

THE TIDES OF TIME

Number 42
Michaelmas 2018



Contents

4	The Time of Doctor Puppet: interview with Alisa Stern	JAMES ASHWORTH
9	At Last, the Universe is Calling	GEORGIA HARPER
11	“I Can Hear the Sound of Empires Toppling”: Deafness and <i>Doctor Who</i>	SAM SHEPPARD
14	Summer of ‘65	ADAM KENDRICK
17	The Barbara Wright Stuff	SOPHIE ILES
19	Tonight, I should liveblog...	GEORGIA HARPER
22	Love Letters to Doctor Who: the 2018 Target novelizations	ROGAN CLARK
27	Top or Flop? <i>Kill the Moon</i>	JAMES ASHWORTH, WILLIAM SHAW AND SAM SHEPPARD
32	Haiku for <i>Kill the Moon</i>	WILLIAM SHAW
33	Limerick for <i>Kill the Moon</i>	JAMES ASHWORTH
34	Utopia 2018 reports	JAMES ASHWORTH
40	Past and present mixed up: <i>The Time Warrior</i>	MATTHEW KILBURN
46	Doctors Assemble: Marvel Comics and <i>Doctor Who</i>	JAMES ASHWORTH
50	The Fan Show: Peter Capaldi at LFCC 2018	IAN BAYLEY
51	Empty Pockets, Empty Shelves	MATTHEW KILBURN
52	Blind drunk at Sainsbury’s: Big Finish’s <i>Exile</i>	JAMES ASHWORTH
54	Fiction: A Stone’s Throw, Part Four	JOHN SALWAY
60	This Mid Curiosity: Time And Relative Dimensions In Shitposting	WILLIAM SHAW

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Thanks to **Alisa Stern** and **Sophie Iles**

This issue was largely typeset in Minion Pro and Myriad Pro by Adobe; members of the Alegreya family, designed by Juan Pablo del Peral; members of the Saira family by Omnibus Type; with Arial Rounded MT Bold, Baskerville, Bauhaus 93, and Gotham Narrow Black.

TIDES OF TIME number 42 for Michaelmas Term 2018 was published in November 2018 by the Oxford Doctor Who Society, a registered student club of the University of Oxford. Printed by the Oxford Print Studio, Estates Services, University of Oxford. Distributed online at oxforddoctorwho-tidesoftime.blog.

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What we did on our holidays

SO HERE, AT THE END OF NOVEMBER, AS MICHAELMAS TERM 2018 FINISHES, IS THE LATEST ISSUE OF *THE TIDES OF TIME*. Despite the autumnal climate, a lot of this issue was written in the summer and so recalls warmer and sunnier days spent... indoors at conventions meeting *Doctor Who* personalities. Consequently for the majority of articles the era of the Thirteenth Doctor was still on the horizon or has just dawned, though you will find references to *Demons of the Punjab* and *Kerblam!* within. The next issue should appear before Easter and will include lots of Thirteenth Doctor content including reviews, reaction and ratings of Series Eleven and the New Year's Day Special.

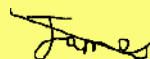
One of the highlights of my summer, which I haven't been able for one reason or another to work into a full article, was my expedition to Aldbourne, south-east of Swindon, to take DePaul University's *Doctor Who* Study Abroad group around locations for *The Dæmons*, at the invitation of Paul Booth, associate professor of digital communication and media arts at DePaul and a leading *Doctor Who* scholar. Joined by Katrin and Ian, we investigated and ate at the pub which provided the exteriors for Devil's End hostelry the Cloven Hoof, explored St Mary's Church which has survived being blown up at the end of the story remarkably well (the vicar joined us just as I was explaining how at one stage in the story's development Jo Grant would have been offered for sacrifice on an altar 'just like this one' in a studio recreation of the church interior, rather than in a deChristianized 'cavern') and walked in the rain up to the Devil's Hump itself, the first of the Four Barrows, past a tree on which someone had carved 'Bok Lives!' It might have been made in 1971 but *The Dæmons* seems to be more part of Aldbourne life than ever.

Developments relating to *Tides* include the rethinking of the website. I wanted to refresh the site in the run-up to the launch of Series Eleven and make it easier for visitors to access the content, with the option of publishing web-first articles as blog posts. A change of WordPress theme, the removal of the fixed front page and the addition of new logos - including Francis's new logo for the society - have contributed towards increased visitor numbers, but the greatest boost has come from the new series reviews written by Victoria Walker. When I took out a subscription for the site, to remove the various inappropriate adverts, I also took up a new web address so at least until next November you can find *The Tides of Time* online at oxforddoctorwho-tidesoftime.blog.



IT'S BEEN A LONG ROAD TO THIS ISSUE, WITH A BIG CHUNK OF PREPARATIONS BEGINNING WHEN I WASN'T EVEN IN THE COUNTRY! As such, it's worth noting that this term, I haven't been able to give *Tides* the fullest of my attention. While I did quite a bit of the easy commissioning stuff, it was my co-editor who has done the lion's share of the formatting, so I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Matthew for all the work he's done while I've been editing *The OxStu*.

That aside, I'm pleased to let you know that we are again bringing you the heady mix of opinion, analysis, fiction and reviews that make *Tides* what it is! This time, we can also bring you an interview with Alisa Stern and a guest contribution from Sophie Iles, reflections on the madness that was classic *Who* on Twitch, a look at the world of *Doctor Who* memes and an exclusive insight into Matthew's new Black Archive book!



That's all from us for now, so see you again soon!

The Time of Doctor Puppet

James Ashworth talks to the creator of *Doctor Puppet*, Alisa Stern

IN OCTOBER THIS YEAR, I AND MANY OTHERS WERE OVERJOYED TO SEE A BOLD REINTERPRETATION OF THE DOCTOR HIT OUR SCREENS. I am of course talking about the finale of the *Doctor Puppet* saga. The series was created by Alisa Stern, who in April 2012 started a Tumblr – doctorpuppet.tumblr.com – featuring the Doctor in his then-contemporary eleventh incarnation. Gathering fans, *Doctor Puppet* began travelling, first to other cities like Philadelphia and London, before a formative trip into the medium of animation, beginning with *How the Doctor Puppet Saved Christmas*. This has now developed into a full blown eight-part series, featuring puppet versions of all the Doctors up to Twelve, along with Christmas specials. I managed to interview Alisa to discuss the creation of the show, Jodie Whittaker, and what comes next.

The Advent of Doctor Puppet

Out of all the many animation methods, why did she choose to use puppets? Why didn't she choose to use a more conventional method, such as the various animations that have been used to recreate missing episodes, most recently *Shada*? Alisa points out that she loves “all kinds of animation - hand drawn, computer, stop motion puppets.” However, it is the latter that comes out on top, with Alisa having “a special fondness for puppets ever since I saw *The Nightmare Before Christmas* and *Wallace & Gromit*. I just love making tiny things, especially characters.”

Having successfully tracked down the origin of one half of the name, I moved on to the other. What made her interested in *Doctor Who*? It turns out that the interest in animation itself was key. “I



got into *Doctor Who* through one of my first animation jobs... working on a Nick Jr. show [*Wonder Pets*] and a lot of coworkers were watching it. They talked about *Doctor Who* all the time, and that enticed me to watch too.” Society members may recognize this method of recruitment from their time with us! Getting back to Alisa, this hook was enough to get her 2009 self

“through all the previous series of New *Who* in anticipation of Matt starting as the Doctor. By the time he did, I was hooked!”

The final step must therefore be their synthesis into *Doctor Puppet* itself – one could almost say, a hybrid. While perhaps not “destined to conquer Gallifrey and stand in its ruins”, destiny seems to have had some sort of a role in its creation. Alisa admits that after really getting “into *Doctor Who*, they just sort of came together by accident. I needed to make a puppet as a demonstration for a stop motion animation class I was teaching, and thought the Eleventh Doctor would be a fun challenge.”

The Story

As anyone with something to be proud of knows, it’s then time to show it to everyone else. “Once I had the puppet, I started taking photos of him and posting them on Tumblr. [This] got me some attention, and I ended up making a short animated Christmas special (*How the Doctor Puppet Saved Christmas*) for my newfound audience.” A further positive response led to Alisa raising her ambitions, writing the “outline for what would become the eight-part story about the Eleventh Doctor being chased by a mysterious light.” Having made the previous short within her own apartment, it was time to reach out for others, getting “other animators and artists involved to help, because the story got too big for me to make on my own.”

This was also a time before both the Twelfth Doctor and the War Doctor were introduced, and as such the original ending was different to its eventual conclusion. As Alisa points out, it still had the “Doctor’s future self meddling in his past, but for a very simple reason - to gather all eleven Doctors and celebrate *Doctor Who*’s fiftieth anniversary together.” In order to do this, the Doctor needed to trick “himself into thinking something malicious [was] happening”, with the appearance of the Master “always meant to be a decoy in the Doctor’s head.” But with delays on episodes 6 and 7 and with “higher emotional stakes than planned... [it] made the original ending feel like a letdown that was also several years too late. So I decided to throw it out and start over. With help from my collaborators, we turned a sweet and simple ending into the ten-minute epic that is Episode 8. I was even surprised by how well it worked out!”

The Making of the Doctors Puppet

Behind the scenes, each puppet itself is a miniature work of art. How is it that they are created? As you might expect, it’s quite an involved process. Alisa explains:

“First, I do some sketches to figure out the puppet’s likeness... try[ing] to keep it as simple as possible.” She then uses these to “sculpt the head from polymer clay and hand paint it. The mouth is a sticker and the only thing on the face that actually moves. When we animate, we swap out the stickers to change the expression.” I was quite surprised that nothing else moved, given how expressive the puppets can be, but it just goes to show how far body language can go! To complete the head, the final thing left is the wig. It’s “made of artificial (or sometimes human) hair I buy from a beauty supply shop. I style the wig with hair spray just like a full-size wig.”

Next up comes the body. “The armature (basically, the skeleton) is made of twisted aluminum wire covered with foam and medical tape to give the body shape. The hands are wire dipped in latex rubber to make them look like skin.” “The hands themselves are particularly fiddly”, and on “the earlier puppets - the hands are big and lumpy!” While the “process hasn’t changed much over time”, she has got “much better at making the hands.”

Finally, the Doctor’s friend Shakespeare said that “clothes maketh the man”. In this case, the clothes are handsewn by either Alisa or her “talented” friend, Amanda, capping off the process to



give a particularly intricate result. In all, this takes around a week. After all the many times she has gone through the process to create her army of puppets, is there a favourite? She admits, like selecting a favourite child, that “it’s tough to choose...,” yet there is a winner. This honour goes to the puppet of the Twelfth Doctor, not just because she’s “very pleased with how he came out”, but “more importantly though, we’ve had the most adventures together! We’ve been to England, Wales, France, Canada, California... and all over New York City of course.” It was also “really special” when “Peter Capaldi voiced the puppet for a clip [for] *Earth Conquest*, the Series Eight promotional tour and documentary. She’s hopeful for the future as well. “In a few years, I hope to feel the same way about my Thirteenth Doctor!”

The other special part of *Doctor Puppet* is the music. “Through a serendipitous post on Tumblr,” Alisa found composer Scott

Ampleford,” all the way “back when [she] was working on *How the Doctor Puppet Saved Christmas*.” From then on, “he’s been an integral part of the production”. Scott “also happens to actually be from England, so I made him the narrator as well.” One of the lovely features of *Doctor Puppet* is the way that the music of each episode is in tune with eras of the Doctors within it, and this was one of Scott’s ideas, something that has also led to multiple versions of the *Doctor Puppet* theme. Starting as orchestral, the soundtrack becomes noticeably more 80s in *Baker’s Eleven*, featuring the Fifth, Sixth and Seventh Doctors as well as including original songs such as the delightfully named *Shada* by The Pharos Project.

By Episode 7, Scott had assembled the *Doctor Puppet* Radiophonic Workshop in tribute to the eras of the First and Second Doctors. “For Episode 8, Scott wanted the score to be the biggest yet, and recorded with as many live players as possible. I flew to England to watch the recording sessions, done over two days, in Newcastle and Wells-next-the-sea in Norfolk.” Together, the *Doctor Puppet* Ad-Hoc Orchestra bring a triumphant conclusion to the series. Alisa is “so proud of the music Scott’s made for *Doctor Puppet*,” and thinks that “it elevates the series.”

Worlds Out There

Having looked at the past and present, what’s next for *Doctor Puppet*? It seems that it’s *Survival* again, at least for now. “The *Doctor Puppet* finale is the last animated episode we have planned. It just takes too long to make them, and this feels like the right place to stop. However, *Doctor Puppet* isn’t completely done. I’ll use some of my extra time to take photos of the Thirteenth Doctor puppet, like I used to do with the Eleventh Doctor originally. Expect to see a lot of those on my social media accounts in the coming month!” Alisa is also “really excited” about one of her “puppet photo[s] appearing] as one of the variant covers of the Thirteenth Doctor’s first comic.”

Having achieved so much over the past six years, I asked Alisa what had been her favourite, and worst, moments of *Doctor Puppet*. As always, it’s the people who make moments special, especially “meeting fans in person.” Having just got back from New York Comic Con, where she “spent the weekend walking around while holding a puppet”, it means “so much when someone came up to me because they recognized the puppet. *Doctor Puppet* is mostly made by myself (or one of my collaborators) working alone in a dark room, so going somewhere else and discovering we have fans is just the best feeling in the world.”

As for the other side of things, anyone who has ever tried stop motion animation will know it can at times be a tedious, frustrating process. Alisa herself says that she loves “stop motion, but it is a constant struggle against things breaking and malfunctioning.” Like Murphy’s law, and perhaps a certain time and space machine, everything that can go wrong will go wrong. “The worst moment is every time something went wrong on set, because I am terrible at dealing with stressful situations.” Therefore, “every time a light bulb broke, a puppet armature snapped, a tripod leg gave out, my





camera overheated under the set lights, or a tie down wouldn't screw into a puppet's foot would tie for that terrible honor" of the worst moment.

I also asked her to look back on the *Doctor Puppet* finale, which was crowdfunded via Indiegogo and I myself was one of 392 who contributed a total of \$11,581 towards it. What did she think of it as a model for funding creative projects? "I think crowdfunding is a great model for many types of projects." It's "wonderful that it enables fans to connect directly and support something they really want to see get made," and "especially useful for filmmakers who already have a small audience from a previous project. Of course, it does have its downsides. As a creator, I found it stressful knowing I was on the hook and needed to deliver."

The *Doctor Puppet* finale was originally pencilled in for an Autumn 2016 release, but took longer to make than originally planned. "I felt awful having to tell my backers I wouldn't hit the estimated delivery date. I was honest, and they were mostly very supportive and understanding of how time-consuming *Doctor Puppet* is to make. To make up for the extra wait, I sent out a special in-progress video for backers to watch. In the end, I think everyone was pleased." If it's any consolation to Alisa, I certainly think it was worth the wait!

Moving away from *Doctor Puppet*, I asked what plans were afoot for future projects. It seems she already has quite a few ideas to be getting on with! "First, I really want to make a short stop motion music video with Scott Ampleford, the *Doctor Puppet* composer [and narrator]. I adore his non-*Doctor Puppet* music, and am excited to collaborate on something fresh together."

"Also, I've always been into zoology. I nearly went to university to study it, before I took a hard turn into art school." As someone who studies it, I can confidently say that a passion for zoology is hard to lose, and it's the same for Alisa, with many of her ideas for original films still "grounded in science." One such project is an "outline for a stop motion wildlife mockumentary that predates *Doctor Puppet* by several years, as well as a very rough draft of a horror short about an entomologist. That's about the furthest from *Doctor Puppet* I can get!"

Number Thirteen

Of course, the other bold interpretation of the Doctor that arrived this October was of course Jodie Whittaker and the Thirteenth Doctor. Speaking after the original broadcast of *The Ghost Machine*, Alisa said that "*Doctor Who* is fundamentally about change and reinvention, but this is an especially

big shift in the show. And I am here for it! Everything I've seen of Jodie so far is downright delightful; [she's] a ray of sunshine... and I'm really enjoying the dynamics of her three friends."

As for Chris Chibnall? He "really proved himself with *Broadchurch*," though she "was quite disappointed when Chibnall said the episodes would be stand-alone and there would be no series arc, as she's a big fan of that method of story-telling. But as River Song says, "The Doctor lies," and Alisa hopes this is the case with our new showrunner as well, especially after the recent "strong hint at a larger arc. Chibnall's already surprised me, and I'm now even more excited for what's to come."

So there you have it. While *Doctor Puppet* may be on hiatus for the foreseeable future, Alisa Stern has no plans of stopping yet! With a new series of *Doctor Who* and a newly freed-up schedule, Alisa has got plenty to look forward to, and we at *Tides* wish her the best of luck with her future plans.



At last, the universe is calling

Georgia Harper has made it through the darkest part of the night

29 September 2018

WITH *THE WOMAN WHO FELL TO EARTH* JUST OVER A WEEK AWAY AT THE TIME OF WRITING, A LOT'S HAPPENED SINCE THE PREVIOUS ISSUE OF *THE TIDES OF TIME*. The hype machine is in full force, with a constant stream of new clips, magazine covers and "spoiler-free" reviews which decidedly aren't (looking at you, *Radio Times*). And I'm wondering how I'm going to even make it through episode one without exploding with excitement.

While early indications are that the new series itself doesn't draw much attention to Whittaker being the first woman to play the Doctor, it's fair to say that the promotion sometimes has, most notably with the "*It's about time*" slogan and the specially-made video which features the Doctor shattering a literal glass ceiling. The wider media has certainly done so, and so have many of the fans – indeed, I'd started repeatedly captioning social media posts with "Jodie Whittaker is the Doctor and the world is a wonderful place" long before we knew anything at all about her character. This has led some to wonder why it's such a big deal, why we're celebrating the new lead before we've seen an episode, why we're reacting so – the horror! – emotionally. Why should it matter?



It matters because well over a year after Jodie Whittaker's new role was announced, some people are still bothering to actively click the angry reaction on every single post relating to Series Eleven. (You really have to admire their dedication to "not caring".) It matters because Series Eleven is happening anyway and those people, who tended to take over every single conversation about who the Doctor could be in future, now look a bit silly. It matters because the new Doctor, and therefore promotion of the new series and *Doctor Who* in general, just graced the cover of *Marie Claire* and nobody bat an eyelid. Someone who believed she couldn't do a

particular job simply because she is a woman is now doing it, so it's only natural that the half of the fandom who constantly find themselves in that position – and the vast majority of the fandom who know how pervasive and how unjust it is – would feel something stir when she points her new sonic screwdriver and says "*I'm the Doctor*" in the same way as her many predecessors.

In short, it matters because it doesn't matter.

Thankfully, we now have a lot more than that to go on too. The first full trailer, released back in July, emphasises change ("*New faces, new worlds, new times...*") and the music chosen for the more recent second trailer has the same effect. This theme of change has been reflected time and time again with a new cinematic aspect ratio, the apparent absence of well-known villains and the move to Sundays in the hope of a "*regular, earlier time slot*". We know a little more about each of the Doctor's new friends (I'm particularly excited to see a neurodivergent companion in Ryan Sinclair, assuming his dyspraxia is handled appropriately) and a first look at the new episode (at least for those of us who didn't watch the leak) provides a tiny glimpse of how they meet. That's before we consider the many colourful promotional pictures – they might not reveal much at first glance, but the TARDIS is conspicuously absent, and just what is with all those orange crystals?

The giddy excitement of a new Doctor is a familiar feeling, but for many, *this* new Doctor signals hope, progress, and things we never thought possible becoming a reality. It's a chance to start again, and – with apologies to Macklemore and Skylar Grey, and no apologies to anyone else – it feels glorious.

“I Can Hear the Sound of Empires Toppling”

Sam Sheppard on being deaf and a *Doctor Who* fan

“LIFE”, AS THE NEWLY-REGENERATED DOCTOR OBSERVED IN *THE POWER OF THE DALEKS*, “DEPENDS ON CHANGE AND RENEWAL”. *Doctor Who* itself has proven this, time and time again, and Series 11 is no exception. I’ve been reminded of that strange and exciting time when I, as a much younger fan, witnessed the handover from Russell T Davies to Steven Moffat; however, the latest series of *Doctor Who* has marked an even more striking transformation. Chris Chibnall’s *Doctor Who* feels like a very different show. What has gathered the most attention is, of course, the casting of Jodie Whittaker as the Doctor, but it’s worth noting that this series has broken new ground in other ways. In fact, it offers a timely reminder of the power of representation. It can be exciting and empowering to encounter characters whose journeys reflect your own, and there are many people for whom that experience is frustratingly rare. As a disabled person, I’m one of those people.

The Woman Who Fell to Earth introduced us to Ryan Sinclair (Tosin Cole), the first dyspraxic character in the show’s history, let alone companion. The episode clearly addressed Ryan’s dyspraxia – showing his difficulty with tasks such as riding a bike or climbing ladders – and this was appreciated. Browsing social media in the days after *The Woman Who Fell to Earth* was first broadcast, I encountered a range of responses which made it clear that Ryan’s difficulties in riding a bike resonated with dyspraxic and neurodivergent fans. I could certainly understand the excitement of those who identified with Ryan, for two reasons. Firstly, a few years ago, I was diagnosed with a slight form of dyspraxia: although I can ride a bike, dyspraxia has still affected my motor skills in certain areas. Secondly, the online response to Ryan reminded me of the way I felt in 2015, when *Under the Lake/Before the Flood* hit our screens.

It seems that *Under the Lake* and *Before the Flood* were not popular episodes, and I personally found them somewhat underwhelming. However, I can still appreciate that they gave us something very important: Cass, the first deaf character in the history of the show. I’ve been profoundly deaf since birth, and it’s difficult to deny that positive representation of deaf people in popular culture is inexcusably rare. Indeed, it’s often the case that deaf people are not treated with the respect which we deserve. Many refer to deafness as an “invisible” disability, meaning that a deaf person’s disability isn’t immediately apparent in the same way that, say, blindness or physical impairment are. As a consequence, deaf people often struggle with the problem of accessibility because they aren’t provided with the necessary accommodations. It’s also been noted that many people find it easier to joke about deafness than other disabilities. If you see a deaf character in popular culture, it’s likely to be an elderly person whose hearing impairment is played for laughs. Honestly, I’d struggle to come up with examples of deaf characters I actually found relatable (the one notable exception being David, Charles’ deaf brother in *Four Weddings and a Funeral*). Consequently, it was amazing to see a character like Cass in *Doctor Who*.

Cass is a deaf character who is presented as practical and competent. Her deafness doesn't prevent her from taking charge of the situation. Rather, she appears as an authority figure who is even able to stand up to the Doctor: "I can't force you to leave, so you can stay and do the whole cabin in the woods thing and get killed or drowned, if you want. But my first priority is to protect my crew." Nobody questions her reliance on British Sign Language (BSL) or her need for an interpreter. What's especially impressive is that Cass was played by Sophie Stone, a deaf actress (indeed, the first deaf actress to study at RADA). Writing in March 2005, shortly before *Doctor Who* returned to our screens, the disabled comedian Laurence Clark examined the treatment of disabled characters in classic *Who*. He brought up examples including Davros and Dr Judson, both played by able bodied actors. He ended the article by asking: "... wouldn't it be good to have some disabled actors playing actual disabled characters in the new series?" Ten years after Clark's article, *Doctor Who* offered Cass, a disabled character played by a disabled actor. This was, of course, a big step forward. *Doctor Who* gave me a deaf character in whom I could actually see myself.

Of course, the portrayal of Cass wasn't absolutely perfect. For one thing, I was slightly annoyed by the flippant way in which the Doctor declared he'd "deleted" his knowledge of BSL, as though it wasn't particularly important. More importantly, I was troubled by the final scenes, in which it's revealed that Lunn, the interpreter, is in love with Cass. The idea of a deaf person having a romantic relationship with their interpreter seems unprofessional and inappropriate to me, and – while I'm not really qualified to comment on this, personally – the revelation is arguably indicative of compulsory heterosexuality.

It's also worth noting that Cass is presented as a non-verbal character who relies exclusively on BSL. There's absolutely nothing wrong with this, of course; there are many non-verbal deaf people in real life. The problem, however, is that Cass is, to date, the only deaf character in *Doctor Who*. One character is not enough to represent an entire community (and the same can be said of any minority group). There is a lot of variation among deaf people, particularly in terms of our hearing levels and the accommodations which we require. Some deaf people use hearing aids or cochlear implants, and others do not; indeed, I believe Sophie Stone uses a hearing aid in real life, although she removed it for the filming. Some deaf people rely on sign language more than others; some, such as myself, will supplement sign language with speech. While Cass is a great character, I really wouldn't want an audience to think that all deaf people are like Cass.

In particular, I was concerned by the emphasis which the episodes placed on Cass' ability to lip-read. It's true that many people have praised the writing on the basis that Cass' deafness is incidental to the plot, but it remains the case that her lip-reading becomes something which is useful in advancing the plot. Certainly, Toby Whithouse admitted in an interview with *Entertainment Weekly* that the character was initially born out of necessity; he "needed a character who could lip read". Therefore, I can't help but worry that Whithouse's script reinforces the stereotypical perception that all deaf people are good at lip-reading. This is definitely not the case. Lip-reading is a very difficult skill to master, and I myself hardly ever use it. In fact, I'm often annoyed when people ask me whether I can lip read, because this creates (whether intentionally or not) an expectation that I'll carry out most or all of the hard work needed to maintain communication between myself and a non-deaf person.

Taking all this into account, it can be concluded that *Under the Lake/Before the Flood* offers a portrayal of a deaf character which is fairly strong, but still flawed. However, I can still appreciate the fact that Cass was included at all. Throughout my life, deafness has affected the way I consume media. When I was very young, for instance, I enjoyed watching *Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends*, and I think this was partly because it felt more accessible than other children's programmes. The stories were simple and easy to follow from the visuals alone, and the characters were represented by resin figurines or engines with static facial expressions – meaning that there were no lip movements to read. Even as I've grown up, deafness has continued to shape the way I consume and react to my favourite shows, including *Doctor Who*.

For instance, Big Finish's audio productions – which form a big part of the fandom experience for a lot of people – are completely inaccessible to me, excepting those stories for which I can obtain scripts. This can be difficult or expensive; for example, I was only able to obtain a script for *The Kingmaker* because I got lucky and happened to meet somebody who could put me directly in touch with the author, Nev Fountain. More significantly, I almost always need subtitles to watch videos, films and television shows. As a *Doctor Who* fan, I'm often unable to watch things like trailers, fan videos, or interviews because they aren't subtitled. In fact, this problem was one of the most important reasons why I became a fan to begin with.

I remember how, a long time ago (in 2007, I think), UKTV Gold were showing episodes of classic *Doctor Who*. I watched these with interest, and I can still remember seeing scenes like the Fourth Doctor trying to confuse the K1 Robot by putting his hat on it (*Robot*) or the android Sarah giving herself away by drinking ginger pop (*The Android Invasion*). However, the episodes were shown without subtitles and my mum had to offer a signed translation. I was interested enough in the episode that I asked for DVDs, so that I could watch classic Who with subtitles. This was probably my first major step towards becoming a fan, and it wasn't the first time deafness would have a unique impact on my fandom experience. When I first joined the Oxford Doctor Who Society in 2015, I was nervous about having to ask the society that they screen *Doctor Who* episodes with subtitles; hearing people often regard subtitles as a nuisance. However, the society was happy to comply, and I still remember the occasion when *Revelation of the Daleks* was shown in '80s week – the room burst out laughing when the subtitles labelled the voice of the Tranquil Repose computer as “SEXY COMPUTER VOICE”.

I would emphasise that my deafness is an integral part of my identity, and, in many ways, I value the relationship I've had with *Doctor Who*. That's largely why I felt so excited when Cass appeared on our screens, and I hope that Ryan will have the same impact on dyspraxic and neurodivergent people as Cass had on myself. Furthermore, I also hope that these characters will lead to the appearance of more disabled characters in *Doctor Who*. This is an area in which the show has historically been lacking. There have been instances of disabled actors, such as Nabil Shaban or Tim Barlow, playing non-disabled characters. Regrettably, *Doctor Who* has also followed mass media in associating disability with the evil and strange, marking it as something distinctively and worryingly “Other” (think of characters like Davros or John Lumic). It would be much appreciated if the show could override this trend and build on the precedent set by Cass or Ryan. Who knows – perhaps one day we could see a deaf companion?

Summer of '65

New love for old Time Lords and their friends thanks to



Explored by **Adam Kendrick**

Watcher Hey this zine is cool

Ladymemeful LONDON 1965

HarrySullifan COOOOOLLLL RET-

ROFANDOM BUT MODERN

Babscardy London 1965

Watcher OXFORD 1965

CaptainSorin OXFORD 1917

TOVARISH

DoneBKR Of course in the golden age of fanzines this would have been produced on a manual typewriter with Letraset

Babscardy GATEKEEPER

HarrySullifan IRRELEVANT

Pikachula I want Tegan's blouse

DoneBKR I have the original! John gave it to me. He was a really dear friend.

LeonSK JOHN WHO

CaterinaSforza BARROWMAN

ON TUESDAY 22 MAY, *DOCTOR WHO* FANS WORLDWIDE RECEIVED A SURPRISE WHICH FOR MANY WOULD DEFINE THEIR SUMMER OF 2018. Following on from hosting previous marathons for cult TV shows such as *The Joy of Painting*, *Power Rangers*, and *Yu-Gi-Oh!*, the live-streaming website Twitch announced that they would be broadcasting more than 125 classic *Doctor Who* serials over the course of June and July. Starting every weekday from 1900 GMT, a block of between two to five serials would be streamed non-stop and repeated three times in a row. For UK viewers, catching everything would require staying up ridiculously late and/or waking up early to catch the morning repeat. The inability to pause or rewind, as well as the requirement to tune in at specific times, reminded me of having to tune into UKTV Gold for the omnibus editions of serials, long before the technology for on-demand platforms such as Netflix or iPlayer had been developed.

While it would have been unfeasible to have expected every single serial of *Doctor Who* from 1963 to 1989, some omissions from the schedule were curious to say the least. Nearly every story unfortunate enough to have missing episodes was skipped over, which meant not only was William Hartnell's regeneration in *The Tenth Planet* not shown, but frustratingly neither was Patrick Troughton's introduction in *The Power of the Daleks*. The exception to this rule was *The Web of Fear*, which led to rumours that the misplaced Episode Three had finally been retrieved and would be broadcast once again for the first time in five decades (it hadn't). I believe that Twitch had directly negotiated a licensing deal with BBC Worldwide, who are responsible for selling the programme overseas, and ultimately felt that both telesnaps and animated reconstructions were unsuitable for syndication. This theory is substantiated by how some serials differed from the original broadcasts which are freely available on DVD. For example, Mary Whitehouse would be pleased that the infamous "drowning" cliffhanger from *The Deadly Assassin* had been reedited, while most of Series 22 was broken up into 25-minute episodes, resulting in the credits suddenly rolling mid-conversation or immediately after the Doctor leaving the room.

Strangely, *The Ice Warriors* was originally scheduled between *The Tomb of the Cybermen* and *The Enemy of the World*, but was quietly dropped once somebody realised that it wouldn't be otherwise possible to fit three run-throughs of *The Seeds of Death* and *The War Games* into twenty-four hours. Less explicable were the absences of *Planet of Fire* (at least until it was quickly added to the schedule one week beforehand) and all Dalek appearances not written by Terry Nation, including *The Five Doctors*. Presumably, permission to stream these serials had not been obtained from the Nation estate, robbing us of classics like *Remembrance of the Daleks*. Finally, and most confusingly, *Logopolis* was immediately followed with the pilot for the unsuccessful spin-off, *K9 and Company*.

Due to the fast-paced and immediate nature of any Twitch chat with thousands of viewers, any attempts at having detailed discussions about the show quickly became futile. Still, I did notice a few reheated arguments over which Doctor was the best, while other viewers patiently explained to newer fans why certain serials wouldn't be shown during the marathon. For the most part, the vast majority spent their efforts repeating amusing dialogue, cracking in-jokes and references, spamming emotes, and laughing and cheering as each episode proceeded. The result was a communal viewing experience with audience participation, somewhat similar to public viewings of *The Room*. Fortunately, I was able to embed the stream on my own personal Twitch channel with its own chat room, which other members of the society could use if they wanted a quieter environment to discuss the action.

Every single episode was interspersed with a sixty second promotional trailer of seemingly randomly picked clips of the current Doctor, to help viewers understand what to expect from each era. The Fourth

Some quotations beloved on Twitch:

"Time doesn't go round and round in circles." – Ian argues with the Doctor, *An Unearthly Child*

"Barbara, we made it! London 1965!" – Ian and Barbara finally arrive home, *The Chase*

"Speak up, I can't hear you!" – The First Doctor interrupts the Sensorites, *The Sensorites*

"I know! Believe me, I know!" – The First Doctor warns Barbara of the impossibility of interfering with history, *The Aztecs*

"I warned you, Julius, I warned you!" – Edward Travers becomes frustrated with Julius Silverstein, *The Web of Fear*

"NO JAMIE, NO!" – The Second Doctor as Jamie runs out of the TARDIS, *The Mind Robber*

"But I should have to put my hand inside!" – Vorg objects to rescuing the Doctor and Jo from the Scope, *Carnival of Monsters*

"Ah, but you haven't seen the quality of my footwork yet!" – The Third Doctor taunts the Master during their sword-fight, *The Sea Devils*

"Another mistake, Styre." – The Fourth Doctor taunts Field Major Styre, *The Sontaran Experiment*

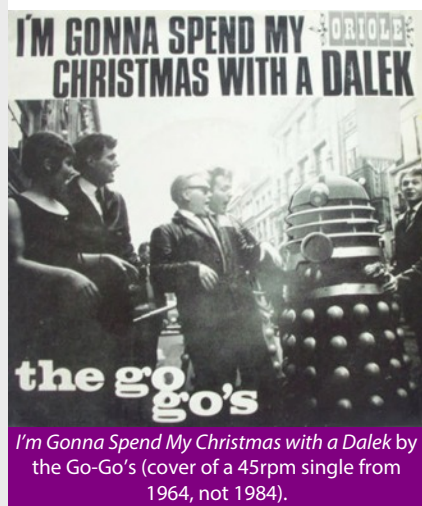
"I wouldn't even say no to a salami sandwich!" – The Fourth Doctor after saving the day, *The Masque of Mandragora*

"You can't mend people, can you?!" – Hindle has a nervous breakdown, *Kinda*

"And cut it... NOW." – The Governor terminates the broadcast with a close-up of the Sixth Doctor's face, *Vengeance on Varos*

"BOOM!" – Ace recalls the fate of Class 1C's prize-winning pottery pig collection, *Battlefield*

Doctor was fortunate enough to receive two different trailers, possibly because of the length of Tom Baker's tenure, but also because the first trailer was arguably rubbish. This prompted the commissioning of a replacement by Pip Madeley, who would also produce the trailers for the Sixth and Seventh Doctors. Bizarrely, the same trailer was typically run twice or more in a row, when it would have made more sense to simply increase the total length to two minutes. These previews quickly became notorious for their heavy repetition, a factor which was only compounded by the First Doctor's trailer in which Ian insisted that "time doesn't go round and round in circles". One particular quip which fans quickly latched onto was taken from the final episode of *The Chase*, in which Ian excitedly exclaims, "Barbara, we made it! London 1965!", having departed the TARDIS for home. Within hours, it had become a catchphrase amongst viewers and would be constantly referenced in the chat for the rest of the marathon, alongside countless other one-liners from these trailers. The anticipation grew for days until *The Chase* finally reached its conclusion, resulting in an explosion of delight and emotes within the chat.



Occasionally, the viewers would be shown some trivia questions before the aforementioned trailers. Embarrassingly, some of these questions contained fundamental errors, such as *The Time Meddler* being referred to as a "Second Doctor story" –perhaps whoever wrote this was thinking of *The Mind Robber*? Another question claimed that 'I'm Gonna Spend My Christmas with a Dalek' by the Go-Go's was released in the 1980s, a minimum of sixteen years too late. I'm not entirely sure how these mistakes could have been made in the age of Wikipedia, or why they weren't corrected as soon as they had been spotted. I can only assume they were added intentionally to provoke fan ire, or to give the chat another go-to one-liner: "Another mistake, Styre."

The marathon was not without technical problems either. After just four days without any incidents, a fault resulted in the first half of *An Unearthly Child* being restreamed instead of *The Web Planet*, leading to much panic, confusion, and bemusement amongst viewers, including some joking that the serial was now missing. We were then treated to repeats of *Planet of Giants* and *The Dalek Invasion of Earth* while Twitch scrambled to "fix the playlist", a process which somehow took three hours and forty-five minutes to complete. As such, I doubt that there has been, or will ever again be, as much demand for *The Web Planet* as there had been that evening. As the summer progressed, the problems continued to accumulate; the first five minutes of *The Mind Robber* were skipped over due to the stream starting late, while Episode Three of *Planet of the Daleks* was omitted and shown the following day in place of Episode One of *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*. This was

compounded when *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* was shown in full on the Saturday, but now with the black-and-white Episode One. Later in the marathon, Part Two of *Attack of the Cybermen* apparently used the subtitles from Part One, something which I'm sure would only have enhanced the experience of watching 80s era *Doctor Who*. Finally, and most controversial of all, the final episode of *Survival* was followed by one last montage featuring all the Doctors – except for Colin Baker, to the indignation and outrage of his supporters.

Despite the numerous technical blunders, baffling decisions by management, and a serious lack of communication from the channel (at the time of writing, the official TwitchPresents Twitter account has lain dormant for over a year), this marathon was nevertheless a successful celebration of *Doctor Who*. Fans were able to discover stories which they might not have seen before, alongside the all-time favourites, and were brought together to discuss their favourite moments on social media. Indeed, the popularity of the stream exceeded 20,000 viewers during the start of the Fourth Doctor era. This arguably led to *Torchwood* being marathoned in late July as well, despite containing mature content which would normally result in most Twitch channels getting suspended. Despite its current availability on iPlayer, I'd be surprised if Twitch doesn't eventually arrange a New *Who* marathon in the future. The joyful reactions to the Brigadier's first appearance, the crying emotes as Adric and Peri were written out of the show, and the celebrations as Ian and Barbara finally arrived in London, 1965 are moments that I will always treasure.

The Barbara Wright Stuff

Artist **Sophie Iles** explains how the *Doctor Who on Twitch* marathon changed her life

Before *Doctor Who on Twitch* my life seemed very different. I was working in a call centre and had gathered a small niche amount of followers on Twitter who enjoyed my fan art. I had completed some small commissions for some now well-known blogs, but it was still small.

When I heard about the Twitch event happening, I was very intrigued. I have, and probably always will be a huge fan of the Hartnell era, particularly of Ian and Barbara, and I also knew that most of the time, those new to the series didn't respond kindly. This was usually because they weren't expecting the grouchy grandfatherly figure who had an arsenal of intelligent companions who didn't want to be there, and a granddaughter. This Doctor didn't want to save the universe, just wanted to discover it for the first time and on some occasions could and would do some pretty devious things to get his own way.

So I logged on Twitch to watch *An Unearthly Child*, just to see the response, and I am so glad I did.

For the first time – at least, that's how it felt to me – the classic series was being talked about with passion. Everyone was energetic about enjoying the show, and seeing how these four characters changed over time. With every episode, the crowds seemed to get more excited.



One of Sophie's memetastic artworks

When Twitch couldn't immediately play *The Web Planet*, often described as one of the worst of the Hartnell era episodes, the number of complaints caused the story to trend on Twitter. A new vibrant audience hungry for the Zarbi was something I never thought I'd see! Even fans like myself, who haven't had the time to sit down and watch these episodes for a while, were able to rediscover favourite moments. For me in particular it was the creation of the meme 'London 1965' due to the short clips between episodes, where everyone knew exactly what

was going to happen to our favourite history and science teacher.

I may have ended up watching *The Chase* all three times it aired that week.

The enthusiasm for the characters and the joy in the chat box was enough to get me doodling, as I have often done and post them on social media under the hashtag. For me personally, everything changed for me after that. Tagging my relevant art to #DoctorWhoOnTwitch and its story title gained me almost double my followers just in the first week of episodes, and despite the fact I had a full-time job, which worked in shifts, I was able to use my downtime to doodle ideas for what I wanted to do next. I even did requests, and all of a sudden, that double was a triple. My phone battery was dead by lunchtime most days when Twitch was streaming *Doctor Who*!

Since the last Twitch episode aired on 23 July, everything's changed. In almost six months I've been able to leave my full-time job and become an artist and writer professionally. I have now traded my artwork at ten conventions, set up an Etsy and Patreon and have 1,300 followers on Twitter. My work has been featured in *Doctor Who Magazine*, BBC America's *Anglophenia* blog, DoctorWho.TV, *The Time Travel Nexus*, the Doctor Who Appreciation Society's *Cosmic Masque* and multiple charity anthologies all to be released soon, and I've been able to organise creating my own fanzine about Ian Chesterton and Barbara Wright in memory of Jacqueline Hill.

I now also have a platform for my writing, with work due to be published next year, most of which is terribly top secret and makes me grin from ear to ear.

Without Twitch, I don't know if I would have realised just how much love my work had, or find the confidence to do it at all. It really is a wonder.

Isn't it funny that a TV show that aired fifty five years ago could do all this? I wonder what the next year will bring.

Sophie can be found at the following places:

Twitter: [@sophilestweets](https://twitter.com/sophilestweets)

Facebook: [sophieillesart](https://www.facebook.com/sophieillesart)

Etsy: www.etsy.com/uk/shop/SophieillesArt

Twitch: www.twitch.tv/sophieillesart

Website: www.sophieilles.co.uk

Tonight, I should liveblog...

Georgia Harper has been revisiting twenty-first century *Doctor Who* for the benefit of a discerning audience

The screenshot shows the BBC iPlayer website interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'BBC' logo, a search bar, and links for Home, News, Sport, Weather, iPlayer, TV, Radio, and CBBC. Below this is the 'iPlayer' logo and navigation options like Channels, Categories, A-Z, TV Guide, and My Programmes. The main content area is for 'Doctor Who', described as 'Adventures In Space and Time' with '146 EPISODES AVAILABLE'. Below this is a grid of eight episode thumbnails, each with a title and a short description:

- Series 1: 1. Rose**
Rose Tyler meets a mysterious stranger called the Doctor...
- Series 1: 2. The End of the World**
The Doctor takes Rose on her...
- Series 1: 3. The Unquiet Dead**
Charles Dickens and the Doctor...
- Series 1: 4. Aliens of London**
Rose is taken home, but a...
- Series 1: 5. World War Three**
Time is running out for the...
- Series 1: 6. Dalek**
The Doctor and Rose discover the Time Lords' deadliest enemy...
- Series 1: 7. The Long Game**
The Doctor investigates a...
- Series 1: 8. Father's Day**
Rose witnesses the day her...

THIS SUMMER, EVERY SINGLE *DOCTOR WHO* EPISODE SINCE THE PROGRAMME'S REVIVAL IN 2005 WAS MADE AVAILABLE TO WATCH ON BBC IPLAYER. Also this summer, there was a prolonged heatwave which, suffice to say, my brain translates roughly as “the end is nigh”. The result: me, hiding away in my room, giving a running commentary of yet another episode to the population of Facebook group Time and Relative Dimensions in Shitposting (highlighted elsewhere in this issue by William Shaw).

Eventually, to get around my own indecisiveness, I started letting them choose the episodes too. Ideally, this is done via open poll in the Facebook group. The winning episode gets liveblogged, the rest stay on the list for next time and eventually get their turn. If other discussion of a particular episode piques my interest, that gets thrown into the mix as well. As it turns out, there's a lot to be learned from diving back into old-New *Who* almost at random, and even more so from putting your viewing choices into the hands of others...

Some episodes deserve a better viewing

Sometimes, we scramble to watch *Doctor Who* on or near broadcast even when the circumstances are... less than optimal. In hindsight, I really didn't give my full attention to *Listen* the first time round, with it airing on a particularly difficult night at the very start of my year studying in Paris. Unfortunately, the same applied to *Sleep No More* fourteen months later, broadcast in the immediate aftermath of the terror attacks that claimed dozens of lives in the city.

Other times, I only have myself to blame for the half-remembered first viewing – attempting to watch *The Time of the Doctor* at 2am when the Christmas festivities were over, or judging Clara Oswald's proper debut in *The Bells of Saint John* by her terrible crime of not being ~~Rory~~ Amy Pond. On second viewing, I appreciated all of these stories that little bit more. (Well, maybe not *Sleep No More*...)

That original broadcast was longer ago than you think

We all have our favourites, which we tend to revisit time and time again (and sure enough, *The Empty Child/The Doctor Dances* and *Heaven Sent* have already been covered), but it's great to have that little push to try something different. It might seem like only yesterday that *Rose* first reached our screens, but it turns out that it's been over a decade since I first saw *Daleks in Manhattan/Evolution of the Daleks* on broadcast -- no wonder I barely remembered it! It's even been five years since Clara's first series (including *Journey to the Centre of the TARDIS*, which I hadn't seen since broadcast until it won a poll), which makes me feel like I must have been on my own trip into the time vortex.

The subtitles leave a lot to be desired

In *Sleep No More*, trapped mid-chase by a computer who insists he sings to it, Deep-Ando is clearly heard saying "Oh ffff-!". BBC iPlayer's subtitles, which I left on to make quick screencap based shitposting easier, report this as "HE SIGHS EXASPERATEDLY", which is not what happens.

As someone who doesn't **need** subtitles to understand the programme, I was more than a little alarmed by how much gets shortened or, worse, omitted entirely. Earlier series seem to suffer particularly badly from this – *The End of the World*'s subtitles leave out the 4000-degree external temperature that almost hits Rose, before mis-transcribing the words which begin the main arc of the series: "Indubitably, this is the Bad-Boo scenario" is what appears on the screen. Thirteen years on, is it really that difficult to fix?

The poll respondents enjoy winding me up – with great results

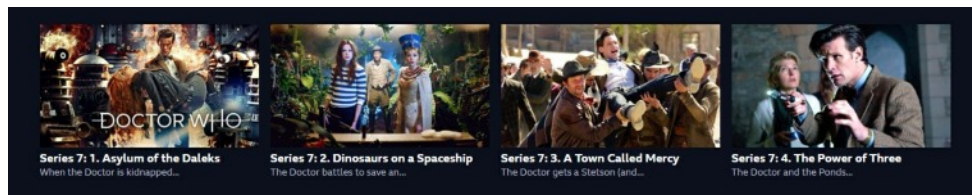
The first time I asked members of TARDIShitposting to suggest an episode to liveblog, it was very explicitly framed with "please distract me from the heatwave". In that poll, *Dalek* won a narrow victory over... er... 42. The joke's on them, because when I eventually did watch it, it became one of my highlights of the liveblogging quest. The more thermally-challenged *Planet of the Ood* and *Thin*

Ice also featured that week, whilst *The Snowmen* has remained on the list for so long that it might actually be relevant again by the time I get round to watching it.

The episode you complain about isn't THAT bad

I wasn't the biggest fan of *Hell Bent* on broadcast – it had a very tough act to follow in *Heaven Sent*, and after the drama of the previous two episodes, it was jarring for Clara to be, for all practical purposes, alive and well after all. Revisiting the episode almost two years and many, many debates later, though, it was surprisingly easy to set that detail aside and comment on, well, all the other brilliant things going on. Delving further back, the much-maligned *Love and Monsters* – for which I abandoned my first liveblog attempt after the wi-fi went down, only for it to immediately come back once I'd turned off my laptop – was surprisingly fun, at least for the first half. Even *The Time of the Doctor*, which still hasn't fully convinced me, features Matt Smith doing an excellent job of essentially playing a different character for most of the episode.

That said, an additional, more analytical viewing won't save every episode. I still couldn't get past *In The Forest of the Night's* questionable take on mental illness and neurodiversity, *The Time of the Doctor's* lax approach to tying up the loose ends of the Eleven era (and surely it should have been the War Doctor in that room in *The God Complex?*) and *Sleep No More...* in general.



It's a chance to revisit the new showrunner's previous work

When Chris Chibnall was revealed to be taking over from Steven Moffat in Series Eleven, many were sceptical. For me, those misgivings were firmly replaced with excitement as soon as the new Doctor lifted her hood (more about that on pages 9-10), but otherwise, I'd have been greatly reassured by the reminder that *42* and *The Power of Three* are both, in TARDISposting parlance, Top Episodes. Chibnall's back catalogue isn't **all** *Cyberwoman!*

It's fun!

At the time of writing, the full post-2005 run of *Doctor Who* is available on BBC iPlayer until the end of the year. That really isn't far away, so I'd recommend you take the opportunity not just to revisit your old favourites, but to discover new favourites. Making your viewing decisions a democracy, and then documenting your every thought as you go, is certainly a more complicated way of doing it, but it's a **lot** of fun. And who knows, maybe I'll really enjoy *The Doctor*, *The Widow* and *The Wardrobe* when it inevitably wins a poll.

Probably not. But maybe.

LOVE LETTERS TO DOCTOR WHO



Rogan Clark imagines the experience of the fans of the 1970s and 1980s as he explores BBC Books' revival of the Target *Doctor Who* series.

BEING A CHILD OF THE NEW *WHO* GENERATION, I'VE NEVER HAD MUCH EXPOSURE TO THE TARGET NOVELISATIONS THAT MANY PEOPLE WOULD SWEAR ON. I had *Doctor Who* books, sure, but they were asides to the televised narrative, existing in that semi-liminal space of the 'expanded universe', hanging somewhere between "Good, but not a real story" and "So this is what Martha was doing for a year!" (*The Story of Martha* by Dan Abnett is one that sticks in my memory, for some reason).

I can, however, understand the rationale behind why you'd make this group of four novelisations. (Like John Wilson in the last issue of *Tides*, I'm not covering the abridged version of James Goss's *City of Death* as it's based on a 1979 story and had been published in another form before now.) You can expand on a lot of things in the transition between television and book, whether or not it be explaining character motivation, adding in deleted scenes, or just showing things that would be difficult to do on television. All four books tell more than any of the stories do on television, with some doing it better than others. *Rose* and *The Day of the Doctor* were both written by the authors of the television stories, Russell T Davies and Steven Moffat, and perhaps it shows in how they have the most changes from the televised versions. The other pair, *The Christmas Invasion* and *Twice Upon a Time*, are Davies and Moffat stories respectively, but are turned into books by two other prolific *Doctor Who* writers, Jenny T Colgan and Paul Cornell. They stick more closely to the original scripts. I've seen all of these stories in the last year or so.



Rose

The common perception of the television version of *Rose* held by most modern fans I've talked to seems to be that it's a strong story, hampered by a few choice 2005-era effects and the central mystery being slightly ruined by the fact that we already know the Doctor far too well. The novel completely gets around the first issue, even as it pays homage to it in the rich descriptions (thankfully, Davies didn't remove my favourite scene where Mickey has his fateful encounter with a garbage bin), and counteracts the second by showing us a lot more of the lives of our characters,

contrasting them with how little we know of our protagonist. Or, perhaps not, because Rose is our protagonist here, not the Doctor. It was a good choice back in 2005 to focus on the companion as the way to relate to the Doctor's world, and it stays good here, allowing us to see the development of someone who doesn't start out in the centre of the action, so to speak.

This novel's strongest selling point is easily its fleshing out of many characters in Rose's life. This isn't to say the TV version fails at this, as it gives you all you need to know in what is already a busy forty-five minutes, but the novel benefits from both an extended length, and allowing extended monologues and digressions on character's backgrounds. As such, Jackie is given more depth than "worried mother", for the first time outside *Love and Monsters*. Doctor Who uber-fan Clive has a backstory invented from whole cloth, relating him to a red-shirt from *Remembrance of the Daleks*, which seems like the kind of fan-service that belongs in a Moffat-era story, not the Christopher Eccleston series. However, that backstory provides enough insight into his character that his death truly means something. Even Wilson, almost-nameless chief electrician who dies before the credits even roll on TV, has a chapter to himself, in an inspired touch stolen from an earlier Target novel, or so I've heard. The one who benefits the most from this is Mickey, whose band (Bad Wolf, would you believe it) brings both LGBTQ representation to a thirteen-year-old piece of TV that could use some, as well as comedy, pathos, and even a little bit of romance. I love Mickey, and I always have since I first watched *Doctor Who* many years ago, and this just makes me wish some of this backstory had been on TV.

It's not just the characters that get expanded, the entire plot is more developed. Deleted scenes are included, since no budget cuts are forcing them out, the massacre at the end is more gruesome than could probably be shown (I love the paragraph where he shows how literally every molecule of plastic, even the ones inside people are fighting back, for an example of something that would be impossible to show on TV but is easily put in a description), and Davies sneaks in a lot more continuity gags than you'd get away with in the first episode of a 'reboot', as well as few sneaky nods to the future. Overall, this does lead to a detriment of the book as a starting point to someone unfamiliar with *Who*.

While I feel as though *Rose* the show works as a first episode, *Rose* the book feels like you need some backstory with the show. But, of course, that's the point. This is a love letter to the fans of a new generation, letting them experience an old story in a new light. It's my favourite of the group, and I'm hoping that shows in this review.



The Christmas Invasion

This one feels like an odd choice for a Tenth Doctor episode. It's not the most memorable episode (*Blink* or *Journey's End* probably compete for that crown, for the average viewer, but I wouldn't want

to novelise either of those), the Tenth Doctor is barely in it, and to my mind it's not a particularly exciting script. I can only guess that, similar to *Rose*, it's a new Doctor's first story, and BBC Books wanted some kind of pattern to the releases, only to completely ignore that with the Moffat era. Nevertheless, Jenny T Colgan has taken an episode that I like enough, and turned it into a book that I like enough. I'd call that a success.

Unlike *Rose*, there isn't much expansion to this one, plotwise. It's pretty much the same, which allows our protagonist to be Rose once again – maybe that was the reason for choosing it? I do like the inclusion of the Children in Need short (*Born Again?*), though, especially with the added benefit of an insight into Rose's thought processes. Having watched a lot of this show, it can be hard to picture just how shocking regeneration must seem, but it's captured perfectly here. And that's probably the best part of this novelisation – Colgan captures the personality and emotions of the characters perfectly, from Rose going through the confusion of losing her best friend, to the workers at the British Space Agency, who get some characterisation here by virtue of needing a POV character for those scenes in the show. Once again, representation is added, this time of the disabled variety, as well as a small romance between two minor characters, to make sure we feel the tragedy of the Scyrox ruthlessly murdering people. In a show where death can become commonplace, it's good for both novels so far to remind us how much it does hurt everyone involved in it.

I feel like this novel's biggest flaw is how rigidly it sticks to the original. While there is more detail than the televised story had, including a pleasing cameo from Arthur Dent and Ford Prefect, it doesn't feel like enough. Nothing of major substance is added that made me want to come back to this over the televised story. Maybe it's due to the length, coming in fifty pages or so shorter than *Rose*, or my general apathy towards the TV story. That's not to say I don't like it, I just don't love it. It could have explored the world in a little more depth, but as it wasn't originally Colgan's script, I can imagine there might have been issues preventing that. Either way, this is a good book, but not as good as I feel it could have been.



The Day of the Doctor

For Matt Smith's Doctor, Steven Moffat has novelised his fiftieth anniversary epic, including within it the short released online beforehand, *The Night of the Doctor*. I really like the televised version, finding it to be a visual spectacle as well as an emotional exploration of who the Doctor should be. This book, I hate to say, I didn't really enjoy. Steven Moffat's writing can be very hit-or-miss for me, with his unending quips and innuendos usually falling into the miss side. Since this book is full of that sort of thing, as well as too much 'meta-ness' for my liking, I find myself disliking the

finished product, which is a shame, since there's some very good stuff in here.

I'll start with the good. The Doctor's characterisation is really well done in this book, and while there are a couple of weird choices (*i.e.* writing the whole book in the voice of a first person narrator who thinks of himself in the third person, even if I understand why its done), there are some great character moments in here. The biggest is something we don't even see in the original – a waggon ride to the Tower of London, where we see the event from each Doctor's perspective, and how they might think of it given how their life is going. As previously said, it also gives us the Eighth Doctor's swansong, and while there are a couple of decisions character-wise I don't like, mainly his focus on making the Doctor an attention-seeker over his desire to save Cass, I love that short, and also its little addition to the name drops. I'm not sure why he didn't add more than just Fitz, but I'll take it. The eponymous 'Day of the Doctor' at the climax of the book somehow works really well, and has a suitable tone of grandeur, in spite of leaning a touch too heavily on the fairytale side of *Doctor Who* for me in how it's written. And the ending, featuring a certain Thirteenth Doctor continuing on her quest, is the perfect capstone to update the book into a new era of *Doctor Who*. So, with so much going right, how can I dislike it?

For a start, the narration is annoying. This book is supposedly told by the Curator/Fourth Doctor, giving a lecture to some students, but it to me it comes across as an attempt at making the book 'better' by adding in meta-cleverness, when a plainly told story would read a lot more nicely. Practically everyone reading this will have seen the TV story already, so we don't need a lecture on how regeneration works, or some such. River Song is also in this, and while you think I'd like the addition of such an important character to these years of the show being added, every scene she's in makes me uncomfortable. First, she and the Doctor take a bath together, which is just weird, and feels like a bad example of pushing what you wouldn't get on TV. In her second, she wipes the Doctor's mind because she feels it's best for him. The whole discourse on why that's wrong is the only thing I like in *Hell Bent*, and playing it for heartwarming points like this just leaves me sour for the rest of the book. Add to this repeated mentions of Chapter Nine, which are alright at first but quickly outstay their welcome, and the whole book feels it contains all of the things I don't like in *Who* – overused running gags, overabundant focus on sex and romance, and meta-gags masquerading as something new.

Like I said, there are some good moments, but they didn't counteract my dissatisfaction as a whole. I can see why some might like it, but overall, it's not for me.

Twice Upon a Time

This was the most recent story broadcast when these books were published in April. Steven Moffat's script was novelised by Paul Cornell, most noted for his David Tennant-era two-parter



Human Nature/The Family of Blood. I'm not the biggest fan of the televised version of *Twice Upon a Time*. It mischaracterises the First Doctor for laughs, the 'villain' stretches my disbelief too far, and it makes five minutes of plot last fifty. Does the book fix all that? No, but it tries its best, and it's mostly successful. As with *The Christmas Invasion*, it has a shorter length than the two novelizations written by the same writer as the televised original, but precisely because there's so little plot, the pages are filled with interesting introspections, little fixes to minor questions, and this makes reading it a much better experience.

The story gives every character some chance to explain their thoughts and motivations, and it works really well. Both Doctors' hesitations at changing are given more depth, with the First being terrified of his identity being torn apart, while Twelve sees no reason to go on while all he ever seems to do is suffer, being reminded of happier times with companions (or possibly companion) past. I'm still not the biggest fan of Testimony as a concept, but through it, Bill receives a great deal of development, including an actual relationship with Heather, as opposed to the *Deus Ex Machina* hook-up that was always my biggest gripe with *The Doctor Falls*. Nardole also gets a life story, but his is a little less interesting than I'd hoped, even if I do love all his dialogue here. The Captain is a little underserved, but his thought processes during the shoot-out scenegun stand-off with the German soldier are well-written, and he seems like an honourable man, even though Cornell either chose or was forced to keep the dialogue mostly the same. Unfortunately the First Doctor is still presented as a massive bigot. While Cornell tries to salvage this situation with a monologue from Twelve, where he namedrops Barbara for one thing, it still feels like unneeded character assassination to someone modern viewers might not be familiar with.

Being honest, the biggest hurdle to me liking this is that I'm not a big fan of the original. Novels can sometimes work wonders, but when I don't like the plot of the original, I'm unlikely to like it here. But the additions work to make it a more enjoyable experience, giving depth to characters, even if I don't like their motivations. And, of course, I'd be remiss not to mention the debut of our Thirteenth Doctor, beautifully written, and making me wish for a sequel novelization. (*The Woman Who Fell to Earth* by Chris Chibnall next time, Target?) Seeing regeneration for the second time in these books, from the other side of the process, is just as well done, and the metaphors employed work brilliantly.

And that's the innate point of these books. Regenerating an old medium into something for new readers to enjoy, and ultimately, I did. If this was the only way to experience stories again, I'd be mostly happy with them, *The Day of the Doctor* not included. As a collection, they add interesting background flavour, develop characters we never got a chance to meet on TV, and remind us why, even when DVDs and Blu-Rays and Netflix are everywhere, books won't be going away any time soon.



Top or flop?

Kill the Moon

The return of the feature where two fans are pitched against each other on a point of contention. **James Ashworth** introduces the argument and debaters **William Shaw** and **Sam Sheppard**

“The moon’s an egg!”

“Has it, er, always been an egg?”

“Yes, for a hundred million years or so.”

— *Kill the Moon* (BBC, 2014)

THE FOURTH OF OCTOBER 2014 WAS MUCH LIKE ANY OTHER DAY. For some, it was a day of politics, with Latvia voting in a parliamentary election, while Sweden recognised Palestine as a state. For some, it was a day of celebration, as the Asian Games drew to a close in South Korea. Here in Oxford, a new academic year was dawning, as the WhoSoc Committee tirelessly planned their new Freshers campaign. They may also have been contemplating the episode that was to be shown at 2030 that very evening, after *Strictly* had finally dropped the curtain. Who knew what they would be in for...

Kill the Moon, it’s fair to say, was an episode that divided from its very beginning. For some, it has become what the defence would call “a top episode”, with publications like *The Radio Times* and *IGN* giving it 5/5 and 9.3/10 respectively, the former describing it as “audacious” and “highly imaginative”. For others though, *Kill the Moon* was criticised by *Forbes* review as delivering “false controversy”, while not respecting “the debate it was trying to start in the viewers at home”. The science was also problematic, with Phil Plait’s review stating that the “science mistakes were so egregious and so obvious that they kept pulling [him] right out of the story”. In Oxford, its controversy only grew further after being screened by a pro-life group, despite author Peter Harness saying that any abortion parallels were unintentional.

At WhoSoc, *Kill the Moon* has become a cause célèbre, provoking instant debate whenever it rears its head. In an (unlikely) effort to put it to bed, we gave one fan and one critic the opportunity to put their arguments to the test...

For the Defence: WILLIAM SHAW

William Shaw is a writer, blogger and fanboy, formerly of Corpus Christi College. You can find him online at williamshawwriter.wordpress.com and on Twitter @Will_S_7

For the Prosecution: SAM SHEPPARD

Sam is a long-term *Doctor Who* fan who has recently completed a BA at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford. His experience of the show was started by the Tom Baker era and a host of Target novelisations.

THE ARGUMENT FOR *KILL THE MOON* – BY WILLIAM SHAW

KILL THE MOON IS A PROBLEMATIC EPISODE. And by ‘problematic’, I do not mean in the colloquial sense of ‘reinforcing some form of bigotry; racism, sexism, homophobia etc.’ It may well be that, but I use the term in a slightly different sense. *Kill the Moon* is problematic in that it seems designed to frustrate totalising interpretation. Any definitive statement about what it is, says, or does, immediately throws up half a dozen contradictions and qualifications. For example, the statement ‘*Kill the Moon* is pro-life’ immediately invites the would-be defender to shoot back “It’s your moon, womankind. It’s your choice.” Similarly, the statement ‘*Kill the Moon* is pro-choice’ prompts more than a few pointed questions about ‘the gravity of the little dead baby.’ This is not to say that *Kill the Moon* is invested in some facile notion of ‘balance’ at the expense of any statement or ideology of its own. It is simply to observe, following Elizabeth Sandifer, that the nature of *Kill the Moon* is to messily over-signify.

There is a basic appeal to this kind of unruliness. The pioneering Marxist sci-fi author China Miéville has described himself as “very pro-metaphor and very anti-allegory”. Metaphor allows the reader a freer hand; reading becomes a practice with room for uncertainty, argument, and nuance, rather than an exercise in code-breaking. Stories become mysteries, rather than enigmas. It’s also a very *Doctor Who* approach, and has been ever since it did a supposed Second World War allegory in which tall, muscular blonde men had to be goaded into fighting a race of technologically advanced atom bomb victims.

We see this same problematising tendency in both of Peter Harness’s subsequent stories. For Harness, the Zygons are simultaneously youthful rebels, religious zealots, Soviet infiltrators, youthful anarchists, South American immigrants, internet trolls, and ISIS, as well as rubbery monsters from a 70s kids’ TV show. Similarly, the Monks are computer hackers, nuclear physicists, Donald Trump, an entire rogue nation, and the organisers of disingenuous referenda. All these categories are broadly similar, while still being wildly distinct, and their unsettling power derives in part from the fact that the audience is never sure precisely which set of conventions are in play at any given moment. Harness’s stories are superpositional; they stick in the mind because we are never allowed the comfort of unified, total understanding.

Of course, this is not to argue that Harness’s stories say nothing at all about the world. *The Zygon Inversion*, for instance, ends with a paternalistic white man shouting at a young woman who has been forced to hide her entire life that her basic desire for radical change is childish and immoral. *Pyramid at the End of the World*, meanwhile, suggests that international cooperation is futile in the face of the dangerous power of incoherently ‘Oriental’ manipulators. Which is to say that, while the problematisation of existing narratives is compelling, we must be mindful of the context in which that problematisation takes place. In this case, the problematisation of these concepts in the context of a mainstream Western television show will inevitably be one that reinforces hegemonic ideology.

To drag this argument back to *Kill the Moon*, then, whatever its problematic protestations, the episode has had a material impact on the discourse. A story does not get championed by Tim Montgomerie and Oxford Students for Life as a voice of conservative, pro-life politics for no reason. *Kill the Moon* has been read as a pro-life story: there is textual evidence to support this reading. But there is also textual evidence to support other readings, and those readings are, I think, strong enough to warrant a defence.

THE ARGUMENT AGAINST *KILL THE MOON* – BY SAM SHEPPARD

“AN INNOCENT LIFE VERSUS THE FUTURE OF ALL MANKIND. WE HAVE FORTY-FIVE MINUTES TO DECIDE.” This announcement, delivered by Clara, forms the powerful opening of *Kill the Moon*, rapidly and effectively introducing the crisis facing humanity in a way which takes advantage of the show’s very format (“Forty-five minutes” is, of course, the length of the episode itself). However, I think this also suggests a basic problem with *Kill the Moon*. For me, it is an episode which tries to do too much in too small a space.

Rewatching the episode, I found myself a little disinterested in its first act. Arguably, it relies a little too heavily on visual spectacle: “Look, we’re on the moon!” It doesn’t help that the astronauts, with the exception of Lundvik, are very much disposable. Their main purpose is to be rapidly killed off in order to highlight the severity of the situation. Similarly, I can’t help but feel that the spiders aren’t truly necessary. They remind me of Leandro in *The Woman Who Lived*, in that it seems as though they have been included to satisfy a “monster of the week” obligation, rather than because their presence is needed to make the story work.

The biggest reason for my lack of interest, though, is that the most interesting – not to say challenging – part of the episode comes later, when the debate as to whether the creature should live or die is introduced. Here, I think, is where *Kill the Moon*’s flaws really lie. The episode attempts to tackle a complicated and sensitive issue in a confused and rushed manner which leaves itself far too open to misinterpretation.

Specifically, it has often been claimed that *Kill the Moon* is an episode which features an anti-abortion agenda; for instance, the group Oxford Students for Life screened the episode at one of their events, noting that ‘it has been reviewed as one of the most ‘pro-life’ episodes released’. In fairness, Harness has denied any intention to write a ‘pro-life’ episode, and the episode offers a genuinely compelling exploration of the relationship between masculinity and emotional labour. It is, after all, the episode which contains the line: ‘It’s your moon, womankind. It’s your choice.’ However, it is also the episode in which the decision to spare the unborn creature is ultimately framed as the morally correct one. There are also lines such as Clara’s “I’m going to have to be a lot more certain than that if I’m going to kill a baby”, which is uncomfortably reminiscent of the pro-life rhetoric utilised by the far right. This, then, is why *Kill the Moon*’s handling of its ethical debate is muddled at best. It’s difficult to overlook the fact that Harness is a male author seeking to tackle the question of female agency, and I can’t help but think that such a debate might have been better handled by a female author.

There is another problem which complicates the debate. Clara is the person least justified to override the vote as to whether the creature should live or die. It’s true, of course, that the vote is a somewhat unfair way of deciding the issue, but that doesn’t cancel out the fact that Clara takes a huge gamble and happens to get very lucky. She has no way of knowing that sparing the creature’s life will not result in disaster, and this becomes all the more significant when it is considered that Clara is from the past. Unlike Lundvik, whose time period this is, she would not be directly affected by any catastrophe.

Should anything go wrong, Clara can simply return to the past, and it will be more than 30 years before she has to face the consequences of her actions. Regarding Clara’s decision, therefore, there is a potentially challenging debate to be had about accountability and moral responsibility. This would,

Let's start with the basics: *Kill the Moon* is well-shot, briskly-paced, and superbly acted. The cold open with a visibly terrified Clara telling the audience “we have forty-five minutes to decide” is an exquisite hook, tying the nature of the story's dilemma to its medium, the tension palpable and immediate. Compare this to the rather less elegant 42, which attempts a similar trick but ultimately turns into a fairly standard *Doctor Who* plot which occasionally flashes up a decreasing number. From there, the episode's opening scenes escalate smoothly from Coal Hill banter to fish-out-of-water TARDIS antics to high-tech space cupboard exploration, the transitions fast enough that their open contrivance feels smooth and natural. The scripting of these opening scenes is absolutely masterful; every single line advances the plot, gives us character information, introduces strange and evocative imagery, or all three, but it never feels overstuffed. Paul Wilmshurst is busy earning his title as one of the best directors of the Capaldi era; later in the episode we'll have plenty of neo-Hinchcliffe shadow horror and intense corridor debates, but even in these early scenes he's making his mark. The Coal Hill/TARDIS scenes cut just a little too quickly, and the camera moves slightly too fast, foreshadowing the story's more off-kilter qualities. Meanwhile, the repeated framing of the Doctor, Clara, Courtney and Lundvik with the TARDIS looming in the foreground helps emphasise its later absence.

The acting, of course, is in a class of its own. Hermione Norris is world-weary and blackly humorous as Lundvik, her Voice of Reason act under visible strain, and Ellis George projects an adolescent glee (distinct from childlike glee) at the initial moon trip. She makes a convincing turn towards uncertainty and panic as things get serious, visibly struggling to maintain her composure, perfectly complementing Coleman's attempts to do the same. Even Christopher Dane does splendidly with a very minor part as Ground Control. The horror of Earth's tidal devastation rests almost entirely on his quiet, shaken delivery of “Yeah... pretty bad,” and he absolutely nails it.

Capaldi, meanwhile, is still finding ways to surprise as the Doctor. His delivery of “the moon's an egg” is deliberately halting and muted, almost coming out of the side of his mouth. Capaldi will use a similar technique for his earnest declarations to Harold and Missy in *The Doctor Falls*, but here it signifies a barely suppressed glee. Capaldi plays a Doctor both utterly in love with the universe, and at pains not to let that love show — a dynamic that will mature and develop over the remainder of his tenure. It's also important to note how many future episodes involve the Doctor misleading the supporting cast. Capaldi excels at playing emotional misdirection; unsurprising for a man previously most famous for playing a spin doctor.

But more than any other actor, this is Jenna Coleman's episode. Clara spends most of the story confused, scared, or abandoned, but forcing herself not to let it show, lest she endanger Courtney (or indeed the world) by doing so. So when she finally lets loose at Capaldi in the climactic scene, the catharsis hits like a bomb going off. If you can watch Coleman (and indeed Capaldi) in this scene without feeling like you've been punched in the stomach, you're a stronger person than me. Harness has described this ending as a lot of long-term hurt coming out in front of the Doctor for the first time, and part of this scene's power comes from the fact that we haven't seen a companion outburst quite like this before. When Barbara or Ace or Donna have expressed anger or disappointment in the Doctor, it's generally been during the course of an adventure, essentially as yet another plot function; we've never seen a companion suppress their pain over multiple episodes until it has come flying out at the climactic note of a story, almost involuntarily. Perhaps the closest we've seen before this is Tegan in *Resurrection of the Daleks*, which is, while ahead of its time, still not very close.

perhaps, be reminiscent of the debates surrounding Brexit and the referendum on Scottish independence; many criticised these events on the basis that important political decisions had been heavily influenced by the older generations, despite the fact that it would chiefly be the younger generations who had to shoulder the burden of any negative consequences; indeed, I can't help but wince at the fact that, in contrast with *Kill the Moon*, there will probably not be a magic solution that makes Brexit turn out all right. However, Harness chooses to skirt around any possible debate surrounding Clara's actions. He simply presents her as making an objectively correct decision, and this is something I find particularly dissatisfying.

The problem with *Kill the Moon*, then, is not that its premise is silly or scientifically unrealistic; criticising the episode on this basis is rather narrow-minded. A more significant issue is that the newly-hatched creature lays an egg which is completely identical to the original moon-egg, thereby saving humanity from disaster. This incredibly convenient ending neatly restores the status quo, and this prevents Harness from having to challenge or address the morality of Clara's intervention. Because the moon is instantaneously replaced, the episode is free to depict her as having made the right choice, as emphasised by Clara's line: "I nearly didn't press that button. I nearly got it wrong." The wording, furthermore, implies that terminating the creature's life would have been the 'wrong' decision, and this only reinforces the arguments that *Kill the Moon* is a pro-life episode. This leaves me feeling conflicted, to be honest; I do think that the episode offers a strong and valid critique of the Doctor's actions, but I would also argue that the episode's portrayal of Clara's actions is a disappointing oversimplification. This echoes the way in which the convenient resolution to the moon-egg dilemma is too neat, too pat to be entirely satisfying.

Beyond the Doctor and Clara, furthermore, there is another significant character whose treatment, I would argue, leaves much to be desired. *Kill the Moon's* handling of Courtney presents



The Moon's an Egg! *Kill the Moon*, assembled by Matthew Kilburn

Similarly, Ace in *The Curse of Fenric* is being deliberately manipulated by the Doctor, rather than thoughtlessly neglected (though the Virgin New Adventures, particularly *Love and War*, do come much closer to this dynamic). The discomfort of this scene is that of an existing paradigm being suddenly uprooted, found wanting, and a whole new type of Doctor/companion dynamic emerging, breaking from its shell to feel the sun on its back. If *Kill the Moon* shows Capaldi's Doctor is still able to surprise halfway through his first season, it's also where Clara shows she can still become a wholly different type of character halfway through her second.

It also provides the basis for a more liberatory reading of the episode. I have written elsewhere about the usefulness of *Kill the Moon* in explaining the gendered concept of emotional labour, but note how this episode repeatedly reinforces the Doctor's unthinking disrespect of Clara. Even before the big abandonment, the episode hangs on moments that would be quick cutaways in any other story. The Doctor dives into a ravine to face almost certain death; Lundvik asks if he'll be back; all Clara can do is sigh and say, "If he says so, I suppose he will." The Doctor makes no effort to communicate with Clara, or any of the women in this story, beyond the odd high-handed lecture about looking to the stars. His rationale?

THE DOCTOR: That was me... respecting you.
And Clara's response?
CLARA: Yeah, well, respected is not how I feel.

Because respect for women (or indeed anyone) does not involve refusing to help them when it is well within your power to do so. Nor does it involve setting the terms on which you will respect them. It involves listening to them, it involves mucking in, and, if necessary, it involves serving at their pleasure. This is the lesson the Doctor learns from *Kill the Moon*, which the series goes out of its way to demonstrate him having learned, most obviously in *In the Forest of the Night* and *Thin Ice*. It's certainly my preferred reading of the episode, and the way I would rescue it from the Tim Montgomeries of the world. It is, I hope to have demonstrated, possible to pull useful, even radical readings out of this episode. I certainly cannot blame anyone for being unwilling to do so, but for me, this is why *Kill the Moon* remains one of the most important episodes of the single greatest era of *Doctor Who* so far.

A Haiku for *Kill the Moon*

By William Shaw

The Doctor is gone.
But can we make a future
Without breaking eggs?

us with the uncomfortable image of a white man belittling a black child, and this forms part of a deeply undesirable pattern; *Kill the Moon*, after all, appears in the same series as *The Caretaker*, in which the Doctor regards Danny Pink with condescension and hostility, apparently refusing to believe that he could be anything other than a “PE teacher”. Admittedly, it isn’t entirely fair that my opinion of *Kill the Moon* has been influenced by another episode in this way. However, I think the treatment of Courtney in *Kill the Moon* itself remains open to criticism; for one thing, her role in this episode feels rather insubstantial.

Although Courtney says she wants to “help”, she is given little to do. Arguably, Clara would still have decided to spare the creature even if Courtney hadn’t been there. Furthermore, the Doctor’s patronising attitude towards Courtney is never challenged in the same way that his behaviour towards Clara is. His behaviour towards both women forms part of the same pattern of high-handedness and unthinking disrespect – one which must be broken, and I do think one of *Kill the Moon*’s strengths lies in its willingness to make this point – and yet the episode ultimately relegates Courtney to the sidelines while Clara takes the spotlight. This particular weakness is highlighted by comparison with *Thin Ice*, in which it is Bill who ultimately determines the Doctor’s decision to save the creature living underneath the Thames. True, it is something of an oversimplification to compare *Kill the Moon* and *Thin Ice* in this way, but it still seems that the latter episode lends Bill a degree of agency and influence which Courtney simply does not have in *Kill the Moon*.

All in all, *Kill the Moon* is not an entirely irredeemable episode, and I’m prepared to admit that it has its strengths. Indeed, there are several compelling and valid readings to be gleaned from the text; however, this doesn’t change the fact that the source material suffers from a lack of clarity which allows and even invites a pro-life reading. To me, in fact, it seems as though discussing *Kill the Moon* with other people is much more interesting and rewarding than actually watching it. I might even go so far as to say that some of Clara’s words are ironic because I feel like *Kill the Moon* is itself somewhat ‘patronising’. Watching it, I feel like I’m the one being patted on the back.

A Limerick against *Kill the Moon*

By James Ashworth

One Saturday, late afternoon,
The TARDIS crew went to the moon,
But it was an egg
And the fans they did beg:
“Let this episode be over soon!”

utopia

EYNHAM HALL, OXFORDSHIRE 8th - 10th JUNE 2018

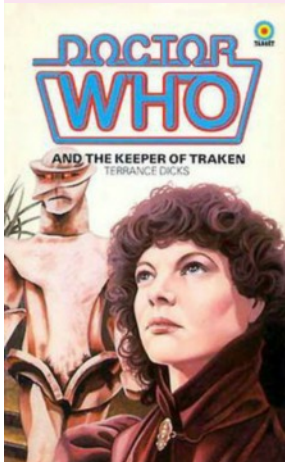
Fantom Events have run the *Utopia Doctor Who* convention in Oxfordshire for several years now. **James Ashworth** went to Eynsham Hall this June and found himself on Traken, at Coal Hill School, under the sea and at the dawn of *Doctor Who* itself.

Traken Tidings

TOM BAKER'S PENULTIMATE STORY *THE KEEPER OF TRAKEN* (1981) INTRODUCED SEVERAL CORNER-STONES OF *DOCTOR WHO* MYTHOLOGY. Guests Sarah Sutton joined as Nyssa, Geoffrey Beevers played the decayed Master, and Graham Cole wore the Master's disguise, the Melkur statue TARDIS.

Graham Cole remembered the many issues that affected the Melkur costume. It was uncomfortable from the beginning. The various parts required a long period of moulding, and they somehow became more uncomfortable when worn in studio. This was only exacerbated by the cables needed to power its glowing red eyes, which initially entailed dragging them around the set, making the costume heavier than it was already! After getting them caught on various bits of the set, he eventually received an upgrade in the form of a battery and switch to turn the lights on. The costume's limited vision also necessitated it have a microphone and earpiece, something that was quickly forgotten about by the rest of the production. As such, Graham often heard increasingly irate comments from director John Black on performances on set.

The Master's costume was also not without contention. Geoffrey Beevers argued against the fake eyes worn by Peter Pratt in *The Deadly Assassin* (1976), insisting that with the large mask, his eyes would form a crucial part of the performance, though he does admit that his predecessor was still able to do a great job.



Andrew Skilleter's cover for the novelization of *The Keeper of Traken* (1982)

All the cast remember the story fondly, especially its Shakespearean qualities. Geoffrey related how the story shows the development of television acting. Initially, television plays were much more static as large and unwieldy cameras could only move over limited angles, and along fixed tracks. As cameras became more mobile, this allowed a greater fluidity for the actors, yet still deeply rooted in the theatrical styles that preceded it.

Sarah in particular recalls when she was asked if she wanted to stay on during rehearsals, accepting excitedly. While she got on with Tom Baker, she felt more comfortable when Peter Davison arrived, as they were both still settling into their roles and so could support each other, while Tom had seven years of experience behind him, as well as knowing he was soon to leave. She also had more time to get to know Peter, so their offscreen chemistry could contribute to a better onscreen relationship.

CLASS Resit

ANOTHER GREAT PANEL AT UTOPIA 2018 WAS THAT OF THE CAST OF *CLASS*, THE LATEST *DOCTOR WHO* SPIN OFF TO HIT OUR SCREENS, ONLY THEN TO BE CANCELLED. Only a week before the convention, *Class* had just received a reprieve of sorts in that Big Finish had announced they would be releasing *Class* audio dramas. As Greg Austin (Charlie), Sophie Hopkins (April) and Fady Elsayed (Ram) entered the room, I settled back for a look into the birth, life, death and rebirth of *Class*.

One of the most surprising things revealed during the panel was how unlikely it was that the actors even got their parts. Sophie nearly didn't attend the audition at all, as her fiancé was being deported to Australia on the same day (it's all sorted now, she reassured us). Fady, meanwhile, was asked to prepare for the wrong scene, but Patrick Ness allowed him a few hours to practice the other (where he loses his leg, if I remember correctly). Greg upped the stakes, when, having auditioned but not heard anything back from the producers, he decided to fly out to Los Angeles for pilot season, 6-8 weeks of auditioning for the latest shows being produced across the pond. However, on only the third day of auditions, Greg received a call from his agent, telling him he'd been invited back for another audition. Tired, he initially said no, but his agent managed to talk him around, and so he arrived back in the UK and did the audition, all while extremely jetlagged!

Fady managed to top everyone else's story, though admittedly not for *Class*. For his first film, *My Brother the Devil*, he went on holiday to Egypt post audition, and lost his passport. Shouldn't be an issue, only a trip to the embassy away, right? Not in this case. The Egyptian Revolution had broken out, leaving Fady unable to leave until he could get a new passport and so attend his audition. After a lot of calling around, his mum managed to find someone in the embassy willing to provide a passport in a few days. Coming back, however, the passport office was closed, though the building was open. Getting past a crowd of protesters, they found their way to the office where the passport official had left Fady his documents, allowing him to get back home.

Looking back on the production, which they initially didn't know was *Doctor Who*-related, they all clearly enjoyed their time working together. One of the key parts of this was the team around them. Katherine Kelly in particular and, more briefly but no less notably, Peter Capaldi were both great to work with, and taught them more about acting in the process. Capaldi's playfulness was something that Sophie remembered in particular, and they remember trying to act casually around him (it didn't work)! Patrick Ness also looms large in their minds. Greg remembers discussing Charlie and Matteus's bedroom scene with Ness, who emphasised how important it would've been to see for himself during his teenage years, showing that being LGBT is completely normal. Ness also

set up a WhatsApp group for the cast and himself, which was apparently still active by Utopia.

One question from the audience asked the cast which was their most difficult scene to film. For Fady, it was losing his leg, as he had no experience to draw on. How do you act when you lose a limb? For Greg, it was opening the cabinet in the finale. He had always found it difficult to cry on cue, and to convey the intense emotion of the scene, he knew that he really needed to open the floodgates. For Sophie, it was a much more practical issue. Being in the Brecon Beacons for *Brave-ish Heart*, the cast and crew were met with horrendous weather, including heavy downpours, thunderstorms and an ever-present mist. To top this, she had to have further stunt training before filming the climatic fight with Coriokinus; an exhausting day in all. The filming of *Detained* also cropped up, as despite it being their favourite episode, spending two and a half weeks in one small set is a sure way to make everyone a bit stir-crazy, though this may have contributed to their performance in the episode itself. A further difficult moment was learning of *Class*'s cancellation, something they were all very disappointed in, especially for the lack of opportunity to continue with their characters, which only increased after they learned Ness's plans for the future.

As for the future of *Class*, we initially explored an alternative reality. Something that changed from Ness's original script was the amount of gore. *Class*, it seems, was originally to have taken a darker path—darker than killing most of the character's parents, that is. The attack at the prom in the first episode would have seen much more blood and chaos, especially when Ram loses his leg. Fady is still impressed by the make-up artists' work on his leg. Coming back to the future, all are happy with their new digs at Big Finish. The ability to act for audio leads to a much more relaxed atmosphere, and now knowing their characters more intimately, this gives them the chance to offer a stronger performance than before. Sophie also noted, with the high profile pickups of *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* and *Lucifer* by Netflix, it may not be out of the question for *Class* to return to screens in the future, in the vein of Netflix/BBC co-productions like *Troy: Fall of a City*, or an upcoming adaptation of *Watership Down*.

With Big Finish's first set of *Class* stories including Ace and the Daleks, the future for the concept looks much brighter than it did only a few months ago. While we may never see with our own eyes the planet of the Weeping Angels, as promised by Ness (though as Sophie said, keep those fingers crossed!), we may still hear those quantum locked antagonists zip towards a staring group of students from Coal Hill School. Stranger things have happened, so as always, Who knows.

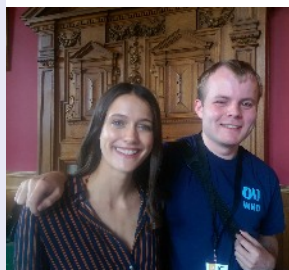
James meets Greg Austin...



...and Fady Elsayed...



...and Sophie Hopkins!



The second Big Finish *Class* volume



Katymanningtary

AMONG MY FAVOURITE EVENTS AT UTOPIA 2018 WERE THE LIVE COMMENTARIES, WHERE CAST MEMBERS DISCUSSED ONE OF THEIR EPISODES AS IT PLAYED BEFORE A GROUP OF FANS. I was lucky enough to attend Katy Manning's live commentary of *The Sea Devils* Episode 6. She swept into the room in typically fashionable style, before proceeding to introduce herself to everyone in attendance. This involved giving hugs and kisses to all in attendance, and complementing one guest in particular who was wearing a fantastic Iris Wildthyme cosplay. As the introductions concluded, she settled into her chair, and as the opening titles rolled, the commentary began.

The first thing she noted as she came in the screen was her costume. While the white and purple suit was perhaps a good idea in principle, it wasn't in practice. With all the naval shenanigans of *The Sea Devils*, it was all a matter of time before it got wet. Once it was, it became very stiff very quickly, leaving Katy to shuffle uncomfortably around the location shoots, especially when climbing from a ventilation duct.

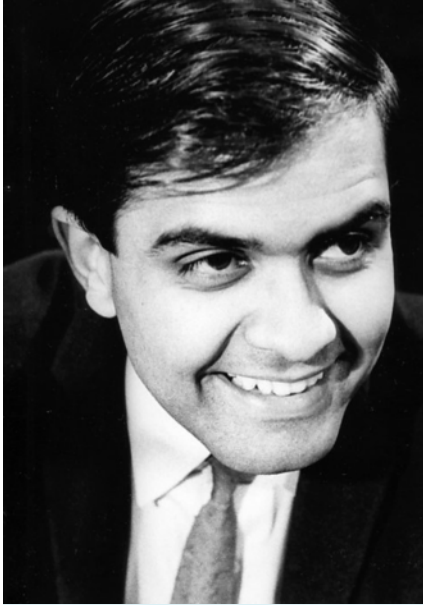
The *Sea Devils* themselves came in for considerable praise. She had built up a rapport with the actors beneath the costumes, Stuart Fell, who she nicknamed the 'Baby Sea Devil', in particular. She was also very passionate about the design and costumes of the *Sea Devils*, especially the scaly, reptilian look they were able to achieve.

A well-known story from the filming of *The Sea Devils* regards Roger Delgado's sea sickness. While Jon Pertwee was very happy to be left in the water and wait to be picked up, Roger Delgado was only very briefly dunked in to be filmed before being hauled out again. Katy also recalls teasing him along with Jon, repeating the line 'fatty pork chops' while Roger tried to stop throwing up.

Recalling the Royal Navy sailors who helped out in filming, Katy remembers Jon being very protective of her around them, especially after emerging from the hovercraft.



The Firemaker



ONE OF THE GUESTS I WAS DELIGHTED TO MEET AT UTOPIA 2018 WAS WARIS HUSSEIN. The director of *An Unearthly Child* and *Marco Polo* is one of the few remaining people connected with the birth of *Doctor Who*. In his talk, Waris discussed everything from putting the show together, missed opportunities, and the future of the show itself.

Waris started at the beginning, discussing how he initially got into directing at all. He was cast by director John Jacobs as a revolutionary in an episode of a BBC television series called *Corrigan Blake*, where by his own admission he found that acting was not his forte. Because of this, he tried to get onto an internal BBC director training course, from which he was initially fobbed off for being too young. He managed to get onto the waiting list, and the Friday before the course began, received word that he had made it! Completing the course, he remembers attending his first meeting of BBC directors, where a shocked John Jacobs saw and

remembered him.

Cutting his teeth in other BBC productions such as *Compact*, he eventually met one Verity Lambert, who was working on her new science-fiction show. As *An Adventure in Space and Time* suggests, it was not the most auspicious of productions, especially in the Lime Grove studios that he hated. Casting in particular proved quite a challenge. The character of Barbara was passed on by many actors, and eventually Verity convinced Jacqueline Hill, whom she knew socially, to take on the part. William Hartnell, as is known, could also be tetchy at times. In rehearsals, Hartnell tested the young director by trying to alter his stage directions, before Waris pointed out he'd walk off set. It seems that having passed his tests, the 'WHs' came to like each other, with Hartnell sad when Waris left after *Marco Polo*. By comparison, casting Susan was a walk in the park. In the old Television Centre, Waris sat in the observation room for Studio One, watching the actors preparing for the plays of the day. Noticing Carole Ann Ford, he got Verity to come and look, with both agreeing that she seemed suitable. After a successful audition, the rest, as they say, is history.

Waris also recalled some of the incidents on set. For *An Unearthly Child*, he vividly recalls a demanding female extra, who walked off set after realising that this version of *100,000BC* did not include Raquel Welch style costumes! The attack in *An Unearthly Child* was originally going to be much more vivid, with Waris wanting to use the old foley trick of smacking a pumpkin with a hammer to replicate the sound of the stone cracking the skull. Verity, aware of *Doctor Who's* positioning as teatime entertainment, disagreed, and she emerged victorious from the resulting argument. *Marco Polo* too was not without incident, with a monkey hired for the production

“crapping all over the set”, forcing a temporary hiatus in the production due to the overpowering smell. The actor holding the monkey, Tutte Lemkow, was apparently unfazed by the incident, later appearing in the serials *The Crusade* and *The Myth Makers*, as well as arranging the choreography for *The Celestial Toymaker*. He wasn't put off monkeys either, playing an Imam in *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, where a particularly villainous simian tries to poison Indiana Jones via the Imam's apprentice.

He awaits the return of *Marco Polo* one day, firmly believing that it exists within a collector's vault, and the chance for fans to see just how far the show had come in the short space of time, now it was better funded and supported by the BBC.

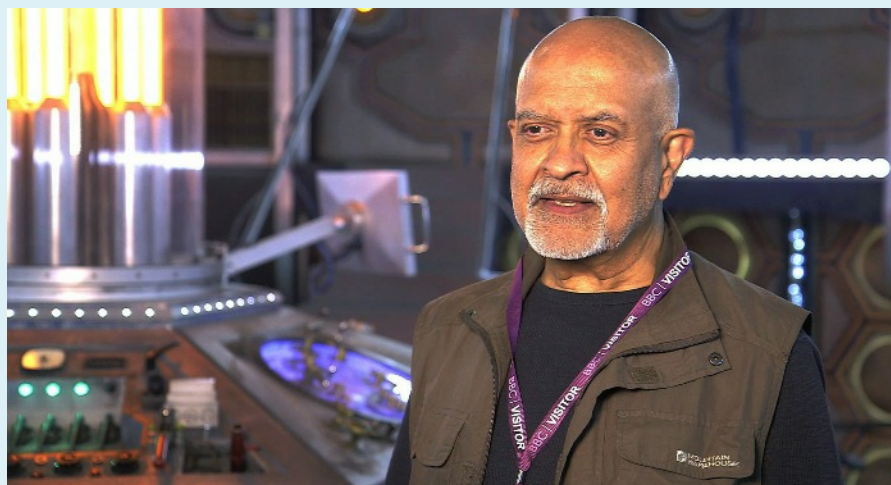
Having been unable to return to direct *The Five Doctors* as had been proposed by John Nathan-Turner, Waris was delighted to consult on *An Adventure in Space and Time*. Of course, one of the key parts involved helping Sacha Dhawan, who played him, get his accent right for the part. He also advised Mark Gatiss on various other aspects of the production. For example, Verity was originally to have been introduced in a basement flat, before catching the bus to work, which was quickly changed after Waris pointed out that her father was a wealthy solicitor, so it didn't ring true. Another was much more technical, noting that cameras one and four would not be used simultaneously in the studio.

As for the future of the show, Waris is looking forward to the arrival of Jodie Whittaker. He finds the concept fascinating, and hopes that this will lead to the phasing out of the Doctor as a romantic lead, with the “will they, won't they” tension that accompanies it. He also hopes that this change will give the show an added unpredictability, enabling the exploration of hitherto unthought of directions.

After all this time, Waris Hussein is still a font of information about the formative days of *Doctor Who*. We can but hope that his beliefs about *Marco Polo* hold true, and this work can be rediscovered by a generation who have never had the opportunity to watch it. As we approach a new era, it is good to see the support of those who have been with *Doctor Who* since the start, and will be enjoying the show with us.



returns in 2019





Past and present mixed up

Matthew Kilburn introduces his book *The Black Archive 24: The Time Warrior*

THE TIME WARRIOR IS THE EARLIEST *DOCTOR WHO* STORY FROM WHICH I HAVE ANY MEMORY OF THE FIRST BROADCAST. It's not Jon Pertwee's Doctor whom I remember specifically, though I'm sure he was already a familiar figure; and I think by the time the story began in December 1973 (I had turned three late in November) I'd already been bought the Contour album *Children's TV Themes* by Cy Payne and his Orchestra, from whose album cover a line drawing of Pertwee stared out above a less recognisable image of Pertwee face to eyestalk with a livid pink Dalek, perhaps jealous that the Doctor had turned up to the same event in its colour. Nor did Sarah Jane Smith initially have a great impact. Instead, I was fascinated by a particular figure, clad in a what looked like metal, surmounted by what seemed to be a domed head with few features beyond two eye slits. I don't know whether the voice I associate with the memory, saying "I think it's some kind of robot," was my thought or an observation from Karen, the neighbour in her late teens with whom I think I was watching.

Of course, as the end of the episode showed, the creature wasn't a robot. Instead the entity's head turned out to be a helmet. When removed, the features beneath were like nothing I had ever seen. The most disturbing thing, I suspect, was that the features were human, but slightly out of proportion with each other – sunken eyes, enlarged nose, widened mouth, ears small and some distance from the other features of the face, as if cut off and stitched back on. What's more, this didn't seem to be something artificial, as I knew it must be, but grown – confirmed, it appeared, by the moving eyes and tongue. This was Linx, *Doctor Who's* first Sontaran, and he was terrifying.

I'm sure I didn't watch another episode of the story.

I remember fragments of the rest of the season. I recall the Daleks, shooting at a model police box



Linx (Kevin Lindsay), tasting the Cheshire air (Peckforton Castle, 1973)

for target practice. I remember Alpha Centauri escorting Sarah Jane Smith through a corridor on Peladon (although I thought poor amiable Alpha was a different variety of Dalek). I remember a good deal of *Planet of the Spiders*, not from first transmission but from the Christmas compilation. Nevertheless, none of the creatures I encountered had the same effect on me as Linx. This was a being whose features were so human, unlike the Daleks or Alpha Centauri (if I saw the Ice Warriors on television during 1974 they were entirely unmemorable, likewise the puppet prehistoric reptiles of *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*), that I wonder whether I feared that I could plausibly grow up into him. This was not an appealing destiny.

Matthew and the Sontarans

I watched more of the 1974/5 season, or rather followed it from the stairs and vicariously from my parents' summaries as I was often too apprehensive to watch. It's difficult to say why. Most monsters were not frightening. Robot K-1's head looked a bit suspicious – what was lurking behind that reddish plastic visor? – but it was on the whole harmless-looking. Even as I was disturbed by Noah, half his body consumed by what two and a half years later I'd read was the larval tissue of a Wirrn (or as Ian Marter preferred in that 1977 novelization, Wirrrn), I was sure the effect was made by the use of a packaging material, which I thought was green netting like my mother's collapsible shopping bag. The Daleks were tame and harmless and Davros was just a man in a mask sitting in half a Dalek. Styre, however was an even more grotesque version of Linx, his features taunting my childhood sense of identity as a squashed human face. There was something about horror behind something detachable. I remember seeing a trailer for *Revenge of the Cybermen* and having to be reassured by my mother, both on the day the trailer was broadcast (Saturday, after part six of *Genesis of the Daleks*? Or Sunday?) and during the week between *Doctor Who* episodes, that the Cybermen did not take their helmets off to reveal an abomination.

With visual documentation not extending beyond the two monster books, the faces of Linx and Styre grew as symbols of the terror of *Doctor Who* as my childhood progressed. Despite being seven years old, I treated the appearance of the Sontarans at the end of part four of *The Invasion of Time* as a reason not to watch the next two parts, only returning for the Doctor's declaration of amnesia and his departure without Leela and the original K-9. At an even more advanced age, fourteen, I was still



Varl and Stike in *The Two Doctors* – less believable than Linx or Styre.

sufficiently haunted by memories of *The Time Warrior* and *The Sontaran Experiment* to feel that watching *The Two Doctors* and its Sontarans was a significant step, although at the same time I thought the masks worn by Tim Raynham and Clinton Greyn in that story were over-sculpted and stylized beyond usefulness; these were misplaced art pieces, not practical creations intended to combine with an actor's performance to suggest an alien lifeform.

Doctor Who and the Oxonians

I first watched *The Time Warrior* right through in 1989, when the BBC Video was released. I can't remember my reaction beyond admiring the production, which to my serious eighteen-year-old self seemed, in performance, writing and design, so much more sure of itself and its audience and less mannered than the *Doctor Who* of Sylvester McCoy's day. The prehistory of the book, though, was about to become an Oxford story. At the still-young Oxford University Doctor Who Society, I became embroiled in arguments of varying levels of seriousness about when the Earthbound adventures of *Doctor Who* were set. *The Time Warrior* was particularly taxing. I ended up expounding one theory in unexpected circumstances when, early in 1992 during my final undergraduate year, I was at a dinner attended by my prospective postgraduate supervisor. I didn't drink alcohol at the time, unusual for attendees at a formal meal such as this one. "Do you smoke?" asked my potential supervisor. I said no.

"So, what are your vices?" came the reply.

"*Doctor Who!*" chorused one of my tutors and a postgraduate student a couple of undergraduate years above me (already then emerging as a leading scholar and now herself a professor of urban history).

I was in a hole, I decided; but stopping digging is not always the best option, depending on how one manages the spoil and what one finds as excavation advances. So I landed upon historical *Doctor Who* stories, and outlined the issues as I understood them then, getting through splutters of disbelief that there could be anything that could claim to be 'character development' in *Doctor Who*, and talked about *The Time Warrior*, where its setting might be accommodated historically, and possible influences upon the script. I don't think I necessarily acquitted myself in the eyes of the rest of the table, but it was not the first time I had to make a defence not only of *Doctor Who*, but of television as something that invited study. Someone then said I should write a book about *The Time Warrior*. This is not the book I would have written over a quarter of a century ago, of course; but it owes something nevertheless to that conversation.

Discovering the Black Archive

About ten years ago I made some notes towards and wrote out a chapter structure and some text for a book on *Doctor Who* and history. This later turned into a collective enterprise as I learned of a similar plan from two classical historians, Tony Keen and Penny Goodman (the latter an Oxford Doctor Who Society veteran), and we agreed to join forces. We have not yet managed to launch this work, although we came very close early in 2014 when I got as far as making contact with a publisher, only for my then-new job to become all-consuming. The advent of the Black Archive, which was announced by Obverse Books during 2015 for launch early in 2016, suggested an opportunity to get some of my ideas about *Doctor Who* and history out there.

Remembering my dinner conversation of early 1992, *The Time Warrior* seemed an obvious choice, a decision buttressed by my interest in the Third Doctor's relationship with history. The past was largely somewhere the Third Doctor talked about having visited, as for much of the Jon Pertwee



The Time Warrior writer Robert Holmes -
a pipe-smoking man

period the Doctor was exiled to Earth. He reminisced about meeting Edward VII in Paris, his friendship with Horatio Nelson, or a conversation with Napoleon. However, just as the monsters from outer space came to the Doctor, so did the monsters from Earth's past. These were, mostly invented prehistoric creatures, Silurians and Sea Devils or Dæmons, representatives of the mythical civilization of Atlantis in *The Time Monster* or anonymous individuals plucked briefly from their time streams in that story and *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*.

The Time Warrior, at the start of Jon Pertwee's fifth and final season of *Doctor Who*, was the first story in which Pertwee's Doctor spent any length of time in a documented historical period. While the precise dating of *The Time Warrior* falls under what Terrance Dicks calls on the DVD commentary 'masterful vagueness', the story does have a sense of historical change, recognising the threat to established order when the authority which has maintained a monopoly of force is weakened or challenged by an unexpectedly greater power, or the disruption caused to established societies when an outsider arrives with more advanced technology. Its writer Robert Holmes had spent several formative years fighting across Burma in the Second World War and the original storyline has Linx speaking in jargon drawing from that used by American forces in south-east Asia in the Korean and Vietnamese conflicts. The latter was grinding slowly towards its close in 1973 and informed Holmes's juxtaposition of modern, historical and futuristic elements. Likewise Holmes's sense of the Middle Ages was shaped by fiction, particularly Hollywood cinema. I thought this would make an enjoyable book for me to write and for others to read.

I was further encouraged when I discussed the idea at an M.R. James conference in March 2016. This was held in Leeds, co-organised by Dewi Evans (another ODWS alumnus) and attended by, among others, Penny Goodman, former ODWS president James Brough, and Holly Matthies. All of them encouraged me to pitch, James reminding me of how far Linx is a parody of the Third Doctor. However, the Black Archive was still in its early months and there were no guidelines as yet for approaches. It was not until December 2016 that I took things further, when I attended that year's Missing Believed Wiped at the BFI in London, celebrating and screening recent recoveries in the hunt for lost television. Ian Potter, whom I'd first met at a University of Manchester conference on *Doctor Who* back in 2004, reintroduced me to James (Jim) Cooray Smith, whom I'd last seen in 2002 when I was helping Alan Stevens and Fiona Moore (another ODWS ex-president) at a signing event for their Kaldor City CDs. At the end of a conversation with Ian, Jim and several others about recent discoveries of old television, I mentioned to Jim – whose appointment as a joint editor of the Black



One of my favourite things about the Written Archives Centre was access to the BBC Monitoring canteen, with its traditional menu and its ancient-seeming trays with fifty-plus-year-old BBC branding.

Archive had then been recently announced – that I would be taking advantage of the imminent open submissions period and sending a proposal.

“Don’t bother,” he said. “Send it to me anyway.”

So, I spent a lot of the Christmas and New Year of 2016/17 working on my argument for a book on *The Time Warrior*. I never completed it to my satisfaction, and eventually sent an unfinished version to Jim at his request in February 2017. He commissioned it nevertheless.

Fugitive time

My work on the book didn’t get very far during 2017. I undertook some desktop research on the career of the story’s director Alan Bromly, using the British Newspaper Archive (a subscription collection of scans from the British Library’s newspaper collection). Bromly’s work on this story and on *Nightmare of Eden* (1979) has customarily not been well-regarded. I was able to find out more about his background and his earlier career than I’d seen collected before, although in the end most of this proved to be extraneous to the finished book. I also spent some time in the Bodleian with boxes of the magazine *John Bull* in an attempt to find influences on the story from Robert Holmes’s early career, but was unable to pin down very many with the exception of a particular magazine cover from 1957 which might have lingered in Holmes’s memory from the period he was working on the title. In September 2017 I spent a day at the palace of programme documentation that is the BBC Written Archives Centre, Caversham, where I made copies of the production files and camera scripts - the scripts which lay out the position of each camera in the multicamera video studio shot for shot, and which include the versions of dialogue and directions used as the actors went into the studio to perform on set.

A few months later, after I mentioned *The Time Warrior* project on Twitter, a collector contacted me to say that they had copies of the rehearsal scripts, and were happy to send them to me. It became clear as I looked at these scripts that they represented a much less polished edit. There were hints of an earlier draft of the serial which suggested that Terrance Dicks’s anecdote of his hacking down the scripts over a weekend to meet Alan Bromly’s reservations was close to what actually transpired, while there were tantalising glimpses of other possible realisations of Linx.

I did some work in November, exploring the influence of Henry Fuseli’s painting ‘The Nightmare’ on Linx’s mask and other elements of 1970s *Doctor Who* design, but then other events intervened and I didn’t get back to writing until February. During this time I had an interview for, was offered and accepted a research contract which I confidently said I’d start in May. How hard could writing a Black Archive be? I had significantly underestimated the task, as it transpired, largely because of my own ambitions for the book and the need to balance other commitments.

I was lucky in that my academic visitor status at the Oxford History Faculty gave me access not only to the physical university libraries, but also to online databases including newspapers and academic journals. Unrestricted collections like Project Gutenberg, the Internet Archive and the Hathi Trust were all useful too, as were online booksellers, especially secondhand ones. As a result of this process I have two more copies of the novelization of *The Time Warrior* than I did before, as my battered first edition (bought in Foyles, Charing Cross Road, London, in August 1978) was joined by a first edition in better condition and by a 'blue spine' edition from the early 1990s (actually a 1984 reprint with its original cover and price removed and the new cover and price attached). However, this also created a problem of selection in several areas, for example, covering Gothic literature as applied to *The Time Warrior*. As the book grew – I'd expected to write 30-35,000 words at most, only for the manuscript to exceed 48,000 – I realised that I could easily have written 100,000 words on the story, though perhaps not to as great an effect as the shorter length has provided.

The time editors

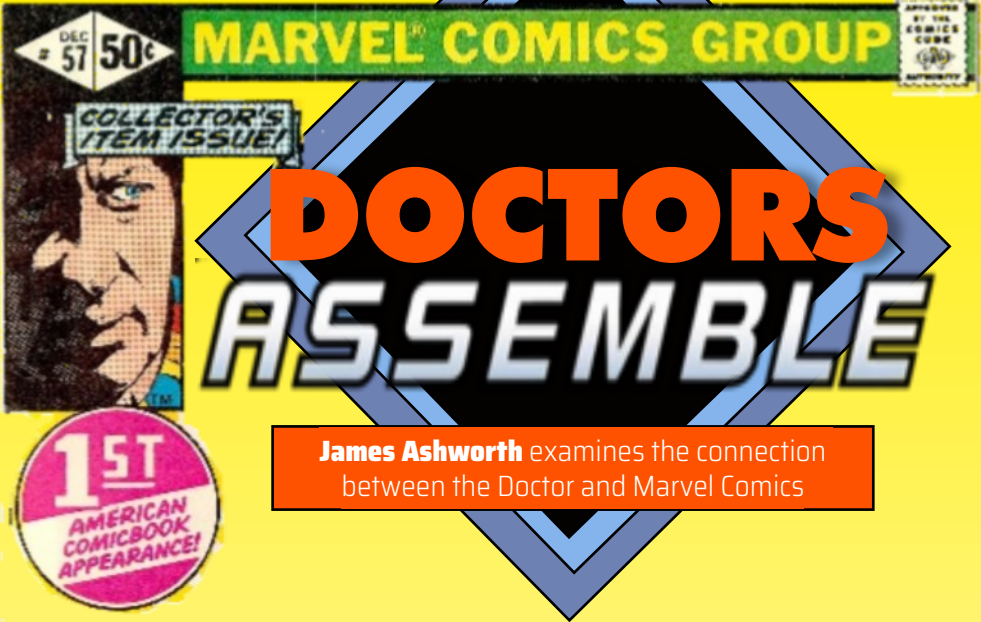
A significant change for the book came in April when Paul Simpson took over from James Cooray Smith as the book's editor. Among Paul's many activities is the editorship of the website *Sci-Fi Bulletin*. He's been involved in *Doctor Who* fandom since the 1970s and brought a sharp eye for inconsistencies, over-speculation, and referencing. One exchange led to research which has affected a future Black Archive, and which led to me ordering up two boxes of mid-1960s *Playboy* to the Bodleian, under the dubious gaze of a librarian, in search of an article by Arthur C. Clarke.



The book! Illustration by Blair Bidmead, graphic design by Cody Schell.

My deadline for the book had been 1 April. I'd changed that to 1 May; in the end, I delivered during August and spent the rest of that month and much of September frantically adjusting the book to the requests of Paul, his fellow range editor Philip Purser-Hallard, and publisher Stuart Douglas. Several sections were removed or heavily trimmed to be able to fit my text into the maximum length for the book, and I also needed to write an authoritative conclusion. I'm immensely pleased that Paul, Philip and Stuart were able to get the book out at the start of October, on schedule, despite my extreme lateness.

Several people helped with the book in one way or another, and the acknowledgements cover not only information and commentary but various kinds of reassurance. The process was exhilarating as well as tiring. The book is a very personal as well as analytical work and represents a skein of more than four decades from my life. There's more to be woven from it yet.



IT'S 1961. A NEW ERA OF POPULAR ADVENTURE STORIES IS DAWNING, DRAWING ON HOPES AND FEARS ABOUT RECENT SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES, AND A GROUP OF ADVENTURERS ARE ABOUT TO BURST INTO THE PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS. I am, of course, talking about the publication of *Fantastic Four* 1. The fledgling 'Marvel age of comics' had just started, and would go on to produce many other characters, including Spider-Man, the Hulk and the X-Men. A couple of years later, another group would enter a strange blue box, which would whisk them away on a whole new series of adventures. *Doctor Who* had begun. Both *Doctor Who* and Marvel Comics have had their ups and downs, particularly in the 1990s. For *Doctor Who*, this was cancellation, while Marvel Comics went bankrupt in 1996 and sold film rights for many of its most popular characters, which still affects decisions made by Marvel Studios today. But what else links these two institutions? Let's find out!



Captain Britain no. 1, as seen in *Doctor Who* newsagents in October 1976.

One of the most concrete links existed in Marvel's British outfit, Marvel UK. This was established in 1972 so Marvel could handle its own publishing in Britain, it originally just reprinted US comics, mostly in black and white. They were printed weekly, rather than monthly as in America, and in anthologies in the style of existing British weekly comics rather than as single-character or single-team titles. A lot of work was required to create new or edit existing art to act as covers and splash pages that didn't appear in the US. The reprints suffered from competition, both from the original American comics themselves circulating in Britain, and also from the reinvigoration of British boys' adventure comics through titles such as *Warlord* and *Battle*. In order to combat falling sales, Marvel UK editor Neil Tennant suggested Marvel commission its own British-originated war comic, but Marvel US preferred to introduce a British Marvel

superhero, and Captain Britain was introduced in 1976. Neil Tennant remained at Marvel UK for a couple more years before becoming famous as a member of the Pet Shop Boys. One David McDonald would borrow Neil Tennant's surname for professional purposes when he became an actor.



Advertising for *Doctor Who Weekly* placed in the Doctor Who Appreciation Society's *Celestial Toyroom* newsletter, and so aimed at the most devoted of the devoted fanbase.

Note the lack of emphasis on comics!

However, Captain Britain faltered, lost his own title and eventually disappeared (though not for good) in 1977. Marvel UK needed a new source of revenue. Luckily, Marvel had the comic strip rights to *Star Wars* in the US and UK, and the success of their *Star Wars* titles saved both its American parent and Marvel UK, whose *Star Wars Weekly* debuted in January 1978. In 1979, Marvel UK's then editorial director Dez Skinn, committed to originating new material in the UK, also gained the rights to *Doctor Who*, and with it a devoted fanbase ready to buy his new launch *Doctor Who Weekly*. This evolved into the monthly *Doctor Who Magazine* (referred to in most of this article as *DWM*), which has been continuously published to the present day, beyond the incorporation of Marvel UK itself into Panini UK in the 1990s.

While Marvel hasn't majorly influenced the television series (though *The Lodger* is based on a Panini *DWM* strip of the same name), it has contributed to the creation of a familiar character. One fan of Marvel's output while he was growing up was a certain Russell T Davies, reflected in his work by the recurrence of the surname Harkness. Initially appearing as Esme Harkness in both the TV series *Century Falls*, and later *The Grand*, it is of more interest to us as the surname of our favourite Time Agent, Captain Jack Harkness. The surname itself comes from Agatha Harkness, a witch of the Marvel Universe, who first appeared in *Fantastic Four* 94. She has acted as a mentor and carer to other characters such as Scarlet Witch and Franklin Richards, and like Captain Jack has an uncanny knack of coming back to life. Marvel has also created characters that have later appeared in other *Doctor Who* media. Frobisher, the Whifferdill who likes to take the form of a penguin, is one such example. Originally appearing in part one of *The Shape-Shifter* in *DWM* 88 (May 1984) and a regular character until the final part of *A Cold Day in Hell* in *DWM* 133 (February 1988), he has gone on to appear in a couple of Big Finish audio stories, as well as making occasional returns to the main comic strip. However, Marvel did predict the casting of a female Doctor, sort of. In the eighth issue of the short-lived *The Incredible Hulk Presents* (25 November 1989) is a *Doctor Who* strip by the name of *Who's That Girl!* As the TARDIS arrives at the signing of an intergalactic treaty, the delegates are surprised to see a woman step out. This 'Doctor' wears a mix of clothes from the wardrobes of Doctors Four to Seven. However, it soon becomes apparent they are an imposter, with the Seventh Doctor tied to the TARDIS console. While that Doctor may not have been real, her character is still out there. Maybe she's due a comeback, perhaps even a companion in the vein of the unmade Season Twenty-Seven's proposed cat burglar?

A more recent connection is via *The World Shapers*, as featured in *DWM* 127-129. It featured the Sixth Doctor, along with Peri, Frobisher and Jamie McCrimmon. Here, after finding a distress signal on Marinus, the Doctor follows clues to Planet 14, which turns out to be a name given by terraformers to Marinus. Here, he finds the Voord evolving into the Cybermen. This incident seems to be recalled by the Twelfth Doctor in *The Doctor Falls* as one of the many examples of the parallel

evolution of the Cybermen, mostly by races desperate to survive. It remains to be seen whether the story's further statement, that the Cybermen will transcend physical form to become benevolent helpers, somewhat like the hypothetical Boltzmann Brains, will come to pass.

Up to this point, the Whoniverse had been self-contained, while still existing under the Marvel banner. However, the Marvel and *Doctor Who* universes have crossed paths. These crossovers began in *DWM* 135 (April 1988), after Death's Head, a Marvel UK character, collided with the TARDIS. Death's Head is an intergalactic, time travelling, robotic bounty hunter who was originally developed for another Marvel licence, *Transformers*. As such, the character was thirty feet tall, and so this story was written out of narrative convenience in order to allow him to enter Marvel proper. He had to be shrunk, and after a quick spin with the Tissue Compression Eliminator, The Doctor sent him into one of the many Marvel universes.



Death's Head 8 (July 1989). Cover art by Brian Hitch and Mark Farmer. Hitch was later concept artist for the 2005 series of *Doctor Who*.

After Death's Head received his own series the next year, the Doctor took a trip to the Marvel Universe instead, in *Death's Head* 8 (July 1989). In this issue, Death's Head is hired to kill the Doctor, but they are both set up by a common enemy in the form of Josiah Dogbolter, the villain of *DWM*'s strips *The Moderator* and *The Shape-Shifter* (both 1984). After Dogbolter's attempt to destroy them with a nuclear bomb fails, the Doctor drops Death's Head off, calling it even. While this in itself could be seen as another self-contained story, the Doctor left Death's Head on top of the Fantastic Four's Baxter Building, making the Doctor an official resident of, or at least visitor to, the Marvel Universe. This suggests that the Marvel Universe may be one of the myriad of parallel worlds that the Time Lords could access, as revealed on television in *The Age of Steel* (2006). Death's Head and the Doctor would later cross paths at a party in *DWM* 173 (May 1991).

Doctor Who is heavily referenced in other comics as well. One of the most blatant is in the *Excalibur* comics. *Excalibur* are the British X-Men team, and one of their members is none other than Captain Britain.

They are frequently assisted in their first series by the British government organisation W.H.O. led by the twins Alysande/Alysdane (her name changes) and Alistaire Stuart. Of course, they are inspired by a certain Brigadier and U.N.I.T. Another feature of *Excalibur* was the later revelation they were brought together by the wizard Merlin as a gambit in his age-old battle against the sorcerer Necrom. The Doctor has assumed the identity of Merlin before, and the Seventh Doctor especially was fond of a bit of manipulation, so who knows? Maybe he played a longer game than we know about...

Captain Britain had endured several other revivals between his disappearance from *Super Spider-Man and Captain Britain* in 1977 and his appearance in *Excalibur*. For a period in the 1980s Alan Moore wrote *Captain Britain* for Marvel UK. Sent to a parallel Earth, Captain Britain found that a politician had swept to victory, seemingly from nowhere. This politician travels in a flying teapot, one which is bigger on the inside than on the outside, and he aims to destroy all other superheroes, leaving him the sole survivor. He is the Master Sir Jim Jaspers. The parallels to the Master's plan in *The Sound of Drums/Last of the Time Lords* (2007) are apparent, though the similarities end quickly after this set-up.

Authors have also crossed between these two universes. Captain Britain yet again acts as a bridge between worlds via one of his more recent series, *Captain Britain and MI13*. This was written by Paul Cornell, long a writer for the New Adventure novels and more recently for TV through his episodes, *Father's Day* (2005) and *Human Nature/The Family Of Blood* (2007), as well as many other contributions to the world of *Doctor Who* comics and audios. Another, Dan Abnett, most well known in the Marvel Universe for being one half of the duo who assembled the recent incarnation of the Guardians of the Galaxy, has also written for *Doctor Who*, in the form of novels such as *The Silent Stars Go By* (2011) and also for *DWM* comic strips while the magazine was at Marvel. He also wrote *The Harvest* (2004), the Big Finish audio which introduced the Seventh Doctor's companion Hex for the first time. Even Colin Baker provides a link here. After being given the opportunity to pen three short stories for *DWM*'s 'Brief Encounters' series, he went on to write a *Doctor Who* comic for Marvel, called *The Age of Chaos* (1994). This special edition continues Peri's story after her departure in the *Mindwarp* section of *The Trial of a Time Lord*. The Sixth Doctor arrives on Krontep, a world plunged into civil war by the manipulations of the regent, Farlig, after the death of Yrcanos, and sets about sorting things out and reuniting Peri's family. The front cover was drawn by Alan Davis, one of the artists and later authors of the aforementioned Excalibur comics.



Jeremiah Kilgrave (David Tennant) exercises his malign influence on Jessica (Kristen Ritter) in *Marvel's Jessica Jones*

In recent years the Marvel name has been associated with film and television productions directly controlled by the company which also owns the comic characters, rather than licensed out (as remains the case with the X-Men series). A number of *Doctor Who* actors have featured in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, most notably David Tennant, who in *Jessica Jones* plays the villainous Jeremiah Kilgrave, a man with the power to make people obey his commands. Unfortunately, he has not yet used the phrase 'I am Kilgrave and you will obey me'. Christopher Eccleston had previously made this transition, playing another villain, Malekith in *Thor: The Dark World*. Karen Gillan plays Nebula in *Guardians of the Galaxy*, while Jenna Coleman briefly appears in the first Captain America film, as does David Bradley. Even Marvel films produced by other studios, such as the X-Men series (at Fox) and Spider-Man films (at Sony), have Ian McKellen and Laurence Belcher (a current Oxford undergraduate) of Christmas specials various, for the former, and Andrew Garfield (*Daleks in Manhattan/Evolution of the Daleks* [2007]) for the latter.

So will a new *Doctor Who* film be produced as part of Marvel's phase four plans? Alas, probably not. In 1995 Marvel merged Marvel UK with their other European subsidiary, Panini, and following Marvel's bankruptcy in 1997 Panini was sold into different hands to Marvel US. While Panini publishes Marvel content in Europe, it is a licensee rather than a subsidiary or a sister company. While we may never see the Doctor fight the Hulk on screen, all these references can still be tied into the show, thanks to a short story, *Continuity Errors*, by one Steven Moffat. His first contribution to the world of *Doctor Who*, it tells how the Doctor inserts himself into cultures as a fictional character, in order to avoid any suspicion. So if there is a crossover, there's an explanation ready.

Back when Stan Lee was editor-in-chief and then as publisher of Marvel Comics, he would end his 'Bullpen Bulletins' with his signature line, 'Excelsior!' We'll end this on a more Whovian note. Until next time, Excalibur!



The Fan Show

Ian Bayley contemplates Peter Capaldi, actor and superfan, at London Film and ComicCon 2018

IN THE CONTEXT OF *DOCTOR WHO*, PETER CAPALDI'S LIFE STORY IS FAMOUSLY THAT OF THE OBSESSIVE TEENAGE SUPERFAN WHO WENT ON TO PLAY THE HERO OF HIS OWN CHILDHOOD. While that description may fit David Tennant too, it is Capaldi who went so far as to pen an eloquent essay on the then-current title sequence for the Doctor Who International Fan Club fanzine in 1976. When he speaks to an audience, there is something disarming in the way that he seems to communicate with us fan to fan, as if inviting us all to imagine what decisions we would make, if we had found ourselves in his shoes, crafting the character of the Twelfth Doctor.

It was in this spirit that he recalled his pride when, after extensive consultation with the fashion designer Paul Smith, he perfected the initial, and his personal favourite, look of his Doctor for the Pertwee-homaging photoshoot that introduced us to Twelve. Likewise, he explained his electric guitar as a response to a request for new ideas for Series Nine. He even acknowledged it may be fan heresy for him to say that he doesn't like the sonic screwdriver; the reason he gave, that the Series Eight model spoiled the lining of his jacket, made its way into the script for *The Witch's Familiar*.

If Capaldi still carries something of the studious professional actor carefully preparing a role, the inner fanboy leaves the actor behind when the opportunity arises to talk about the character of the Doctor. In the cold open to *Listen*, which he named as his favourite story to work on, the Doctor is seen to talk to himself at length. Why wouldn't the character have a whole different way of interacting with the universe, Capaldi argued, when not around humans and freed from the need to behave as we expect? In the same vein, the prompt cards we see in *Under the Lake* show us that the Doctor is an alien who often finds it difficult to be around humans; Colin Baker also developed this theme during his era. It could indeed be seen as an acknowledgement of the daily problems of autism, as one questioner suggested, but if so then that is an unexpected boon.

As you'd expect, the inner fanboy comes out even more when asked what past monster he'd like to return. Having reportedly been given the Mondasian Cybermen as a goodbye present, Capaldi

immediately pictured himself travelling back to Vortis for a sequel to *The Web Planet*. Imagine how good a planet dominated by insect life would look with modern effects, he argued, and with none of the Zarbi crashing into the cameras. We would all marvel again at the Menoptra with their delicate membranous wings and their quivering voices, he added, recalling Martin Jarvis's portrayal in particular. You might argue that their recent Twitch-based surge in popularity makes this case even stronger, although Big Finish has already send the Fifth Doctor back to Vortis in audio-only form.

It was very entertaining, but also rather striking, to watch our show's lead actor for three years proposing fan theories and wish lists, like we do ourselves when in Whovian company. However, he is no ordinary aficionado, but one who has had a positive impact on the subject of his expertise. I had viewed his portrayal of Malcolm Tucker as an unrelated comedy role, but he explained that the requirement to memorise very long scripted rants, for delivery in a manner intended to seem spontaneous, helped him enormously with many of the speeches he had to make as the Doctor. He emphasised though, as he has done before, that unlike Malcolm Tucker, the Doctor is about kindness.

I sat at the back of a huge hall of hundreds of people, having joined three different wrong queues, so I didn't get the chance to ask Capaldi a question. However, I still greatly enjoyed hearing what he had to say in reply to those who were luckier. He was even asked the ultimate divisive question that all fans must answer: "Who is your favourite Doctor?" Diplomatic as ever, he replied "Jodie Whittaker!" It is heartening to know that he is cheering her on with the rest of us.

Empty Pockets, Empty Shelves

LEARNING AND THE ACCOUTREMENTS OF KNOWLEDGE WEIGH HEAVILY ON THE TWELFTH DOCTOR. By the end of his first episode, he's already fitted out the upper gallery of the TARDIS control room with rows of books and a blackboard. Books and bookshelves protect the Twelfth Doctor's inner life. In *Robot of Sherwood*, he lurks amidst them eating yoghurt with a childlike guilt, as if his covetous licking of a spoon is proof that he is not a good man. Later, reading is possibly an indicator of the Doctor's entering a dream state, as he has a book in his hand when Santa Claus knocks on the TARDIS door and interrupts the closing credits of *Death in Heaven*. Ashildr/Me's emulation of the Doctor includes her library, dominated by her own diaries, recalling the Fifth Doctor's "A man is the sum of his memories, you know. A Time Lord even more so." (*The Five Doctors*)

The transformation of the Twelfth Doctor into the Thirteenth sees the Doctor's books either consumed in flame or cast to the winds above Sheffield. The new Doctor proves to have "empty pockets". The introspective reader and guitar player has become a practical woman who applies knowledge, recalled from fragmentary experience rather than complete works, or gathers it on the fly. The institution this Doctor would gather around her would be different from the Twelfth Doctor's St Luke's. Instead of the poetry of physics and the universe as absurd abstraction, the Thirteenth Doctor would probably talk about helping people while making free with a blowtorch. Like the First Doctor in *The Aztecs*, she's an engineer, a builder of things, but with added kindness. However, with the old monsters has gone a sense of security in old learning. The Thirteenth Doctor has been betrayed by incomplete knowledge in *Demons of the Punjab* and *Kerblam!* Salvation and identity come from discovering information and making new tools. Instead of studying precedents and soul-searching about what it is to be a hero in one's own life, the Doctor now finds her heroism in other people and in small decisions. If the last Doctor worked out what it was to be the author of one's own and others' stories, this one is interested in the best possible collective narrative, and that means disparate voices and far fewer grand gestures. Binding them on a shelf would be too limiting and a spirit of anti-discovery. She's someone who has renounced Godlike presumption to become "a stranger on the bus, trying to make [her] way home," (in the words of Eric Bazilian's song recorded by Joan Osborne, *One of Us*) and content with small victories. I miss the tortured authority of the Twelfth Doctor, but am intrigued to see how much more evidence arises for my reading of the Thirteenth Doctor.

Matthew Kilburn

Blind drunk at Sainsbury's

James Ashworth asks whether Big Finish's *Exile*, starring Arabella Weir, really is the worst *Doctor Who* audio ever made



The cover of the CD release of *Exile* (Big Finish Productions, 2003)

WITH JODIE WHITTAKER ON OUR SCREENS AS THE FIRST WOMAN DOCTOR, MANY HAVE BEEN LOOKING BACK AT OTHER TAKES ON A FEMALE DOCTOR. Joanna Lumley's turn in *The Curse of Fatal Death* (1999) is perhaps the most memorable, but *Exile* is an attempt its creators would rather we forgot. *Exile*, starring Arabella Weir, was produced back in 2003 as part of Big Finish's Unbound Range, which explores a 'What If?' approach to the Doctor's life. *Exile* investigated what happened if the Doctor escaped the Time Lords at the end of *The War Games* (1969).

'I just made it up as a bit of a joke at the time really because it is a fairly humorous episode.'

So said writer Nicholas Briggs.¹ Unfortunately, it's really not that funny at all.

The Good

Before we come to the negatives, let's look at the bright side. As the story opens, we are reminded by the author himself that Big Finish Productions does not believe that Sainsbury's car parks are prone to exploding. So far, so Douglas Adams. Maybe it isn't as bad as people say? We open at the end of *The War Games*, with the Chief Time Lord Adjudicator attempting to pass sentence on the War Lord, and then the Doctor, while being constantly undermined by his subordinate. As the Doctor arrives, they realise that the Doctor has escaped, with a guard arriving in his place. Despite the protestations of the president of the Doctor Who Appreciation Society back in 1977, taking the Time Lords off their pedestal was a masterstroke by *The Deadly Assassin*, and the concept is still fun here. This continues as these two Time Lords, played by Toby Longworth and one David Tennant, track the Doctor to Earth, engaging in a fish out of water comedy as it turns out their information is useless. Dressed as hippies and trying to spend shillings in the year 2000, they are forced to politely mug someone, stage a broadcast intrusion from a bedsit (reminiscent of one which interrupted a transmission of *Horror of Fang Rock* (1977) by WTTW Chicago in 1987), and try to conquer the intricacies of tinned goods. If the question at the heart of the story had been 'What if the Doctor had been exiled with another Time Lord?', we'd be off to a flying start. But unfortunately, the rest of the story has to happen.

¹ Interviewed by Susan Hewitt, <https://blogtorwho.com/nicholas-briggs-big-finish-past-present-future/>

The Bad

William Shakespeare, of *The Shakespeare Code* fame, wrote many comedies. As Nicholas Briggs professed, *Exile* is meant to be humorous. However, if I were to sum this up as a Shakespeare play, it would have to be *The Comedy of Errors*. Or in this case, 'A Tragedy of Errors'. The Doctor hides on Earth, and works at Sainsbury's to escape the attention of the Time Lords. She also spends her evenings getting blind drunk with her food themed friends Cherrie and Cheese, with plenty of vomit and burping to fill up any spare space. And I must emphasise the sheer amount of burping that the listener is subjected to in a misguided quest for laughs. After a cringeworthy scene in a bar, where another pubgoer is mistaken for the Master, she becomes involved in a plot to save Princess Anne, who is to open her Sainsbury's car park, from a supposed alien attack caused by the drunken misinterpretation of her fellow Time Lords' intrusion into the TV signal. As you may have guessed, it just isn't funny. It just seems to be a sting of awkward, drawn out moments that don't entertain and don't lead anywhere. The constant repetition of the joke about the evil Quarks may raise a smile the first time, but wears thin. Even this could be forgiven, but the worst is yet to come.

The Ugly

The worst part of *Exile* is most certainly its attitude to a female Doctor as a concept. In order to become female, the Doctor had to kill themselves, in a weird hybrid regeneration of the second and fourth Doctors, leading to the present incarnation. Bad enough? It gets worse. The previous Doctor, whom Weir's Doctor hallucinates about while drunk, is misogynistic at best, and a horribly sexist and transphobic figure at worst. This means the first female Doctor to have their own episode as the primary Doctor is played for cheap laughs, and is treated as a drunken fool throughout. She doesn't even get the episode to herself as the only Doctor! While this audio would still be bad if the Doctor was male, the fact that there was a conscious decision to make the Doctor female, vilify this change of gender, and then produce something where the Doctor is treated by her fellow Time Lords, and her former self, as lesser because of it, is the true crime of this audio. The ending puts a cherry on the metaphorical cake by having the two other Time Lords pull one last trick on her.

Would I recommend this audio? Certainly not. It's offensive, and certainly the worst Big Finish audio I have listened to. If, out of some morbid curiosity, you still desire to listen to it, it is worth pointing out that in more recent interviews with *Doctor Who Magazine* Nicholas Briggs has stated that he 'made a lot of bad decisions...' and is 'quite ashamed of it'. I'm sure he didn't set out to make it this way, but unfortunately, the end result is abysmal. Thankfully *Exile* was a long time ago now and if it served as any precedent at all, provided an example of how not to present a female Doctor. Chris Chibnall and Jodie Whittaker have shown they know better.



A fan cover design for *Exile*, by Nick Ferrazza, whose alternative Big Finish covers can be found at <https://nickferrazza.deviantart.com/gallery/57919978/Big>

A Stone's Throw

by John Salway

Part Four

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 thieves, it was then... *misplaced* in an Edwardian study (and he didn't even notice). Now, Nyssa's life depends on the Doctor (currently with blonde hair and a cricket obsession) swapping the real stone with a fake so his younger self loses a random pebble rather than an ancient relic. While the Doctor followed the path of the thieves to intercept the stone and make the switch, Tegan chased a shadowy figure who turned out to be... the Doctor.

*
"I'm afraid things have become a bit complicated."

"A bit?! A bit complicated! Talk about the understatement of the century, Doc, what on earth are you doing here? Dressed like that?!" Tegan barked at the Doctor, before adding, more softly, "and what happened to your face?"

The Doctor sheepishly rubbed the back of his neck – it was a gesture Tegan had seen all too many times and it always meant trouble. "Well, as I say, it's all become a bit messy...do you really need to hear all the details?"

"I *really* do."

"Well, I suppose I had better bring you up to speed. Quite a lot has happened since we last spoke..."

"Which was all of ten minutes ago."

"For you Tegan, perhaps. For me, it's been a fair while longer than that..."

*
The first thing the Doctor noticed after regaining consciousness was pain. Blackness and pain.

"Who told you we were grabbing the stone tonight?"

He couldn't see a thing, though his eyes were wide open – so he must have been blindfolded in some way. But he could also feel a slight touch of fabric on the nape of his neck, so perhaps instead he had been given some kind of hood. How delightfully macabre.

"We've been planning this operation for months, not a peep from the judicators and then you show up!"

He was sitting on a chair, but his arms were tied together behind its back, so this evidently wasn't a social call. He tried to remember how he got here – what was the last thing he remembered? He was

hunting for the Heart Stone, and had reached the thieves' hideout. He had climbed the top of the stairwell, opened the door and then -

Oh. Thud. He had walked straight into a trap.

"One of our boys must have let something slip, and it certainly wasn't me, so WHO WAS IT?"

That would also explain the heavy, angry voice that appeared to be shouting at him. Yes, everything seemed to be slotting neatly into place. This was an interrogation. Well, if that was the case, he knew exactly how to respond.

"Ahem. I'm *dreadfully* sorry if I've put you to some trouble, but I haven't a clue what you're talking about."

That's it Doctor, play the fool, that always -

The first blow caught the Doctor off guard, striking the middle of his chest and rocketing him backwards into the chair as both he and it toppled to the ground, and it was followed by a second, and then a third, and then a fourth, and a fifth, until eventually there were too many to count and all he could feel was a wave of pain across his entire body.

*

The interrogation continued in fits and starts for a few tortuous hours.

"For the last time you little maggot, who are you working with?"

"For the last time, I simply refuse to answer any of your questions until you at least remove this ridiculous hood! Though I suppose I should probably be grateful that I can't see your face."

As expected, that prompted another hard smack to the Doctor's face, this time just above his right eye, and with quite a bit more force than usual. The Doctor smirked softly to himself - he must have hit a nerve.

"I will have the truth from you! You will tell us what we want to know!"

Yes, yes, of course I will. Don't these people ever tire of cliché?

"I'm going to go grab some tools of mine. Tools designed for just this sort of situation."

Oh good, I was hoping you might.

"And perhaps by the time I return you'll have reconsidered your position."

No need to hurry on my account.

The loud, creaky swing of the metal door, followed by the harsh slam as it closed, signalled his captor's exit from the room. Now he could get to work! The ropes holding him to the chair didn't seem too tight, at least not for a student of Houdini. All he needed was a few minutes and he could be up and about again.

As he started to tense and relax his arms rhythmically to loosen his bindings, the Doctor could faintly perceive the sound of footsteps behind him. Was there someone else in the room? He quickly ceased his struggling

"Psst. Hello there!" A deep, throaty whisper suddenly sounded directly behind the Doctor's ear, sounding awfully pleased with itself.

Oh no. Not him. Not now.

The voice continued. "I'm the Doctor. A friend! Hold still for a moment and I'll have you untied in a jiffy."

The familiar whirr of the sonic screwdriver (oh how he missed the sonic screwdriver!) cut through the air, and the older Doctor's hands were quickly released from behind the chair. He instinctively

reached his arms up to remove the hood from over his head – and then just as quickly stopped himself and forced his arms back down by his side.

He knew the situation was hovering on the brink of disaster. He had got it all wrong, and now he'd run out of time and his younger self had caught up with him. If his younger self saw his face, and managed to work out who he was, then the entire timeline would be shattered beyond his powers of repair. Best to keep the hood on, then, stay as quiet as possible, and try to get out of the room rather briskly. Which, without being able to see, would be tricky.

He stumbled to his feet, arms in front of his face, feeling for a wall as he edged forward.



“You know, while it is *rather* fetching, you might be better off without that hood, hmm? I could remove it for you, if you like?” His younger self sounded rather amused. Well just you wait, thought the older Doctor, you wait until it’s your turn to play Blind Man’s Bluff...

Trying to add a gruff, authoritative, un-Doctorish quality to his voice, the older Doctor replied. “No you mustn’t! I’m, um, an undercover agent for the government, you see, and if you did see my face, well, I’d have to kill you, for um, well, for security reasons, yes. Standard protocol!”

The younger Doctor made a quizzical sort of sound. It didn’t sound like he was particularly convinced.

The older Doctor couldn’t really blame him – he could scarcely believe that stream of tosh had issued from his own lips. An uncomfortable silence filled the room as his younger self seemed to consider his next action.

Then the younger Doctor cleared his throat theatrically with a series of coughs, and though his eyes were covered, the older Doctor could practically hear the beaming grin on his younger self’s face. “Oh! Oh well, if that’s the case then I’m terribly sorry, I certainly wouldn’t want that, would I? No, no, best for me to let you quietly slip away, I tell you what – you can slip away unseen, and I’ll tidy things up at this end, what do you say?”

The older Doctor couldn’t quite believe he’d got away with that – but then again, his younger self was also hunting the missing Heart Stone, and was probably as keen to get rid of any bystanders as he himself was to get out of the room, so it made sense that he would try to play along.

Increasingly resenting his current headwear, the older Doctor slowly shuffled around the edge of the room, searching for the door, and feeling more and more humiliated with every passing moment. This entire evening had been an utterly pointless exercise. There was no chance of grabbing the Heart Stone now without causing irreparable damage to his own history, and his entire body ached with dull pain courtesy of his captors. He consoled himself with the one single golden lining he could see around this cloud – *thank goodness Tegan isn’t here to see this!*

“You’ll find the exit on your right, old chap!” The bold outburst of his younger self cut through his gloomy thoughts, and then the older Doctor could hear the heavy, confident footsteps of his younger self striding in the opposite direction. Towards that damn stone!

*

“So that’s it then. We’ve failed. We haven’t got the stone, you’ve been beaten up, and now we’re back at square one again.” Tegan slumped down against the side of the alley. This was turning into one rollercoaster of an evening. And she’d only been here twenty minutes.

“Oh Tegan, where would I be without your pessimism? I haven’t finished telling the story yet! Don’t you want to know how exactly you came to be chasing me round the city? How I could possibly be leaving the government archives and chasing after the thief at the same time? And of course, there’s most important question of all!”

“...what question?”

The Doctor slumped down next to Tegan, and winked. “You haven’t asked what I’ve got in my pocket.”

“...okay then Doctor, what’ve you got?”

From his right trouser pocket, the Doctor slowly withdrew a small, jagged rock. It was similar in colour and texture to the smoother, rounder stone she had seen in the TARDIS earlier, but the shape was quite different.

Tegan’s eyes widened. “Is that -?”

“Yes. The real one this time. This is the fabled Heart Stone of legend. Doesn’t look like much, does it?”

“How did you -?”

“Well, if a job’s worth doing, it’s worth doing properly. So for my second attempt at swapping our fake stone for the real one, I wasn’t going to take any chances...”

*

Tonight was the night. After months of planning, weeks of physical and mental preparation, and hours of endless run-throughs and rehearsals. Tonight was the night that she would actually be able to touch, to possess the Heart Stone. Albeit, only for a few hours before she handed it over to the boss.

The first part of the plan had gone by without a hitch. Even a top-secret government facility needs to be looked after, and with a little bit of effort the tech team had been able to uncover the identities of the cleaning staff. Then it was child’s play to pick an unfortunate victim for replacement. So this evening, with the help of a well-made prosthetic, she was playing the role of an ordinary mop-handler, cleaning down the entry corridor.

In a few minutes the operation would really begin in earnest – at the signal she would have to drop her mop, and follow the route that had been prepared in exact detail to the next waypoint. There again, she would wait for a signal and move and the cycle would repeat again and again until she reached the inner vault door. Any security barriers would be deactivated remotely by the score of keyboard-jockeys back at base, and the route had been timed so she wouldn’t encounter any patrols, human or robot.

She knew as the only one actually heading *into* the vault that she had the most to lose if something went wrong – but she also knew how much her employer wanted that relic. As long as she did her job right, the boss simply wouldn’t *allow* anything to go wrong. Everything had been accounted for.

The band on her left wrist vibrated – that was it. That was the signal. Now she had five minutes to make her way to the next waypoint. She quickly left her mop against the wall, and removed her civilian disguise, revealing a tight, absolutely black combat outfit, with an array of tools attached securely round the belt and a small, empty (but soon to be filled) pouch strapped to her back. Then she quickly ran through the second door on her left – the staircase down to the next level.

Suddenly, a figure darted from the right into her field of vision. What the -

“Hello. I’m dreadfully sorry about this!” A man’s voice, and a figure dressed in a black outfit similar to her own quickly raised a small gas cannister in front of her face and sprayed.

She immediately started to keel over, but she felt the figure’s arms slowly lower her to the floor as her eyes began to droop and the world began to fade into a dark haze...

“I think I’ll take over from here. Don’t worry, I’ll be back in a jiffy!”

*

“...and I’m afraid the next thing the poor woman remembered was waking up on the floor with our fake stone in her hand thirty minutes later. Naturally she wouldn’t want to let anyone know about our little run-in on the stairs or they might suspect her of a double-cross, and having encountered one of their enforcers first-hand, I can’t say I blame her. So she had no choice to try to pass off our fake as the real thing, while I - ”

“ - while you had spent the last thirty minutes following *their* plan to steal the real stone. And then I saw you making your getaway and followed. Oh yes, Doc, *very* clever.” Even as she said this, Tegan seemed unimpressed – the Doctor couldn’t work out why.

“Well, I thought so! Why spend months planning a dangerous and difficult heist when you can merely hijack a scheme already in progress?” The Doctor wasn’t going to let Tegan’s negativity get him down this time – he was quite pleased with himself.

“But you know what this means, Doc?”

“Yes! It means that we’ve got the real stone and can exchange it for Nyssa’s safe return, the gang have stolen a fake rock, which my younger self will soon acquire, and then when he misplaces it somewhere down the line, nothing of particular importance will be lost. All very neat, I think!”

“No, I mean that the person who stole that damn stone in the first place, the person that started this whole nightmare, was *you!*”

The Doctor blushed. “Ah. I hadn’t really thought of it like that.”

Tegan pushed past, grabbing the Doctor’s hand. “Come on you, let’s get back to the TARDIS before your head inflates so far you can’t get past the door. I’m not gonna relax until I can see Nyssa safely back in the TARDIS... ”

“Oh I shouldn’t worry, Tegan. All of the loose ends have been tidied away!”

*

Many centuries previously, in a quiet Edwardian study, an old man with a mane of long, flowing white hair was looking for something. Something that was wrong. But he had to be quick – he was not really supposed to be there. He turned in a circle, scanning the room quickly. He knew it had to be here!

And then he spotted it, on the ground beneath a small mahogany table – a small, round stone. He knelt down on one leg and grabbed it off of the floor, cradling it in his hand, inspecting it closely.

“Sir, who are you? What are you doing here?!” A young maid, duster in one hand, had entered the study, and had frozen, rooted to the spot, unsure what to do when confronted with an intruder.

The old man barely turned his head, continuing to stare at the object in his palm. “Just doing some tidying, child. Cleaning up some mess, pay me no mind.”

The maid’s voice began to crack. “Sir, I, I, I must insist that you leave these premises. The master will be very angry!”

She noticed the old man had something in his hand. Had she interrupted a thief?

“What have you got there!?”

He twisted his hand, revealing the contents. “It’s a stone. Just a stone, thrown into the ocean of

time. An alien stone, from a different time and place, discarded casually on the floor like so much rubbish. Do you know how much damage this could cause, this one pebble, fashioned from minerals this world won’t see for centuries to come? Have a look, hold it firm in your hand.”

He softly grabbed the terrified maid’s hand, and gently dropped the rock into her palm. Her already unsteady hand began to shake violently with the weight of the thing.

“See how it trembles? See how it quivers in this strange atmosphere? It *knows*. It knows it shouldn’t be here, it *knows* that it is wrong!”

As he began to raise his voice, he looked up into the maid’s wet, glassy eyes, and saw the fear in them. He paused for a moment, and then tenderly removed the stone from her grasp.

“Thank you, child. You’ve been very kind, listening to an old fool like me. I must go now, and take this silly pebble with me, before it does any harm. We can be old, forgotten things together.”

He sighed, a long slow breath, and stepped away.

“But sir –“

She blinked. The old man was gone.

And then there had never been an old man. Just a maid in a drawing room, wondering what she was doing standing alone and still with her hand stretched out. She froze for a moment, trying to think, trying to remember what she had been doing. Then the moment was gone and she returned to her duties.

*

Sitting on the porch of a wooden cabin, overlooking a vast, beautiful pond, the old man looked at the round stone in his hand. He laughed softly to himself, and threw the stone into the depths of the water.

“Will my children never learn?”



Study of the writer Walter Besant, c.1895.

THE END

This Mild Curiosity

William Shaw offers an introduction to Facebook group Time And Relative Dimensions In Shitposting

THE THIRD OF AUGUST 2016, LIKE MOST OF THAT YEAR, WAS A VERY STRESSFUL TIME FOR ME. I was two years into my university experience, three days into a very crappy internship, and contemplating the onrushing postgraduate void as my career options seemed to collapse one by one around me. Besides which, western liberal democracy was merrily imploding at home and abroad, with a monstrous demagogue ascending to the highest office in the United States, and the slow-motion catastrophe of Brexit having begun in earnest.

Even worse, there wasn't even any *Doctor Who* that year.

And so I sat alone on the sofa of my grandparents' living room while they enjoyed themselves on the holiday I had abandoned (in favour of a tech startup in Walthamstow), as the perverse unreality of the situation finally poured forth. My laptop already beginning to overheat, I leaned forward into the heady, blue-tinged pages of Facebook, and clicked 'Create Group.'

A few months previously, I had written a profile of the Oxford Doctor Who Society for that bastion of quality independent journalism, *The Oxford Student*. While promoting the article on Facebook, I had gotten into a comment thread with good friend and then-WhoSoc treasurer Beth Graham, in which we shared images from *Doctor Who* with humorous captions. (My favourite was Beth's picture of a group of Vervoids captioned #squadgoals). I had said on the thread that this would make suitable material for an entire Facebook group, suggested the name 'Time And Relative Dimensions In Shitposting,' and promised to create such a group in my next fit of procrastination.

Well, at this moment my entire life felt like a fit of procrastination, and cometh the hour, cometh

the man who would go on to receive a disproportionate amount of credit for something he co-developed with an important female collaborator.

My first post was a picture of the villain from 1985's *Timelash*, which, in honour of a meme already several months old, I captioned "HERE COME DAT BORAD/O SHIT WADDUP!". I proceeded to create a handful of extra posts based on *Revenge of the Cybermen* (of all things), before adding as many of my friends as I thought I could get away with and going to bed. I spent the rest of the week creating similar content and adding more friends, which made a rather more edifying pastime than constantly rewriting the same



Here Come Dat Borad. William Shaw, 3 August 2016
The very first post on TARDIS, this image riffs on the popular 'Here come dat boi' meme from a few months prior. Inauspicious perhaps, but we all know what can come of mild curiosities...



Georgia Harper
November 24, 2016

When you go too far



I've Gone Too Far. Popularised by Sam Sheppard and Georgia Harper, 2016-present
This image of a horrified Ten became a running joke as an all-purpose reaction to one's own mistakes, and then began accruing more and more variations, each stranger than the last.

... four Google Slides, which was about all the aforementioned internship had to offer in comparison.

My memories of what came immediately after this are hazy, so I will take this opportunity for a brief digression on the nature of shitposting.

Urban Dictionary's Top Definition of 'Shit Posting' defines it as the "constant posting of mildly amusing but usually unfunny memes, videos or other pictures that are completely random or unrelated to any discussions." A fine enough definition, but lacking in some key respects. While it adequately covers the 'posting' part of the term, the 'shit' is rather more

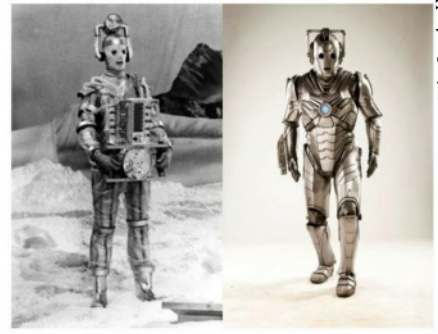
ambiguous; if the quality of the memes is sufficiently covered by their being 'unfunny,' then why is it called 'shitposting' as opposed to 'unfunnyposting,' or simply 'badposting'?

The answer, I believe, lies in shitposting's inherent relation to the act of consumption. In the wider world of Facebook groups, the extent to which shitposting overlaps with established fandom is remarkable. Star Wars Sithposting, David Bowie Starposting, Twin Peaks Logposting, Oasis Sheeii-ineposting; all of them explicitly market themselves as places of both established media appreciation and anarchic cultural détournement (even if many of them euphemistically obscure the act of excrement). You see where I'm going with this: shitposting groups are places for people who have consumed a lot of something, where they can share the fragmented, de-contextualised results of that consumption, a constant churn of partially-digested matter once part of a corporate whole, now rendered unrecognisable, made uniquely, disturbingly, gloriously, ours.

As a fandom space, the nascent Time and Relative Dimensions In Shitposting (TARDIS for short) drew primarily from people I knew in fandom, most pertinently through Oxford WhoSoc. Early recruits included several names familiar to long-term readers of this fanzine; Beth Graham, Hannah Taylor, Sam Sheppard, Ryan Bradley, Matthew Kilburn, and Ian Bayley, among others, with more joining as the group began to build momentum.

That first term back in Oxford following the group's creation saw the first indications that this idea

Be careful who you call ugly in Middle School



Be Careful Who You Call Ugly in Middle School. Anonymous, 2016
The winner of the first (and to date last) TARDIS shitpost competition, this early Cybermeme is a marvellous example of the form which would inspire shitposters for years to come.

(CC BY 2.0) -David Johnson-Reveng of the Cybermen CyberLeader Helmet



Shower of the Daleks. Ryan Bradley, 27 January 2017.

Created in response to an Oxford WhoSoc viewing of the reanimated *Power of the Daleks*, this piece was TARDIS's first non-admin-created cover photo. An excellent piece of wordplay, further enlivened by the recontextualisation of one of the story's most dramatic moments to a mundane domestic setting.

had legs; more people started posting, and interacting with each other's posts. Over time a community of shitposters would establish itself, fuelled by an endless stream of in-jokes, which, by their very nature, would probably not make much sense were I to attempt an explanation. But trust me, they were hilarious!

As well as raw memes, the group also proved a fertile breeding ground for fresh takes on the source material. Idiosyncratic opinions abounded; not for us the suffocating weight of Fan Orthodoxy. We found joy in *The Horns of Nimon*, *The Happiness Patrol*, *The Lie of the Land*. Ryan Bradley introduced us all to the majesty that is *The Keys of Marinus*, with its iconic wetsuit-clad villain Yartek, Leader of the Alien Voord. We re-evaluated the legendarily marmite, finding new and

strange pleasures in *Hell Bent*, *Love & Monsters*, and *Destiny of the Doctors*. For my part, I continued to evangelise for *The Rings of Akhaten*, *Kill the Moon*, and *In The Forest of the Night*, sometimes even successfully. A whole new taxonomy emerged of Top Episodes and Flop Episodes, with no-one able to decide which episodes were which, caught in an endless stream of bizarre and arresting imagery (a state of affairs capturing, I believe, the pleasures of *Doctor Who* in cameo). TARDIS is a collective project, in which we constantly find new ways to experience *Doctor Who*, whether through liveblogging,



The Distracted Shitposting Group. Sam Sheppard, 6 September 2017.

Veteran shitposter Sam Sheppard captures the core dynamic of *Doctor Who* discussion on TARDIS; at eternal dialectic of top and flop, forever moving towards an endlessly-deferred synthesis. Also, there are lots of memes.

poetry, open polls or *Thomas the Tank Engine* spin-off groups, our methods of engagement as expansive and mercurial as the Doctor herself.

However, as anyone who's seen *Love & Monsters* will tell you, the real fandom is in the friends we make along the way. TARDIS is a social space, as much as (indeed probably more than) it is a fandom space. That sense of community is what keeps me coming back, and has helped many members of the group through some tough times since 3 August 2016. Whether through the famous 'Autobiographical Shitposting' of the group's early days, the lengthy Dissertationposting sequences several members created towards the end of their degrees, or simply the fact that one can post a picture of Rory Williams being sad and receive a sympathetic reaction, TARDIS has become a reliable source of friendship, camaraderie, wholesome

bae: come over
me: can't, busy delivering lecture about time
bae: my parents have forgotten to subscribe to the official doctor who youtube channel
me:



Don't Forget to Subscribe to the Official *Doctor Who* YouTube Channel. Adam Kendrick, 23 October 2017.

Like online fandom at large, TARDIS fell in love with Peter Capaldi's renditions of this social media catchphrase, applying it to existing formats (like some sort of hybrid or something).

content, and an all round generosity of spirit.

And that, more than the

close-ups of *Doctor Who* comic panels, more than the unstoppable Cybermemes, more than the images of David Tennant saying 'I've gone too far' recontextualised to the point of hypermeaning, is what I am most proud to have been a part of. As we enter the group's third year, I hope we can keep providing a place for *Doctor Who* fans to hang out, meet new friends, and grow in each other's company. Time And Relative Dimensions In

(CC BY-SA 2.0)-GabboT-Arthur Darvill



Georgia Harper
September 3, 2017

your regularly scheduled reminder that Jodie Whittaker is the next Doctor and the world is a wonderful place



Jodie Whittaker is the Doctor and the World is a Wonderful Place. Georgia Harper, 3 September 2017-present.

With the announcement of Jodie Whittaker as the Thirteenth Doctor, pillar of shitposting Georgia Harper took it upon herself to regularly remind us of this fact, with the joint statement that the world is a wonderful place (she even reminded us in the last issue of *Tides of Time*, and no doubt will do so again this issue). And when the world produces not only great *Doctor Who*, but memes like these, it's a very hard position to argue against.

Shitposting. It means life. You are more than welcome to join us. We can be found at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1130322500358717>

THE TIDES OF TIME

Number 42 • Michaelmas Term 2018

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