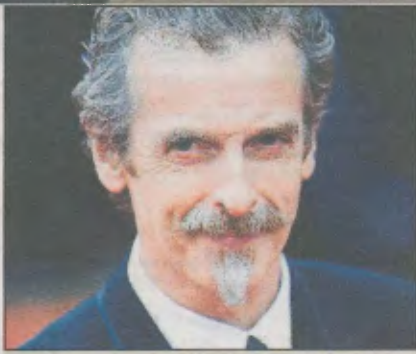




## Sean Stangland WIDESCREEN



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**Peter Capaldi will take over as star of "Doctor Who" in December.**

### Time to get in the 'Doctor Who' loop

Some of us, myself included, were very excited Sunday to hear that Peter Capaldi has been chosen to succeed Matt Smith later this year as the star of "Doctor Who."

But most were probably asking, "Who's Peter Capaldi?"

Or, "Doctor whaaaaat?"

The BBC science-fiction show is coming up on its 50th anniversary and is arguably more popular than ever here in the U.S., not to mention the suburbs — just last week I spotted shelves full of "Doctor Who" merchandise in no less than three stores at Woodfield Mall.

Nearly all of the televised adventures of the "madman with a box" are available instantly on Netflix, and episodes beginning with the 2005 revival season (or series, as they're called in Britain) can be purchased in just about every format: DVD, Blu-ray, Amazon Instant Video, Xbox Video, Google Play, etc.

Newbies intimidated by 50 years' worth of mythology may want to begin with current star Matt Smith's debut episode, the Series 5 premiere called "The Eleventh Hour." It's fast, it's funny and it reintroduces The Doctor to the audience and to fan-favorite character Amy Pond (Karen Gillan). That's the one I started with, and I've been a Whovian ever since.

Capaldi, who will take over in this December's installment of "Doctor Who's" annual Christmas specials, previously appeared in a 2008 episode, "The Fires of Pompeii," as a different character alongside David Tennant as The Doctor.

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## Before The Doctor ...

The most notable role in Capaldi's past is that of Malcolm Tucker, a foul-mouthed adviser to the British prime minister, in the BBC sitcom "The Thick of It," which you can watch for free on Hulu. That show spawned a critically acclaimed film version in 2009 called "In The Loop," which is available for

streaming to Hulu Plus and Netflix subscribers.

The political comedies were created by Armando Iannucci, whose acerbic wit can now be enjoyed on HBO's "Veep." If you've seen that show, then you know what to expect from "The Thick of It" and "In The Loop": Horrible people saying horrible things at a very fast pace. (Only this time, they all have British accents.)

Make no mistake: The youngest members of the "Doctor Who" fan base are not quite ready for Malcolm Tucker's parade of profanities. But if Mom and Dad want to hear new and exciting vocabulary, and see another great performance from the dearly departed James Gandolfini, "In The Loop" will delight.

## More Nintendo?!?

The Nintendo nostalgia factory

churns out another treat for gamers this weekend in "Mario & Luigi: Dream Team," a new action/role-playing game for the 3DS handheld console that puts you in control of both famous brothers. Your mission, as it has been since 1985, is to save Princess Peach from Bowser and his evil pals, but this time Mario does battle in the world of Luigi's dreams, where anything can happen — including

a giant, "Katamari Damacy"-inspired boulder made up of hundreds of Luigis.

The game retails for \$39.99 and hits stores Sunday, Aug. 11.

- Sean Stangland is a Daily Herald copy editor, a tireless consumer of pop culture and a hopeless nerd. He writes about television and digital entertainment every Friday.