
CELESTIAL
TOYROOM
THE QUEEN'S HEAD
DOCTOR WHO
APPRECIATION SOCIETY
516

Editorial
By Alan Stevens

CLARA: When did you stop wearing your veil?
VASTRA: When you stopped seeing it.

Ever since they first appeared, I've always wondered how a classic series' version of the Paternoster Gang would have looked, but now, thanks to respected artist Andy Lambert's superlative wrap-around cover, my dream (or is it nightmare?) has come true!

His image functions as a suitable introduction to the first article in this issue, where Paul Driscoll casts a critical eye over our landlubbing and our aquatic forebears: the Silurians (or is it Eocenes? Homo Reptilia?) and Sea Devils (er… chums of Green Gilbert?). Additionally, as it features a classic series' version of Strax, it also fits with Matthew Kilburn's thoughtful essay on the Sontarans.

Fiona Moore and myself follow on, listing fifty exciting and unusual things about another terrestrial adversary: WOTAN and its lethal, if slightly comical, War Machines. This leads into Ian Scales' appreciation of *Doctor Who* companions Ben Jackson and Polly Wright (the latter having no relation to Barbara!).

Next up, Jez Strickley's informative article on how ex-*Doctor Who* show-runner, Steven Moffat, deployed the same plot device with regards to aliens, the guest cast, and regular companions, over and over again, until we were entirely sick of it, before Fiona Moore returns to examine the role (ham or cheese?) assigned to hostelries in our favourite TV programme.

On a sadder note, we also say goodbye to David Bailie, who played Dask, nee Taren Capel, the memorable villain from *The Robots of Death*, expertly profiled by Fiona Moore in our closing article.

Finally, I would like to express my thanks to JL Fletcher for his magnificent free postcard illustrating *The War Machines*. ▲

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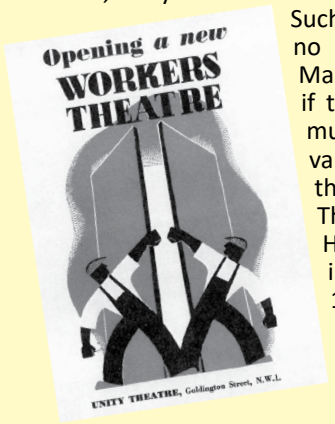
Whose Planet is it Anyway?
By Paul Driscoll

Throughout the 1970s, the BBC was accused of political bias by both those on the left and those on the right, in much the same way as it is today. In reality, some of its programmes, producers and personalities, overtly or tacitly, support the status quo and the institutions and philosophy of the ruling elite; while others subvert or challenge the norm by offering an alternative vision of how society should be structured, and a less than positive assessment of those holding power. Usually it is the ruling elite who win the argument and satire is reduced to a kind of Feast of Fools role. By mocking the institutions and the personalities that inhabit them, ironically, such works encourage the endurance of those very institutions and personalities they seek to undermine. We are permitted to laugh at the forces that oppress us, especially in holiday seasons, as long as we allow business to return to normal. It's a way of relieving tension before it can spill onto the streets. We don't become revolutionaries by laughing our socks off at *Have I Got News For You*.

Doctor Who in the early 1970s brought its hero down to Earth, placing him uncomfortably within British society as an agent of the state through his employment as UNIT's scientific advisor. Politicians, civil servants, and the military abound in the Pertwee serials and, in the spirit of *That Was The Week That Was,* they are often subjected to ridicule.

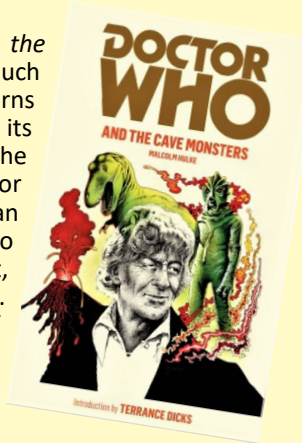


Such an approach no doubt pleased Malcolm Hulke, even if the satire was of a much gentler, safer variety than that of the socialist Unity Theatre with which Hulke was so heavily involved during the 1950s and 1960s. The Doctor's role had shifted from that of Hartnell's schoolmaster, to Pertwee's voice of conscience, via Troughton's 'undercover hero' figure. Of course, the Doctor is always all three, but it is where the emphasis lies that is significant.

Some people argue that *Doctor Who* became adult-orientated under producer Barry Letts and script editor Terrance Dicks. In truth, what we see is a more nuanced approach to storytelling, and the suggestion that children were unable to appreciate adventures that were not so black and white (pun intended) is rather patronising.

Ambiguity, and a focus on how we deal with difference, was symptomatic of Britain's post-war identity crisis. The empire was collapsing, increasing multiculturalism was creating tensions and insecurities, and we found ourselves living in the conditions of a cold war; recognising the need for global cooperation yet fearful and mistrusting of nations governed by alternative political philosophies. Hulke was certainly conscious of the state of the nation when, in his novelisation *Doctor Who and the Cave Monsters*, the Brigadier responds with enthusiasm to the plan to generate energy through the cyclotron: "That'll show 'em… foreign competitors. A discovery like this will make Britain great again!"

Doctor Who and the Silurians places such contemporary concerns at the heart of its story. For example, the Silurians question Major Baker about human society, wanting to know what we eat, amongst other things. This references one of the most important drivers of the move towards détente



between the US and the Soviet Union at that time — the need to trade food; 'détente' representing the two country's endeavours to temper the rhetoric of the Cold War and work for a common good, under the assumption that nuclear weapons would act as deterrents. The question posed by the Silurian reflects the dilemmas of those seeking rapprochement, in that it could either be seen as suspicious — a fact-finding exercise to determine the weakness of us "apes" — or as essential information-gathering in a quest to divide the resources of planet Earth between two different cultures. Ultimately, it is a reminder of our shared need for sustenance: whoever came first, whichever species is more intelligent, or stronger, in the end we are all dependent creatures.

It is the Silurians' right to live on planet Earth that makes this adventure so much more interesting than the usual run of alien invasion stories. It calls into question the whole notion of who, if anyone, owns the world, and challenges our inherently human-centric view of the universe. The Doctor, as an alien with no stake in the planet, can stand outside the debate, looking at it dispassionately, taking the even-tempered role of a scientist against the hot-headed military men, Major Baker and the Brigadier, and the career-driven Doctor Lawrence. He also acts as a corrective to fellow scientist Doctor Quinn, who betrays his calling through his own ambition. The novelisation makes this point much clearer than the TV serial. Miss Dawson tells Quinn that he could become famous for discovering a species, but he laughs off her suggestion, saying that nobody remembers such people. Instead, he will become a household name by writing a paper, or even a book, on what the Earth was like millions of years ago, using knowledge acquired from the Silurians. He also has an eye on their advanced technology, for which he also intends to claim credit. Perhaps it is the impossibility of being completely dispassionate and logical, that Hulke is getting at when later, he has the Silurian scientist K'To side with Morka against Okdel, conceding that he too is disgusted by the "apes"; something which appears in the novelisation as well (where the Silurians are given their names).

In *Doctor Who and the Silurians*, it is not, then, love or sympathy for the outsider that is the condition for sharing the planet in peace, but emotional detachment, something that in this story only the Doctor, in his position as an outsider, is able to display. The Doctor might be highly critical of the Brigadier's solution, but he remains fairly aloof. For his part, he wants to revive the Silurians in order to gain a "wealth of scientific knowledge". Liz Shaw, a scientist herself, though not particularly well written here, highlights the Doctor's isolation as the voice of impartiality when she tells the Brigadier he should attack their base. She comes off better in the novelisation, due largely to Terrance Dicks giving her some of the lines of exposition Hulke wrote for the Doctor (my personal favourite being,"we will all die of sunburn on a cloudy day").

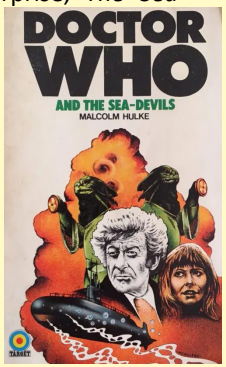
The Silurians are mirror images of the humans in the story and come across no better than us. The Silurian leader (Okdel), who is closer to the Doctor than any other character in the piece including Liz Shaw, is presented as atypical, giving us the impression that the rest of his species are intolerant and racist. The upshot is a relentlessly depressing adventure; the only alternative to mutually assured destruction, (the logical end of the proliferation of nuclear weapons), being the genocide of one species. In the novelisation, the Silurians are made more appealing through the device of telling some of the story from their perspective. It makes them easier to relate to, and allows Hulke to present them as more complex and emotional creatures.

Okdel, for instance, sheds a tear when the Doctor tells him that nothing is left of the ancient Silurian civilisation on the surface of the planet. He is characterised as sympathetic to humankind from the start. Before he entered the shelter with the rest of his people, he kept one as a "pet" and wanted to bring it into hibernation with them. That said, his treatment of his pet as a creature that "amuses" him, poses the same moral questions as humans training elephants to paint. Even Morka considers showing compassion to a human — a mercy killing of the farmer's wife, when he thinks her screams upon seeing both him and her dead husband might signify physical pain or disease — although by the end, he gives in to his prejudice about the "apes", relishing the opportunity to kill millions of the screaming species.

The Sea Devils, also written by Hulke, presents quite a contrast, disappointingly reverting to a more black and white form of storytelling. Although it depicts a similar scenario, it skirts over any ethical issues largely because of the requirements to present the Royal Navy in a positive light. Even in the novelisation, the Sea Devils are not fleshed out with the same level of detail and sympathy as the Silurians.

In this narrative, the situation escalates with the arrival of parliamentary private secretary Robert Walker, who is generally dismissive of the Doctor's suggestion that peace could be achieved by sharing the planet, a point

elaborated on in the novel when he cites the troubles in Northern Ireland and the Middle East as evidence that humanity doesn't even know how to live in harmony with itself. The best Walker can offer is to spare the lives of a few Sea Devils by keeping them in a zoo.



Rather to the viewers' surprise, *The Sea Devils* ends with the Doctor carrying out his own drastic solution to the crisis, sparing the establishment the trouble. This is the first time the Doctor uses his 'catchphrase', "reverse the polarity of the neutron flow"; a piece of technobabble that features in many a fond tribute to the Pertwee Doctor while conveniently forgetting its original, deadly intent. In the novelisation, the Master says to the Doctor, "You do realise you have just committed mass murder?", but the latter is unrepentant. This might seem like a contradiction given his earlier disapproval of the Brigadier's actions in Derbyshire, but the Doctor is at least consistent in acting dispassionately in both stories. For him, genocide is the only possible solution to the problem the Sea Devils pose, even if it is far from ideal. The thought that there might have been another way does not cross his mind.

Both the Silurians and the Sea Devils made a return in the 1984 adventure *Warriors of the Deep,* this time with a name for the anonymous Silurian scientist from the 1970 teleplay. Whilst it is not made entirely clear,

onscreen, that the past events relate to the televised Pertwee serials, and although the three Silurians were never described as a "Triad" by Hulke, Terrance Dicks makes the link explicit in his book, and associates the Silurian character Icthar with the crisis at Wenley Moor. As both Okdel and Morka died during the former adventure, this means that Icthar must be the scientist T'Po.

However, the reference to the second failed peace effort with the Sea Devils is problematic, in that neither the Fifth Doctor nor Icthar acknowledge the Time Lord's culpability for this failure, pinning the blame squarely on the humans. Dicks clearly wrestled with this issue, and goes out of his way to remind the reader of the Third Doctor's actions. However, he is also keen to offer an excuse: Icthar may accuse the Doctor of betrayal, but in the judgement of the narrator, the Doctor had no choice; destroying the undersea base was his only option. The Doctor, for his part, holds both human and Sea Devil extremists responsible.

Warriors of the Deep is an effective bridge from the science and reason-based approach of Hulke's adventures, to the emotion-heavy 2010 remake by Chris Chibnall, *The Hungry Earth/Cold Blood*. The Fifth Doctor is on the same moral high horse as the Third Doctor, but Davison's performance adds heart to the piece, conveying a Doctor who is emotionally distressed at the deaths of both humans and the reptile people, and who is almost broken by his culpability. The Doctor's conclusion that there should have been another way is mostly read as a rhetorical statement (there should have been, but there wasn't), although it is more powerful, and more challenging, to see it as a genuine admission of guilt (there should have been, but I didn't…).

In truth, there is little grounds for sympathy with the Silurians in *Warriors of the Deep*, who this time refuse to entertain any possibility of peace and compromise. Their treatment of the Sea Devils leaves much to be desired too, with the latter reduced to unthinking slaves and foot soldiers for their land-based cousins.

The clear message of the story is that with a little push, humanity can destroy itself through internecine conflict. In contrast to the Doctor, the Silurians attempt to absolve themselves of any responsibility and blame for their planned genocide of the human race. It's a very human approach, all too familiar from our own history (for instance the partition of India, which resulted in violence and bloodshed between Muslims and Hindus, the conditions of which were very much created by the British), and also our psyche (those all too common gloating cries of, 'It's his own fault', or, 'She brought it upon herself.')

There is a paradox at the heart of the presentation of the Silurians and the Sea Devils in *Doctor Who*. On the one hand they can be seen as victims, the 'sinned against', who have little chance of being respected by the human usurpers of their planet — unless, of course they passively accept conditions of slavery. Yet, on the other, they are likened to us — a projection of our own hubris, blindness and intransigence. It is this dual role that validates both liberal and conservative readings.

Yet, as much as they are often celebrated as evidence of *Doctor Who*'s inclusivity, these adventures also suffer from an implicit racism, something clearly unintended by their liberal-minded authors. One of the most striking images of *Doctor Who and the Silurians* occurs when the potholer Spencer begins to behave like a Neanderthal. The novel makes more explicit the Jungian psychology behind his reversion — Spencer's encounter with the Silurians triggers a racial memory of the time when the lizards were the intelligent life form and the humans only one step removed from the status of vermin, at best pets and at worst wild animals.

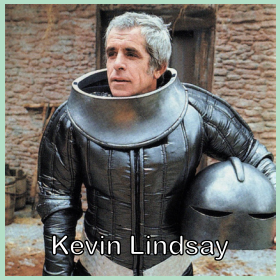
By depicting Spencer's regression in cave paintings, however, the story reinforces the mistaken notion that such art is primitive, and by association, so are all non-Western cultures where it might still be found. In this respect, stories about these cave and sea monsters in *Doctor Who* can be likened to anti-colonial pieces such as Joseph Conrad's 1899 novel, *Heart of Darkness*, which inadvertently reflected the very prejudices it was written to oppose.

Tellingly, the closer the Silurians come to being treated as our equals in *Doctor Who*, the more humanised their appearance. The 2010 revival of the Silurians, as is so often the case with twenty-first century *Who*, makes the socio-political issues second to relationships and families. To enable human viewers to fully sympathise with the Silurians, the rubber latex masks are replaced with a silicone face appliance — the ultimate betrayal of a species that should be seen as radically different from our own and respected for what sets them apart, not for what we can see of ourselves in <u>them</u>. ▲

The Sontaran Foundation
By Matthew Kilburn

When I wrote my book on *The Time Warrior* for the Black Archive series, (an intense, exhausting and greatly enjoyable experience!) there were a few sections along the way that I had to remove in order to keep the monograph focused. This article is a development of one of them: namely, how the Gothic themes of *The Sontaran Experiment* informed, or failed to inform, later Sontaran adventures.

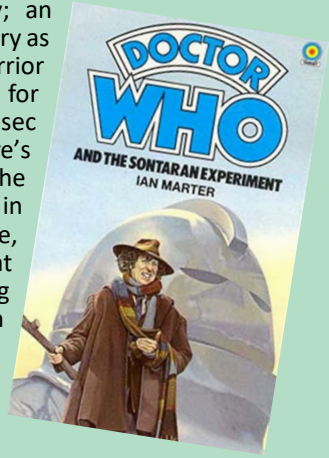
For the first few years after its transmission, *The Time Warrior* seems to have been remembered more for introducing us to Linx than the Sontarans. The theatre programme for Neil Simon's *The Gingerbread Lady* (1974) cited Linx, not the alien species, as one of the two television roles for which Kevin Lindsay was best known (the other being Cho-Je in *Planet of the Spiders*). Then, during preparation for the 1974/5 recording block, the possibility of reusing Linx's costume suggested a cheap way to provide an antagonist for the Doctor, and the two-part location serial *The Sontaran Experiment* was commissioned. Script editor Robert Holmes worked closely with writers Bob Baker and Dave Martin on their story, which picked up several cues from *The Time Warrior*.


Kevin Lindsay

Although the adventure is set thousands of years in the future, Baker and Martin originally had Styre hanging out in a ruined priory; a direct link to our first introduction to a Sontaran in medieval England, and connecting the species to the literary world of late eighteenth century Gothic romanticism.

In works of this genre, characters from a society priding itself on rationality and technological achievement, choose to dwell in medieval fortresses and abbeys because these perpetuate in their stones the values of a less cultivated, more superstitious age. Further, as the heroine of such a fiction, the Doctor's companion, Sarah Jane Smith, is subjected by Styre to experiments which reflect Gothic themes of divided identity and dissociation; something understood and developed in Ian Marter's novelisation.

In its exploration of the themes of divided identity and its attendant disassociation, *The Sontaran Experiment* reverses some of the details of *The Time Warrior*. The specimens on whom Styre preys, are stranded Galsec space travellers, the descendants of colonists from Earth, clinging, in adversity, to this imperialistic identity; an inversion of Linx's story as a stranded space warrior who claims Earth for his empire. The Galsec leader Vural, Styre's agent, boasts of the humans' prowess in building an empire, demonstrating that he shares something of the Sontarian ideology and this is why he is vulnerable to Styre's manipulation.



An extra layer is created, by having Vural and his crew speak with South African accents. This asks explicit questions of the white British viewing public, brought up to think of South Africa as a country for whites. By the 1970s, they had to face overwhelming evidence that Black South Africans were an oppressed majority, and were finding this difficult to reconcile with received propaganda about the civilising mission of British expansionism. While Vural's accent might have caused some of the audience to distance themselves from his values, his rhetoric would have spoken to others. The economic decline following the Second World War, and the challenging of cherished myths about national character and superiority that accompanied it, had led to a Britain with a divided sense of identity and aroused powerful feelings in many households.

Viewed from this perspective, there is surprising continuity between the Sontarans of *The Sontaran Experiment* and those of *The Invasion of Time*. Building on Linx's notorious dismissal of the Time Lords' military capacity in *The Time Warrior*, the intention seems to have been to portray the battle between the Sontarans and the Time Lords in the 1978 story as a clash of contrasting imperial elites. Instead, the casting of Derek Deadman to play Stor, complete with Fulham accent, re-invented the race as class warriors rising up against an effete ruling caste.

As a result, the triumph of the Doctor and the Time Lords presents as a victory for an imperial long view over working-class immediacy and impetuousness. Further, whilst the Time Lords are seen here in settings with pronounced Gothic influences, the Sontarans symbolise a different level of psychological threat, perhaps playing towards the part of Britain that was coming to see the working class, and their tribunes the trades unions, as the subversive and uncultured 'Other'. Gothic dualism had already been explored, and then abandoned, by the Doctor himself in the confident behaviour he demonstrates following his agreement with the Vardans. Here, nothing is shown to succeed against brute force better than a self-assured personality with a few dashes of deviousness: the student rebel Fourth Doctor envisaged by producer Barry Letts perhaps coming closest to 'the Man Who Built the Empire' sought by later producer Philip Hinchcliffe, but under the supposedly more anarchic production regime of Graham Williams.

The original objective was, no doubt, to have the Doctor apply some lateral thinking to the problem, and thereby enable a hierarchy of intellect to overcome a hierarchy of force. As it stands, however, the Sontarans led by Stor, fail even to convince as class warriors, partly because in such a role they can't embody the dramatic conflict between the opposing parts of the late British imperial psyche: nostalgia for military dominance, confronted by an arguably complacent intellectualism.

The Two Doctors (1985) takes a small step towards reviving the Gothic imagery of *The Time Warrior* giving the Sontarans a cellar, reminiscent of Linx's dungeon workshop, in which to plot. Had the story been set in New Orleans as envisaged, one might even have looked for the traits of the American genre of Southern Gothic; its depiction of the Androgums, drawing on white prejudice against the African-American and Creole populations of the American South, as too 'sensual' to be trusted with power. The Second Doctor espouses a belief used by generations of racists, that "you can't change

nature", and thus Dastari's augmentation of Chessene is doomed to failure. As realised, this pessimistic view of existence is entirely at odds with that defended by the Doctor in his first Sontaran adventure, where he expressed his belief in social evolution.

Although it's something of a stretch, Stike and Varl could be compared to the eighteenth century stereotype of the Spanish nobleman, believing their country and its wars are at the centre of events, when in fact they have been superseded — an image that would have been familiar to founders of the eighteenth century Gothic tradition such as Horace Walpole and Ann Radcliffe. But, as I say, this may be taking the analogy too far!

In fact it is the Doctor, rather than the Sontarans, who embodies Gothic dualism. Whereas Linx was the Time Lord's mirror-self, here the Doctor is divided into both his Second and Sixth incarnations. The Sixth Doctor assumes that he is the more advanced version, but the introduction of Androgum genes into the Second Doctor undermines them both. Consecutively, the two Doctors are twinned with Shockeye and Chessene, whose relationship to their Androgum origins parodies the aforementioned changing face and self-image of the Doctor. But the end result is too grotesquely racist to do adequate justice to the legacy of *The Time Warrior*.

In twenty-first century *Doctor Who*, the Gothic echoes of *The Time Warrior* are perpetuated, albeit not always especially developed. Margam Castle, the building chosen for the location of the Rattigan Academy in *The Sontaran Stratagem*/*The Poison Sky*, is a neo-Gothic mansion, built in the 1830s, and inspired by a comparable romanticism to that which led to the construction of *The Time Warrior*'s Peckforton Castle in the 1840s. The dualism presented in this story is pessimistic, with Sontaran forces and UNIT soldiers fighting each other to the death, and friends unable to tell which of them are Sontaran duplicates. But although the potential for psychological disturbance is present, it is underplayed.

There is, however, a more telling return to Gothic themes, when later, Strax is established, first in a futuristic setting which takes its design cues from the Napoleonic Wars, and then as a permanent resident of nineteenth century London (with excursions to Yorkshire and Glasgow), recalling the Victorian take on medievalism in *The Time Warrior* and offering a humane riposte to the pessimism expressed in *The Two Doctors:* even Sontarans can learn to care. Strax's comedic presentation might exaggerate that absurdist strand which has been intrinsic to the species since its origin, but it also demonstrates their potential to be something other than they had hitherto appeared.

As Robert Holmes would tell interviewers, the Sontarans were only warriors for the time being. They could see the moral universe beyond armed conflict, but for the moment most of them chose to keep fighting. As long as this is remembered, they remain characters rather than ciphers. ▲

The Black Archive #24: *The Time Warrior* is available for order from https://obversebooks.co.uk

Cool Things: The War Machines

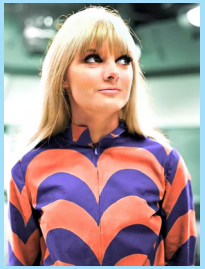
By Fiona Moore and Alan Stevens

26 Cool Things about The War Machines
(and 24 Stupid Ones)
(But we're not telling you which is which)
(We're expecting you to work that out for yourselves)

1. London! 1966!

2. The opening sequence is a 1960s-tech version of Russell T Davies' signature zoom-down-to-London-from-space shot.

3. The Doctor's skin evidently prickles when in the presence of modernist design icons.



4. Why it doesn't then prickle at the sight of Polly's amazing dress, is something of a mystery.

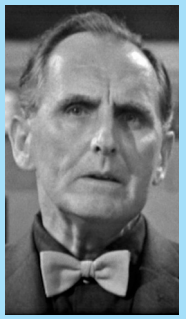
5. Whilst it would be perfectly in character for the Third Doctor, to have the First breeze into the WOTAN project, here, using a military acquaintance as a reference, seems unexpectedly pro-establishment.

6. And later, the Doctor hangs out at the Royal Scientific Club with Sir Charles Summers… (He'll be drinking wine and practicing Venusian Aikido next.)

7. Which makes one wonder if the Inferno club is full of Nazi soldiers with eyepatches and green-skinned werewolf mutants.

8. WOTAN stands for Will Operating Thought ANalogue. As in, its processes provide an analogue for thought — not that the computer is, itself, analogue.

9. "We are about to link this up with computers all over the world…" Good heavens, they've invented the Internet!



10. Brett says that the system is "at least ten years ahead of its time." While he's partly correct in that the Internet wouldn't start to come into general use until the 1970s, the idea of a linked computer system actually dates to 1962, when ARPANET (Advanced Research Projects Agency Network) was founded by the US military.

11. WOTAN can type faster than Polly and never makes mistakes. Fifty years later and we still haven't managed that.

12. How would WOTAN know what Tardis stands for? Has it seen *An Unearthly Child*?

13. Also, WOTAN says the D stands for "Dimensions," not "Dimension." So it has, in fact, made a mistake.

14. With Polly, Dodo and Kitty in residence, the Inferno Club has quite a menagerie.

15. Shout out to Telstar, the first satellite co-sponsored by the General Post Office (GPO). No, really, look it up if you don't believe us.

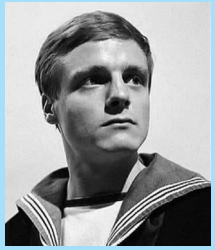
16. There's a Black reporter visible in the press conference in Episode 1, but he never speaks; later, in Episode 4, we have the first ever speaking part for a Black performer in *Doctor Who* (Dwight Whylie) but he's never seen.

17. "There's nothing more important than human life." What about cat life, you speciesist?

18. "Machines cannot govern man!" Why not? I mean, WOTAN even gets its own mention on the end credits.

19. "He looks like that disc jockey!" Kitty remarks. The Doctor interrupts this train of thought nervously, evidently knowing the later revelations about the DJ in question.

20. Ben really doesn't come over very well in his opening episode. He's too busy sulking about his shore-posting to have a drink with two beautiful women; he gets himself into a fight**,** and then starts calling Polly "Duchess", which implies he's got a nasty**,** class-related chip on his shoulder. Remind us why he's companion material again?



21. And right after saying goodbye to Polly, Ben sashays over to some old tramp to ask him if he's got a bed for the night. Nice to see *Doctor Who* embracing the permissive society, but really.

22. Despite this first impression, the Doctor says in Episode 3 that "he seemed quite a responsible young lad."

23. Moreover, during Episode 3, Polly talks about Ben, saying, "He was my friend." No he wasn't, Polly, he was a sailor you tried to chat up in a bar, who started a fight and blew you off for an old dosser.

24. In case you thought WOTAN saying "Doctor Who" in Episode 1 was a mistake, Brett repeats it loudly several times at the start of Episode 2, and WOTAN follows suit. Just to wind up future obsessives.

25. This story marks the beginning of the Sacrificial Tramp motif in *Doctor Who*, that appears from time to time, whereby some random drifter has a fatal encounter with the monster/villain of the week to build up the drama.

26. "Sir Charles, do you suppose, er? No, I don't suppose you would."

27. Has William Hartnell ever picked up a phone before in his life? Judging by his performance in Episode 2, the answer is no.

28. "I'll get Brett's secretary…" "Oh, no, no, no!" "Well, a little brandy then." Sir Charles' reaction to the Doctor's cries of distress suggests the permissive society has penetrated the Royal Scientific Club.

29. And, just to cover all the bases, Sir Charles returns with both a drink and a woman.

30. Did it not occur to the Doctor to question Dodo about the mysterious goings on

<u>before</u> taking her out from under WOTAN's influence?

31. Dodo is sent off to stay with Sir Charles' wife in the country, and never seen again. That's cold, First Doctor, that's cold.

32. It's a nice detail that the War Machines bear a certain resemblance to WOTAN itself.

33. The reel-to-reel tape ticking away on the side of the machines is also a rather charming touch.

34. DalekInvasionOfEarthWatch: Battersea Power Station, robotic brainwashed Londoners, the Doctor confronting a machine by standing up to it and clutching his lapels.

35. Other prescient location footage includes Covent Garden (*The Web of Fear*), Heathrow Airport (*Time-Flight*), and Cornwall Gardens (as seen in *The Mind of Evil*).

36. In fact, the use of a canvas tent to camouflage the Doctor and Sir Charles' activities in *The War Machines* anticipates the Masters' use of a workman's tent in *The Mind of Evil*. Or perhaps the Master stole the idea?

37. In 1969 the GPO was abolished and the assets transferred to The Post Office, changing it from a Department of State to a statutory corporation. Then, in 1981, the telecommunications sides was split into a totally separate publicly owned corporation.

38. Blocky machines on treads, armed with bashing implements, trundling around a warehouse. All it needs is Craig Charles up in the announcer's booth, and you'd have an episode of *Robot Wars*.

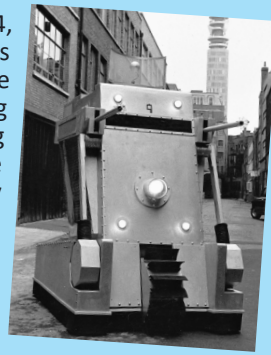
39. Where exactly did WOTAN get all these weapons from? You'd think that large wooden crates with the words "HIGH EXPLOSIVES" stencilled on the side coming in via Heathrow would incur at least a little suspicion, but no.

40. This is also the start of *Doctor Who*'s tradition of soldiers with more-than-regulation-length haircuts.

41. On that subject, check out the officer in the background during Episode 3 with the really magnificent 'tache.

42. Most of Episode 3 is spent either preparing for a fight, or actually fighting, around Covent Garden.

43. And in Episode 4, there's all that business about War Machine 9 going rogue, being captured, and getting reprogrammed by the Doctor. Which is entirely redundant in story terms, since he could have just reprogrammed the already-captured War Machine 3.



44. Considering that WOTAN's agents spend the bulk of Episodes 2, 3 and 4 failing to pursue the Doctor, it seems he's not all <u>that</u> required.

45. Signs of the times: a pause in the action in Episode 4 to explain to the audience what "programming" is and why computers need it.

46. The amount of location filming in this story is really quite impressive.

47. Ben's ship is *HMS Teazer*. Make of that what you will.

48. *HMS Teazer* was a real ship, but she was decommissioned in 1961 and sold for scrap in 1965. Either this story takes place in a parallel universe, or Ben is some kind of lunatic who goes to bars dressed as a sailor from a non-existent ship.

49. In hindsight, maybe naming your supercomputer after a Norse deity was a mistake.

50. We bet the GPO were quite pleased with all this favourable publicity, and the way their efforts in adopting cutting-edge computer technology were celebrated as a great development for everyone. ▲

Bell-bottom humour and cocktails
An appreciation of Ben and Polly
By Ian Scales

Back in 1976, I experienced, during my emerging adolescence, a rather unsettling school residential trip. My male compatriots, who had previously been playing with *Six Million Dollar Man* toys, now talked about dating girls and their engagement in other related activities. Vaguely bemused, I returned home to find some comfort in the form of a *Doctor Who* book on my bedside table. It was a slightly battered, purplish hardback that my sister had found in a second hand book shop, titled *The Dr Who Annual*. The cover featured a face that I recognised from the illustration on the *Doctor Who and the Cybermen* Target novel: that of the Second Doctor. But even more thrillingly, it also displayed colour drawings of two of his companions, Ben and Polly. These characters had fascinated me ever since they featured in a couple of contemporary Target Cybermen stories, where they helped to defeat two attacks on Earth by these monstrous parodies of men — something I considered far less unnerving than tackling the onset of puberty.

I sheltered in the comfort of my garden that summer, shutting out the pressures of my social life by immersing myself in any *Doctor Who* novels and annual that featured my ideal companions. Still functioning only on the edges of sexual awareness, I regarded Ben and Polly as reassuringly straightforward representations of masculinity and femininity. Not only did the annual feature copious illustrations of their clean-cut good looks, but it also contained an article with a small photograph and accompanying description of them. Apparently, Polly had a "strong

streak of common sense" even though she found her travels "a bit frightening at times". This was clearly the Polly who had both feared and responded courageously to the Cybermen at the Antarctic and on the moon; the same woman who was behind the "Polly Cocktail". In a wonderful sequence, that reminded me of *George and his Marvellous Medicine*, Polly recalls that her nail varnish remover contains chemicals that may break down the plastic on the Cybermen's chest units. A later, more sophisticated me, would, perhaps, claim that Polly uses the trappings of a patriarchal expectation of women (obsession with her nails) as a tool to deconstruct the mechanisms of the male architect... or something, but my child persona just loved the idea of a plucky companion mixing some kind of magic potion to chuck at her foe!

According to the annual, Ben saw his life on board the Tardis as one "mad merry-go-round". This was the same energetic, cheerful Ben who happily leapt about on the moon, in between tackling the Cybermen, and helping out with daily Moonbase chores. (In the first annual story, he is described as pummelling his midriff and stating his desire to go for a run on the next planet where they land, come what may.) As a rather sedentary pre-adolescent, I was not as sports-orientated; though I did enjoy playing football with the other local children; but as we all neared adolescence, the distance between us seemed to be increasing. The other kids were more competitive, more inclined to preen and show off to the opposite sex, and consequently less predictable. Ben and Polly, inhabiting the world of what was essentially children's fiction, seemed more comparable to the engaging, but sexually non-active characters in the pre-war *Magnet* and *School Friend* papers that I had read, combining their good looks with a proactive resolution to solve whatever problems life might throw at them.

The Ben I read about in these first stories was athletic, impulsive, apparently straightforward, while Polly was clever, self-assured, socially adept, and I developed a wary sense of envy and attraction to them. However, as I matured and experienced more of their adventures in various formats, I began to notice complexities within their characters.

Of course, finding stories from the Ben and Polly era to view was no easy task; the majority of their episodes being either lost or destroyed. Fortunately their introductory adventure, *The War Machines*, is pretty much intact, and later on I was able to watch the BBC video release. Polly's introduction is reasonably faithful to the character I expected, hospitably taking the departing companion Dodo under her wing to get down with the other kids in "the most with-it place in town", the Inferno, where Ben is discovered in full sailor uniform, including cap, dolefully haunting the bar. It was the first time I realised that the character was sexually attractive, despite having to acknowledge that he was a far more diminutive figure than I expected. I was additionally surprised to find myself irritated by his personality. He was not the robust, stalwart figure that I

had envisaged. This was a man who wore his heart on his navy sleeve, communicating his despondent feeling through his dialogue and dejected body language. Initially smiling at Polly's attempts to humour him, he is soon snapping at her. A few moments later, as some letch makes his move on the woman, Ben launches into a physical attack, before turning on Polly and warning her to "be careful who you encourage." To judge from his volatile form, Polly might have been wise to listen. Prior to this, I had been unaware of Ben's potent mood swings. I suspected the scene had been added simply to give a reason for him to meet Polly, but throughout his tenure, Ben proceeds to lurch from one emotional state to another with surprisingly regularity, often meeting danger with violence or shouting. After Polly gets taken over by WOTAN, Ben turns up at Sir Charles' residence in the depths of despair. Whilst he is quick to deal physically with danger, away from the action he reverts to frustration and outbursts of anger. The veins in his neck double in size during one scene, as he demands Polly's rescue.

This behaviour reminded me, in many ways, of the mood changes that had beset the friends with whom I played football during our early teens; from jovial bantering to full scale conflict — often solved with a punch — and then a return to horseplay. I always found such shifts unnerving, and still do. I realised that Ben, rather than being a stable role model, was closer to the temperamental males around whom I would be constantly treading warily throughout the rest of my life.

The recent animations of those missing stories are consistent with Ben's introduction, allowing me to experience visually his ever changing temperament — something I had only been able to read about previously, which did not make the same visceral impact. He appears at his most volatile when his attention is on Polly. During Episode 3 of *The Moonbase*, after enthusiastically engaging with Polly's "cocktail" seconds before, he then aggressively tries to dissuade Jamie from going to battle with the Cybermen. "I'm sure Polly's very impressed!" he mocks. The next minute, both boys are squaring up, forcing Polly to intercede. As a man of action, Ben is in his element, bravely facing off against a War Machine, fighting Cybermen, or protecting Polly from giant crabs at a holiday camp, but it's in those pauses between the action that he is liable to take umbrage and spat with friend or foe. This behaviour, however, is tempered with moments of joie de vivre that are rather pleasant, and employs what Polly terms as "bell-bottom humour". In *The Smugglers*, when deciding to return to the Doctor's aid, Ben pauses to call to Polly who is returning to the safety of the Tardis. "Polly!", "Yes?", "Put the kettle on." It's a cliché, of course, but from the surviving audio footage, we can hear it's delivered with an appealing charm, broadening Ben's character with humour.

The scene of Ben's which I like most, occurs in *The Power of the Daleks* and expertly conveys this balance between physical conflict and comedy. It shows him responding heatedly to Polly's kidnapping, grabbing the new Doctor in frustration, and forcing him to get involved in the search: a reaction that differs significantly from the deference he showed to William Hartnell's Doctor. It sums up Ben's personality — passionate, aggressive, devoted to Polly and confrontational, but actor Michael Craze also manages to imbue it with humour through the resolute way he has Ben employ his aggression against the annoyingly passive Doctor. Whilst Ben is quick to use his hands, his generally positive nature demonstrates that his heart is in the right place.

In Polly's case, although Ben teasingly calls her "Duchess", apart from her accent, Polly seems to me anything but standoffish in the way that the nickname implies. There was a girl in my class at school called Janet who was a perfect 'duchess'. I remember feeling an almost worshipful admiration for her — she whose feet never deigned to touch the ground. Polly, in contrast, is nothing less than open with those she meets, whatever their background — befriending a young, local woman in *The Highlanders* and an Atlantean servant in *The Underwater Menace*. Polly is, I acknowledge, treated more inconsistently than Ben, she disappointingly resorts to screaming and passively obeying others in Atlantis, and literally clutching onto Ben in *The Macra Terror.* For the most part, however, she demonstrates a great strength, balanced with a good sense of humour, especially in my favourite scene for her in episode 2 of *The Moonbase.* Here, Polly asks the Doctor if he's considered whether his medical degree, taken in 1888, might be somewhat out of date in the year 2070: Anneke Wills delivers the lines with perfectly judged humour, blending plaintive enquiry with a resigned, caustically sharp wit.

Polly displays intelligence and cunning in the way she plans to rescue the Doctor and Ben in *The Highlanders* and later, during *The Underwater Menace,* manipulates the 'fake god' Ando's sound system to feed upon the inhabitants' superstition. She is also able to make connections from her own time to deal with various situations they encounter — using her knowledge that witches and warlocks were feared in seventeenth century Cornwall to confound their gaoler and make an escape, as well as understanding the potential link between the chemical properties of beauty products and the Cyber technology of the future. She even adapts her previous role as a coffee-providing secretary**,** to ingratiate herself with Doctor Barclay in *The Tenth Planet*.

And she appears to have a good understanding of character as well, claiming she knows instinctively who to trust in *The Power of the Daleks*. Furthermore, Polly seems fully aware of the effect she has on men, utilising this to both flirt with, and blackmail, Algernon Ffinch in *The Highlanders*. Despite Ffinch being, ostensibly, one of the enemy, he reciprocates her attention by defending both Polly and her companions later in the story, suggesting that she not only assesses people's nature accurately, but can convert them to her side. I assume that Polly is also well aware of the impact she has on Ben!

I particularly like the fact that Polly and Ben's romantic relationship is implicit within the stories. Polly takes the initiative in offering to stand Ben for lunch when they first meet, though Ben reminds her he is "no Deb's delight" (no rich girl's idle fling or fancy). Throughout their time together, they are concerned for each other's safety. In *The Power of the Daleks,* Polly is contemptuous of her captors for not being "real men" like Ben, and immediately calls for him, even when he is under the influence of the colony in *The Macra Terror*. In fact, the strength of their emotions for each other appears to transcend the power of malevolent mind-control. Ben rushes to protect Polly from the Macra, while Polly rescues Ben from a War Machine and later, allows him to escape to warn the Doctor, despite being under the hypnotic power of WOTAN at the time.

Experiencing the different aspects of Ben and Polly's personalities over time has expanded my appreciation of these characters. They are definitely flawed, as we see with Ben's fierce anger and his quickness to take offence and with Polly's tendency to submissiveness and her over-reliance on Ben, but as I got older, I have experienced similar complexities, both in myself, and other people. It is a shame that Ben and Polly were pushed to the background during their later stories, especially when Jamie's relationship with the Doctor becomes more established. In fact, in their last adventure, they only appear in half the episodes and Polly is not really Polly for part of it, but instead, a Chameleon duplicate identifying itself as Michelle Leuppi from Zurich. But it is satisfying that their journey comes full circle as they return to the exact day they originally left in the Tardis. It is also pleasing for me that Ben and Polly leave together. I am tempted to think of their futures as always joined. I'm still an old romantic at heart.

Both these companions have been poorly represented in the surviving archive, but in recent years, particularly with such releases as the animated *The Power of the Daleks*, they have become more familiar to fans who may never have seen their previous episodes. Historically they were the first companions on television to witness the Doctor regenerating. They even featured in the final Peter Capaldi story, first in clips from *The Tenth Planet*, and then recast with present day actors to perform various lost scenes. I was amused to see that Ben had acquired an extra few feet in height and both were flaunting some rather magnificent wigs; but any opportunity to remind the audience of these wonderful characters was a welcome one. Ben's "bell-bottom humour" and mood changes, and Polly's "cocktails" and courage, make them anyone's ideal companions, as they have been mine, from adolescence to maturity.

But I'd keep a wary eye on Ben. ▲

TIME'S CHUMP!

By Jez Strickley

You're probably aware that HBO has announced it's going to make a television adaptation of Audrey Niffenegger's 2003 novel *The Time Traveler's Wife;* a story about the emotional dynamics of a marriage up-ended by the simple fact of a husband who, suddenly and involuntarily, travels in time. The cover shot for the DVD release of the 2009 film version, showed the pair in a loving embrace, but lying in opposite directions, an overt signal of their temporally tangled relationship.

Sound familiar?

Let's put it another way. A male time traveller drops in and out of his beloved's life, their respective timelines crisscrossing to dramatic effect as each out-of-synch meeting triggers a new adventure in their remarkable relationship. Yes, I'm talking about the Doctor/River Song story arc.

It opens with a youthful Tenth Doctor meeting his future wife in what turns out to be her final hours, and closes with a world-weary Twelfth Doctor taking River on a twenty-four year date to the Singing Towers of Darillium. Between these bookending events, River's timeline variously circles and intersects the Doctor's, weaving some of the series' most complex narratives.

How much of their romance is just a reworking of *The Time Traveler's Wife*?

Moffat readily admits it inspired *The Girl in the Fireplace* and there are patent borrowings in his development of River Song: the diary of her encounters with her time-travelling beau; her complicated "first" meeting with him (after her child-self has known him for years); and tragic portents framed in temporal inevitability. As the story unfolds, the same tangled meeting of timelines which makes Niffenegger's fiction engaging and perplexing, can be discovered in Moffat's scripts for the pairing.

And if you read her book (or take the shorter route and watch the film) after reviewing Moffat's efforts, you'll spend your time ticking off crossovers and reflections, as you realise just how far all his *Doctor Who* stories echo Niffenegger's time-travel narrative, in part or in whole.

There's a wonderful irony in that, having mined the concept to exhaustion as *Who's* showrunner, Moffat is now one of HBO's executive producers for their adaptation of Niffenegger's book. I guess his timey-wimey storytelling style makes him ideal for the job. And at the very least, he won't be accused of of recycling her ideas!

The same can't be said of his work on *Doctor Who.* Moffat's insistence on time as the defining factor in his scripts is clear from the very beginning. *The Empty Child/The Doctor Dances* hinges on the Tardis' arrival in wartime London days after the crash landing of a mysterious capsule the Doctor has been seen chasing through time and space in the opening scene. We've already noted that *The Girl in the Fireplace* was inspired by Niffenegger's work; while Moffat's Weeping Angels, which debuted in his third script, wreck the lives (and relationships) of helpless

humans by hurling them into the past as unwilling travellers in the fourth dimension.

Each of the above outings constitutes some of the series' most popular adventures since its 2005 reboot, making Moffat perhaps the most successful writer during Russell T Davies' tenure as showrunner. It seemed everything he touched turned to gold; his finely judged understanding of the Doctor, assured plot development, knack for sharp dialogue, and natural sense of pacing, delivering up one well-crafted drama after another.

Unfortunately Moffat's choice of time travel as his signature story-telling device had pretty much run its course by the time he, in turn, became the *Doctor Who* showrunner. So did he pick a new idea to tap? Or at the very least reinvent someone else's? No, he did not. He took Niffenegger's time-twisting romance and ran with it to exhaustion.

Moffat kicks off his tenure with Amy Pond and her 'River Song lite' character arc. Her childhood encounter with the Doctor is the prelude to her meeting him in adulthood, repurposing the Time Lord-human relationship in which the non-time traveller must take "the long way round". To make the connection more obvious, Amy wears a bright red cardigan for her childhood meeting, a reference to Niffenegger's protagonist, Clare Abshire, and the red picnic blanket which her future time traveller husband, Henry DeTamble, uses to clothe his nudity when he and the child Claire first meet. The time concept even manages to fuel *The Girl Who Waited*, a one-off adventure where parallel time streams, running at different speeds, see Amy living into her later years waiting for the Doctor and Rory to find her, and only a Moffat-crafted reset switch can resolve her predicament. In typical time-travel fashion, Amy's lengthy arc is finally brought to an end by one of his Weeping Angels.

And it doesn't end there. Not by a long shot. Amy is followed by Clara Oswald, and the latter's story also channels *The Time Traveler's Wife* as Clara's encounters with the Doctor involve her crossing and re-crossing his time stream to undo the villainy of the Great Intelligence. Yes, these fleeting intersections are speedily managed and retrofitted, but the conceit remains intact. It's as though Moffat's very conception of the Doctor-companion relationship exclusively rests on an unsubtle reheating of Niffenegger's premise.

To give Moffat his due, visits by the Doctor to different points in an individual's timeline are common enough in the series. The Brigadier, for instance, finds himself working with different incarnations of the Doctor before, during and then after, his time with UNIT. As for Sarah Jane Smith, she is perhaps the original "girl who waited", with many years passing between her later encounters with various regenerated Doctors. Elton Pope's brief meeting with the Doctor as a child, lies behind his search for the Time Lord in adulthood (*Love and Monsters*). Similarly, the Tigellan leader Zastor knew the Doctor prior to the events shown in *Meglos*, and the people of Karfel hosted him on a previous occasion, before his battle with the Borad (*Timelash*). Conversely, Commodore Travers of the *Hyperion III* meets him sometime prior to the events screened aboard the Time Lord space station in *The Trial of a Time Lord*. And during the same adventure, Melanie Bush appears as a companion from the Doctor's future, in what can only be seen as a foreshadowing of Moffat's plans.

However, there's a crucial difference between these examples of timeline-splicing and Moffat's temporal alchemy. Brief mentions of previous off-screen encounters with the Doctor, are a useful way of fast-tracking character interplay, hinting at a through-line between past and present adventures, or stoking our curiosity for those stories which happen after the credits have rolled. But in Moffat's case, it becomes standard practice for events to be knotted up in a melee of 'what ifs' and 'maybes', taxing the viewer's comprehension, and giving rise to a Hydra of unresolvable story threads that can only be dealt with through hitting a reset button (see *The Big Bang*, *The Wedding of River Song*, *The Name of the Doctor*).

Moffat seems to have been predisposed to this approach long before he began officially writing for *Doctor Who*. His 1999, *Red Nose Day* sketch, *The Curse of Fatal Death*, is a comedic love letter to the programme, and channels the paradoxes of time travel to good effect. On this occasion he turns it into a vehicle for humour, but, even here, we are eventually faced with a sense of repetition. Watching Matt Smith's Doctor conjuring his way out of problems in *The Big Bang,* I couldn't help but be reminded of Rowan Atkinson and his Doctor's "sofa of reasonable comfort", which, through judicious use of the Tardis, he substitutes for the Master's "spikes of doom". In a similar fashion, time travel becomes not only the plot driver of *The Big Bang*, but also a shortcut to get through a locked door: Davies' multi-purpose sonic screwdriver is trumped by a Police Box!

But it's the way Moffat uses the notion of love splintered across time, as the keynote in his time travel opera, which makes me feel he's overcooked the whole thing. Somehow, despite his obsession with mortality, his forays into malign software, and his complex spaghetti-like plotting, it's his overuse of River Song, and her back-to-front relationship with the Doctor, that leaves me cold.

This is a real pity, since River's introduction in *Silence in the Library/Forest of the Dead* is possibly one of the brightest, shiniest pieces of *Doctor Who* drama since its relaunch. However, her return appearances demystify her character so much, that I am reminded of that disastrous moment in *The Phantom Menace* where Qui-Gon Jinn announces that it's the midi-chlorians who provide knowledge of the Force. Further, by burdening series 32 with her arc, Moffat elevates the 'time-travel romance' motif to the realms of absurdity, as if he was so taken by Niffenegger's story that he saw it as the be-all and end-all of his showrunner masterplan.

It's not surprising, then, that when the love story comes full circle in *The Husbands of River Song*, Moffat's writing seems less instinctive and less purposeful. As much as I prefer the absence of a heavy season arc in series 36, some of its offerings seem below par by Moffat's standards. Indeed, we only see him return to form with *Extremis* and later *World Enough and Time/The Doctor Falls*, which has the Master encountering his future self in the guise of Missy, and forming a kind of love triangle with the Doctor.

Could it be, that bereft of his go-to time travel romance, Moffat had no clear picture of what *Doctor Who* is about?

Moffat's guiding vector, both as a contributing writer and as showrunner, was certainly *The Time Traveler's Wife* and variations thereof, and we can conclude that, without this template to guide him, his direction for the series lost focus. More, as much as the template allowed for the sort of emotional substance which can appeal to a wider audience, relying on it to the extent where it

became the only tool in the box was, at best, slipshod, and at worst, cheated the viewer.

I'm pretty sure Moffat didn't set forth to reuse this idea ad nauseam, but like a songwriter who realises they've discovered gold with a certain chord sequence and writes variations on it time and again, he found himself stuck in a similar groove, churning out everything from a romantic tragedy across time-windows, to a paradox-busting wedding, via parlour tricks at Stonehenge, until he finally hit bedrock.

While the formula succeeded well enough in his pre-showrunner days, largely because this reworking of Niffenegger's idea was interspersed with the many and varied efforts of other writers, once Moffat took over from Davies, his reliance on the same premise, naturally and inevitably, ran out of steam.

It's bad enough that we have the to-ing and fro-ing of River Song and her oh-so-tangled timeline, but when you throw in the labyrinthine lives of Amy Pond and Clara Oswald, plus any number of adventures where time travel is not just a way of setting up the plot, but also the motor at the heart of the storyline, then you discover a theme which saturates the scripts its intended to lift, and leaves the viewer with a weary sense of déjà vu — perhaps the only real time travel any of us will experience. ▲

Doctor Booze

By Fiona Moore

"A Place Where A Gentleman May Refresh Himself…" — *The Massacre*

The most surprising thing about pubs in *Doctor Who* is how few of them there are. The obvious explanation for this — that the series is aimed partly at children — doesn't stand up to scrutiny: it's a programme with a mostly-adult main cast, and, given the prominence of such hostelry in British culture, children aren't unaware of them as a social area. Pubs are even name-checked in nursery rhymes such as *Pop Goes The Weasel* (the line "In and out The Eagle" is in reference to The Eagle Tavern that could be found on London's City Road). While detractors of the post-2005 series complain that it's a "soap", it appears to be a soap that's lacking a Queen Vic or Rovers' Return, to name but two of the drinking establishments which provide a focus for a fictional community of soap-opera characters.

To explore this, I will be considering the dual function of the pub in British telefantasy generally: as a safe space and as an information hub. However, I will also argue that the primary reason for their absence in *Doctor Who* is that they are a symbol of domestic life… and, as the Tenth Doctor said, *Doctor Who* doesn't generally "do domestic."

Perhaps the best-known role of the pub is as a sanctuary: a point of community identity, and an expression of it. Think of the way in which such places are depicted in horror films like *The Wicker Man* and *An American Werewolf in London*: venues where the little rural community gathers, and where outsiders are generally not welcome. This trope is definitely associated with hostelry in *Doctor Who*: the mock British village in *The Android Invasion* would not pass muster as such without a pub, and the fact that the Fleur de Lys is abandoned is an eerie indication of something gone wrong. In *The Snowmen*, the cheer and friendliness of the inn where Clara works provides a counterpoint to her subsequent involvement in an adventure which will get her killed (it's not insignificant that, when she goes off on her immortal adventures through the universe at the close of *Hell Bent*, it's in the guise of a waitress in a diner, an arguably analogous institution in American life). *Turn Left* shows us the alternate-universe Donna celebrating with her workmates in a pub, again as a secure and normal counterpoint to the tragedies which will then follow. Their designations can also indicate community identity, as in *The Daemons*, where the 'local' is named The Cloven Hoof in acknowledgment of Devil's End's name and history.

Given this association of pubs with security and domesticity, it's perhaps not surprising that several of them crop up in UNIT stories — UNIT being the closest thing to an Earth "family" the Doctor had in the original series. The Cloven Hoof features prominently in *The Daemons*, as a space for patrons and UNIT members to congregate at various points, and of course, the serial ends with a nod to the pub's ability to encourage male friendship as the Brigadier suggests to Captain Yates that they share a pint. The public house again features in *Terror of the Zygons*, where the Fox Inn provides a base of operations for UNIT. When UNIT returns in *Battlefield*, the Gore Crow Hotel, with its husband-and-wife owners, represents domesticity and the commonality. And the fact that the Destroyer's attack on Ace and Shou Yuing takes place in the bar symbolises the risk the creature poses to safety, normality and social order.

The second function of the alehouse is as an information hub: a hangout to acquire, and pass on, news and gossip, and, in film and television, consequently a very good place to provide an info-dump or establish backstory. Or the reverse. There is the common horror-film trope where the locals in the pub all refuse to speak with our protagonists, which, inevitably, results in them wandering into danger. Telefantasy precedents for this include *Quatermass II*. Here, Quatermass and reporter Hugh Conrad investigate an industrial plant by the simple expedient of attending the community centre of the prefab town built for the construction workers, and buying a round of drinks. The people are happy to talk at first, but, when Conrad comes on too strong, they get suspicious and go quiet. This provides the viewer both with information, and with some tantalizing lacunae to keep them hooked to the story. The tavern in *Doctor Who*'s *The Massacre* has a corresponding significance as we learn about the politics of sixteenth century France through conversations between its clientele, informing the viewer and setting them up for the action to come. Later, in *Quatermass and the Pit*, Kneale's device of people watching television in their 'local' reveals the spread of the Martian madness through London, and inspires a similar scene in *The War Machines*, where the announcement that the machines are on the attack plays out on a television in a bar.

This aspect of the pub is usually implicit in *Doctor Who*. Clearly, it's an element in the above-mentioned UNIT stories: the Doctor and Sarah visiting the Fleur de Lys during *The Android Invasion* in order to find out what's happened to the village, for instance. In *The Reign of Terror* and *The Massacre*, its role is more explicitly informational, as members of various resistance and anti-government movements use local alehouses as places to meet, to hide, to spy, or to exchange messages.

The presence of taverns in those two stories raises an interesting general issue about their function in *Doctor Who*: this being that they are almost always in a British setting. Leaving aside the Western saloons in *The Gunfighters* and *A Town Called Mercy*, drawn more from cowboy-film tropes than from sci-fi and folk horror, the two exceptions are set in France — which arguably reflects the long-standing "frenemy" relationship between the two countries, and the fact that they have more cultural similarities than either would necessarily like to acknowledge. However, in both cases, there is also a British connection: firstly with the counter-revolutionary movement in *The Reign of Terror*, and secondly, with the Huguenots in *The Massacre,* many of whom would later migrate to parts of the United Kingdom.

Nevertheless, this restriction is surprising. Pompeii, ancient China, and other areas visited by the Doctor, also had inns, and there is no reason why drinking establishments should not have been a feature of future Earth colonies. Even in the primitive setups of *The Power of the Daleks* and *Colony in Space*, it's puzzling that no one seems to have lashed together some home-brewing equipment in a spare room or Quonset hut. It's also not immediately intuitive why a pub should be the source of the info-dump in *The War Machines*, as opposed to a private setting (or even a more public one — the use of a department-store display of televisions to provide a quick explainer is another common horror film trope).

It is possible that the answer lies with my first observation. For a British audience, the pub is a place of homely camaraderie, and as such, seems appropriate in stories focussing on domestic affairs in the present day, but not in ones set in the future, or in quite different past societies, that deal with broader issues. The saloons in the two Westerns mentioned above, support this argument. We see them within a context specifically referencing the gunslinger-walks-into-a-bar cliché, rather than one which recognises their wider place in American frontier society. Much as horror films use the pub as a symbol for affinity and community, so in *Doctor Who*, it is used to mark out a domestic space. A space that is, moreover, keenly associated with modern British identity. ▲

David Bailie: 1937-2021

By Alan Stevens

"Wild men who caught and sang the sun in flight."

My first meeting with David Bailie was on Saturday, 3 September, 2000, at the Palace Hotel in Manchester. I can be this precise because it was the first day of a *Doctor Who* event called Panopticon.

It had always been my intention to approach the actor**,** with regard to his recreating the role of Taren Capel from *The Robots of Death* for my audio spin-off drama series *Kaldor City.* Fortuitously, Bailie, together with fellow cast members Russell Hunter and David Collings, and Chris Boucher, the writer of this highly regarded story, had all been invited to the convention as a precursor to the adventure's first release on DVD.

Russell Hunter had already lent both his support and considerable acting talent to *Kaldor City,* revisiting his part as the former Storm Mine Commander, Kiy Uvanov, and it was he who introduced me to Bailie.

"Go on, David, it's a great series. You'll thoroughly enjoy it!" Hunter enthused. Bailie agreed in principle, and we swapped telephone numbers.

"When can you send me a script?"

"Not for some months," I replied, "We have to write them first."

As it happened, the recording did not take place until August 2002.

Quite why there was such a delay, I'm not sure. I recall I was working on some aspect of the series for what seemed like every minute of every day. Nevertheless an agreement was struck, not only with Bailie, but with David Collings too, and I remember we all cemented the deal with a £45 bottle of Champagne, generously purchased from the hotel by another talented actor and *Kaldor City* supporter, David Bickerstaff.

Now fast-forward about twenty months. The scripts are written and Bailie has been sent his contract.

I receive a phone call.

"Oh, Alan, it's David Bailie here. I've informed my agent, and he'd like you to drop him a line. Here's his number!"

So I ring the agent and speak to a quite jolly and accommodating chap, who tells me that he's read and approved the contract and everything is fine.

Now, usually, an agent will only ask you to call them if they have an issue to raise, so this struck me as rather curious.

I phoned Bailie back and told him what had transpired.

"So he was perfectly happy?"

"Yes, he sounded in good spirits."

"The bugger!" replied Bailie.

"What?"

"Sorry, but an hour ago that bastard was dragging me over the coals for not arranging things through him… it's all power games I suppose!"

A few weeks later, Bailie arrived at the studio looking somewhat nervous!

"This is my first voice-only performance!"

"Don't worry, it's just acting without the pictures!"

"Yes, but acting requires some physical movement."

"Well, as long as you don't knock the microphone, you can gesticulate as much as you like."

Despite his doubts, Bailie was superb in the role, and, later, when conducting a promotional interview, he had this to say:

"I took my performance from the *Kaldor City* scripts, which I thought were very good. Sometimes you'll read a part and instinctively you know you're there, and it's wonderful when that happens. I also found the production side very interesting. I remember getting the scripts and thinking, 'Jesus, there's a lot of writing in this!' but then I've never done radio before, and really it's completely different to film, theatre and television. With an audio play you have to rely almost entirely on words, as words are basically all you have. I found the experience quite a challenge, but also very enjoyable. Taren Capel has returned, and I am more than happy to once again give him a voice."

Over the ensuing years, despite the international fame he was to achieve through the film series *Pirates of the Caribbean*, he kept in touch, and would very kindly autograph *Kaldor City* covers, which I would then include as a bonus to customers.

Later we became Facebook friends, and from there on, almost every week I'd received an email from him that began, "Greetings…. Alan,". He would then introduce his latest YouTube video, on which he'd perform a well known poem or Shakespearean soliloquy.

On 19 January 2021 he sent me a link to his powerful reading of Dylan Thomas' *Do Not Go Gently Into That Good Night*.

And then I heard from him no more. ▲

Taren Capel: Portrait of Fear

By Fiona Moore

Taren Capel, the villain of *The Robots of Death*, has a complex relationship with robots. Or perhaps it's a simple one. Raised by robots, he simultaneously regards them as superior beings, pathologically fears them, and wants to dominate them. It is this which drives him to reprogramme the robots on Storm Mine Four to murder the human crewmembers with a view to adapting every robot on the planet to do likewise, until he himself is finally killed when one of his own modified robots fails to recognise him as its "master".

The Robots of Death has its roots in the psychologically-literate films of the 1920s and 1930s: the idea that the coolly rational persona of Dask conceals the raging madness of Taren Capel is very much in line with that sort of narrative. The serial also harks back to the popular science fiction of the 1930s through 1950s, an era when the world was becoming mechanised to the point where the notion of a robot child-carer, as in Isaac Asimov's short story *Robbie*, seemed like an unsurprising future development. Moreover, given advances in pedagogy and child psychology in this period, one might even imagine that having a child raised by robots could be a good thing. Human child-carers and teachers are fallible and capricious, so why not allocate their tasks to reliable, programmable, untiring robot servants?

The Robots of Death was first broadcast in 1977, when people were questioning the idea of science as infallible, and in particular the idea that it was even remotely up to the complex task of child-rearing. So, the Dask/Capel dualism, in this new context, takes on a further meaning: that the rational self-interested philosophies of the 1950s, however tenable they seem, are in fact a path to megalomania.

One of the reasons why robots dominate the sci-fi of the 1950s, however, is because of the way in which mechanisation was transforming the domestic. The household that would have been full of human servants cooking, cleaning, and raising the children fifty years previously, was now full of mechanical ones, cooking, cleaning — and yes, raising the children, through educational and entertainment television aimed at the young: "Leave your children with Auntie Beeb." The robophobia of *The Robots of Death* exemplifies a very contemporary fear, and one that, ironically, was reflected in the National Viewers' and Listeners' Association's (NVLA) active campaign at the time to condemn *Doctor Who* as unsuitable viewing for children.

So, Dask/Capel embodies the anxiety of 1970s Man: that, having been raised by "robots", he fears them, wants to dominate them, and might, ultimately, be destroyed by them. *The Robots of Death* shows us a programme that was not afraid to make apparent the anxieties of the society it came from, and even to question its own role in building that society. ▲

Fiona Moore's book The Black Archive #43: *The Robots of Death* is currently available from Obverse Books in paperback and ebook formats.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