits the audio medium very well. I certainly don’t dislike this opening tale – while rather inconsequential I do find it consistently entertaining – but I don’t think it’s unfair to expect more from a multi-Doctor story, or from a story meant to kickstart an entire range of adventures.

Adam Kendrick

If you’re going to launch a new franchise of Doctor Who audio stories, why wouldn’t you start off with a multi-Doctor adventure? The narrative structure of The Sirens of Time is rather ambitious for Big Finish’s first story, with three separate mini-adventures that intertwine during the fourth. However, the result is somewhat convoluted and heavily dependent on technobabble, and I would have preferred it if each narrative thread had been developed further into deeper stories.

Nevertheless, each Doctor receives their turn in the spotlight and being able to hear all three interacting with each other is what makes the finale a delight. Davison, Baker and McCoy deliver great performances which allow them to communicate their own interpretations of their respective incarnations. The biggest success by far is Colin Baker who, now free from the shackles of his abrasive 80s characterisation, is finally able to shine with a gentler and far more amiable Doctor, albeit one who still has an underlying streak of pompousness and pragmatism.

There is a considerable amount of audio design which went into this story, from the sounds of spaceships crashing and battleships exploding, to the robotic voices of the Drudgers and the Knights. The retro-inspired incidental music helps to create a mysterious atmosphere and there’s a certain member of the supporting cast who proves themselves to be particularly versatile. Unfortunately, while the voices of the Lord President of Gallifrey and Commander Vansell are decent enough, the same cannot be said for either the ludicrously cartoonish Ruthley, who resembles a joke character from Monty Python
instead of a plausible villain, nor the dodgy German accents throughout the second episode.

Overall, this was a promising introduction to the Big Finish range which left me looking forward to hearing more thoroughly-developed stories in this format – especially those featuring the Sixth Doctor.

James Ashworth

‘It all started out as a mild curiosity in the junkyard, and now it’s turned out to be quite a great spirit of adventure’. In some ways, this quote from the First Doctor is reflective of how far Doctor Who had come by 1999, encompassing eight Doctors, twenty-six series and one TV movie, and now moving back into the world of audios after an earlier foray in the 70s. In other ways, it also refers to our endeavour to listen and discuss every story in the Doctor Who audio range from Big Finish from this point. To stretch the analogy to breaking point, let’s begin our own mild curiosity at the beginning, with *The Sirens of Time*.

For a cover that promises three Doctors, the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh, *The Sirens of Time* does a good job of not putting them together for a while. Slightly upping the ante from the twenty-five minute episodes of the past, this serial sees the Doctors on their own individual adventures, coming together to battle a threat to them all. The structure of this story is not its strong suit, but then that’s perhaps by design. With each Doctor exploring a different setting (Alien Planet, The Past, Space), it does serve more as Big Finish advertising what it can do rather than a standard story, but this still gives time for a bit of adventuring in each place. Personally, I enjoyed the historical section the most, but each is still vivid enough for their brief appearance before giving way, quite abruptly, to the next.

The other problem with the split structure, before coming together, is that the characterisation tends to suffer somewhat. The jumps between storyline don’t really present the villains in a particularly compelling way, and when this settles, you still expect another jump to be around the corner. For the Doctors’, their personalities seem slightly off, especially the Seventh Doctor, who doesn’t quite seem to be the Clown or the Schemer he tends to be in either the series or the New Adventures. This may just be down to first serial jitters, and when the Doctors meet the personalisation kicks up a notch, with banter between them reminiscent particularly of that in *The Three Doctors*, with Six and Seven acting like Two and Three, and the Fifth Doctor as a mediating influence. It’s quite nice in particular to see Sylvester McCoy finally getting a chance to team up with other Doctors, which as will be seen throughout this odyssey is the first of many.

Overall, *The Sirens of Time* is a pleasingly diverting way to spend two hours. While it’s not the triumphant return that was maybe expected after three years
of no *Doctor Who*, it does its job well, whetting your appetite for further adventures. And all this without any companions either! Having laid the groundwork for new *Doctor Who* audios, I for one look forward to seeing where this great spirit of adventure continues…

Michael Goldsmith

*The Sirens of Time* is the debut *Doctor Who* script for Big Finish and long term writer and producer Nicholas Briggs, but unfortunately it’s not a successful one in my opinion. While I admire the ambition and attempted scale it suffers from a few major problems – most notably a lack of coherence and structure in the script.

To summarise: the central setup is that three incarnations of the Doctor (Fifth, Sixth and Seventh) are somehow entangled in an event that threatens Gallifrey and which involves the eponymous ‘Sirens of Time’. In theory I can understand why this might seem like an ideal story to launch Big Finish’s *Doctor Who* range back in 1999. It has multiple Doctors engaged in various different plot strands and involves Gallifrey and the Time Lords – just the sort of thing I can imagine fans, especially in the ‘Wilderness Years’ of the 1990s, might have looked for.

However, I think this is also symptomatic of the main issue with *The Sirens of Time*. It clearly wants to be a sort of ‘anniversary special’ type story with multiple incarnations, continuity references and Time Lord mythology but it gets so caught up in the establishing scale that it loses most of its dramatic potential. The choice to have the first three parts devoted to each Doctors separate story, while providing an opportunity to have three different settings (the most interesting of which is the World War One submarine in part two), means that the best part of a multi-Doctor story – when they meet – is delayed until the end! It also means that each part has to deal with a new set of characters which are then discarded almost immediately, limiting the possibilities for building dramatic momentum. This comes to a head in the final section which throws around so much exposition about Knights of Velyshaa, Temperons, Sirens of Time and the Celestial Intervention Agency that I was hard pressed to follow the plot, or indeed to care much about it.

Having said all this *The Sirens of Time* was not entirely a waste. As mentioned, part two with the Fifth Doctor is pretty good and there are some excellent moments (which I won’t spoil) that along with the more grounded
setting allowed me to engage more with the events unfolding. Peter Davison and Colin Baker are also pretty good reprising their incarnations and providing more mature and measured performances, although the same can’t be said of Sylvester McCoy who mainly relies, unsuccessfully, on one tone of delivery.

In general this is not a story that I would urge anyone to prioritise. It’s not actively terrible per se but I did find myself on a few occasions throughout wondering what the point was. It’s nice to hear as a historical artefact—after all it kicked off a whole new lease of life for Doctor Who—but it’s not wholly engaging or coherent and the ending is largely a mess of unearned exposition.

Jonathan P. Martindale

WHY DOCTOR WHO AS AUDIO DRAMA? I don’t mean in the ‘because that was the closest we could get to real, televised Who back in 1999’ sense—although it may well have been—or the ‘because I’ll take my Who in whatever format I can get it’ sense either (although that might again be true). I mean, rather, something like this: what is it about the world of Doctor Who that the medium of the audio drama might be peculiarly well suited to bring out? And conversely, how might the possibilities of storytelling that the world of Doctor Who opens up show how the medium of the audio drama might be made use of to its fullest potential? I hope the reader will consider joining me in pondering these questions as we make our way through this Big Who Listen.

Let’s start with a simple answer. Describing far-away planets, distant times, fantastic events, terrifying monsters, etc., is a lot cheaper than having to show them; thus given a limited budget, a cast and crew reliant on saying rather than showing should be able to give us a lot more of the above than one dependent on the latter. The Sirens of Time actually reminds me as much of The Keys of Marinus as any of the classic televised multi-Doctor stories in the way that Nicholas Briggs respectively sets his first three episodes in completely different time and places, introducing his Doctors one-per-episode alongside their own cast of characters before bringing them together together in a lengthy forty minute conclusion that still feels packed fit to burst. Furthermore, the obvious budget problems that The Keys of Marinus suffered on its way to the screen suggest a story like The Sirens of Time, far less modest in scope, simply wouldn’t have been realisable as television during the classic era of Who.

The benefit of Briggs’s separate-episodes approach is that it limits the chaotic, everything louder than everything else feel of, for instance, The Five Doctors, to the final episode. The downside is that Briggs is left with only enough time in episodes 1-3 to sketch his characters and settings in briefest outline before the listener is whisked onward into the next episode. Unlike some of Big Finish’s later audio dramas—but like much of classic Who— exposition and action are definitely at forefront here, sometimes at the expense of character development. One senses that, aware of the flagship role his drama would have to play for the range, Briggs has tried to include something to
please every possible Doctor Who fan in The Sirens of Time; the story ranges across past and future, Earth, Gallifrey, and several other locations, and Briggs draws heavily on existing series continuity in developing his own ideas. That’s a good formula for an ‘all-rounder’, certainly; for an introduction to Doctor Who in a new medium. Less sound for a classic, perhaps. But since when has there been a formula for one of those?

Philip Holdridge

When I began to listen to this story, I was delighted to find that I wasn’t just going to be treated to one, but three whole Doctors! There’s something about having more than one Doctor in an episode that for some reason makes it feel more exciting and special, and I wasn’t disappointed.

The story followed a plot device I’ve seen before, and quite like, which is to follow several separate stories that all link together at the end. In this case it was the Fifth Doctor in a German submarine, the Sixth Doctor on a spaceship and the Seventh Doctor on a strange planet.

From the name of the episode I was expecting the story to have some basis on the Greek myth of the Sirens, but I was surprised to find that it was only very loosely connected to it. I actually preferred the story because of this because a retelling of Greek myths has been done before in Doctor Who and elsewhere and would be too predictable. The story was well thought out and kept an air of mystery right until the end, with even the identity of the Sirens of Time being unknown for most of the story.

All together well written and a good start to our adventures through the audio stories of Doctor Who.

And that concludes our first adventure into Big Finish! I hope you have been inspired to give Big Finish a try if you haven’t already, even if that’s not with us! If we haven’t managed to put you off, you can listen along and find our ongoing reviews at bigwholisten.blogspot.com
The Bedford Tales

The bard Sir Adam of Kendrick concludes with the tales behind an Arthurian Adventure...

Following a short break to allow everyone to stretch their legs, the convention moved onto the next two Q&A panels. In the first panel, Sophie Aldred (Ace), Angela Douglas (Doris Lethbridge-Stewart), and Mike Tucker (special effects) discussed the action-packed Battle-field and answered questions from the audience.

The biggest challenge that Sophie Aldred faced during filming was the scene in which she emerges from the lake holding the sword Excalibur, similar to the Lady of the Lake from Arthurian legend. Holding the sword vertically was particularly difficult due to the disorienting nature of being underwater for so long, and she was prescribed a course of antibiotics before the scene could be shot. Fortunately, the Rutland Water reservoir was at least warmer than Lulworth Cove during the filming of The Curse of Fenric.

Naturally, the infamous water tank scene from the end of Part Two was discussed at length. Sophie was very excited about performing this stunt herself, knowing that the outcome would make a fantastic cliffhanger. However, the glass panel cracked against her hands during filming, resulting in the studio becoming completely flooded and creating a massive electrical hazard. She believes that the glass was either not thick enough to support the mass of water or more likely, unable to withstand the additional stress produced by the thrashing around of a body inside. Thanks to the quick reactions and loud vocals of Sylvester McCoy, Sophie was rapidly pulled to safety by stage hands and the power was immediately shut off. She escaped with only minor cuts and thought nothing of the incident until it was reported by the News of the World as a “life-threatening” accident weeks later. This caused much distress to her friends and family, who had difficulty reaching her while she was on location to ask if she was all right. To this day, the footage is apparently still used in BBC safety videos as an example of bad practice.

Speaking of life-threatening accidents, Sophie was reminded of the time she nearly choked to death at a much earlier Doctor Who convention. While taking part in a game show hosted by a Julian Clary impersonator, she stuffed an entire doughnut into her mouth and required the Heimlich manoeuvre after it got stuck. Once the manoeuvre had been performed successfully, the Public Domain-Charles Ernest Butler-https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/6/61/Charles_Ernest_Butler_-_King_Arthur.jpg
remnants were swept up and apparently auctioned off for charity, later being presented to Mike Tucker for a possible evaluation as ‘memorabilia’.

Possibly due to the briefness of her role as Mrs. Lethbridge-Stewart, Angela Douglas lacked a deep connection with the Lethbridge-Stewart name or Doctor Who itself. Nevertheless, she was more than happy to reminisce about her time filming four Carry On films (Cowboy, Screaming!, Follow that Camel, and Up the Khyber) with Joan Sims and Kenneth Williams. She described them as always performing, but both leading “very lonely” existences as a result. Her favourite cast member was Peter Butterworth, whom she was surprised to learn had played the Meddling Monk in the ‘60s.

Mike Tucker was Mat Irvine’s assistant and worked on special effects for the show, both in the ‘80s and in the present. When the production order of Series 26 was rearranged so that Battlefield was scheduled as the first serial, they had merely a three-week turnaround to finish work. A portfolio of designs for the terrifying Destroyer was presented to John Nathan-Turner, after the team had been given a tip-off that such a creature would soon be needed. The final design they came up with was not actually used, as John preferred an earlier version which he thought was perfect. Of the two people responsible for this monster, one now works at Madame Tussauds and the other was involved with the Harry Potter films. Unused work for the Destroyer was later recycled as Rimmer’s Self-Loathing Beast in Red Dwarf, which Mike Tucker continues to work on today.
Sir Adam recounts a story of the stone lady, and a dog of strange artifice….

The second panel involved two actors who had portrayed various aliens on the show, including a certain tin dog!

Elen Thomas wanted to be a Blue Peter presenter when she was growing up. Instead, she became an Auton in *Rose* (she was the one wearing the lavender blouse and jeans), a part which she was given after pretending to know how to do “robotic dancing” during her audition. She would later go on to portray a clockwork droid in *The Girl in the Fireplace*, a Futurekind in *Utopia*, one of the Vashta Nerada-infested spacesuits, and most importantly, a Weeping Angel. To create this iconic monster, Elen spent six hours in makeup each day. Once the full costume had been completed, bathroom breaks became impossible and so she had no option but to “hold it in”. Mercifully, she was able to sit in a chair which was hidden under her dress, even during shots where she appeared to be standing.

Recalling how he was cast as the voice of K9, John Leeson talked about bumping into TV director Derrick Goodwin, whom he knew from repertory theatre, in the pub down the road from his house. He was told to wait by the phone for an unspecified amount of time and two weeks later, his agent contacted him about a TV show which needed someone to provide the voices of a virus and a robot dog (for *The Invisible Enemy*). During his audition, John noticed the tartan collar that K9 was wearing and asked if they wanted him to provide a Scottish accent. Unfortunately, his suggestion was turned down, and so the wait for a Caledonian K-9 continues. Afterwards, he was informed that the part was “his for the taking” since nobody else had auditioned.

John considers K9 to be “a bit of a smartarse” and so perhaps is not the friendliest character that Doctor Who has ever produced. Nevertheless, he remains popular with children and adults alike due to his loyalty and faithfulness. The reason why K9 works, John explained, is that he is a modern-day reimagining of a stock character from Italian *commedia dell’arte* - that of “the servant who knows more than his master”. This might partly explain the lack of success behind the Australian spin-off *K-9*, of which Leeson’s only involvement was to record his lines in the studio. If this sounds like he was "phoning it in", as he put it, then it probably would have been very different to his experience on *Doctor Who* in the 70s. However, this was averted as he had to crawl around on all fours in the studio early on, in order to stand in for the model which had not yet been built!
Sir Adam’s tale comes to a close...

This was the first time that I went to a Doctor Who convention and I couldn’t have asked for a better experience. I decided to attend Bedford Who Charity Con as it was nearby to where I live and relatively affordable, more so than others I’ve considered. I also didn’t want to miss the chance to meet Sophie Aldred, the actress behind one of my favourite companions, and Colin Baker, who I feel is the most underrated Doctor of all time, especially since listening to Big Finish’s main range of audio dramas. Despite my concerns about crowds and queues, the event was surprisingly small-scale with less than 300 attendees, resulting in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere which never felt crowded. The guests themselves were all absolutely wonderful and fascinating to listen to, as I hope you’ll agree from my recollections of the day. Sophie is the loveliest person that you could ever meet, while Colin is incredibly charming and witty in person, as befits the Sixth Doctor. It was one of the best days out that I’ve ever had and I can’t wait to see who they’ll have at next year’s convention!

TERROR OF THE ZYGONS

William Shaw

Whatever their faults,
Evil spirits don’t destroy
Mineral slime rigs.

In this sickly light
That mass of stings and suckers
Melts into a face.

Wireless aliens
Manipulate the Loch News
Monster, commuting.

A giant lizard
Swims into London; I hope
You got a refund.
At the time of writing, it’s been ten months since the Doctor removed her hood to reveal Jodie Whittaker. Just as some predicted, the world literally ended. Doctor Who suddenly ceased to exist. The whole fandom disintegrated after its backbone of a few “edgy” angry commenters bravely fought the evil social justice agenda by announcing they were LEAVING THIS FORUM and ranting about NEVER WATCHING THE SHOW AGAIN. The universe collapsed, buckling under the weight of all those bras…

Oh, wait. That’s not what happened at all.

What did happen, shortly before the previous Tides of Time went to press, was the announcement of three new companions – Graham, finally confirming the rumours about The Chase host Bradley Walsh, and Yasmin and Ryan played by former Hollyoaks actors Mandip Gill and Tosin Cole respectively. Soon after that, we saw Thirteen’s new outfit and redesigned TARDIS exterior for the first time, and I had a new background for my phone’s lock screen. The Doctor had arrived.

Then, at last, the regeneration. They certainly made us wait for it (with a powerful closing performance from Peter Capaldi) but for a few moments, there she was. A new silhouette in Twelve’s old clothes. An expression of confusion, then delight. The understated but instantly iconic “Oh, brilliant!” – and then straight back into the action with that cliffhanger. I spent the rest of 2017, and beyond, endlessly repeating the YouTube clip.

The reaction to the exploding TARDIS was particularly interesting, leaving aside the few “woman driver” jokes which frankly aren’t worth spending time on. I was surprised to see so much speculation about a TARDIS-less new series; given that a TARDIS crash is now almost traditional for regeneration, and the aforementioned photo included a specifically redesigned TARDIS, it seemed to me like an odd assumption to make, and perhaps one rooted in a wider sense of “a big change”. In any case, the set photos and videos that later circulated on social media seem to have proven these fears unfounded.

By January, it was time to change my phone wallpaper again. “Jodie Whittaker Is The Doctor”, the new Doctor Who Magazine cover declared in keeping with tradition. As we now know, it would also be the penultimate DWM cover to bear the Steven Moffat-era logo. The following month, Doctor Who’s branding underwent a regeneration of its own, and a 16-second video appeared showing off the new logo, again prominently featuring the TARDIS. I found this far more exciting than it realistically should have been – partly because the gap between series is so long, but partly because it’s another tiny piece of Thirteen’s era taking shape. A regular reminder that Jodie Whittaker is the Doctor and, sometimes, the world is a wonderful place.

Once again, Doctor Who is changing. Yet, at the same time, Doctor Who is the same as it has always been. The promotion and publicity is completely normal – and that, in itself, is powerful.
GWENDOLINE  I think the Reverend Matthews is confused.
THE DOCTOR  I’ll have him completely baffled by the time I’m finished.
              —*Ghost Light*, Part One
INSPECTOR MACKENZIE  What is happening in this house?
                          —*Ghost Light*, Part Two

**Marc Platt’s *Ghost Light* was transmitted in 1989 as part of the final season of ‘classic’ *Doctor Who* and has proven a source of bafflement over the years to fans of the programme. It has been argued that the narrative was highly edited to fit into its time slot and to fit within three episodes, and that as a result much exposition was lost. One may see the above quotations as a wink to the television viewer about the complexity of the narrative, but, in fact, the key to at least partly deciphering *Ghost Light* is to read the narrative allegorically as fitting into a tradition of written texts, the visual arts, and *Doctor Who* stories. This article will begin by exploring those traditions before ultimately showing how they illuminate *Ghost Light*. The discussion shall be limited to the most famous works to show various ideas in operation.**

**Allegory in Literature and the Visual Arts**

In addition to a vast number of non-religious allegories in literature, there are numerous examples of Christian allegories from medieval times through the Renaissance and into the Restoration period where names are interpretative markers. It will be worth bearing this in mind...
when considering *Doctor Who*. The discussion here shall be limited to works which depict infernal versions of the Holy Trinity, since this will be mainly picked up on in discussion of the programme and of *Ghost Light*. The nature of the Holy Trinity has been a hotly debated topic: T.A. Noble comments that some see the three of God, Christ and the Holy Ghost as one and others distinguish the three which comes close to being tritheistic (203). There have been frequent depictions of the Holy Trinity in the visual arts, such as in medieval manuscripts and paintings, using a number of techniques to portray God, Christ and the Holy Ghost, in the form of a dove, including using abstract symbols like the triangle. These are too numerous to survey all here and for those interested further reading is recommended in books and articles by the likes of G. Schiller and Lev Puhalo, as well as on websites such as that devoted to the ‘Iconography of the Trinity’, to Frans Floris’s *Allegory of the Trinity* (1562), to ‘Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Icons’, and to John Wampler’s ‘Symbols of the Holy Trinity’. There are also references to the Holy Trinity by theologians like St Ambrose, Gregory of Nazianzus (Noble, 206), St Augustine (212), Venerable Bede, St Thomas Aquinas (211), and Julian of Norwich (Fletcher, 355), and by later literary writers such as the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries playwright and poet Ben Jonson and the so-called ‘metaphysical poets’ of the same period (John Donne, George Herbert, Richard Crashaw, Abraham Cowley, Henry Vaughn and Thomas Traherne, for example) and, as Noble discusses (203-9), John Wesley in the eighteenth century, to name but a selection. Thinkers who deviate from trinitarian faith (208) are beyond the scope of this article.

The allegorical expression of the common anti-Trinity of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, however, is not.

Various literary texts present allegorical infernal threes, in some cases with symbolic names and in others not. In addition to works like *Cursor Mundi, Religious Lyrics of the Fifteenth Century*, and *Hymns to the Virgin and Christ, ‘The Parliament of Devils’ and Other Religious Poems* (Cullen, xxxiv), there is Dante’s medieval text *The Divine Comedy*. Not only is the structure of Dante’s text tripartite (featuring the books of *Inferno, Purgatory* and *Paradise*) and not only does the narrator describe seeing three circles (for the Father, Son and Holy Spirit) but, as Jay Rudd (quoted in ‘The Trinity in the *Inferno*’) also argues, uses of three pervade Dante’s descriptions of Hell. In Hell there are symbolically three main categories of sin. The three-headed hound Cerberus stands guard at the gates of Hell (Cantos 12-17). Moreover, Satan is depicted as a highly allegorical figure: he is described as having three heads (Cantos 31-34) and can be seen as an infernal parallel of the Holy Trinity. Rudd notes that some hold that the chief qualities associated with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit are negatively reflected in the colours of Satan’s three faces.

There are, moreover, depictions of the Trinity in William Langland’s Catholic poem *Piers Plowman*, such as in the form of the Tree of Charity and the three piles that support it: ‘the
Trinity it meneth’ says the narrator (Fletcher, 343), who also remarks on the Trinity at other points (like X: 53). Elsewhere, Ecclesia (the eternal Church) warns one be wary of the body’s desires and, as one critic points out (‘William Langland Poetry Foundation’), the body is taught by the World, the Flesh and the Fiend, a ‘familiar anti-Trinity’ from the medieval period onwards, mentioned above, which we shall also see in other texts. By contrast, the soul is taught by the divine church and guided towards moderation by Reason (see, for instance, I:54). There are other positive threes such as Dowel (do well), Dobet (do better) and Dobest (do best) (see, for example, VIII: 76-9).

In his *Mirour de l’Ommme*, meanwhile, John Gower allegorically sets up a series of oppositions. There are two parallel narratives, one accounting for the origin of the sins and the other the origin of the virtues and the oppositions are between Lucifer and God, between the World and Heaven, and between the Flesh and the Soul (Nicholson, 4). The alliance between the infernal version of the Holy Trinity of the World, the Flesh and the Devil in the struggle for the soul permeates the work (4).

Geoffrey Chaucer’s *The Canterbury Tales* has been commonly read as an allegory, where the pilgrims *en route* to visit the shrine of St Thomas Becket in Canterbury symbolise the journey to Heaven with some pilgrims falling way short of this goal. The structure resembles the collection of narratives in Giovanni Boccaccio’s *The Decameron*, while pilgrimage towards God was a common medieval notion. A few of the individual pilgrims’ tales, such as *The Nun’s Priest’s Tale*, have also been read as allegories. In *The Pardoner’s Tale* we find a trio. Here the sinful Pardoner presents a narrative of three men who seek to kill Death and are informed by an old man that they will find him under a nearby tree. There they discover a hoard of treasure and murder each other out of greed. An unnamed critic (in ‘The Pardoner and the Word of Death’) writes that ‘The revellers, who number three probably in deliberate mockery of the Holy Trinity, are a drastically carnal version of the Triune Lord, and they are hardly likely to equal His victory in the struggle with Death. Indeed, they become the victims of Death instead of the victors’, a point raised by Michael Delahoyde when he asks: ‘Do we have a perverse Trinity in the three revellers?’

The ‘pilgrim Chaucer’ s *Tale of Melibee* is also to a degree allegorical and returns to presenting the infernal trio of the World, the Flesh and the Devil. This tale draws on the common notion of the castle as the body and the dwelling of the soul which is penetrated by sin, also seen in *Piers Plowman*. Melibee, who gives himself up to pleasure, finds that his three foes, the world, the flesh, and the fiend, have broken into his house and beaten his wife Prudence and inflicted five mortal wounds on his daughter Sophia, corresponding to the five senses. However, the allegory in this case has been described by many critics as ‘imperfect’ since it treats the assault on Melibee’s house as though it were committed by an external force rather than it just being symbolic of one’s
sin and the remainder of the tale involves the working out of the medieval concepts of justice and mercy.

Furthermore, as Charlotte Cornalijn Noelle Stam points out, each of the Catholic medieval morality plays presents an anti-Trinity where the traditional three enemies of Mankind are the World, the Flesh and the Devil (6). Stam points to David Klauser who notes that the idea of an evil parallel to the Trinity was widespread and may have derived from the Meditations that circulated in the thirteenth century (6). In The Castle of Perseverance, where the familiar medieval image of the castle appears, each of the three, the World, the Flesh and the Devil has a further three children: the Devil is referred to as Belial from 2 Corinthians 2:16 and his children are Pride, Envy and Wrath; the World’s children are Pleasure, Boy and Folly; and the Flesh’s children are Gluttony, Lechery and Sloth (6). In Mankind, meanwhile, the anti-Trinity was signalled by Newguise, Nowadays and Nought, representative of the World, and the Devil was symbolised by Titivillus (6). However, the flesh was not presented as an allegorical figure but in general as ‘the unclean carnal desire’ (6). Wisdom also mentioned the three traditional figures (6). Here, the three mights of Mankind are the Mind which leads to Pride; Understanding, leading to Avarice or Covetousness; and the Will which results in Lechery (6).

Edmund Spenser also depicts infernal allegorical trios in The Faerie Queene, a protestant epic modelled on the Italian Renaissance writers Ariosto and Tasso. Patrick Cullen argues that the common infernal triad of the Flesh, the World and the Devil is the major structural motif for Book I on Holiness (where Red Cross must learn to shun Duessa who stands for the Flesh, Lucifera who stands for the World and Orgoglio who stands for the Devil) and features in the Cave of Mammon and Bower of Bliss episodes of Book II on Temperance. Cullen points out the similarities of Book I with the allegorical works of Guillaume de Deguileville (The Pilgrimage of the Life of Man), John Lydgate (The Assembly of Gods), Stephen Hawes (The Example of Virtue and The Pastime of Pleasure) and Jean Cartigny (The Wandering Knight) which feature pilgrims tempted by the World, the Flesh and the Devil (4-17). In Book V of The Faerie Queene, meanwhile, Gerionio is actually a three-personed tyrannical giant, with ‘three bodies in one wast empight,/And th’armes and legs of three’ (X: 8). Kenneth Borris argues that as his father was the mythic three-headed Geryon, Gerionio’s triple nature has been equated with the three main kingdoms combined in Spain but for sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English protestants would have allegorically represented what they saw as the anti-Christian triple-crowned papacy, as seen in an engraving of the period and later in a Milton sonnet, as well as constituting an anti-Trinity (37). In Book VI, moreover, in this case, the symbolically named trio of Despetto (spite), Defetto (deception) and Decetto (an offence) work together nastily and summon the evil Blatant Beast, representative of the Devil: ‘of them all…/Three mightie enemies did him [Timias] most despight,/Three mightie ones, and cruell minded eeke’, ‘The Blatant Beast the fittest meanes they found,/To work his vtter shame, and thoroughly him confound’ (V: 14).

John Milton also experimented with allegory in his seventeenth-century protestant epic Paradise Lost. As Cullen argues, in Hell, the infernal council of Moloch, Belial and Mammon allegorically stand for the Devil, the Flesh and the World and are self-tempters presenting a reflection of Adam’s temptation in Eden and Christ’s in the wilderness of Paradise Regained (99, 103) and indeed Samson’s facing Manoa, Dalila and Harapha in Samson Agonistes (193). Cullen points out that while the proposals of Moloch, Belial and Mammon are rejected in favour of Satan’s plan to subvert Eden, the sins they embody are not and reappear in Satan’s scheme in
Moreover, two is the number of duplicity and so it is apt that in Book II of *Paradise Lost* Milton presents the infernal trio of Satan, Sin and Death. This trio can be read in relation to the Holy Trinity of God, Christ and the Holy Ghost, with God and Christ appropriately described in Book III of the epic (‘on his right/The radiant image of his glory sat,/His only Son’ [l. 62-64]). Satan, Sin and Death are allegorically depicted as a family but this is a perverted family and Satan engages in an incestuous sexual relationship with his daughter Sin, who arose from his mind, which leads to the birth of Death (‘Out of thy head I sprung’ [l. 758], ‘such joy thou took’st/With me in secret, that my womb conceived/A growing burden’ [l. 765-67], ‘my womb/Pregnant by thee’ [l. 778-79], ‘At last this odious offspring.../breaking violent way/Tore through my entrails’ [l. 781-83]). In turn, Death rapes Sin. Whereas the Holy Trinity reside in Heaven, Satan, Sin and Death occupy a threshold space between Hell and Earth. In the Garden of Eden, where all is in flux, Satan’s temptation of Eve and her disobedience of God’s command that she not eat from the Forbidden Tree of Knowledge (see Book IX) literally brings sin and death into the world, as represented allegorically, meaning that the pair can pass the threshold to the upper world.

A.D. Nuttall has written a book *The Alternative Trinity: Gnostic Heresy in Marlowe, Milton, and Blake*. However, in this book, Nuttall does not see there as having been an infernal trio in Christopher Marlowe’s earlier play *Doctor Faustus*. Nuttall does comment on how William Blake read Milton’s Trinity of God, Christ and the Holy Ghost as an infernal trio. But the discussion concerns how Blake read the original Trinity as being where God was a tyrant opposed by Christ (4, 15) rather than Blake paralleling the original trio with his own infernal Trinity. In Blake’s *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* there is the famous line that Milton was of the Devil’s party ‘without knowing it’, an idea explored in Blake’s poem *Milton* (234), and the inversion of good and evil is also evident where, for Blake, energy, typically called evil, is really the supreme good, and rational passivity, commonly labelled virtuous, is really evil (224). According to Nuttall, another Romantic, Percy Bysshe Shelley, like Blake, attacked established religion and thought the Devil in *Paradise Lost* far superior to God (252). In *Prometheus Unbound*, Shelley, furthermore, saw a separation between Son and Father and likened Christ, as a martyr of liberty, to the hero Satan (252).

While there is evidently a wide tradition of Christian allegories depicting the Holy Trinity and infernal trios, however, there are also Buddhist allegories, which are pertinent to *Doctor Who*. Texts were sometimes intended as allegories by their authors and sometimes read as allegorical whether intended as such or not. These texts are numerous, can also feature interpretative names, and are associated with different Buddhist schools.
Allegory in *Doctor Who*

A variety of non-religious allegories have been presented in *Doctor Who*, largely during Jon Pertwee’s time as the Doctor when the series was produced by Barry Letts and script-edited by Terrance Dicks. These included the United Kingdom’s entry into the EEC in *The Curse of Peladon* (1972) and the effect of big industries on the environment in Robert Sloman’s *The Green Death* (1973). Some narratives featured names as interpretative markers. To give a few examples: the character ‘Grun’ in Brian Hayles’s first *Peladon* story calls to mind the idea of ‘grunting’, symbolising lack of communication in talks to enter the Galactic Federation, and by extension worries about joining the EEC. Much further back in *Doctor Who*’s history, Terry Nation’s *The Daleks* (1963–64) is set on ‘Skaro’ where an atomic war has left the planet scarred. Similarly, Nation’s *Death to the Daleks* (1974) featured a race known as ‘Exxilons’ who were exiled from the body politic as impure, as was the Muto ‘Sevrin’ (the word suggesting ‘to sever’) in the following season’s *Genesis of the Daleks* (1975) (see Bignell and O’Day, 148). These are allegories of Nazi Germany’s attempts at purification. Allegory was also evident in Nation’s other programme *Blake’s 7*. Interpretive markers were additionally present in a vast array of other *Doctor Who* stories.

*Doctor Who* features religious allegories in addition to narratives that merely allude to Christianity. For example, Robert Holmes’s *The Ark in Space* (1975) plays on the Old Testament account of Noah’s Ark. While the Biblical figure of Noah had been instructed by God to build an Ark to escape a flood along with an assortment of different creatures, in Holmes’s narrative, in the far future representative humans are sent to a space ark to escape the solar flares which ravaged the Earth and are put into a deep sleep. The commander is nicknamed ‘Noah’ playing on the Biblical figure. Bob Baker’s *Nightmare of Eden* (1979), meanwhile, concerns the Mandrels from the planet Eden being an addictive and harmful drug. Anything but a paradise is presented. David Layton argued that the series celebrates humanism.

Following the Doctor’s visit to Tibet in Mervyn Haisman and Henry Lincoln’s *The Abominable Snowmen* (1967), Robert Sloman’s *Planet of the Spiders* (1974) is laden with Buddhist allegorical meaning. K’anpo Rimpoche is an allegorical figure standing for the Guru Rimpoche, also known as Padmasambhava, the teacher who brought Vajrayana Buddhism to Tibet and its neighbouring countries (Bryher, 64). The narrative’s Buddhist ideas include a group of men at a meditation centre gathered around a mandala on the floor which is a figurative picture of the world and the divine powers acting upon it, with the spiders invading this sacred space (56); the men chanting the mantra ‘om mane padme hum’ which is a Sanskrit phrase interpreted as a practice by which a person may transform an impure body, speech and mind into the pure body,
speech and mind of a Buddha, and their humming ‘om’ as in a Buddhist prayer (56); one’s hunger for knowledge and experience allegorically having devastating consequences (65) and the representation in the Doctor’s regeneration of the old man facing his fears and dying and becoming a new man (58).

Christopher Bailey’s Doctor Who stories are also Buddhist allegories. John Tulloch and Manuel Alvarado not only point out the parallels between Bailey’s Kinda (1982) and Ursula K. Le Guin’s novel The Word for World Is Forest (1972) where colonists invade the land of natives, but they were also the first to observe that in Kinda names were ‘interpretative markers’ of Buddhism (270-1). So, for example, ‘Mara’ refers to temptation, and ‘Dukkha’ stands for suffering, referring to the world’s sickness, cured by ‘jhana’ meaning meditation. The old couple playing chess are ‘Anatta’ and ‘Annica’ who, along with Dukkha, represent the three stages of existence in Buddhism. ‘Annica’, for instance, refers to the impermanence of man, while ‘Anatta’ refers to the denial of an eternal soul created by a God. ‘Panna’, meanwhile, represents intuitive wisdom and sees the nature of reality as transient. She gives birth to ‘Karuna’, standing for active compassion for all those who are trapped in the ignorance of the material world. Panna and Karuna are doubles: they are separated into two characters but are one. The Buddhist allegory in this narrative is Christianised where the Mara appears as a snake invading Paradise, just as Satan took on the shape of a snake in Eden.

Bailey’s sequel Snakedance (1983) is also a Buddhist allegory. The name of the planet ‘Manussa’ signifies the Buddhist notion of being in the humanoid realm, while the name Tanha suggests thirst (see Cook). Renunciation of craving is key to Buddhism and the Manussans thirst after things: Lady Tanha thirsts after a meaningful relationship with her son, Lon, who is constantly bored and takes an interest in the legend of the Mara to occupy himself; Ambril, the academic historian, craves after material objects of exquisite art; and the Showman and Fortune Teller, who work in a bazaar, reminiscent of the Far East, crave material riches (see Brown). There is also the headpiece of the Six Faces of Delusion which appears to be composed of only five faces but which the Doctor has Ambril try on, pointing out, to Ambril’s fury, that the sixth face is the wearer’s own. This signifies the delusion that the Manussans are under in their thirst for material things. The Doctor also tells Nyssa that the Mara was something the Manussans ‘blindly’ brought into existence and there is then a cross-cut to Ambril wearing a blindfold as he was led to relics from the past. The literal blindfold signifies the way Ambril is symbolically blinded by thirsting after the honour of discovering these relics and is hence allegorical. The Mara itself was created through the hatred and greed inside a person being transformed into physical matter and is therefore also allegorical; for example, the Showman states that he desired to be the one with his hand stretched out waiting to be paid and stretching one’s arm out is connected with letting the Mara enter one. By contrast, Dojjen lives on nuts and berries and wants for nothing, undergoing the snakedance of purifying the mind. Buddhism is Christianised since the snake-mouth cave reminds one of Hell Mouth.
Barbara Clegg’s *Enlightenment* (1983) can be read as a Christian allegory. The narrative concerns a spaceship race and steering a ship was commonly associated with following a spiritual path to Heaven or being wrecked (see, for instance, seventeenth-century emblem books, the avoidance of being shipwrecked earlier towards the end of Book II of *The Faerie Queene* and the inversion of this in Satan’s journey in Book II of *Paradise Lost*, l. 927-28, 940-42, 1010-11, 1040-44). *Enlightenment* concerns the battle for the Doctor’s companion Turlough’s soul. The character names are symbolic: ‘Striker’ refers to one who, in football, scores goals and here he is out to win a race; the name ‘Marriner’ alludes to a mariner, a person who directs or assists with the navigation of a ship; and the name ‘Wrack’ can be read as a play on the word ‘wreck’ which is important since, although her ship wins the race, by aligning himself with her, Turlough is on the verge of being spiritually shipwrecked. At the end of the narrative, the Black and White Guardians appear, with a crow and a dove on their headpieces respectively, signifying that one represents the Devil and the other the Christian God. Turlough must make the choice of whether to sacrifice the Doctor to the Black Guardian and take a jewel or not and, literally and symbolically standing on the threshold between the two Guardians, he chooses good and casts the jewel into the Black Guardian who bursts into flames in a Satanic manner. We are told that enlightenment was the choice and as Milton stated in *Areopegitica* ‘that which purifies us is trial, and trial is by what is contrary’; so Turlough must know evil in order to choose good. So Turlough avoids being shipwrecked. Francis Bridger has noted that consistency of humanism is questionable as evident here.

Trios are present in a number of *Doctor Who* stories, such as briefly at the beginning of *The Curse of Peladon* and in Robert Holmes’s *Carnival of Monsters* (1973). In Andrew Smith’s *Full Circle* (1980), meanwhile, the Starliner is ruled by a trio of different Deciders who have evolved from Marshmen as opposed to being a Christian Trinity; while Terrance Dicks presents the Three Who Rule in *State of Decay* (1980), a secular story of vampirism where there is an infernal version of the Holy Trinity, as with the three witches in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*. Here, the medieval-like populace has been kept in a primitive state and must rediscover science. Terence Dudley’s *Four to Doomsday* (1982) is allegorical and is also a secular text returning to the programme’s humanist roots. Here an infernal trio is presented which reminds us of the earlier texts. This is interesting since the narrative has, to date, been read as containing fours: The Doctor and his companions make up four, the spaceship on which the TARDIS lands, is four days away from Earth; and the spaceship contains four different peoples taken from different periods of Earth’s history. Yet in the throne room, Monarch, meaning ruler, sits at the centre while Enlightenment and Persuasion sit on his left and right. Both are allegorical ministers standing for the aspects that Monarch intends to
bring in conquering Earth. Bigon reveals that Monarch seeks a rendezvous with himself in the past as he believes that he is God, which emphasises this trio as a reversal of the Holy Trinity.

**Shedding Light**

Regardless of Marc Platt’s intent, *Ghost Light* can be read allegorically in the tradition of the stories mentioned above and especially *Four to Doomsday*. Whereas previous writers presented infernal allegorical trios, and while Dudley presents an infernal trio in *Four to Doomsday*, in *Ghost Light* there is an allegorical trio relating to evolution, in the humanist tradition. The theme of evolution had previously appeared in Bob Baker and Dave Martin’s *The Mutants* (1972) and, as noted above, in Smith’s *Full Circle*. Families are important in *Ghost Light* (Mrs Pritchard turns out to be Gwendoline’s mother and Gwendoline refers to Uncle Josiah) but there are also allegorical relationships. This allegorical trio consists of Light, Control and Josiah.

Naming is important here, as with the dualism in the title of the house Gabriel Chase where Gabriel refers to an angel and Chase to a game preserve (see Barnes, 27) and is also the name of the antagonist in *The Seeds of Doom* (1976). Similarly, the name Nimrod is not only an allusion to the Old Testament hunter or to the builder of the Tower of Babel, but was the nickname given to the game hunter Frederick Courteney Selous (see Taylor) upon whom the explorer Redvers Fenn-Cooper was based. Light seeks to possess Control: he aims to catalogue all life and stands opposed to evolution and change to his database. On Earth, Light has taken the form of an angel, resembling not as first planned a Blake painting but rather the work of nineteenth-century painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti (Barnes, 31). Light is worshipped as ‘the burning one’ by Nimrod and kept in a sacred temple. Meanwhile, Josiah seeks to be free from Control who herself cannot be contained: she learns to speak, she cannot be kept locked up, and she becomes a lady as did Eliza Doolittle in George Bernard Shaw’s early twentieth-century play *Pygmalion* (31). We are told by the Doctor that ‘the survey got out of Control’ and that ‘the survey is Josiah’. Control states that Josiah is a ‘big man now. Leaving Control behind’ and Josiah has evolved from a husk into a Victorian gentleman. Furthermore, looking at an insect, the Doctor says that ‘things are getting out of control’; and Ace later remarks that there is ‘no sign of Control’ and that it ‘feels like this whole place is coming alive’. Josiah advocates Charles Darwin’s theories of evolution and the Reverend Ernest Matthews sees Josiah turning into a gruesome creature as divine retribution for his unholy theories. This could also be seen as an example of physiognomy where outward ugliness reflects moral corruption (as was the case with Chaucer’s Summoner who is covered with ‘sauccefelem’ and has ‘whelkes white’ and ‘knobbes sittinge on his chekes’ [l. 625, 632-33]). However, it is, in fact, neither, but a return to a prior evolutionary stage and the reverend also reverts back into the form
of an ape. At the narrative’s end, Control takes possession of Josiah (as Ace says they have ‘swapped over’) but it is questionable how long he can be contained.

Reading *Ghost Light* allegorically, then, places it within a lineage of written texts from medieval times, through the Renaissance and Restoration up to the present day and within a style adopted by previous writers for *Doctor Who*. The narrative can be read as an allegory about evolution. There are further readings that can be made of *Ghost Light*, however. For instance, it can be read as a narrative about Ace’s lack of control and her maturing. From early on, towards the end of the first episode, we learn that Gabriel Chase is located in Perivale, Ace’s home, and that Ace trespassed into the house, a hundred years in the future, before the Doctor brought Ace to the house in the late nineteenth century since as he puts it: ‘We all have a universe of our own terrors to face.’ At the point in the third episode at dinner where Control lacks control and threatens to burn the house down, Ace stops her, declaring that was what she did in the future, thereby finally taking control of the situation. In this respect, Ace and Control can be seen as doubles lacking and seizing control. This can also be seen as a reference to Charlotte Bronte’s *Jane Eyre* (1847) where Bertha Mason burns Rochester’s house down, though within *Doctor Who*, *Black Orchid* (1982), where George Cranleigh falls from the roof of a burning building, provides a more obvious parallel. *Ghost Light* can also be read as a narrative of allusions such as to the work of Lewis Carroll and Henry James (see Barnes).

*Ghost Light* is filled with meaning, perhaps too much for transmission on a weekday early evening, but these can be teased out so the mysterious case of Gabriel Chase is at last partially solved and that the narrative, unlike the creatures in the house, can be, to a degree, fixed.

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A Dalek offers the Doctor (Jodie Whittaker fan Colin Baker) a spade, so he can help with their nefarious plan to dig a hole to the Earth’s core. Picture by Adam Kendrick from Bedford CharityCon 4