

The Doctor beats time to lead the heroes of science fiction

By Adam Sherwin

DR WHO, whose screen exploits prompted a generation to hide behind their sofas in terror for part of every Saturday, has been named the greatest science-fiction character in entertainment history.

The Time Lord, played by seven actors during the show's three decades on screen, was voted top by television and film buffs.

The programme *Buffy The Vampire Slayer* proved the biggest hit in the poll of sci-fi and fantasy figures for *SFX* magazine with four of its leading figures making the top ten. Perhaps strangely, Buffy herself – played by Sarah Michelle Gellar – is not the highest-ranked character from the show. The high school heroine is beaten by the cocky vampire Spike – played by James Marsters – who came second.

Doctor Who has a devoted worldwide fanbase, but he was dispatched deep into space by the BBC in 1989. He had been able to assume new forms by way of regenerating, so allowing different actors to take on the role. The Doctor



The Doctor was played by William Hartnell (Richard Hurndall took the role here), Peter Davison, Tom Baker (here represented by a waxwork), Jon Pertwee, and Patrick Troughton

was rescued from oblivion in 1996 for a one-off American TV film, in which he was played for the first time by Paul McGann. There

continues to be talk of further adventures for the eccentric, who has travelled through time and space since first appearing on screens in 1963.

Two characters from television's *Farscape* made it into the top ten, as did Han Solo and Darth Vader from the *Star Wars* films, and

Angel, a *Buffy* spin-off with David Boreanaz in the title role. The top ten was completed by Gandalf from *The Lord Of The Rings*

trilogy, played by Sir Ian McKellen. Dave Golder, the editor of *SFX*, said: "The Doctor hasn't been on our screens for more than five

years now, and he still beat characters who have been in hugely popular shows and films on our screens in the past 12 months."

Sci-fi favourites

1. Dr Who
2. Spike (from *Buffy The Vampire Slayer*)
3. Buffy
4. John Crichton (from *Farscape*)
5. Aeryn Sun (from *Farscape*)
6. Han Solo
7. Willow (from *Buffy*)
8. Darth Vader
9. Angel
10. Gandalf

A Time Lord's life

□ The BBC produced 158 *Dr Who* stories. In his 1963 debut, William Hartnell travelled back in time 100,000 years to help cavemen to discover fire.

□ Tardis: Time And Relative Dimensions In Space.

□ This year, 24 new *Dr Who* novels, six videos/DVDs of old adventures, 17 CDs of new adventures and 13 issues of the official magazine were released.

□ As well as the Daleks, the Doctor's deadly foes included the Cybermen, Sea Devils, the Sontarans, giant maggots, Quarks, Ogrons and the Kandyman.