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SEPT. 29 — OCT. 5, 1979

WEEKLY

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Weekly soap opera
update

Pictured: WOR's
Dr. WHO and various space creatures

HIGHLIGHTS of the new local season



DR. WHO
(2 Episodes)
10:00 A.M.
Channel 9

By Roslyn Kay

Before the coming of "Star Wars," before the phenomenon of "2001," and before the legacy of "Star Trek," the British Broadcasting Corporation had already lauded forth a hero of time and space: "Dr. Who."

For over 16 years the good Doctor has been thrilling audiences around the world, and here in the tri-state area, viewers can enjoy the serialized space fantasy adventures of "Dr. Who" every Saturday at 10:00 A.M. on WOR-TV, Channel 9.

Born with two hearts and a cold body temperature of 60 degrees, the amazing Dr. Who is a near eternal Time Lord who travels through time and space combatting the intergalactic forces of evil in his extraordinary spaceship, the Tardis. Resembling an obsolete British police call box, the Tardis, (Time and Relative Dimensions in Space), is temperamental and erratic, and can deposit its passengers where they might not want to be!

Starring Tom Baker in the title role, there have been four different and distinctive Dr. Who's since the series began in 1963. The current Doctor is a curly-haired vagabond whose long scarf, floppy hat and quick wit make him the most popular Dr. Who ever. In a recent London interview, Tom Baker described his feelings about the role, claiming that he loves being a Saturday afternoon hero. He says that like any other television hero, the role has certain limitations in that he's really a goody-goody who will never become interested in romance, violence or power. He feels that given these limitations, it is up to the actor in the part to become inventive, amusing and exciting to the audience in different ways.

A cross between an over-aged art student, an absent-minded professor and Sherlock



Holmes, Dr. Who is an undaunted adversary of evil who is extremely intelligent but endearingly idiosyncratic! His seemingly bottomless coat pockets are filled with an array of oddities ranging from cricket balls, apple cores and assorted pieces of scientific equipment, to an endless supply of jellybeans and an all-purpose sonic screwdriver. He uses his superior intelligence and expertise to solve any problem he encounters, as well as his natural charm to woo potential allies, astonished by his unusual nature.

The eccentric Doctor is usually accompanied on his travels by his loyal assistants, Sarah Jane Smith, Leela and Harry Sullivan. Elizabeth Sladen plays the free-lance journalist Sarah, who is the first of the new-style "Dr. Who" heroines, exhibiting a keen awareness and a fierce independence. She is succeeded by a glamorous female "Tarzan" type named Leela, played by Louise Jameson. Leela is a knife-wielding warrior who descended from a tribe that had degenerated over the years from a highly technological to a near stone-age culture. Ian Marter, who wrote the paperback, "Dr. Who and the Ark in Space," plays the Doctor's unwilling male companion, Harry Sullivan. Always the most unlikely candidate for the position of Space/Time Traveler, Harry became Dr. Who's companion more or less by accident.

In over 500 episodes, Dr. Who has battled an incredible array of villains, from hideous monsters to computerized machines, never failing to outwit them all! He has had close encounters with bizarre creatures like golden

Cybermen, menacing Daleks, giant intelligent ants, suction-covered Zygons, wasp-like Worrns, Anti-Matter monsters and evil Sontarans.

As the longest running science-fiction/fantasy series ever to hit the small screen, "Dr. Who" owes much of its success to a talented cast and a crew who rely on their creativity rather than on overripe budgets to create dazzling special effects. According to producer Graham Williams, "Dr. Who" is probably one of the most difficult shows the BBC does. Due to a lack of studio space, there are no standing sets and everything must be built from scratch for each story. The actors themselves only see the finished sets on the actual days of recording and special effects are usually done during the taping sessions, too.

In addition, there are only five days of actual recording time, with two days on location and three in the studio. Because of the tight production schedule, there is virtually no room, and no time for anything to go wrong!

Although billed as a children's series, "Dr. Who" is actually written with wry comments and implications which operate on several levels that are hugely enjoyable for adults. As portrayed by Baker, the Doctor possesses an almost camp humor, a childlike curiosity and is a non-conformist with solid principles. Impulsive and idealistic, he'll risk his life to fight against tyranny, oppression and anything that is anti-life. He represents a positive life force with which we can all identify and, whether fiction or fantasy, he captures the imagination and the dreamer inside us all.



Tom Baker (opposite page) stars as the idiosyncratic title character in the popular British fantasy series, "Dr. Who." Among the many strange villains he runs up against are the evil Davros (above) and the dreaded Sontara (below left). The Doctor travels through time and space in his highly temperamental spaceship "Tardis" (below).

