

**Doctor Who**  
Saturday 6.30pm BBC1, 8.25pm BBC HD



CENTURIES AGO BY your Earth-time, a once proud race – or, to be honest, the Gatiss family in a small semi in County Durham – settled down to watch the telly. It was 1972. Raleigh bikes had been safely stowed. Beans on toast had been scoffed. And there was only one thing on my little mind: Daleks!

Aged six, I was already mad about *Doctor Who* and knew that the return of the Daleks meant something special. I'd seen the gorgeous *Radio Times* cover [overleaf] in the shops, but wasn't allowed to have it as we only got the RT at Christmas. And I knew from whispered conversations with my brother and sister that the Daleks were both the Doctor's archenemies and really scary.

Dreamt up by writer Terry Nation, the Daleks made their debut in 1963 in only the second-ever *Doctor Who* story. Two races inhabited the devastated planet Skaro, mutating into perfect, blond (and rather fey) pacifists called Thals and ruthless blobs of hate inside metal travelling machines: the Daleks. Obsessed with racial purity and the desire to "exterminate" all life that isn't like them, the Daleks always bore more than a passing resemblance to the Nazis. Although the parallel can be overstated, there is something intrinsically WWII about the hate-spewing, tank-like monsters that has cast a long shadow.

The Daleks were an instant smash – a brilliant combination of Nation's ideas, the chilling staccato voices, and their design, by BBC employee Ray Cusick. Through a combination of budget-restraints and inspiration, he devised the familiar pepper-pot shape, ball-covered skirt, domed head and infamous sink plunger. (It's a testament to the power of this design classic that, when the series returned in 2005, the largely unaltered Dalek immediately captivated a whole new generation of children.) ▶

# Let battle begin again...

Our favourite baddies are back – bigger than ever!  
Writer **Mark Gatiss**  
in-ves-tig-ates the Daleks' timeless appeal and their Nazi origins



**RT PICTURE EXCLUSIVE**  
**EX-TER-MIN-ATE!** They swarmed over Westminster Bridge for the front of RT (above) – voted the best magazine cover of all time – in the week of the 2005 general election. Five years on their latest story (right) and our special covers depict the Daleks invading the capital once more – now in technicolor!







**CONQUERING ICONS** The metal monsters glided onto our cover in 1964, 1966, 1972 (glimpsed on the shelves by a young Mark Gatiss), 1999 and 2006

Next, the Daleks invaded Earth, their fascist-inspired origins made explicit by sink-plunger jets and a grim storyline featuring weary resistance fighters and treacherous humans who pay the Doctor's companions to the conquering aliens. The invaders also find time to tour some of London's most famous landmarks for reasons that are not entirely clear.

By the mid-60s, Dalek-mania had gripped the country, with two feature films ("Now on the big screen! In colour!") and a TV return to threaten Doctor Patrick Troughton in his debut story *Power of the Daleks*. In this adventure – now mostly lost – stranded Daleks survive by pretending to act as robot slaves to the human colonists on the planet Vulcan. For once, the Daleks are cunning, sly, patient... and even more frightening. Soon the Daleks were to be whisked away by the Doctor for an ill-fated attempt to conquer America on TV, and it wasn't until Jon Pertwee appeared as the new Doctor that *Day of the Daleks* brought back our favourite nasties. Which is where we come in, on that Saturday afternoon in 1972.

FURTHER PERTWEE ADVENTURES saw the Daleks entombed in volcanos that spewed molten ice – an improbable idea from Terry Nation's that has since been proved usually to exist, as there are such things as some of Saturn's moons – and deprived of their ability to exterminate the strange and underrated *Death to Daleks*.

A canny Terry Nation was now writing a Dalek story per season until incoming producer Philip Hinchcliffe decided the creatures needed to justify their presence for new Doctor Tom Baker. This they emphatically did in the electrifying *Genesis of the Daleks*, widely regarded as one of the all-time classics of *Doctor Who*. Revealing the Daleks' creator to be the crippled scientist Davros – a Hitler-like maniac surrounded by a black-uniformed scientific elite – firmly repositioned the Daleks once again in their Second World War origins. So successful was Davros that he tended to dominate succeeding stories, relegating his creations to playing second fiddle. It's an odd fact that *Genesis* led to a vogue for biblically inspired Dalek titles. *Resurrection*,

*Revelation* and the wonderful *Remembrance* followed in rapid succession though, sadly, we were never treated to *Passion of the Daleks*.

Then, in 2005, a single surviving Dalek battled Christopher Eccleston's Doctor, posing the poignant question: what does a Dalek do if it has no orders to follow? Since then, they've come back in their millions, scheming in 1930s New

**LOOK OUT IN THE BLACKOUT!** The Nazi-influenced Daleks look right at home in the Second World War, even if they are sporting Union flags...



"I wondered: what if the Daleks appeared to be a man-made superweapon?"

MARK GATISS

York, sent back into the Void by David Tennant and trounced, along with the returning Davros, for the final time at the end of 2008.

And now, like any self-respecting archenemies who've been beaten for the final time, they're back. It was an honour and a daunting task to be asked to write a Dalek story for Matt Smith's new Doctor, but with all that history in mind and with a Second World War setting part of the brief, I wanted to bring back some of the thrill of the Daleks being cunning and manipulative, just as in that first Troughton story.

For research, I read first-hand accounts of Londoners who had lived through the Battle of Britain and was tremendously moved. I knew we had to be very careful, tonally – it's within living memory and, though this is *Doctor Who* and we want to have fun, it was important to acknowledge the real thing. So the story is about celebrating that incredible spirit displayed by everyone at that time as well as telling a story worthy of the Daleks. A bank holiday war movie in 45 minutes! And so I wondered:

what if the Daleks appeared to be a man-made super-weapon? Camouflaged in khaki with Union flag symbols on their metal heads? What if only the Doctor knew their true identity? And then, of course, there are the new Daleks. Let's just say that the warm glow of those 60s movies loomed large. They're bigger than they've ever been. And technicolor!

Finally, after *Power* and *Evil* and *Planet*, *Genesis*, *Revelation* and *Evolution* and all the other evocative titles that have graced the stories over the years, what would best fit my story of Daleks in the Blitz? Of Daleks proving why they're still our favourite baddies, 47 years after they first blazed onto the screen? What else but *Victory*!

Mark Gatiss was in the League of Gentlemen and has written for and appeared in *Doctor Who*. He presents this week's edition of *Doctor Who Confidential* (Saturday BBC3)

➔ See exclusive photos at [radiotimes.com/daleks](http://radiotimes.com/daleks)



The New Dr. Who.



# Declassified: your verdict on the Doctor

RECEIVED  
28 JUN 1976

RT takes an exclusive first look into the BBC's online archive to find out its top secrets

**F**ORGET DALEKS AND Cybermen. The most daunting challenge for a brand-new Doctor has always been to win over the Great British Public. Matt Smith has pulled off with honours the transition from the phenomenally popular David Tennant but, for many of their predecessors, there was no change without pain.

"Too stupid for words" reads one viewer's verdict on fourth Doctor Tom Baker's debut in 1974 – just one of many startling morsels unveiled this week by an online BBC Archive project ([bbc.co.uk/archive](http://bbc.co.uk/archive)). Dubbed *The Changing Face of Doctor Who*, it allows fans and TV historians access for the first time to a collection of internal memos, audience research reports and rare photos that shed light on how the BBC executed and monitored handovers between 20th-century Time Lords.

Changing the lead actor was a terrific risk, and a memo dated May 1966 shows that the

*Doctor Who* production team envisaged the very first "metaphysical change" from original Doctor William Hartnell to Patrick Troughton as a "horrificing experience in which he [the Doctor] re-lives some of the most unendurable moments of his long life, including the galactic war. It is as if he has had the LSD drug..."

Troughton wasn't immediately popular, but the process – eventually termed "regeneration" – proved the lifeblood of *Doctor Who* and sealed the series' longevity.

Scan the research reports now online and you'll find an Appreciation Index (an average of scores out of 100 from a sample audience). It gives a gauge of the success of each new Doctor between 1966 and 1987. *Patrick Mulkern*

Check out RT readers' reaction to Matt Smith in *Feedback* (page 149) and at [radiotimes.com/who-blog](http://radiotimes.com/who-blog). For RT's own archive material, visit [radiotimes.com/doctor-who-classic](http://radiotimes.com/doctor-who-classic)



**PATRICK TROUGHTON** 1966

**APPRECIATION INDEX 44**

As the first replacement Doctor, he had the hardest job. An audience research report on Troughton's third episode reveals that some thought him "miscalc" and "wasted". He was "playing for laughs" and turning the Doctor into a "pantomime character" or a "half-witted clown". Others welcomed "a refreshing change" and said "a brilliant actor had improved the programme greatly".



**JON PERTWEE** 1970

**APPRECIATION INDEX 54**

Third Doctor Jon Pertwee had an easier ride: "The new Dr Who appears to have been accepted without question, except by very young viewers." However, many found his first episode "naive" and "hardly an adequate substitute for *Star Trek*". The glossy US sci-fi show had just ended its first run in BBC's Saturday-night timeslot.



**TOM BAKER** 1974

**APPRECIATION INDEX 53**

Many missed Pertwee. One parent said, "My two boys aged four and six hope the Doctor will change back next week." Another said, "The new Dr Who is a looney." But a small sample was attracted to a new Doctor who showed "more life and humour" and promised to "buck the series up". Of course, Tom Baker went on to be the longest-running Time Lord with a seven-year reign.



**PETER DAVISON** 1982

**APPRECIATION INDEX 66**

The fifth Doctor's rating is based on reaction to the whole of his first 26-part series. Peter Davison appears to have been widely accepted, with viewers by now more used to the concept of regeneration. Some suggested that "he should stick to being a vet" (he'd starred in *All Creatures Great and Small*), but the majority "clearly feel that he has got to grips with the part".



**COLIN BAKER** 1984

**APPRECIATION INDEX 66**

Colin Baker was met with a "cool reception" by the sample audience. Less than half were impressed by his portrayal, although a few saw his "potential to become an excellent Dr Who". He seemed "less wishy-washy than others who have played the part". By the mid 80s, the BBC was collating individual personal index figures for its stars. Baker scored 66 while the series' AI was 69.



**SYLVESTER MCCOY** 1987

**APPRECIATION INDEX 46**

Up against *Coronation Street* in the schedules, *Who* saw a ratings slump. The AI for Sylvester McCoy's first series was 60, while his personal index figure was 46. There was a "steady, if not spectacular, improvement" as the series unfolded and some viewers found McCoy "naturally charming".