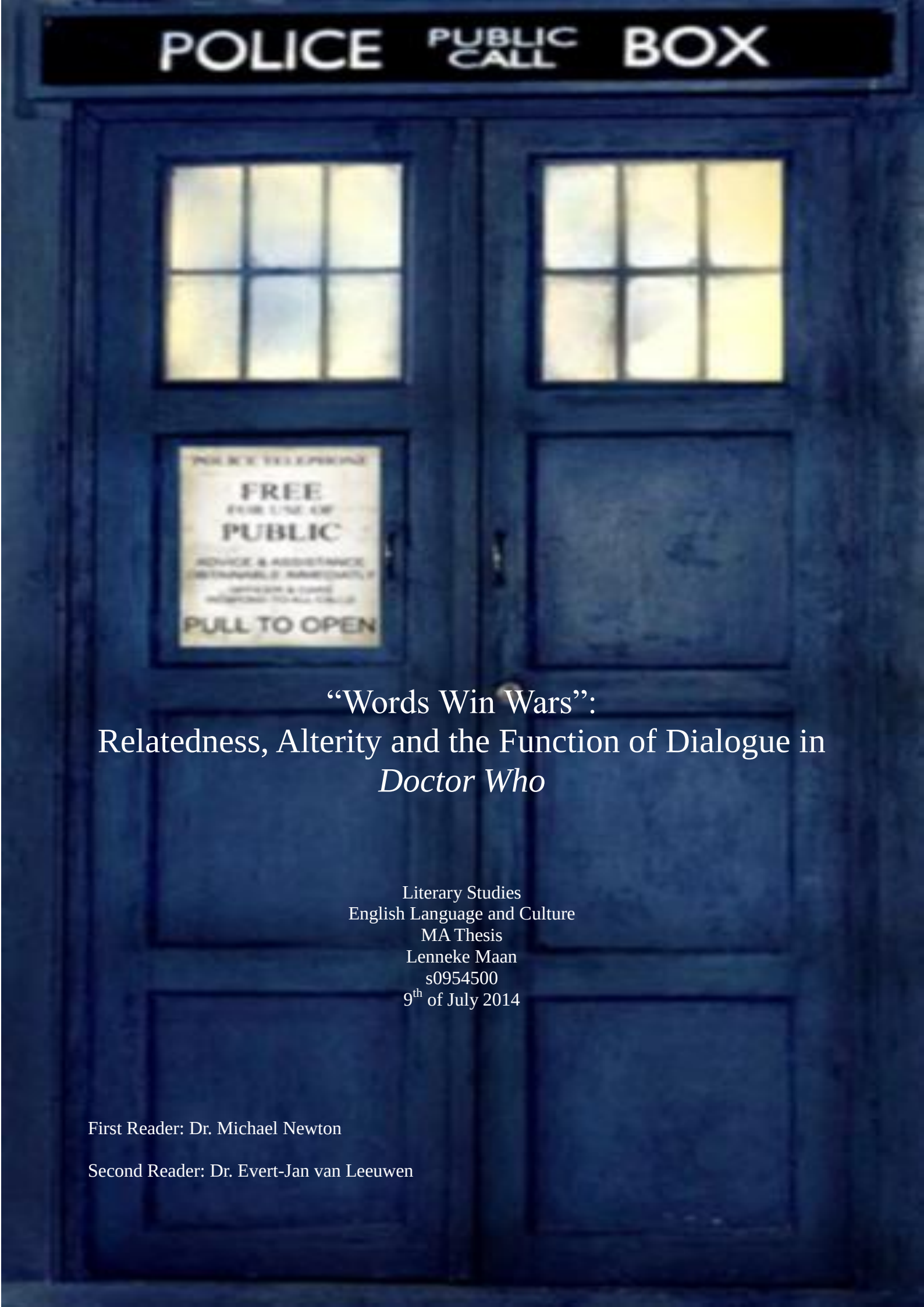

"Words Win Wars": Relatedness, Alterity and the Function of Dialogue in *Doctor Who*

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Lenneke Maan
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First Reader: Dr. Michael Newton

Second Reader: Dr. Evert-Jan van Leeuwen

Little Boy: “Are you afraid of monsters?”

Doctor: “No. They're afraid of me.”

Acknowledgements / First Things First, But Not Necessarily In That Order

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Introduction

The twenty-third of November has been an important day throughout history; if only one could possess some sort of time machine, one could reputedly witness Thespis of Icara become the first recorded actor to portray a character on stage on this day in 534 BC. In 1644, one might be present at the publishing of what by many scholars is seen as John Milton's second-greatest work – the Areopagitica. It marks the birth of *Life* magazine in 1936, the death of Roald Dahl in 1990, and today it is listed officially as the International Day to End Impunity. It is also, for our purposes most importantly, the day on which in 1963 the first episode of *Doctor Who* was aired. Since then, the show has famously become the longest-running science fiction series on Earth. It has undergone a process of starting off as being a family-oriented informative children's programme based on H.G. Wells' *The Time Machine*, being perceived as niche-marketed cult TV, withstanding a sixteen-year hiatus (beginning in 1989) and regenerating gloriously in 2005. In a 2013 critical monograph, James Chapman contends that it "remains very much a niche or cult series in relation to the big US network dramas" (288), yet today, it is so well-known that the same big US drama series – such as, for example, *The Big Bang Theory* and *Criminal Minds* – expect their audiences to understand references they make to *Doctor Who*. Moreover, in part "it is the longevity of *Doctor Who* which has led scholars to respond to the series as a "receptacle" for multiple forms of history, memory and identity" (Holdsworth, qtd in Hills 217); indeed, in recent years academic interest in the programme has surged. In 2011, *Doctor Who and Philosophy* was volume 55 in the interdisciplinary series *Popular Culture and Philosophy*, while in 2014 it was the first single-source work for the *Psychoanalysis and Popular Culture* series (preceded only by a book on social networking, and one on television in general). Tellingly, the writers of *Doctor Who and Psychoanalysis* lament not being able to subtitle their work "bigger on the inside" – as *Doctor Who and Philosophy* had already taken it (preface, xxvi) – because that is precisely what the programme has proven to be; bigger on the

inside. This idea might regard firstly the fact that, besides the "official" programme, *Doctor Who* has yielded two spin-off series, a magazine, a myriad of books and comic books and a vast network of expert fans; and secondly, it may be said of this world of fans, critics and fan-critics who have produced a universe of interpretations and evaluations. Extensive critical attention has been given to the series' production values, intertextual and intra-textual context, score, history and overall development. Surprisingly, however, relatively little comprehensive research has been published on *Doctor Who*'s near-eponymous protagonist, the Doctor himself – who, being the central figure of the series, continues to be an endless source of fascination for many. The Doctor has always been a figure of contradiction; one who is completely alien yet also an example of "what has been called the 'liberal humanist subject', where liberal humanism is conceived as the dominant way of understanding what it means to be human" (Green and Willmot 59); an unstoppable force of good, yet in recent years also one who committed genocide on his own race. This thesis will explore how the programme maintains these contradictions by continually reminding its audience of the Doctor's "less obvious" sides – his being alien, and his recently developed move into a moral "gray zone." It will argue that *Doctor Who* emphasises these all-too-easily forgotten qualities of the Doctor, doing so in various ways; by plot, narrative and characterisation through "mirror figures," which might remind the audience of the Doctor's ambiguous morality; and most obviously through comments and opinions expressed by the series' characters – first and foremost by the Doctor himself, but also by those who oppose or aid him.

One might, of course, have several objections to researching television, popular culture in general, or *Doctor Who* specifically, all of which (I think) are be based on the risk of over-interpretation – blatantly taking the programme "too seriously" (Sleight 4). In the introduction to *The Doctor's Monsters*, Graham Sleight notes firstly the danger of falling into the trap of "intentional fallacy," but rightly refutes that "as long as one accepts that authorial intent is one narrative among many, I see no problem with accepting it as such" (3). He highlights that "[m]any

will object, I'm sure, that the show is […] 'just entertainment' and that the kind of scrutiny I'm bringing to bear on it isn't appropriate" (4). The rapid increase in academic interest I mentioned above, however, argues against this – Alan Gibbs, for example, aptly notes that "*Doctor Who* ably demonstrates certain ways in which complex theoretical material is refracted through popular culture and is, in turn, propagated" (968). Sleight also stresses the danger of assigning too much weight to a detail which may have merely been "what was possible at the time" (3), but also highlights that "my concern, instead, is with the way a monster is presented on-screen" (5). My own concern is, likewise, with the way the Doctor is presented on-screen. Whatever petty "possibility" may have caused "what ended up on-screen" to be allowed to get there does not discredit the fact that "on-screen" remains, in my opinion, a constant *reflection* of "the shifting cultural landscape" (Chapman, qtd in Hills 217).

And the way the Doctor is presented on-screen is, as I have argued above, as a wholly ambiguous character. In being so, he is part of both a long-standing tradition and a trend. Throughout the cultural canon, humanity has shown an interest in the morally ambiguous and therefore "other" protagonist; the main characters of medieval texts (such as *Beowulf* or the Icelandic sagas) are frequently (even for their time) unnecessarily violent, and literary greats such as Shakespeare and Milton more often than not reserve large roles for characters of questionable morality. Also, over the past decade (at least) an interest in these problematic protagonists seems to have gained even more momentum. Series and films featuring one or several morally somewhat dubious characters have popped up like daisies; think, for example, of *Californication*'s (2007 - 2014) Hank Moody, *Iron Man*'s (2008) Tony Stark (who admittedly was a comic-book hero long before he was featured in a film, but Marvel's comics reach a significantly fewer number of people than their films do), the eponymous hero of *Dexter* (2006 - 2013) (who likewise moved from cult book to popular series), *Breaking Bad*'s (2008 - 2013) Walter White, and last but not least the recent reappearance of two separate incarnations of Sherlock Holmes (US-based films *Sherlock Holmes*

(2009) and *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows* (2011), and of course BBC's award-winning *Sherlock* (2010 -)). The Doctor of the in 2005 "regenerated" series, then, appears to fit in perfectly with this line of questionable gentlemen; though he states he acted "in the name of peace and sanity," the Doctor also commits a double genocide. Now that is not to say that the Doctor was an unambiguously good character in the classic series – before 1989, several incarnations exhibited many a dubious trait – but the programme simply refrained from emphasising these. What the classic series *did* emphasise, was the Doctor's otherworldly quality. As stated above, he is a figure of contradiction; he looks, talks and (usually) acts profoundly human, yet is a completely "other" alien from the planet Gallifrey. Throughout, the programme employs various means to ensure that the audience remembers this fact. In recent years, his ambiguities have gained a dimension in that besides being an advocate for good, he is now also very clearly a battle-scarred and potentially incredibly dangerous being – and the renewed series, likewise, likes to keep its audience cognizant of this fact. Before we explore this matter further, however, it is useful to establish two things; a working definition of what the "other" entails, and the fact that this ambiguous understanding of the Doctor is not a figment of my imagination.

Regarding its use in sociology and philosophy, the *Oxford English Dictionary* defines "other" as "that which is not the self or subject; that which lies outside or is excluded from the group with which one identifies oneself" (II, 9a, n). In *Totality and Infinity*, Emmanuel Lévinas establishes the "other" as an untameable force, wholly opposed to the "self." It cannot be grasped, nor murdered, nor made into an object of the "self." The "other" is an endless image of everything one feels one is not, and in meeting it, Lévinas argues, one may glimpse the idea of infinity. In relation to this, many critics have noted that in fiction, however, often "the alien or monster operat[es] as metaphor for the human Other [in short, everything *human* one nevertheless feels one is not]" (*New Dimensions of Doctor Who*, "A Good Score Goes to War," Butler, 20). In that sense, contemporary "aliens or monsters" do what Lévinas deemed impossible; they objectify the "other."

If the distinction between the (monstrous) "other" and the "self" were clear cut, however, the ambiguous protagonists mentioned above would be philosophically impossible. McGuire and Buchbinder argue that with "the events of 9/11 […] the unseeable other had breached the boundaries of the nation-state" (302) but also stress that "we should recall that the waning of the traditional way of knowing the world had commenced before 9/11 and was part of the shift to postmodernity in the late 20th century" (303). Lines were getting blurred under the episteme of postmodernity, and the controversy around 9/11 accelerated this development. And unsurprisingly so – conspiracy theories and a discourse of general distrust had become tea time conversation, and "the technologies of surveillance and visibility on which the nation had relied for […] safety now became the mechanisms by which the citizens […] witnessed their betrayal and their exposure to danger" (302). Today, it appears one cannot be completely sure who or what is (a Manichean) "right" or "wrong" – as a big, invisible "other" seems to be invading (in some areas at least) our safely established "selves." In an essay on "posthumanism," then, Green and Willmot suggest a "view of the self as distributed" (*New Dimensions of Doctor Who*, 66). It is in this light of fundamental insecurities about the humanist nature, I think, that we should consider the surge in interest in problematic protagonists, and the Doctor's increasingly ambiguous nature in particular.

In *Doctor Who and Philosophy*, Clive Cazeaux notes that "[t]he principle of finding a notion within its opposite is one of the most potent forms of expression within the arts [… and] *Doctor Who* has itself played with beauty and monstrosity as interconnected opposites" (321). This is true of the character of the Doctor in particular; Alec Charles has noted that "Who [is] in this sense Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde reunited, their […] contraries held in an uncomfortable but productive suspension" ("Three Characters in Search of an Archetype," 98). Charles compares the Doctor to the Jungian "paradoxical figure of the trickster," who is both a "*senex* [wise old man] and *puer* [Peter Pan-like figure] […] reconciled" and indicates the Doctor is on a par with Doctor House before he cites Waddell describing House as "the embodiment of trickster energy; a boundary-

transgressor" (93). He then establishes another archetype that he feels fits the Doctor; that of the "Parisian *flâneur*, as imagined by Baudelaire," who is "at once within and outside the crowd, an outcast, an alien" (96). Finally, he employs a quote from *Doctor Who* itself to clarify his understanding of the Baudelairian *flâneur*; "'brand-new and ancient' at the same time" (97). In these ways, the Doctor indeed becomes a figure of contradiction.

In his essay "Balaam and his Ass," W. H. Auden argues that

> To present artistically a human [or alien] personality in its full depth, its inner dialectic, its self-disclosure and self-concealment, through the medium of a single character is almost impossible. […] A dialogue requires two voices, but, if it is the inner dialogue of human personality that is to be expressed artistically, the two characters employed to express it and the relationship between the must be of a special kind. (110)

Following this line of reasoning, it is fair to assume that to establish the character of the Doctor fully, *Doctor Who* must provide mirror characters for the Doctor – or at least characters with whom the Doctor has what Auden calls a "special relationship." These characters must then provide the opportunity for the programme to reflect on the *whole* of the Doctor's persona, and to distribute emphasis accordingly. Though it is one amongst others, the predominant means by which this is accomplished is (again) through dialogue.

As I have argued above, *Doctor Who* stresses the Doctor's ambiguities, most obviously in that we (the audience) are in different ways *told* it is so. It is a well-known and popular fact that words only make up less than 10% of the received meaning in face-to-face communication (http://www.bodylanguageexpert.co.uk/communication-what-percentage-body-language.html), yet the idea that *saying something* is the most clear and human way of communicating a thought has been widely attested; in *Doctor Who and Philosophy*, Paul Dawson notes that "If one day my cat sat down and *told* me of her adventures, I think I'd start to regard her as a person, even though she's a

cat" (232, my emphasis). Gibbs notes that "communication […] is seen as a key stage in the recovery from trauma" (955) and Charles argues that "It is only through dialogue […] that the Utopian impulse can hope to contextualise itself into existence" ("The Flight from History" 27). (He speaks not of a constant Utopia in which evil is absolutely defeated (in which one can "neither dream nor hope" (30)), but rather argues in favour of a dynamic Utopia, in which its citizens constantly struggle and negotiate with evil.) The popularity of an image featuring a conversation between a generic 'I' and a spider further underlines my claim; it had, at the time I recorded it (2nd of May 2014), 46 699 'likes' on Facebook, and if one Googles "image conversation spider" at least four copies of the picture show up in the results. The imagined conversation is headlined "I wouldn't be afraid of spiders if I could just talk to them, y'know?" Admittedly, this specific imagined spider is a very reasonable one, but the fact that the image has garnered such popularity does reflect a sense of recognition among the average internet-user of "the merit of being able to speak to something." Finally, *Doctor Who* itself reflects on the importance of dialogue – resident "monsters" with the ability to reason all present us with members turning "good." There are examples of a Dalek (in "Journey's End," Dalek Caan is revealed to have helped the Doctor – manipulating events so that the Dalek race might be destroyed), a Silurian (though unpredictable, they are all in all quite a reasonable race – and one madame Vastra is a recurring friend of the Doctor's), a Sontaran (Strax, madame Vastra's body guard and physician) and even a Cyberman (Handles, a Wilson-like Cyberman head that stands by the Doctor in 50th anniversary episode "The Day of the Doctor") aiding the Doctor. Conversely, a by nature speechless monster like a Weeping Angel siding with the Doctor seems (at least for now) unthinkable.

There are, finally, some objections to my point of view regarding *Doctor Who*, which I shall now address. Most obviously, there is the matter of my age and moment of first acquaintance with the programme; I have come to *Doctor Who* during Matt Smith's tenure – long before it had even dawned upon me that I might write about it – and have therefore watched the series in the "wrong"

order. Smith's troubled performance will inevitably have coloured my perception of every other Doctor. I have tried, of course, to be as objective as possible, and to treat (as stated above) the data I gathered as a reflection of the shifting cultural landscape. Conversely, there is also the benefit of my very retrospective point of view; I have watched almost the entire series within one year, and I feel that therefore my understanding of how the programme represents cultural shifts is relatively concise. Also, research has taught me that being a biased critic does not necessarily mean being a bad one; Kim Newman, for example, expresses very coloured opinions against certain elements of the show (like K-9), but his work has nevertheless been highly valued.

Then, there is the fact that *Doctor Who*'s longevity has produced too many examples for me to really choose from. Had I tried to be entirely complete, my thesis would perhaps have exceeded 100 pages. Therefore, I have tried to opt for a balanced mix of iconic as well as relatively unregarded moments, to demonstrate how the show is saturated with instances which demonstrate my point concerning the Doctor's growing moral ambiguity. I have opted to examine the Doctor as he is presented on-screen in *Doctor Who* only, and to exclude spin-off novels and comic books, *Torchwood* and *The Sarah Jane Adventures* from my investigations. I do realise that these are considered canonical by the majority of *Doctor Who* fans, but I believe they would not have contributed much to my purposes; *Torchwood* and *The Sarah Jane Adventures* for the simple reason that they do not feature the Doctor as a protagonist, and the spin-off novels because my research is into TV-text, not written text (I will take into consideration elements such as camera-point). The *Doctor Who* film will be taken into account, for the reason that it is indisputably canonical, was televised, and the Doctor is central to it.

Lastly, a sceptical reader might note that I have largely refrained from touching upon the role of the companion as "voice" for the audience. This has been a conscious decision, as the idea of the companion being there (amongst other things, of course) to allow for the Doctor to explain (with words) to the audience what is going on is already a widely accepted one within *Who* criticism.

Chapter One: "Showing, Not Telling"/ Classic *Who*

1.1: Outline

Undoubtedly, the character of the Doctor in classic *Who* is "other." The Doctor is an alien from another world, and the series employs both visual *and* textual cues to keep ensuring that this fact does not go unnoticed by *Doctor Who*'s audience. While he does not yet carry the responsibility for a double genocide, various incarnations of the Doctor do show an unmistakable moral equivocation. The ambiguity in his character is hinted at by visual cues, behavioural oddities and mirror characters. Tellingly, however, the classic series abstains form putting any real emphasis on this moral ambiguity. In this first part of my analysis, I will look closely at key moments in classic *Who* that might be seen as being concerned with alterity, and how the writers, actors and directors stress the Doctor's "otherness." Additionally, I will examine exemplary moments in which the visual cues and characterisation mark the Doctor as morally uncertain,[1] while these elements significantly avoid explicit emphasis.

[1] When in this thesis I use the term moral ambiguity, this means that a character's actions and words can be considered morally amibiguous from the perspective of the dominant contemporary Western framework. Of course I am aware that there is not one objective moral code that ultimately determines whether a person's or character's actions are right or wrong, as Robinson and Garratt stress in *Introducing Ethics*, but in this thesis I follow D.D. Raphael's point that "the differences between moral codes…are not as radical as appears at first sight, and the underlying similarities suggest that perhaps after all there is some near-universality in moral judgement, as there is in sense-perception" (16).

1.2: Establishing "What It's Like To Be Wanderers In The Fourth Dimension"

A perfect example of how the Doctor's alterity is emphasised by a blunt statement can be found at the end of the very first episode of the very first serial of *Doctor Who*. In "An Unearthly Child," set in contemporary (1963) Britain, schoolteachers Ian Chesterton and Barbara Wright follow a student of theirs (Susan) home, in order to find a possible explanation for her strange behaviour in class. They stumble upon a seemingly out of place blue police telephone box, out of which they hear what sounds to them like a man yelling at their student. The man, played by William Hartnell, comes out of the box, and professes to be Susan's grandfather. His sense of clothing appears to be out of place, and so does his character – he seems more like a slightly mad Victorian scientist than a loving 1960s granddad. When Ian and Barbara follow this character into the police box, it is revealed to be much bigger inside than out. Susan tells her teachers that they find themselves in a TARDIS, a vessel for travelling through time and space. It is the Doctor himself who stresses his difference when he tells Ian and Barbara "Have you ever thought what it's like to be wanderers in the fourth dimension? […] Susan and I are cut off from *our own planet*" (my emphasis). In stating that he is not currently on his own planet he is openly telling the audience that he is not from Earth, and therefore must be an "other" alien.

The serial to which the episode mentioned above belongs (featuring three more episodes in which the Doctor, Ian, Barbara and Susan find themselves captured by cavemen) does more than merely state the Doctor's alterity; it also gestures towards his moral ambiguity. Though initially two versions of the first serial were recorded and the one portraying the kinder Doctor was eventually aired, he nevertheless retains a good number of questionable qualities. Kim Newman rightly notes for example that "unlike Ian and Barbara, the Doctor is a *bad teacher*, a know-it-all who can't be bothered to explain or communicate with people not as gifted as he" (12). He is also "gruff, devious, smug and quixotic (and encourages Ian to touch a electrified switch)" (15). Finally, as

Newman states, the Doctor decides to intervene in the affairs of the cavemen without much consideration – and, as we will later on learn, does so in conflict with the prime law of his people – "on the side of the goody, though it is Ian […] who teaches Za [the 'good' caveman] that co-operation is better than tyranny […] while the still-ambivalent Doctor's most notable contribution is encouraging the cavemen to expel the murderous Kal by casting the first stone at him" (25).

The next serial, "The Daleks," offers a good example of how the Doctor's moral ambiguity is further hinted at through characterisation, but not stated overtly. This serial features the Doctor's first adventure on an alien planet, as well as his first encounter with what is to become his most iconic foe. As he, Susan, Ian and Barbara land for the first time on what is now known as Skaro, the planet seems to be abandoned, and the forest they find themselves in to have been turned to stone. The only sign of civilisation is a barely discernible yet shiny city in the distance. The Doctor, ever the scientist, suggests they should investigate, but his companions all deem it too dangerous. They persuade the Doctor to go back to the TARDIS, and eventually he agrees. When the protagonists get back to the TARDIS, however, the Doctor states that their ship is suffering from a broken fluid link, and that their best chance of ever getting away from the planet is finding a new one in the city. The fluid link, however, was not really broken at all, and the Doctor only told his companions it was so that he may have his way; not only does the first Doctor encourage cavemen to murder each other, he also lies to his companions. To make things worse, the city turns out to be inhabited by Daleks; creatures which would become, as mentioned above, the Doctor's longest-standing enemy. Daleks are "perfect little Hitlers: ordering, obeying, exterminating, ranting in unison, rolling over enemies, consumed with race hatred, merciless, untrustworthy (they never make a treaty they don't break), rotten to the core" (Newman 32). The Doctor and his companions are taken captive, questioned, used as pawns and tortured. Moreover, the radiation levels on Skaro are revealed to be lethally high. Fortunately, the benevolent forest-dwelling Thals eventually provide a cure for the radiation sickness and help the Doctor, Susan, Ian and Barbara escape the Daleks. All ends well, but if the

Doctor had not in the first place selfishly lied about the fluid link, the protagonists' lives would have never been endangered. Importantly however, this serial too only hints at the Doctor's ambiguities; nowhere does any character bluntly state that the Doctor might be just as bad as, for example, a Dalek, even though they must be aware that he has deceived and lied to his companions.

Another thing to be noted regarding the Daleks and the Doctor is that in this early serial already – again, the Doctor's second and the Daleks' first – a second interesting parallel between them is established, hinting at both the Doctor's alterity and his ambiguity. As the Doctor and his companions discuss with the Thals what is to be their course of action, the latter explain that it is they who used to be the warriors, while the Dals (who, according to matters as they stand in 1963, were to become the Daleks) once were the "teachers and philosophers." In *Doctor Who and Philosophy* Robin Bunce notes that the Daleks are "present[ed] as evil by emphasising their lack of humanity," yet that from the beginning they "aren't enemies because they are less rational than us; they're dangerous because they are *more* rational" (340-341). The Daleks seem creatures who are almost uncomfortably like the Doctor in that they are both inhuman, yet "dangerously perfect being[s]" (Newman 12). Fortunately, the Doctor has his (usually human) companions to keep him in touch with his "humanity" and, as the series will go on to argue, also keep him "sane" – a matter which will be explored more thoroughly below, especially in relation to new *Who*.

In the second Dalek serial, then, "The Dalek Invasion of Earth," the Doctor himself voices the implied shared character quality between him and a Dalek – and in doing so, seems himself to stress his own moral ambiguity – but crucially, we recognise the Doctor's statement as being incorrect. In this serial, the Doctor and his companions find themselves in a future in which London has been invaded by Daleks. By now, a regular viewing audience will have come to know the Doctor as someone "suspicious and capable of sudden malignance" (Chapman 20), but also a scientist, one who will never fire a gun, and one who settles conflicts through battles of wits. Thus, when he characterises the Daleks as creatures who "use [their] brains only, not force" – and that

therefore the right course of action is to outwit them (rather than fight them with weapons) – he might as well have used the same characterisation for himself. In implying this shared characteristic, he seems to set himself on a par with the evil Daleks. His characterisation, however, is wrong – as the audience will know, Daleks are hardly creatures who use their brains only, but rather ones who (besides using their brains, and very unlike the Doctor, or this incarnation at least) are happy to shoot anyone who gets in their way.

Finally, the first Doctor's alterity is (again) stressed obviously in the serial "The Web Planet," as it emphasises that he is alien not only to humans, but also to other aliens. The Doctor, Ian and Barbara find themselves trapped by a mysterious force on a planet called Vortis. Here, they encounter first the extremely suspicious Menoptera, and later the equally distrustful Optera. These insect-like aliens have seen their planet taken over by the mysterious Animus (which had used the indigenous, speechless Zarbi as its footsoldiers), and are therefore hostile towards anything unknown to them. This includes, in equal measure, Barbara, Ian, and the Doctor. The serial is littered with phrases such as "A stranger must not be trusted!," "Every creature who enters our domain comes only to kill us!" and "I cannot yield [an object of value] to a stranger!" As a consequence, it takes the Doctor and his companions a great deal of effort to persuade the Menoptra and the Optera that they are, equally, victims of the Animus. Eventually, of course, the Animus is defeated through a joining of forces. As stated above, however, this victory comes not before a great deal of resistance to alterity from Vortis' sentient species, dealt out equally to Ian, Barbara and the Doctor.

While the Doctor's peculiar dress sense and quirky behaviour had not become any less eccentric after regeneration, the second Doctor, played by Patrick Troughton, is a much milder character than his predecessor. As Newman contests, this Doctor is "puckish, quixotic, slyly self-deprecating, using sham fear and panic as a ruse to trick enemies, childishly inquisitive, a 'cosmic hobo'." Moreover, whereas "Hartnell showed over and over a commitment to fighting tyranny, but

often acted like a tyrant himself; Troughton took the Doctor's anti-authoritarian streak and was less demanding of his companions […] more given to tootling on his recorder or generally amusing himself" (40). While the first Doctor would often treat his companions as a burden and was signally unpleasant, the second Doctor treats his companions like friends and is much less concerned with acting superiorly "other." His episodes, as I will argue below, show emphasis accordingly.

In "The Web of Fear," the Doctor is faced with a distrust similar to that which he had encountered in "The Web Planet." This time, the suspicion is voiced by humans – but crucially, if anything the serial emphasises (again) the Doctor's species-alterity, but not his moral ambiguity. In this serial the tunnels of the London underground are being taken over by a mysterious fog and numerous Yeti, both under command of an incorporeal alien known as the Great Intelligence. The TARDIS accidentally materialises in one of these tunnels, and the Doctor and his companions, Jamie McCrimmon and Victoria Waterfield, join a group of people sent down to try and defeat the Yeti. One amongst their group, however, is revealed to be a spy for the Great Intelligence – but for the majority of the serial the exact identity of the spy remains a mystery. The presence of a spy, of course, makes for an excellent tale of doubt and suspicion. The Doctor possesses a great deal of knowledge about this Intelligence, which he claims to have acquired when fought it before – but though the viewer knows it to be true, the Doctor has no way of proving this (Professor Travers, a character making a second appearance, states to know the Doctor to speak the truth, but as far as the other characters in the episode are concerned, he might be a spy as well – thus, his word counts for nothing). Understandably, various characters throughout the serial express their suspicion that it is the Doctor, with his odd clothing, quirky behaviour, and seemingly otherworldly knowledge, who is the spy; Anne Travers, for example, speculates it is obvious that the Doctor controls the Yeti, as he seems to know so much about them. Also, Colonel Lethbridge-Stewart (who is making his first of many appearances in the show) states that "the Doctor could be leading us into a trap." The Great Intelligence may be seen as a being that (like a Dalek) mirrors the Doctor, since the Doctor

describes it as “floating about in space” (much like himself) and a “Great Intelligence” is obviously something the Doctor possesses. When the Doctor finally speaks with the Great Intelligence, however, it importantly states “Doctor... Your mind surpasses that of all other creatures” but *not* (for example) “Your mind, *like mine*, surpasses that of all other creatures.” The Great Intelligence can be seen as an equal and a mirror character for the Doctor, and one who by being such hints at the Doctor's moral ambiguity – but the hint is much less strong as the second Doctor is now singularly less horrible, and the Great Intelligence fails to emphasise that it has encountered the Doctor before, and therefore *knows* of his character ambiguities. Apparently, the series does not yet feel it needs to remind its audience of the Doctor's previously questionable standards now that his personality has become more docile.

The second Doctor's moral ambiguity is hinted at more strongly in the penultimate episode of “The War Games.” Again, however, the hint at the Doctor's ambiguity is diminished in strength by the Doctor's now much gentler persona, and the mirror character's failing to single him out specifically. “The War Games” features the Doctor, Jamie and new companion Zoe Heriot accidentally landing on a planet divided into different time zones, in which soldiers from Earth are fighting their respective wars in an alien experiment to find the most courageous fighters. The brain behind this operation is revealed to be the strongest singularly malign mirror character for the Doctor yet; another renegade Time Lord, and one who is named as such. The Doctor had encountered another of his own race before – the Monk – but significantly, this “villain” had been portrayed as one who is careless, but not of completely evil or dictatorial intent. The main villain in “The War Games,” like the Doctor and the Monk, who does not have a proper name (he is called simply “War Chief”), has for some mysterious reason fled his home world, settled himself amongst other humanoid aliens, and now travels via machines that obviously resemble the TARDIS. The War Chief, however, has come up with an elaborate (and not altogether plausible) plan to conquer the universe. When the two come face to face, the Doctor asks the War Chief: “Did you really think

I'd take part in your disgusting, stinking scheme?" To which the War Chief answers: "Why not? You must have been a little tempted by the thought of being the ruler of an entire galaxy?" The Doctor answers that he was not in the least bit tempted and therefore affirms his own goodness. But perhaps more importantly, the War Chief does *not* single the Doctor out by telling him (for example) "Why not? *You are a renegade Time Lord, like me, so* you must have been tempted by the thought of being the ruler of an entire galaxy." The final episode of the serial sees the Doctor and the War Chief packed off to a trial before a panel of Time Lord judges, and for the first time in the series, the Doctor's race is named. The tribunal sentences the War Chief to death for his crimes (stressing their alterity in the act – Britain had abolished the death penalty as inhumane only four years prior to the airing of this episode). The Doctor, for his crime of "meddling with history," is (fortunately!) spared from the death sentence by convincing the judges that his meddling has been for the common good. As he has nevertheless broken a law, his judges sentence him to a forced regeneration, and an exile on Earth.

Aside from all their quirky behaviour, peculiar dress sense and otherworldly knowledge, the Doctor's first two incarnations had never been established as being physiologically different from humans. Their alterity, then, had been stressed by one of the characters or the Doctor himself simply stating that he is alien, but not giving very much detail as to what differences this might entail. The third Doctor, played by Jon Pertwee, however, is one who seems keen to remind the audience of "how" he is alien; as Newman states, "From 1970 onwards, the Doctor's alien nature became more apparent, and would be stressed somewhere in almost every story" (64).

The stress on the third Doctor's alterity is indeed abundant. For example – when he is negotiating peace between humans and Earth's "original" inhabitants in "The Silurians," the Doctor clearly tells the Silurian leader "Humans […] are not my people." In the next episode of the same serial, he tells his companion Liz Shaw that his life covers "several thousands of years" – presumably quite a few more than anyone any member of the audience will know. In "Inferno," the

Doctor emphasises that “Without the TARDIS, I feel lost... A stranger in a foreign land.” Moreover, when the Doctor wakes up in reality after having spent two-thirds of the serial in a parallel world, he overtly checks *both* his hearts. When he does get the TARDIS operational and lands, for example, on Peladon, his alterity is stressed further by having him again feature as the object of large portions of distrust. The Doctor and companion Jo Grant successfully pose as an Earth delegates, but the Doctor is quickly charged with sacrilege, as the inhabitants of Peladon believe *he* is the “stranger bringing great peril and tribulation” foretold by the Curse of Peladon. At the end of the story, the King of Peladon is convinced that the Curse had been a mere superstition and the Doctor is heralded for exposing it as such, but not before he is heavily mistrusted throughout most of the serial.

His (return to) occasional questionable behaviour, however, like was the case with his predecessors, was never stridently insisted upon. Throughout his third incarnation, the Doctor's at times dubious morality is signalled at most by his being secretive, and contemptuous towards both figures of authority and those who he feels possess an intellect inferior to his own. Newman notes that “Without trips to other times or worlds […] this season uses the Doctor's frustration in exile to make him a more peppery, even disagreeable character. Not since the early Hartnell days had the Doctor done anything like trying to run out of the middle of an alien invasion, which he does in [his first episode] 'Spearhead from Space'” (67). At the end of that serial, however, the Doctor *has* voluntarily helped the Brigadier get rid of the Nestene Consciousness. For the rest of the season, the two settle to an agreement in which the Doctor helps the Brigadier fight aliens, and the Brigadier offers the Doctor an environment and means to mend his TARDIS. The Doctor will attempt to run off a few more times, but from the first episode it seems firmly established that in the end, he will always help fight off the baddies.

Again, the series seems to emphasise a goodness in his character, rather than his moral equivocality. In “The Silurians,” for example, the Doctor breaks into Dr Quinn's (the serial's lead

scientist) cabinet, without a word from his companion on how breaking into someone's personal files might be frowned upon – the serial appears to accept as a given that the Doctor is a force of good, who operates above the law. The third Doctor was also the first to bring "a tremendous physical authority to the part" (Chapman 78), and it is his "aura" of natural authority which seems to be stressed rather than his questionable behaviour. In "The Silurians," he is called a "raving lunatic" by Lawrence, a project leader in the serial, but not before Masters (a military man) has described him as "brilliant." In the final episode, when Brigadier Lethbridge-Stewart raises questions about the Doctor's way of dealing with the Silurians, Liz tells the men around her "the Doctor knows what he's doing. Trust him." Also, the Doctor himself attempts to take stress away from his using violence in for example "The Green Death;" after he has taken out two guards with his signature Venusian martial arts moves, he tells them "Venusian aikido, my dear gentlemen. I hope I haven't hurt you!"

In short, the second and third Doctors had taken the tone of the show towards the Manichean; while Hartnell's portrayal of the character had overtly shown dubious traits, these ambiguities had lessened (though, importantly and as stated above, not disappeared) in Troughton's and Pertwee's incarnations – though they may have had their sometimes odd methods, it would always be fairly clear that it was their "good" working against "bad." This would change with the fourth Doctor's incarnation. Tom Baker's characterisation would retain Pertwee's love of stressing that the Doctor is other than human, but also make a first return to the more complicated morality of his first incarnation – a characterisation which would endure, as I will argue below, to the present day.

1.3: "Would You Like A Jelly Baby?"

Indeed, the fourth Doctor (like the third) loves reminding us of his being an alien. In "Terror of the Zygons," the Doctor is transported onto a crashed Zygon space ship. When one of the Zygons asks him "Do you admire our technology, human?" he replies "Well, I'm not human, and I've seen better!" Earthbound serial "Pyramids of Mars" even begins with the Doctor having a melancholy trip down alterity lane – when companion Sarah Jane Smith states that he should be "glad to be going home," the Doctor replies that "The Earth isn't my home, Sarah. I'm a Time Lord," and that "[She doesn't] understand the implications. I'm not a human being. I walk in eternity. […] I've lived for something like seven hundred and fifty years." In addition, in the penultimate episode to the same serial, the Doctor finishes Sarah's address to him "Sometimes you just don't seem..." with "...human?" Also, when the Doctor comes face to face with the serial's driving villain, Suketh the Destroyer, he characterises himself as being "a traveller from Gallifrey." And the Doctor's alterity is stressed not only by himself, but also by an adversary when Suketh, for example, states that "It is clear that an extra-terrestrial intelligence is operating [against him]."

But the series' perhaps most charming moment to stress the Doctor's alterity occurs in "City of Death." For a large part of his regeneration, the fourth Doctor has the fellow Time Lord and equally "other" Romana as a companion, and the first episode of this serial seems intent solely on playfully stressing their otherness; it begins with them on holiday in Paris, and features around twenty minutes of banter surrounding the Doctor and Romana's being aliens. When they first arrive and are looking for a means of transportation, the Doctor tells Romana "Let's not be ostentatious," to which Romana answers "All right, let's fly then!" They decide to take a train like "normal people" would, but when they sit down in a café for a coffee the Doctor (quite unlike "normal people") finishes an entire book in under half a minute. Moreover, when the Doctor and Romana find a drawing an artist had sketched of her, instead of her face, the drawing features a clock. Also,

Romana pesters the Doctor that the computer-drawers back on Gallifrey do much better drawings. In response to this, the Doctor decides to take Romana to "one of the greatest art galleries in the whole galaxy" – the Louvre. Romana tries to remind the Doctor of other galleries that may also be among the greatest in the galaxy (such as, for example, the "Academia Stellaris on Sirius Five"), but the Doctor is not so easily swayed. When they stand in front of the Mona Lisa, the Doctor admires it by stating it is "one of the great treasures of the universe," to which Romana replies "The world, Doctor, the world. […] Not *the universe* in public, Doctor. It only calls attention." When the episode finally moves on to more serious matters, that is not before a detective tells the Doctor and Romana, "Everyone *on Earth* has heard of Count Scarlioni!," to which the Doctor replies "Ah, well, we've only just landed on Earth."

The above mentioned Count Scarlioni from "City of Death" possesses a likeness to the Doctor – and may be considered as one who, through similarities in his characterisation, might serve as a reminder to the audience of the Doctor's potential for darkness. He, also, is a time traveller, who is deemed a genius by those around him. In addition, Count Scarlioni had been splintered through time because his ship had crashed on the young Earth; the twelve splinters he now exists in seem reminiscent of the twelve regenerations sometimes described as the number available to a Time Lord. Also, these twelve splinters have meddled heavily with Earth's history; the serial even claims that it was the radiation left by the explosion of Scarlioni's vessel that caused life on earth to start. Finally, he is the last of the race of Jagaroth, who he describes as "infinitely old, and infinitely superior," and who, according to the Doctor, will not be missed by the universe. The description of Scarlioni's race, too, is highly reminiscent of the Time Lords; infinitely old, infinitely superior, and disliked by the Doctor. Scarlioni even tries to voice a likeness between the Doctor and himself; the Doctor tells him that he "can't let him fool about with time," to which Scarlioni replies "Well, what else do *you* do?" The Doctor, however, thwarts his statement by stating "Well, I'm a professional, I know what I'm doing, and I know what *you're* doing." But besides this brave attempt,

the serial passes on the opportunity to really stress that in many ways, the Doctor is just like Scarlioni – and thus the Doctor's ambiguities remain to be merely hinted at, and lacking clear emphasis.

"Genesis of the Daleks" is perhaps the most crucial episode of the fourth Doctor's incarnation. It features "not only the Daleks being reinvented, but – four serials after regeneration – the Doctor" (Newman 86). Several striking moments in "Genesis of the Daleks" in which the Doctor is faced with Davros (the Daleks' creator) and has the opportunity to eradicate the Daleks completely, again raise the possibility of his complex moral ambiguity – but fail to stress it. In the serial's penultimate episode, the Doctor is alone with Davros, as the latter wishes to talk to him "together now, not as prisoner and captor, but as men of science. There is so much I wish to know." Davros seems to equal the Doctor to himself, but only in order to flatter him into giving him vital information about the future of the Daleks. The Doctor, conversely, attempts to persuade Davros of the Daleks' evil, and the need to stop the production of a first Dalek while that is still an option. When Davros remains unconvinced, the Doctor threatens to kill him, and very nearly does so. Davros, however, fails to recognise the opportunity to point out to the Doctor that by killing him, he will lower himself to Davros' standard. In the series' final episode, when the Doctor literally holds the future of the Daleks in his hands, he famously asks himself

> Have I that right? […] the final responsibility is mine, and mine alone. Listen, if someone who knew the future pointed out a child to you and told you that that child would grow up totally evil, to be a ruthless dictator who would destroy millions of lives, could you then kill that child? […] [I]f I kill, wipe out a whole intelligent life form, then I become like them. I'd be no better than the Daleks.

The Doctor himself now voices what Davros failed to note. Crucially, however, he is called away from the scene (and his moral dilemma) by one of his allies bringing the news that Davros has agreed to stop the production of the Daleks. When later in the episode the Doctor blows up the

Dalek nursery, importantly, some Daleks have already survived – his decision is still morally ambiguous, but importantly, the Doctor no longer "kills the child" – and the show therein directs emphasis away from his questionable choice.

So besides reinventing the Daleks and the Doctor, some other important changes had happened in the world of *Doctor Who* during Tom Baker's tenure; first of all, the show had become "more aware of its past, with elements of continuity accruing between regenerations" (Newman 86) – and in its attempts to address a more mature audience, "Nathan-Turner's stylistic revolution saw the programme consciously seeking to expand its semiotic thickness" (Booy 45). During Baker's tenure, the series' characters had gained depth – the production team for the fourth Doctor's stories were "keen to move *Doctor Who* even more decisively away from the association of a children's series," and by the mid-1970s over half of the viewing audience consisted of "adults over 15" (Chapman 99) – yet stress like that put on his alterity remained distant from strongly stressing the Doctor's moral ambiguity. Secondly, the Baker years had seen the beginning of an active fan movement. In his book *Love and Monsters*, Miles Booy argues that the release of the first issue of *Doctor Who Weekly* was ground zero for a fan movement which would eventually come to shape the show in ways un-thought of in the 1960s and early '70s. *Doctor Who* had become more mature and self-reflexive; and both the show's self-conscious semiotic thickness and the Doctor himself would have to endure some less-than-well-received extremes before settling into the equilibrium they enjoy today.

1.4: Balance Lost

The fifth Doctor, played by Peter Davison, "lacks the masculine authority of […] Pertwee or Baker. […] he displays great physical courage in dangerous situations […] but does so in a casual, understated way." He is described as "the most quintessentially English of all Doctors" (Chapman 142), but "quintessentially English" as he may be, the series unremittingly emphasises the Doctor's alterity. In for example "The Caves of Androzani," the Doctor uses his characteristic celery stick to keep companion Peri Brown and himself from getting too affected by the Spectrox poisoning they suffered on the eponymous planet of Androzani. He tells bystanders that "Celery is a powerful restorative where I come from" – which needs be somewhere else than Earth, because to humans, celery is hardly a "powerful restorative." In the same story, the Doctor and Peri need to find a means of escaping from being guarded by killer androids. These androids had been programmed, as the Doctor states, "to kill humans." He believes he may simply walk past them, as he continues, "But my physiology is very different!" Indeed, the androids do not harm the Doctor, and together they add to stressing his inhumanity. Also, the costume that sets this Doctor apart as "quintessentially English" at the same time emphasises his otherness. Whereas the fourth Doctor looked like what may very well be an Earth tramp, his fifth incarnation wears "a stylised version of an Edwardian gentleman cricketer with the addition of a Panama hat" (Chapman 142). Moreover, as stated above, he wears a celery stick as a sort of corsage. The fifth Doctor has the most "other" dress sense in the series so far, which results in his alterity being stressed nearly constantly.

So the fifth Doctor's incarnation is certainly known for his quintessential Englishness and, as some would see it, annoying dress sense, but hardly for his moral ambiguities. The complexity offered by Baker's portrayal is (perhaps on purpose) toned down ("Davison was young, handsome and his Doctor had a more straightforwardly heroic persona than previous incarnations" (Booy 91)), in favour of an increase in the semiotic thickness mentioned above. "Kinda" offers a spot-on

demonstration of these changes; Booy argues that it is “one of the programme's most ambitious and abstract stories.” In relation to one of the serial's protagonists, “'Kinda' evokes 'kinder', the German for children [… and the serial] evokes Christianity in its Edenic imagery, Buddhism in its character names and the novels of Joseph Conrad in its themes of colonialism and dreaming alone” (44-45). The Doctor, however, is relatively reserved, properly helpful, slightly clueless and friendly to almost all throughout the serial.

The sixth Doctor, portrayed by Colin Baker, by contrast, has been widely acclaimed for being unpleasant; he is a “bull-in-a-china-shop […] arrogant, conceited, insensitive and quick-tempered” (Chapman 156), and a contemporary critic argued that he “seems set to play [the Doctor] with all the crabbiness of the original” (qtd in Chapman 155). Other than “the original,” however, this Doctor is also meddlesome and trigger- happy. Nevertheless, his moral ambiguities remain remarkably unstated. When, for example, in “Vengeance on Varos” the Doctor lands on the planet Varos in search of Zeiton-7 ore (his TARDIS had malfunctioned, and he needs this rare ore to repair it), his first action is to forcibly disable an indigenous guard and free his prisoner – without asking what might be going on, or even thinking twice. In the second episode of the serial, he blatantly pushes two guards into an acid bath, cheerily commenting in a James-Bond-style quip, “Forgive me if I don't join you!” In order to acquire the Zeiton-7 ore, he overtly and intently breaks “the original's” ethic of not-meddling and not-shooting throughout the story. This makes his statement at the end of the it – that Peri and himself should “leave the Varosians to work out for themselves” how to deal with their former oppressors – seem all the more incongruous. Also, tellingly, it directs emphasis away from his questionable behaviour. Moreover, when the Doctor re-encounters Davros in “Revelation of the Daleks,” the latter again seems blind to the fact that he might remind the Doctor that he is now hardly better than Davros is. He merely tells the Doctor that he is “The sworn enemy of the Daleks” – a title hardly indicating moral ambiguity to anyone with a knowledge of the average Dalek's moral code.

Besides being exemplary of the sixth Doctor's unpleasantness, "Vengeance on Varos" also serves as an example of how the show was becoming more and more self-reflexive. By the time it aired, *Doctor Who* had been critiqued for being too much of almost everything; its characters have been too flat, and the show itself been too childish, and too complicated, and too dull, and too violent – to name only a few of the criticisms made. "Vengeance on Varos" answers this critique; the show features a male and a female watching a show which involves politics and torture, and in which the Doctor and Peri get caught up. The serial regularly features material of the audience's response to what they are watching – and like *Doctor Who,* it is deemed too much of everything. When it is finally taken off the television, however, the man and woman seem even less happy than before – and clueless on what to do, now that the show they had been so avidly watching and critiquing is gone.

The Doctor's otherness, however, continues to be stressed in much the same way; continually. At the beginning of "Vengeance on Varos," when for a moment it seems that the Doctor and Peri are trapped in the unmoveable TARDIS for ever, the Doctor reminds Peri of the finiteness of her life, how that is opposed to his own, and how she will never understand how he feels. In "Revelation of the Daleks," he causally drops that he is 900 years old. In the same serial, an undertaker even tells him that he doubts a stone statue would have killed him, as "it would take a mountain to crush an ego like yours." Also, he surpasses his predecessor in having the oddest dress sense to date.

The seventh Doctor, finally, seems to have settled down somewhat after regeneration. The character portrayed by Sylvester McCoy has finally balanced out – he is no bull in a China shop (like his predecessor), nor a goody two-shoes (like the fifth incarnation), but rather a slightly manipulative, secretive character, who "would keep his plans to himself until the precipitous moment late in the story" (Booy 129). Moreover, his dress sense seems to have normalised – it retains the odd question mark pattern here and there, but the decorative vegetable sported by

Davison and the eclecticism of Colin Baker have gone. Also, “Fans […] had won the interpretation wars” (Booy 136), which meant that the show's semiotic thickness and adult approach were retained – but not without cost, as the now more and more niche-marketed programme was losing viewers.

“The Greatest Show in the Galaxy,” then, is even more elaborately self-reflexive than “Vengeance on Varos” as it incorporates stressing the Doctor's moral ambiguity in its reflection. It features the Doctor and Ace McShane visiting the (formerly travelling, now stationary) Psychic Circus. Members of the Circus are constantly trying to satisfy what appears to be a “nuclear family” – a mother, a father and one child – and different acts come to the Circus in an attempt to join it, not knowing that if they fail to entertain the family, they die. This seems a very apt allusion to the condition in which *Doctor Who* had found itself over the last five years; it had been on the verge on being terminated more than once, and “entertain or die” is very much what it had to do now. Also, amongst those coming to the Circus is an endearing young nerd with a bow tie who seems to be an allusion to a new Whovian (fan of the series) – he states “Although I never got to see the early days, I know it's not as good as it used to be but I'm still terribly interested.” And perhaps most importantly, the Doctor and Ace meet Captain Cook and Mags – an interstellar traveller and his companion who he has picked up along the way. Captain Cook is an untiring chatter-mouth, who will attempt to solve all conflict with talking and tea, and his companion is a female who looks up to him but at the same time is brave in her own right. Captain Cook and Mags *appear* to be exactly like the Doctor and Ace, until at about two-thirds into the serial Cook betrays them (and Mags turns out to be a werewolf). The allusion, by which the two couples might be felt to be mirrors of each other, however, is only hinted at by characterisation; nowhere in the episode does Cook put any real stress on the fact that the Doctor and he are similar, and that (for example) the now secretive Doctor might have betrayed his new acquaintances in much the same way.

Again, dialogue does continue to stress the Doctor's alterity, for example when Ace states

"Sometimes I think it's you who's mad,"[2] or when the Doctor acknowledges to have met the Gods of Ragnarok before.

So in summary, throughout the Doctor's seven incarnations, classic *Who* emphasises that the Doctor is an alien by having him behaving peculiarly and possessing knowledge that no one from Earth could possibly have. Also, it keeps reminding the audience of his dissimilar physiology, by showing him regenerate, or plainly having him checking two hearts as he wakes up from being unconscious. Moreover, his companions, allies and he himself seem intent on stating that he is different – in case the weird behaviour, scientific genius and the two hearts were not enough, various characters throughout the series *tell* that the Doctor is an incredibly old Time Lord, from the planet Gallifrey, who travels in a space-time machine, and has all sorts of knowledge that we Earthlings may never begin to comprehend. The Doctor, however, like many of us, has a dark side. He has broken the laws of his people by meddling with history, he may be unpleasant and impatient with his companions and allies, and his victories for good have not always come without cost. These morally ambiguous characteristics, unlike his otherworldliness, remain unstated in classic *Who* – they are hinted at by the Doctor's behaviour and by confronting the audience with characters like him, but they are never truly stressed. And that is where classic *Who* differs from new *Who*...

[2] I understand Ace's statement about the Doctor's madness in the context of Foucault's history of madness, in which he points out that in the course of the eighteenth century madness became a significant sign of negative alterity in Western culture.

Chapter Two: INTERMISSION

To consider the eighth Doctor poses somewhat of a problem; he is known for being the Doctor with at once the longest and the shortest tenure, as he has strictly speaking been the Doctor for all of nine years (between 1996 and 2005), but was only awarded an 89-minute film (*Doctor Who the Movie*, 1996) and a seven-minute short ("The Night of the Doctor," 2013) of on-screen time. Moreover, 17 years had passed between the airing of the film and the publishing of the short. I will nevertheless briefly consider the two together, as Paul McGann's performance seems not to have changed in his 17-year absence.

This unchanged performance is perhaps that of the nicest Doctor since Patrick Troughton. Even goody Peter Davison possessed a streak of arrogant superiority that had been an elemental part of all of the Doctor's incarnations, save, then, the second and the eighth. This Doctor, however, is so sweet (the words "dashing" and "suave" would even appear applicable) that his female "companion" in the film indeed goes so far as to call him "the right guy." It is perhaps fitting that it would be this profoundly gentle Doctor who is revealed in the 2013 short to be the one who made a conscious choice to regenerate into a "warrior" – in "The Night of the Doctor," he tells a traveller he is attempting to save that at least, he is not a Dalek, and she replies "Who can tell the difference any more?" Both of them crash, the traveller dies, and after a little persuasion from the Sisterhood of Karn – the Doctor at first emphasises "I help where I can. I *will not* fight" – he resolves "Physician, heal thyself […] Doctor no more."

Considering the Doctor as played by John Hurt is even more troublesome; he appears only in 2013 special "The Day of the Doctor" (and very briefly at the end of the episode leading up to it), but in the time line of the Time Lord, he comes after the eighth and before the ninth Doctor. Moreover, he does not call himself the Doctor; he is the one who makes the decision to "burn Gallifrey," and therefore deems himself unworthy of his self-awarded designation. (What the "real"

name of the character is remains a mystery, but it is clear that "the Doctor" is a title, attached to a "promise: never cowardly or cruel. Never give up. Never give in.") There are, however, some noteworthy things about his character; he is relatively humble and determined – this may have something to do with his limited amount of on-screen time, but he seems to be the only Doctor to actually know what he is doing. Also, after he, together with the tenth and eleventh Doctors, finds a way to indeed save Gallifrey, he *does* call himself "the Doctor."

Back to the eighth, "actual" Doctor and the film – interestingly the Doctor's alterity is complicated by the *Movie* making a claim that has since uniquely been widely regarded as uncanonical; the eighth Doctor claims he is "half human." Though the film stresses his being a Time Lord by showing his regeneration, his bluntly pulling Earth operating gear ("primitive wiring") out of his body and his stating for example that he was "with Puccini when he died," it also features the Doctor and the Master discussing his half-human heritage. Throughout *Doctor Who*, fans have taken pride in possessing a great knowledge of the programme's canon, and treated information presented by the series as revelations of facts, rather than alterations made in fiction. The *Movie*'s surprise that the Doctor is half-human, however, seems to be universally dismissed. The programme certainly makes no mention of it in the renewed series, and numerous fans have attempted to come up with theories disproving the truth of the Doctor's statement (see, for example, http://scifi.stackexchange.com/questions/18314/the-doctor-is-half-human). Apparently, the Doctor's alterity is such an integral part of the show that fans will not accept him to be other than "other" – even if it is their beloved show itself telling them that it is so.

And the power of fans is what characterises *Doctor Who*'s off-screen period, and the run up to its 2005 revival – because besides a film and a canonical glitch, a few other important events transpired in the period between 1989 and 2005. As stated above, fans had won the "interpretation wars," and it is a book by a fan (Miles Booy argues) which drastically influenced the way *Doctor Who* would evolve in the years to come. Paul Cornell's (by fans largely considered canonical)

Timewyrm: Revelation, Booy states, is the book in which "*The New Adventures* [the book series that flourished in the programme's absence] found their voice"; it was "a tale of genuine human pain and experience unlike anything *Who* fiction had seen before," besides being "filled […] with fandom" (148). Booy further underlines that

> Fandom had survived the cancellation of the programme, and its creative energies thrived in the void left by the programme's absence. Many fans were beginning professional writing careers, either as novelists, television scriptwriters or science-fiction journalists. (152)

Moreover, "By the turn of the millennium […] *Doctor Who* was something with which the BBC were no longer embarrassed to be associated" (Booy 164) and "By the early years of the new millennium, fans had completely taken over all official merchandise lines, vastly improving them by almost any standard you care to raise" (Booy 171). *Doctor Who* fans turned television scriptwriters had won BAFTAs for their original television series, and for example future showrunner Steven Moffat's first reference to *Who* "occurs five minutes into his career!" (The first episode of his series *Press Gang* features a sign outside an office saying "Trespassers Will Be Exterminated") (Booy 143) It makes sense, then, to assume that the fans who were now in charge of the renewed show would have picked up on the classic Doctors' at times ambiguous traits. Also, with Russell T. Davies at the helm of *Doctor Who*'s revival, the series would be sure to retain the increase in emotional depth that had developed to such acclaim in the programme's spin-off novels. Davies was "first and foremost, a *Doctor Who* fan" (Chapman 190), but also responsible for "one of the boldest (and consequently one of the most controversial) original television dramas of the 1990s [*Queer as Folk*]" (Chapman 189-190). Bearing these things in mind, it seems wholly unsurprising that *Doctor Who* would regenerate to feature a Doctor with an obvious "traumatic back story" (Chapman 192). To make his traumatic back story apparent, however, stress would have to be put upon it – as it was now an essential yet easily-forgotten premise of the show, much like his easily-

forgotten alterity. The Doctor would remain largely good – a saviour of worlds indeed – so the series' show runners would have to find a means of clearly and continually communicating the Doctor's dark back story (and resulting increased complex morality) to the audience.

Chapter Three: "You Would Make a Good Dalek, Doctor" / New *Who*

3.1: Outline

As in classic *Who*, the character of the Doctor in new *Who* is undoubtedly "other." Again, both characterisation and dialogue stress his "otherness" – the Doctor's peculiar behaviour alongside with various characters in the series who keep *saying* that he is an alien in a time machine constantly remind the audience of the Doctor's alterity. His moral ambiguity in the renewed series is more blatant; this time, the Doctor is one who allegedly committed a double genocide when he ended the last great Time War by wiping out both the Daleks and the Time Lords. This more explicit ambiguity, I argue, shows itself best in that it is now emphasised, mainly by being *stated*; several characters, the Doctor himself included, verbally acknowledge that he is perhaps as monstrous as his adversaries. In the second part of my analysis I will again examine key moments which stress the Doctor's alterity and ambiguity, this time paying close attention to how his moral equivocation is made apparent through dialogue.

3.2: PTSD

Even more than classic *Who*, the first story of the revived series makes a great deal of effort to make sure that the Doctor's alterity does not go unnoticed. While he does appear in a surprisingly inconspicuous outfit, the Doctor, now played by Christopher Eccleston, within five minutes of his first appearance in "Rose" uses his sonic screwdriver, explains the workings of the Nestene Consciousness, and introduces himself simply as "the Doctor." Later on in the episode, he is seen reading a magazine in as little as two seconds, commenting "That won't last – he's gay and she's alien." When companion-to-be Rose Tyler finally urges him to explain what's going on, he states "I'm a long way from home... […] I can feel it. The turn of the Earth. The ground beneath our feet spinning at a thousand miles an hour. And the entire planet is hurtling around the sun at 67,000 thousand miles an hour and I can feel it." The shot in which the Doctor explains this to Rose is also the first in which the TARDIS can be seen. The Doctor tells Rose to forget about him, but of course, she does no such thing. When, as a consequence of her persistent interest, she gets attacked by the Nestene Consciousness for a second time, the Doctor takes her inside the TARDIS. Rose complains that the TARDIS doors seem too weak to withstand an attack, but the Doctor reassures her by saying that "the assembled hordes of Genghis Khan couldn't get through that door, and believe me, they've tried." After Rose utters the usual "It's bigger on the inside" comment, she asks the Doctor "Are you an alien?" to which he replies "Yes... Is that ok?"

"Rose" also offers cues concerning the Doctor's moral ambiguity, both subtly in characterisation and explicitly in a line uttered by the Doctor. This Doctor, like many of his predecessors, appears to possess an "inhuman" insensitivity and arrogance; when, for example, he tells Rose that her colleague Wilson is dead, he does so in a manner that makes it seem entirely unimportant. Moreover, when Rose asks him "So what you're saying is the entire world revolves around you," he answers "Sort of, yeah!" When he addresses the Nestene Consciousness, he tells it

"I fought, in the war […] I couldn't save your world!" Even to someone who is new to the programme, this one episode ably illustrates the Doctor as a man who can do (almost) anything. The impact made by his slightly desperate statement that there was a world he "couldn't save," therefore, is all the greater. Also, it implies a sense of remorse and responsibility in the Doctor's persona that no "classic" Doctor seemed to possess.

An episode such as "The Doctor Dances," then, strengthens the insistence on the Doctor being one who has been involved in a large number of deaths. The story of two-episode serial "The Empty Child / The Doctor Dances" tells of a strange illness which seems to be turning people into a sort of zombies with gas masks. For the majority of the story, it is unknown what is causing these strange transformations. At around ten minutes before the end of the serial the Doctor, Rose and time agent Jack Harkness find out that behind the "attacks" were benevolent, repairing nanogenes from an alien ambulance. The Doctor (by means which are too elaborate to describe here) manages to save everyone who was "infected," and in his triumph he exclaims, "with overwhelming relief" (MacRury and Rustin 43), "Everybody lives Rose. *Just this once*, everybody lives!" In stating that it is "just this once" that everybody lives, the Doctor reminds the audience that usually, at least one "someone" dies. Also, the fact that he appears so relieved further underlines something of his sense of responsibility and remorse for the casualties his victories have taken.

The strongest and most unambiguous statement of the ninth Doctor's moral equivocation, however, is found in "Dalek." In this episode, the Doctor and Rose, in response to an alien distress call, land in the cellar of Henry van Stratten, an American billionaire who has built a museum for alien artefacts. Most of the "artefacts" are dead, but – much to the Doctor's shock and horror – the museum is also home to a living Dalek. It had been dormant, refusing to speak even when tortured, but when it is faced with the Doctor, it suddenly comes to life. The Doctor reveals a "pathological hatred" (Chapman 204) towards the Dalek, and boasts about having ended the last great Time War himself – "I watched it happen – I *made* it happen!" The Dalek, then, voices what Davros in classic

Who has failed to note as it tells the Doctor "I am alone in the universe. So are you. *We are the same*" (my emphasis). The Doctor, importantly, in no way refutes the Dalek's statement; he could have argued, for example, that they are both alone, and that similarities between them end there – but he does no such thing. Later on in the episode, when the Dalek has been able to repair itself by means of a touch from Rose, it and the Doctor speak again. The Dalek acknowledges to have scanned the internet for traces of other Daleks, and to have found none. Programmed to follow orders but now crucially deprived of them, it asks the Doctor what it should do. The Doctor replies "Alright then, if you want orders, follow this one – kill yourself. […] the Daleks have failed. Why don't you finish the job – rid the universe of your filth. Why don't you just DIE!" The Dalek, in an unusually calm fashion, comments "You would make a good Dalek." Again, the Doctor says nothing to contradict it. Of course, the words of a Dalek should not be assigned too much weight – profanities coming from a being which is itself one of the most evil in the galaxy must not be taken too seriously. However, the fact that the episode takes time to obviously reflect on the Doctor's ambiguity (where classic *Who* would merely subtly note it) does provide a clear indication of the shift in understanding of the Doctor's character. In interacting as they do, the last Dalek and the Doctor tell the audience that the Doctor may well be as morally questionable as his greatest adversary.

3.3: "Time Lord Victorious"

The first episode of the Doctor's tenth incarnation, played by David Tennant, features him sleeping for most of it. Nevertheless, it does not fail to clearly signify his alterity. "The Christmas Invasion" starts with the Doctor and Rose crash landing in London, the Doctor stumbling out of the TARDIS and him collapsing at Jackie (Tyler, Rose's mother) and Mickey's (Smith, Rose's boyfriend) feet. He is brought to a bed in Jackie's apartment, and Rose is seen openly checking both his hearts. As Jackie urges her to bring the Doctor to hospital, Rose reminds her that they would probably keep him there, as "One bottle of his blood could change the future of the human race." After they leave the room, the episode stresses the Doctor's otherness further by showing him exhaling leftover regeneration energy. Moreover, Rose tells Jackie, "I keep forgetting he's not human." When the Doctor finally really wakes up (he was up for a short while to fend off a few evil robot Santa Clauses, but collapsed again), he challenges the invading Sycorax's leader to a battle for the Earth, signifying his otherworldliness by addressing the Sycorax leader in their native tongue. The Doctor (of course) wins, but not before his hand is first chopped off and then regrown. The Doctor explains "And now I know what sort of man I am. I'm lucky, because quite by chance, I'm still within the first 15 hours of my regeneration cycle. Which means I have just enough residual cellular energy to do – this!" The Sycorax leader comments "Witchcraft..." to which the Doctor replies "Time Lord."

Like his two first predecessors (in serials such as "The Web Planet" and "Web of Fear"), the tenth Doctor's alterity is emphasised by featuring him in an episode laced with distrust. In "Midnight," the Doctor finds himself trapped on the planet Midnight, in a shuttle which was to take him and his fellow passengers to a waterfall made of sapphires. When the shuttle suddenly stops moving and an ominous knocking on its walls starts, its passengers panic. A woman named Sky Sylvestry seems most scared of all, and within five minutes from the offset of the knocking she is driven to a wall, and the power in the shuttle fails. When the Doctor and the other passengers have

found and lit torches, they find Sky sitting in a corner and repeating everything each passenger says As the power in the shuttle comes back on, Sky speaks in unison with everything being said. This makes all passengers even more scared, and they suggest killing her by throwing her out of the shuttle. The Doctor, however, strongly opposes to this plan. His voicing of his oppositions, together with his earlier assuming a leading role in the "investigations" as to what might be going on, causes the other passengers to start to think he is in league with whatever is inside Sky. The passengers, all at once, start accusing the Doctor – they ask "Who are you exactly? […] Doctor of what? […] He wasn't even booked. […] He just turned up out of the blue. Where from?! […] You called us humans, like *you're not one of us!*" Eventually, the consciousness inside Sky traps the Doctor, as events hint he is the only one that might be on to it. It persuades most of the passengers to throw him out, and it is only by an epiphany of the unnamed hostess – in which she leaps out of the shuttle, taking Sky with her – that the Doctor and the remaining passengers are saved.

The two-episode story "Human Nature / The Family of Blood" conveniently stresses both the Doctor's alterity and his moral ambiguity in one concept. In this serial, which is "really a character-driven emotional drama which just happens to be an SF story" (Chapman 220), the Doctor hides as human schoolmaster John Smith in order to escape from the Family of Blood – a gaseous, predatory life form who wish to take the Doctor's body in order to become immortal. He explains to his companion Martha Jones that he can use a "chameleon arc" to alter his genetic structure and make himself entirely human, locking everything Time Lord in a pocket watch. He will himself even forget ever having been alien, and he will only have to hide for three months, since that is as long as it takes for the Family of Blood to lose track of his smell. Unfortunately, the Family of Blood nevertheless track him down to the village in which he is staying. Villagers start dying as the school of which he is headmaster is attacked by the Family, and the need arises for John Smith to change back into the Doctor. John, however, by this time has married a woman named Joan, and is resistant to the idea of changing back into the Doctor – to, essentially, give up

his entire existence. He asks “Falling in love? That didn't even occur to him? […] Then what sort of man is that? And now you expect me to die?” But “die” he must, and the Doctor punishes the Family of Blood for their crimes (forcing upon them eternal life in imprisonment) in a way characterised by MacRury and Rustin as an example of how “powerful and ruthless the Doctor can be” (55). At the end of the episode, right before the Doctor and Martha leave the village, the Doctor invites Joan to join him on his travels. She, however, concludes by asking “Answer me this. […] If the Doctor had never visited us, if he'd never chosen this place on a whim, would anybody here have died?” The Doctor might have noted how if he had *not* come there many more would probably have died – but he does not reply, and she says “You can go.”

Though showrunner Russell T. Davies describes the tenth Doctor as a “proper saviour,” Chapman contends that “probably the dominant trend overall is to cast the Doctor in the role of the tragic hero” (Chapman 217) – which is a reading close to this essay's characterisation of the Doctor as a morally ambiguous figure. His dubious morality is emphasised unequivocally as the tenth Doctor comes face to face with Davros in “Journey's End.” In this latter of a two-episode serial, the tenth Doctor and all his companions struggle to stop Davros from exploding the aptly named “reality bomb,” which is to destroy all of reality. Chapman rightly notes that “[i]t takes Davros (of all people!) to bring home to the Doctor 'how many have died in your name' with a montage of all the characters who have lost their lives while helping him” (217). Of course, those who gave their lives did so to spare the lives of many more others, but this moment seems to stress that their blood is nevertheless very much on the Doctor's hands. Moreover, during the same scene, Davros tells the Doctor “[T]his is the truth, Doctor. You take ordinary people and you fashion them into weapons. Behold your Children of Time, transformed into murderers. I made the Daleks, Doctor. You made this. […] This is my final victory, Doctor. I have shown you yourself.” A second, half-human, Doctor and companion Donna Noble then stop the detonation of the reality bomb, send 26 of the 27 planets Davros had captured back where they belong, and set the Dalek ship to explode. The Doctor

and his companions run back into the TARDIS (to escape, and tow the final planet – Earth – back home) and the Doctor offers to save Davros – but Davros refuses, and finally takes full hold of the opportunity he failed to grasp in classic Who: his last words to the Doctor are "Never forget, Doctor, you did this. I name you. Forever, you are the Destroyer of the Worlds!" In all the accusations Davros makes, the Doctor says nothing to refute his statements, and therein implicitly agrees. Of course, as was the case with the accusations of the Dalek to the ninth Doctor, we should not assign too much weight to the words of a character who himself would be happy to wipe out the whole of creation. But again, the episode seizes the opportunity to explicitly emphasise the Doctor's ambiguous side, clearly reflecting the changed understanding of the Doctor's persona.

A story such as "The Fires of Pompeii" shows the Doctor's moral dilemma in a more complicated and therefore perhaps even stronger way than "Journey's End" – as the Doctor seems to become more and more self-conscious, and the more troubled. In this episode, the Doctor and Donna accidentally land in Pompeii, on the day before the Vesuvius famously erupts – wiping out the entire town. Donna pleads with the Doctor to try and save everyone, but the Doctor explains that the eruption of the Vesuvius is a fixed point in time, and stresses that therefore, it cannot and must not be changed; what happens to Pompeii is completely inevitable. When they try to return to the TARDIS, however, they find it to be gone. Through a series of accidents the Doctor and Donna find out that the few remaining members of the race of Pyrovile now inhabit Vesuvius. These Pyrovile are intent on converting all humans, and seeing as "Water can boil […] and everything will burn" they so plan on taking over the Earth. The Doctor is now faced with what a soothsayer earlier in the episode correctly called "the most terrible choice"; he has to either explode Vesuvius – which will wipe out both the Pyrovile *and* Pompeii – or allow the Pyrovile to destroy humanity completely. He resolves "Pompeii or the world. […] It's not just history, it's me. *I make it happen.*" Vesuvius erupts as planned, and when the Doctor and Donna are back in the TARDIS and Donna asks him to "Just save *someone.*" This he eventually does, but not before he huffs "Don't you think I've done

enough?! History is back in place, and everyone dies." The Earth has been saved, but the blood of the inhabitants of Pompeii (so the episode tells us) is directly on the Doctor's hands.

The idea of the Doctor being responsible for catastrophic "fixed points in time" in the history of humanity is explored even further in "The Waters of Mars." In this episode, the TARDIS lands on the first human settlement on Mars (Bowie Base One), on the day (the series tells us) it is famously blown up by captain Adelaide Brooke. The Doctor attempts to get away from Mars, explaining to Adelaide "Imagine... Imagine you knew something. Imagine you found yourself somewhere. I don't know, Pompeii. Imagine you were in Pompeii. And you tried to save them. But in doing so, you make it happen. *Everything I do, just makes it happen.*" The death of Adelaide Brooke will eventually inspire her descendants to interstellar travel, and even ultimately result in the birth of an entirely new species; one of her descendants falls in love with a "Tandonian prince" and their children are the makings of a new race. The inevitability of her dying on Mars is stressed further by her later on in the episode relating how she was mysteriously spared by a Dalek as a child, and the Doctor explaining that the Dalek, too, must have recognised her death as a fixed point in time; had her death not been fixed to be at Bowie Base One, the Dalek would have been "able" to kill her as a child (since Daleks basically kill everything and everyone). The Doctor's attempt to get away, however, is thwarted initially by Adelaide taking his space suit (which he needs to get back to the TARDIS) in order to force him to help her investigate a mysterious accident with two of her colleagues in the nearby biodome – she thinks he may be involved. She quickly returns to trusting the Doctor, and over the course of the episode, he persuades Adelaide of the necessity of her death, until such point as she resigns to it. As the Mars base is about to explode, however, the Doctor has a change of hearts and decides to attempt to rescue the three remaining survivors. Adelaide, now persuaded of the good that will come from their deaths, questions him. He dismisses her comments by saying that "There are laws of time. Once upon a time there were people in charge of those laws – but they died. They all died. Do you know who that leaves? *Me!* It's taken me all these years to

realize that the laws of time are *mine*, and they will *obey me!*" In this moment, the series seems to portray the Doctor as one who now imagines himself to be a God, and moreover, one who can solve the problems of theodicy; the Doctor, in an instance of stark hubris, appears to resolve that as long as he is "there," nothing more bad will happen. But after the Doctor drops the three back on Earth, Adelaide and he have a discussion. Adelaide seems frightened of him, and states "The whole of history could change! The future of the human race! No one should have that much power! […] You should have left us there." The Doctor tells her he had saved "little people" before, but never someone as important as her. He muses "Ooh, I'm good. […] For a long time now, I thought I was just a survivor, but I'm not. I'm the winner. That's who I am. A Time Lord victorious." Adelaide tells him the "Time Lord victorious" is wrong, goes into her house, and kills herself anyway. The episode shows us flashes of the Doctor's memory now changing as he realises that, besides his best efforts, he has still altered history for the worse. It ends with an ominous appearance by Ood Sigma, a bell towing in the distance and the Doctor stumbling back into the TARDIS in something which looks uncannily like utter panic.

3.4: "Every Lonely Monster Needs A Companion"

Four stories later, the Doctor regenerates, and his alterity is again stressed in the process of regeneration. Fortunately (and unlike his predecessor), the Doctor, now portrayed by Matt Smith, actively participates in most of "The Eleventh Hour" – he does not pass out after regenerating, as this time, nothing had really "gone wrong." He does, however, have a craving he does not seem able to identify. After a nightly crash landing in a garden he is found crawling out of the TARDIS by seven-year-old Amelia Pond (Amy), who he asks for "an apple? All I can think about. Apples. I love apples." When he is presented with one, however, he exclaims "That's disgusting. What is that? […] Apple's rubbish. I hate apples." He then consecutively loves and upon tasting decides to hate yoghurt ("It's just stuff with bits in"), bacon ("Are you trying to poison me?"), beans ("Beans are evil. Bad, bad beans") and bread and butter (which he throws away, yelling "And stay out!") He states "New mouth. New rules. It's like eating after cleaning your teeth. Everything tastes wrong." What he does like turns out to be the odd combination of fish fingers and custard. After having finished his food, the Doctor follows Amelia to inspect a crack in her wall. He scans the crack with his sonic screwdriver, mutters "wibbly-wobbly timey-wimey" and eventually explains it to be "a split in the skin of the world." He tells Amelia he has to go and repair the TARDIS before the crack can be fixed, and that he will be back in five minutes to help her get rid of her problem completely. When she says that "People always say that." – that they will be back in five minutes – the Doctor replies "Am I people? Do I even *look like* people?" Ironically, of course, he in fact *does look like* people – a fact that the episode's writer was undoubtedly aware of – so that by uttering this phrase, the Doctor makes yet another cheery addition to the long line of the series' best efforts to keep indicating that he *is not* people.

Series showrunner Steven Moffat contends that "For me, *Doctor Who* literally is a fairytale" (qtd in Chapman 273). The eleventh Doctor's second episode, then, stresses his alterity in a very

fairy tale-like way as he is paralleled to a Star Whale in “The Beast Below.” The Doctor and now twenty-one-year-old Amy land on the “Starship UK,” a ship carrying the entire population of the United Kingdom as they have left Earth to escape from deadly solar flares. The Doctor unearths that the ship is powered not by engines, but by a living Star Whale – and that the Star Whale, like the Doctor, is the last of its kind. He also discovers that in order to keep it flying the ship, the Star Whale is continually being tortured by means of jolts of electricity administered directly to its brain. The episode tells us that the Whale was caught when it came to Earth together with the solar flares, and that if it were to stop being tortured, it would fly off – which would kill everyone on board the ship. Finally, the queen of Starship UK had implemented a sort of voting system; its inhabitants would be shown the truth about the whale, and then given the choice to remember and release the whale, or forget and allow life to continue as “normal.” Of course, the outcome of the voting had always been to keep torturing the Whale. The Doctor is now faced with yet another “impossible” choice – “Look, three options. One, I let the Star Whale continue in unendurable agony for hundreds more years. Two, I kill everyone on this ship. Three, I murder a beautiful, innocent creature as painlessly as I can.” Right before the Doctor is about to send a more powerful jolt of electricity through the Whale's brain, which would leave it in a sort of vegetable state, the episode shows us a montage of Amy coming to a series of realisations; she remembers the Doctor telling her to “notice everything,” that the Star Whale will eat adult humans as sacrifices but not children, that it is the last of its kind, that “is this how it works, Doctor? You never interfere with other peoples or planets […] Unless it's children crying,” and that the Star Whale came as a miracle when children screamed. She then takes the queen's hand, and votes “remember.” Instead of flying off, the Star Whale (much to everyone's surprise) increases speed, and Amy explains to the Doctor:

> Yeah, well, you've stopped torturing the pilot. Got to help. […] The Star Whale didn't come like a miracle all those years ago. It volunteered. You didn't have to trap it or torture it. That was all just you. It came because it couldn't stand to watch your

> children cry. What if you were really old, and really kind and alone? Your whole race dead. No future. What couldn't you do then? If you were that old, and that kind, and the very last of your kind, you couldn't just stand there and watch children cry. […] Amazing though, don't you think? The Star Whale. All that pain and misery and loneliness, and it just made it kind. […] I've seen it before. Very old and very kind, and the very, very last. Sound a bit familiar?

But the eleventh Doctor, of course, like his predecessors, is not just "very old and very kind" – he is also one with a consciousness weighed down by a lot of death. This is illustrated strongly in "The Pandorica Opens." The episode features the Doctor, Amy and River Song going to investigate the Pandorica. Legend has it that the Pandorica (so the Doctor explains) is a prison for "the mightiest warrior in history. […] There was a goblin, or a trickster, or a warrior. A nameless, terrible thing, soaked in the blood of a billion galaxies. The most feared being in all the cosmos. And nothing could stop it, or hold it, or reason with it. One day it would just drop out of the sky and tear down your world." Going into the intricacies of the story would take up too much space, but at the end of the episode, it is revealed that the evil "thing" the Pandorica is supposed to be a prison for, is the Doctor himself; a collective of (amongst others) Daleks, Cybermen, Sontarans and Autons had commissioned the construction of the Pandorica because they genuinely believe the Doctor will destroy the universe. Though it is a collective of the Doctor's enemies who built the Pandorica and are responsible for the legend behind it – the "evil," "soaked in the blood of a billion galaxies […] most feared being in the universe" mentioned is from their point of view, and would be "our" "good" – this story does a wonderful job at emphasising that "good" and "evil" are merely a matter of perspective – and that one people's God might be another people's demon.

This point of ambiguity is (shortly but nevertheless strongly) emphasised further in "The Wedding of River Song." In this episode, the Doctor is seen extracting some information from the "data core" of a beaten down and defenceless Dalek, and then killing it. Moreover, he does this after

he greets it with the words “Imagine you were dying. Imagine you were afraid and a long way from home and in terrible pain. Just when you thought it couldn't get worse, you looked up and saw the face of the devil himself. Hello, Dalek.” To emphasise this point, the Doctor is seen speaking the words from the Dalek's point of view. The Doctor describes himself as “the devil himself” perhaps indicating that he has gone a long way from (in classic *Who*) simply being the Daleks' “enemy.”

“Amy's Choice” stresses the weight the Doctor seems to feel on his shoulders in new *Who* more clearly than perhaps any episode in the entire series. It features the Doctor, Amy and Amy's (now) husband Rory Williams faced with a choice between two worlds; one is a dream, the other reality, and it is up to them to find out which is which. Moreover, they have to decide by dying – die in the dream and they will wake up in reality, but die in reality, and that will be it. This challenge is posed by an entity called the Dream Lord, a short man with a dress sense eerily similar to the Doctor's; he wears a red and white striped shirt, a tweed jacket and a bow tie. When the Doctor and his companions meet the Dream Lord for the second time, the Doctor tells him “Drop it. Drop all of it. I know who you are. […] No idea how you can be here, but there's *only one person in the universe who hates me as much as you do*” (my emphasis). Eventually, the three of them beat the Dream Lord by dying in both “realities” and wake up in the real TARDIS. The Doctor shows Amy and Rory the thing that had caused their predicament; “A speck of psychic pollen from the candle meadows of Karass don Slava.” He then explains “Sorry, wasn't it obvious? The Dream Lord was *me*. Psychic pollen. It's a mind parasite. It feeds on everything dark in you, gives it a voice, turns it against you. I'm nine hundred and seven. It had a lot to go on.” When Amy asks why the pollen had not fed on her and Rory, the Doctor tells her “The darkness in you pair, it would've starved to death in an instant. I choose my friends with great care. Otherwise, I'm stuck with my own company, and you know how that works out.”

The idea that the Doctor needs his companions to stay “sane” (at the 'good'-ish side of morally ambiguous) is mentioned throughout new *Who*, but (besides at the end of the above

mentioned episode) it is stressed in a lovely way at the end of "Hide." In this episode, the Doctor and companion Clara Oswald investigate what is presented as the haunting of a Victorian mansion in the 1970s. The haunting knocking and psychic occurrences in the house are revealed to be caused by a twofold of beings stuck in a "pocket universe." The first is recognised early on in the episode to be time-traveller Hila Tacorian, who had crash landed in the pocket universe and is now stuck. The Doctor saves her, but the final five minutes to the episode reveal that the other being he encountered while rescuing Hila was not a pocket universe dwelling monster, but an entity (like Hila) hoping to be rescued. The monster turns out to be one who is merely trying to get back to its significant other, which appears to be stuck in the house in reality. The Doctor is shown to come to this realisation via a montage of a series of moments from earlier in the episode, and exclaiming "How do sharks make babies? […] Happily! […] Every lonely monster needs a companion." The audience will recognise the need for a companion to be a quality the Doctor shares with the "lonely monster," and in choosing the word "companion," the Doctor's words about the being in the pocket universe may very well be interpreted as being ambiguous; applicable to both the "monster" and the Doctor himself. Also, and after all, "it takes one to know one."

Chapter Four: “The Day Of The Doctor” / Conclusion

Of course, the recent events of the 50th anniversary special have shed a whole new light on the Doctor's more explicit dark morality; as briefly touched upon above, the programme has revealed that the Doctor had not murdered the entire population of his home planet Gallifrey at all – but “merely” locked them, frozen in time in a parallel universe. However, the series tells us that the paradox resulting from the Doctor meeting his former incarnations has caused him to forget that he has in fact saved his people and remember only that he *intended* to wipe them out. Fans have debated whether the Doctor has rewritten history in “The Day of the Doctor” or that his mind substituted images of his planet burning to make up for the void caused by his memory loss (see, for example, http://www.doctorwhotv.co.uk/why-bringing-back-gallifrey-is-wrong-63765.htm). Whatever may be the case, by adding the paradox and subsequent memory loss to the equation *Doctor Who* retains good reason for the ninth, tenth and eleventh Doctors to be as troubled as they have been so obviously presented on-screen.

Also, there is the notion of the new *Who* Doctors' potential for romance – an idea that was unthinkable in classic *Who* – which I have failed to touch upon. Briefly put, this is rapidly going through the same progress as his morality; it was there in the eighth Doctor's *Movie*, latently continued through nine's performance (“The Doctor Dances” contains strong hints regarding his sexuality, Mark Campbell (156) argues), received cinematographic emphasis during ten's incarnation (mainly through his “heartbreaking” romance with companion Rose) and while eleven is a very child-like Doctor and his on-screen sexuality is toned down again (he appears clumsy even in the implication of his “full” married life with River Song), today, dialogue stresses (and mocks) it when for example Clara calls the TARDIS a “snog box.”

Finally, and perhaps even most importantly, an attentive reader might by now have argued that the Doctor's increased self-awareness and more complex sense of morality imply that the

Doctor of new *Who* is in fact a morally better figure than he was in *classic* Who. (Or perhaps, rather than being morally superior, we might think of him as increasingly "mature" or "rounded.") Indeed, many critics have noted that the Doctor of the regenerated series is represented using symbolic allusions and cinematographic hints that connect him to Jesus Christ. This is an intriguing assertion, which I will now address. (I shall be making some broad claims here, in the knowledge that my ideas and morals, too, reflect the shifting cultural and philosophical landscape.) As I have stated in my introduction, my concern has been with the way the Doctor's easily-forgotten negative qualities are presented on-screen, the ways in which the series highlights these covert aspects of his persona, and how the revived series has taken great care to emphasise the Doctor's dark side (as well as retaining the classic series' emphasis on his alterity). In moral terms, the Doctor himself seems increasingly insecure about his nature, and his actions and their consequences; whereas he was a "good man" in 2011 episode "A Good Man Goes to War," in the first teaser to the eighth season, the (at the time of writing brand-new) twelfth Doctor (portrayed by Peter Capaldi) asks Clara "Am I a good man?" But to be morally "ambiguous," of course, does not necessarily mean "bad," but rather brings in the idea of "complexity," of something paradoxical or especially open to multiple interpretations. The new Doctors' remorse and sense of responsibility might indicate not only a growing interest in the problematic protagonist, but also a shift in our understanding of what it means to be "good."

As I touched upon in my introduction, lines are getting increasingly blurred – and the "good man" who society may have elected to idolise and trust a few decades ago seems to be considered utterly unworthy of such treatment now. Hannah Arendt in *On Revolution* argues that Herman Melville's *Billy Budd* (1924) illustrates how a force of pure "good" would not be acknowledged in our society, but rather punished: "The tragedy is that the law is made for men, and neither for angels nor for devils" (84). I would argue, however, that rather than people being unable to recognise the purely "good," it appears that many have come to believe that pure "goodness" is philosophically

so improbable that it is very likely to be a lie – and thus "bad." In light of the recent loss of faith in "good men," perhaps the Doctor's move towards introspection reflects an increase of a self-reflexivity found in people today. No "good" comes without cost, and no human (or Time Lord) is perfect, and this thought should be recognised and accepted rather than "overcome." (Of course, when applied to humanity the idea of being imperfect is hardly new. Importantly, however, many texts seem to point out that being purely "good" is, *theoretically*, possible, to some of those with an "overview position" or a "higher plan" – such as (Christian) deities, or superheroes, or Time Lords, for that matter.) Aristotle famously saw "badness" as an incompleteness; the absence of something that makes a person quintessentially human – as vanity, for example, is an effect of insecurity. Much more recent, in *Wickedness* Mary Midgley likewise argues that "bad" is not something present, but rather something absent. Iris Murdoch, too, seems to see the "good" as something very complete; she argues "it is really only of Good that we can say 'it is the trial of itself, and needs no other touch'" (98).

I would argue, however, that surely a recognition of a personal darkness must be a part of the whole these philosophers seem so keen on emphasising – it must not be brushed aside or wished away, but conceded. "A good man" should perhaps be the human embodiment of the dynamic Utopia as imagined by Alec Charles in "The Flight from History" (and mentioned in my introduction). At present, fictitious heroes and superheroes appear more and more to represent not a force of pure "goodness," but rather to set an example in their acknowledging their flaws and demonstrating their struggles to remain on the side of "right" best they can. They attempt to do so despite tyranny or bureaucracy's attempts to sway them in the "wrong" direction – but, like us, do not always succeed. Moreover, the Doctor himself often professes to have no plan whatsoever. I myself have come to subscribe to the idea that the Doctor's goodness may very well be more complete by virtue of his knowing a moral obscurity which is integral to it. Truly, the Doctor's persona being represented as it is seems to suggest that today, "a good man" cannot and must not be

unambiguously so; instead, he cannot escape having a dark side, and ought then to show a continual recollection of and negotiation with it and yet – time and time again – eventually outshine this darkness. Though even such a victory can only be thought of as temporary. If indeed the Doctor does indicate a shift in our understanding of what it means to be "good," then today, "a good man" is "good" *only* if the ambiguities in his persona are, for the time being, overcome, while never being completely defeated or forgotten.

"Words Win Wars" is the name of the musical piece accompanying the Doctor's memorable Stonehenge speech in "The Pandorica Opens." And indeed they do – as River Song (rather sternly) contends in "A Good Man Goes to War":

> The man who can turn an army around at the mention of his name. "Doctor." The word for healer and wise man throughout the universe. We get that word from you, you know. But if you carry on the way you are, what might that word come to mean? To the people of the Gamma Forests, the word Doctor means "Mighty Warrior." How far you've come. And now they've taken a child. The child of your best friends. And they're going to turn her into a weapon just to bring you down. And all this, my love, in fear of you.

In this moment, the Doctor's wife – who the series presents as his equal – perfectly captures my points; the Doctor has (in his own universe) become an awe-inspiring, even feared being of ambiguous moral status. The power of words illustrates this. In her little lecture to her husband, River tentatively notes that the etymology for our word "doctor" might be traced back directly to the Time Lord himself; but not before stressing that he can "turn an army around at the mention of his name." Ambiguous indeed – the mere mention of his title alone might prevent bloodshed, but the remainder of her small speech ("All this, my love, in fear of you") strongly indicates that that is only because there is so much violence already associated with it. No good comes without cost, and no superhero, or deity, or Time Lord, is perfect. But as I have argued above, perhaps our sense of an

embodied perfection is no longer the purely good, but the one who struggles, yet teaches us how to persevere – not with a head permanently held high, but with moments of collapse, despair and self-loathing. The figure of the Doctor, and by extension *Doctor Who*, most aptly demonstrates that (as the Doctor is at pains to explain in 2007 episode "Blink"): "People think that [life] is a strict progression of cause to effect. But *actually,* from a non-linear, non-subjective viewpoint – it's more like a big ball of wibbly wobbly... time-y wimey... stuff."

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