

RED WHITE AND WHO

THE STORY OF DOCTOR WHO IN AMERICA

FOREWORD BY
GARY RUSSELL



STEVEN WARREN HILL

& JENNIFER ADAMS KELLEY, NICHOLAS SEIDLER,
WITH JANINE FENNICK

AND ROBERT WARNOCK
AND JOHN LAVALIE

SAMPLE
CHAPTER

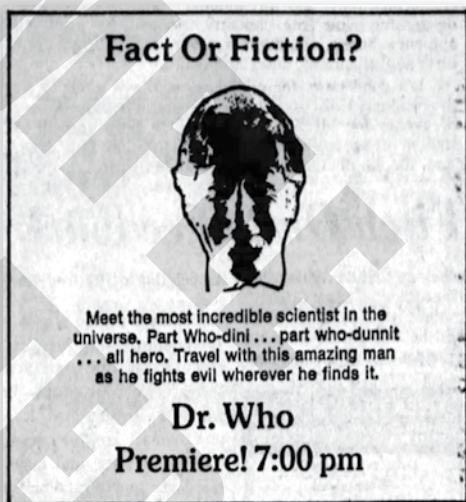
CHAPTER 4 THE DOCTOR ABROAD

ONCE THE TARDIS completed its first materialization in Philadelphia, the Doctor hopped around the country making regional debuts one after another. The second station to debut *Doctor Who* in America was WFTV, channel 9 in Orlando, Florida. WFTV was an ABC affiliate which began with “Doctor Who and the Silurians” on September 15, 1972. Phoenix, Arizona, followed, on CBS affiliate KPHO, channel 5. KPHO Viewers were first introduced to Jon Pertwee as the Doctor on Saturday, September 23, 1972.

Interestingly, American television station number four to air the show was KGTF, channel 12 in Guam, an American island territory located in the Pacific Ocean north of Papua New Guinea. Guam’s screenings began on November 27, 1972, and it is possible that their broadcast tapes were then sent on to the Philippines, which began airing *Doctor Who* in 1976 after Guam’s broadcasts had come to an end.

The fifth American station known to air *Doctor Who* was probably WTOP, channel 9 in Washington, District of Columbia, a CBS affiliate. Television listings for December 4, 1972 indicate that the show was starting to air on weekday afternoons (4:00 pm Eastern time) beginning with “The Mind of Evil”. Oddly, though, the show was nowhere to be found in television listings the following week. It did not reappear until the station aired “Doctor Who and the Silurians” beginning on June 4, 1973, and it is not certain that the show aired at all before that, even for the week it was in the listings. Another station also started its run on June 4, 1973— Anchorage, Alaska’s KIMO channel 13 (ABC).

People in Jacksonville, Florida met the Doctor on July 16, 1973, when they tuned to WJXT channel 4, a local CBS affiliate. A listing for *Doctor Who* appeared in *TV Guide*’s schedule for Miami’s WPLG channel 10 on September 8, 1973, but no other listings have been found before or after it and it is possible that the listing was a mistake. The Doctor then went



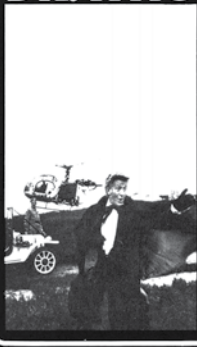
Above, a few extra column inches for a display ad, and right, an unusually indecisive

television listing for the debut in Florida on September 15, 1972. *The Orlando Sentinel*.

- 7:00
- ② To Tell the Truth (C)
 - ③ High School Social Studies
 - ④ Dragnet (C) (R)
 - ⑤ Truth or Consequences (C)
 - ⑧ What's My Line? (C)
 - ⑨ Dr. Who? (C)
 - ⑩ Hee Haw (C)
 - ⑫ I Love Lucy (R)
 - ⑬ Walter Cronkite (C)

DR. WHO 72 SCIENCE FICTION
HALF HOURS
FIRST-RUN/COLOR

"Downright campy," says The Philadelphia Inquirer
With a proven track record for delivering not only children but *adults* as well (ARB)
All-family programming that will play effectively in a variety of time periods—3:30 to 7:00 o'clock and including weekends
For stripping or once-a-week
Produced by BBC-TV



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WE INTERRUPT OUR PROGRAMS TO BRING YOU THE FOLLOWING COMMERCIAL MESSAGE:

It's important for you to have these programs on your station. Why? Because they deliver audiences, big ratings and are highly commercial—attracting national, regional and local sponsors. Because they project an excellent image of your station. Because...frankly, if you want more reasons, backed by impressive case histories, just call us.

AND NOW WE RETURN YOU TO OUR PROGRAMS.



BE SURE TO VISIT US AT THE NAB, SUITE G-100, SHOREHAM HOTEL

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More typical Time-Life Films ads aimed at the television market via *Broadcasting Magazine*, circa 1972.

west, making his next debut on Tucson, Arizona's KVOA, channel 4 (NBC affiliate) on September 21, 1973, continuing on Friday nights at 7:00 pm Mountain time. The very next day, Saturday, September 22, 1973, *Doctor Who* debuted on KRON, channel 4 (NBC affiliate) in San Francisco, California, at 6:30 pm Pacific time.

Bear in mind that as these things were happening, Public Television was still suffering growing pains. The Corporation for Public Broadcasting was just five years old, PBS itself was only three, and the governing bodies were still working out how things would and should work together, all the way up to President Nixon, who was concerned about providing federal funding for a broadcaster who might then transmit viewpoints that opposed his administration. Many of those involved felt that the policy goals originally set in 1967 were not being met, and there was some personnel turnover—CPB chairman Thomas B. Curtis resigned his post on April 16, 1973, citing the inability of all parties to come to any agreements.

PBS was by no means stable yet, but PBS stations did not figure largely into *Doctor Who's* history during this first wave of broadcast sales, and the series did not air on

any PBS stations until 1974. Iowa Public Television, a statewide network of seven UHF and two VHF stations (KBIN, KQIN, KDIN, KTIN, KIIN, KYIN, KHIN, K SIN, and KRIN), was the first Public Television outlet for the show, beginning on April 6, 1974 with "The Ambassadors of Death."

This "first wave" of American sales (1972 through early 1978) eventually comprised 27 television stations across the country. The remaining markets: Four stations comprising the Nebraska Television Network (all ABC affiliates: KHPL, KHOL, KCNA, KSNB) starting on June 30, 1975; KCET (PBS) in Los Angeles, California, beginning on July 1, 1975 with "Doctor Who and the Silurians"; WTTW (PBS) in Chicago, Illinois, beginning on September 29, 1975 with "The Mutants"; WGBH (PBS, VHF channel 2) in Boston, Massachusetts, began on January 5, 1976 with "Doctor Who and the Silurians" but their airings were moved to sister station WGBX (UHF channel 44) on October 12, 1976. The Boston Globe television listing for WGBH's premiere read "Sci-fi serial about Time Lord who defends earth against every incredible menace BBC special effects people can dream up." Next came WVIA (PBS channel 44) in Scranton, Pennsylvania, beginning on July 6, 1977 with "Doctor Who and the Silurians"; and WNED (PBS channel 17) in Buffalo, New York, beginning on October 11, 1977 with "Doctor Who and the Silurians." One more station aired the "first wave" package— a cable television channel called Qube (see next chapter).

Sales to 16 broadcasting groups (a total of 28 stations) hardly made the

10 I'VE GOT A SECRET (C)
 17 THE FRENCH CHEF
 17 DR. WHO
 "A Colony In Space." When Dr. Who begins to find out too much, a giant lizard is sent to find him.
 20 DRAGNET (C)

WEDNESDAY
 COPYRIGHT © 1972 T.V. DATA. INC.
September 13, 1972
EVENING

6:00 3 6 8 10 NEWS (C)
 12 EYE ON DELAWARE
 17 GOMER PYLE U.S.M.C. (C)
 "Grandma Pyle, Fortune Teller"
 20 PLEASE DON'T EAT THE DA
 "A Matter of Concentration"
 27 SESAME STREET (C)
 45 GILLIGAN'S ISLAND
 48 8 NBC NIGHTLY NEWS (C)
 3 8 ABC NEWS WITH SMITH, I
 6 WHAT'S NEW? (C)
 12 THE HIGH CHAPARRAL (C)
 17 "A Joyful Noise"
 20 I DREAM OF JEANNIE (C)
 "The Strongest Man In the W
 45 STAR TREK (C)
 "Miri"
 7:00 3 WHAT'S MY LINE? (C)
 8 TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCE
 8 CBS NEWS—WALTER C
 10 10 HODGEPOLICE
 17 "Wood Carving"
 20 THAT GIRL (C)
 "Kimono My House"
 7:30 3 THE MOUSE FACTOR
 3 THE PRICE IS RIGHT
 3 HOGAN'S HEROES (C)
 "Operation Briefcase"
 10 I'VE GOT A SECRET
 12 GUITAR, GUITAR (C)
 17 DR. WHO
 "The Inferno." The Doctor
 the TARDIS console hits
 where old friends seem deadly enemies.

9:00 HELLO WORLD
 9:30 FLIPPER
 10:00 HIGHWAY PATROL
 10:30 WORLD BEYOND
 "THE TERRORNAUTS"
 Science Fiction
 12:00 TARZAN THEATRE
 2:00 JOHN WAYNE THEATRE
 "FLYING LEATHERNECKS"
 4:00 DEATH VALLEY DAYS
 4:00 THRILLER
 Boris Karloff Hosts
 "THE GRIM REAPER"
 5:30 DR. WHO
 Science Fiction
 6:00 HEE HAW
 Guest: Patti Page
 7:00 BUCK OWENS

8:00 TV 5 CHILLER
 Vincent Price,
 John Kerr
 "THE PIT AND
 THE PENDULUM"
 Edgar Allan Poe's
 Horror Tale

Assortment of Doctor Who TV listings from September and October 1972.

Clockwise from top left, *The Pottstown Mercury*, *The Arizona Republic*, and *The Delaware County Daily Times*.

WTTW/11

ON 11 MONDAY

February

WTTW Channel 11

2

10:00 **Dr. Who** Two hundred million years ago, a race of intelligent reptiles ruled the earth. Now they're back from hibernation to reclaim it. That's the premise of the newest **Dr. Who** science fiction adventure, "The Silurians." The first three episodes air from 10:00 to 11:30 tonight, the concluding four from 10:00 to midnight tomorrow. Sit back and enjoy the fantastic world of "The Silurians."

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A listing for *Doctor Who* in Chicago's WTTW subscriber magazine *Dial*, from February 1976.

series a runaway success. *Doctor Who* aired in some of the biggest television markets in the country (seven of the top 20 most populated US cities per the 1980 census), but few people were watching, and those that did suffered from apparent indifference from the broadcasters, who experimented with different time slots and methods of airing the show. WTTW in Chicago, for example, began airing the show in original episodic format at 6:30 pm on weeknights. Within six months, it vanished from the schedule, only to reappear after several weeks as special airings on Mondays and Tuesdays at 10:00 pm in "split omnibus" format (generally, episodes 1-3 of a serial one night, episodes 4-6 or 7 the next night). This schedule was maintained for four months, airing one story the first week of every month. Then the show vanished again for seven weeks. Next came two omnibus (often called "movie format") airings, one in June 1976 ("Day of the Daleks"), the next in September 1976 ("The Claws of Axos," notable for

the fact that Chicago fan Larry Charet videotaped it on a brand new consumer VCR purchased just three days before the first episode aired). After six more months of nothing, WTTW's last push went back to the original episode format for an airing of "Terror of the Autons" in March 1977. It would be nearly three years before Chicago would see more *Doctor Who* after that.

The "first wave" was ultimately considered a failure. Behind the scenes, Peter Robeck was replaced at Time-Life Films in late 1973 by new president Bruce Paisner, due to the company still having turned no profits and holding a library of unsold programming. Apparently the perception of failure permeated enough that it influenced the way the show would be marketed in the next sales push, which came in 1978. Did the show make any impact at all in the US between 1972 and 1977? It certainly did— there are a number of fans today who credit the "first wave" as their introduction to *Doctor Who*. And you can thank the gadget-

THE IMPORTANCE OF EARNEST VIDEOTAPE TRADING

THE MOST FAMOUSLY traded tape in the annals of American fan history is “The Ambassadors of Death.” Hundreds of people had a second-, third-, fourth-generation (or worse) duplication of the same original tape. In 1977, Chicago fan Larry Charet, who had purchased a Sony Betamax VCR in September 1976 on the day they first went on sale in his city, was a subscriber to *The Videophiles Newsletter*. The newsletter was a typewritten, photocopied affair with a circulation of about thirty, created in September 1976 by Jim Lowe in Florida for enthusiasts of home videotaping in its earliest days. Because of his newsletter, Lowe was subpoenaed in February 1977 for “Sony Corp. of America v. Universal City Studios, 464 U.S. 417 (1984),” now known to history as the landmark “Betamax Case.” The long-running case eventually went to the United States Supreme Court, which found in favor of Sony and held that a company was not liable for creating technology that some customers may use for copyright infringing purposes, so long as that technology is capable of substantial non-infringing uses.

Charet, who was one of the co-founders of the first Chicago Comicon with legendary comic book collector/dealer Joe Sarno, first saw televised *Doctor Who* in Australia while on R&R from the Vietnam War (“The War Games” episode ten) and had seen the Dalek films broadcast on WFLD in 1969. He wanted to acquire episodes for his collection. Chicago’s WTTW was airing *Doctor Who* but from the day Charet’s VCR was installed they only aired two more Jon Pertwee stories (“The Claws of Axos” and “Terror of the Autons”), so he reached out to other collectors via the newsletter. He made a connection with fellow collector and newsletter subscriber Alan Walker in Toronto. Walker wasn’t offering *Doctor Who*— he was seeking tapes of series four of *The Avengers*— but he had access to *Doctor Who* for trading purposes. Walker was receiving WNED from Buffalo, New York via cable, and taped “The Ambassadors of Death” in November 1977. To trade Walker for the tape, Charet needed to supply Walker’s desired episodes of *The Avengers*, which wasn’t airing in Chicago. Charet found another source: “I was getting *The Avengers* from Cleveland and trading them to this guy [Walker] for *Doctor Who*.” Charet wound up with Walker’s first generation tape of all seven episodes of “The Ambassadors of Death” in original color. Technically



Larry Charet’s original Betamax videotape recordings of *Doctor Who* from the late 1970s.



Famous Monsters of Filmland #126, July 1976, presents the magazine's second major feature on Doctor Who.

loving Third Doctor for one unexpected appearance in one of America's biggest magazines: the long-running (since January 1902) *Popular Mechanics* for a time ran a regular feature called "It's New Now" showcasing the "latest products and developments." In the February 1974 issue, those developments included such things as a Grasp-all tool holder, reflective stickers, a "space clock," the brand new Technics SL-1200 turntable (which today is arguably the most popular turntable ever made), and an unusual looking car, subtitled "TV car of the future shows up in real life," with Jon Pertwee's smiling face pictured behind the wheel of what we know as the Whomobile:

If this futuristic sports car looks as if it came straight out of a science fiction TV show, it did. It was built for British actor Jon Pertwee who plays Dr. Who, a time-traveling scientist in a popular BBC TV adventure series. Pertwee uses the car both on screen and off, driving it jauntily around the streets of London. Fully operational, the far-out finned vehicle is powered by an Imp engine, can do 100 mph and has a built-in TV set— so Pertwee can watch himself on TV.

the tape couldn't be called "off-air" as it was taped from a cable television transmission, and the signal quality was apparently poor, resulting in a huge variance in the picture's color. At times, there was no color at all; at other times the color was good; at many times the color was in a herringbone pattern only.

Charet's original tape was duplicated for his trading contacts; people like Tom Licht, Gordon Lurie, Tom Lundie, Bob Weinberg, and Larry Wauchop were among those for whom John Nathan-Turner had a special name. "JN-T used to call me 'the video pirate,'" notes Charet. Some of these fans managed to get PAL copies of rare episodes from a source in the UK, becoming the American wellspring for essentially all of the copies eventually circulating in the country while they were still unaired. Every subsequent duplication of a videotape results in loss of picture quality, so anyone who was, say, a friend of a friend of Tom Licht's would get a fourth-generation dub that was approaching unwatchability (exacerbated by the already poor signal in the first-generation tape).

But for approximately fifteen years the "Color Ambassadors" tape circulated widely despite its problems, even more so as new fans became aware that the BBC archive only held the serial's episodes two through seven in black and white.

Then in 1992, a team of BBC engineers (who would eventually become known as the Restoration Team) were able to take the color signal from an NTSC Betamax recording of "The Dæmons" and mix it with the black and white masters held in the BBC Film and Videotape Library to create a new color version of the serial for its commercial VHS release. "The Dæmons" was recorded off KCET (Los Angeles) on November 19, 1977, by a friend of Ian Levine's, after Levine sent him the money to rent a Betamax VCR with which to make the recording. A gap in the recording (during which time the tapes were switched) was filled from a different American off-air recording supplied by UK fan Keith Hunter. (A brand new restoration was completed for the 2012 DVD release using the same color source.) The success of the process led to the team's Ralph Montagu requesting funding for similar color restoration to three more serials including "Doctor Who and the Silurians" and "The Ambassadors of Death." Funding for the project was approved, coming from the BBC Film and Videotape Library, BBC Home Video, and BBC Enterprises Programme Sales. "Doctor Who and the Silurians" received its treatment not long after "The Dæmons" in the early 1990s, again using an American off-air recording. At least one brief segment had to be computer-colored due to edits in the American broadcast. For these computer colorizations, the Restoration Team used the US company American Film Technologies in North Hollywood, California, the largest company of its kind at the time. For "The Ambassadors of Death," the team borrowed Charet's original tape (among other potential sources) and converted it to PAL, but the poor quality of the color signal on the original NTSC tape of the serial made the process unworkable, prompting them to set "Ambassadors" aside for a whole ten years before

attempting to work on it.

The final home video master of the seven-part serial was delivered in 2002 with “just over half the story now presented in colour,” according to team member Jonathan Wood (the actual total is 55%). Interestingly, it wasn’t only the color signal that was used from the NTSC recording...the audio on the home video release came from it as well because, as Wood explains, “I discovered when switching the audio monitoring between the optical sound and the Betamax recordings that apart from some slight distortion in places the Beta tapes sounded a lot better!”

Similarly, Charet’s own off-air recording of “Terror of the Autons” was used by the BBC’s Restoration Team for their work on the story’s DVD release—the audio heard on the DVD in episodes one and two originate largely from that Betamax tape recording from March 1977— like the audio for “The Ambassadors of Death,” the sound on the tape was considered the best available for those two episodes.

Why didn’t Charet get more episodes of *Doctor Who* from Alan Walker, such as “The Mind of Evil” which aired some time after “The Ambassadors of Death?” “His machine went out [stopped working] and I didn’t get “The Mind of Evil.” I would have gotten it if his machine hadn’t gone out,” laments Charet. “It’s hard to believe that nobody anywhere taped “The Mind of Evil.” And for a year, Beta machines existed while Pertwees were still running in these cities.”

Charet helped organize, finance, and run some early Chicago *Doctor Who* conventions, and through his comic book store was one of the first dealers of *Who* merchandise. Just as fandom began to explode in the early 1980s, his store carried as many things as he could get his hands on, including Target novelizations before there was a North American distributor for them. Already a fan for years by then, Charet loved seeing the sudden interest in the show. Today he feels a bit wistful about it all. “Back then, I was doing a lot of things that were ahead of their time, like episode guides, all kinds of things that people did later on. Now I feel like it’s passed me by.”

Speaking of futuristic designs, by the time the Pertwee episode airings were dwindling down to nothing, the whole world was about to have its eyes opened wide by a futuristic movie that was paradoxically described as taking place “a long time ago...”

SAMPLE
CHAPTER

“This is genuinely fascinating stuff...a warm, dryly caustic in places, look at the way the show was viewed, received, influenced by and ultimately loved by the American audience...you’ve earned this book.”

—GARY RUSSELL, from his foreword

Every American *DOCTOR WHO* fan has a story to tell, and fans of the iconic British television show love to tell stories. All of them, from the casual to the obsessed, will happily regale others with the tale of how and when they discovered the greatest science fiction media franchise ever. Most early American fans first met the Doctor in the early 1980s, nearly twenty years after the show began in 1963...but the story of *DOCTOR WHO* in America—a complex and fascinating journey into pop culture—stretches much further back.

In this book, you’ll find the rich history of everything *DOCTOR WHO* in the USA—from *American TV Guide* listings of Canadian broadcasts in 1965, through the Dalek movies, the early struggles of the Public Broadcasting System, the BBC sales attempts, the official debut on American television in 1972, the explosion in popularity among US viewers in 1979, the twentieth anniversary celebration in 1983, the conventions, the books, the merchandise, the fan clubs, the video releases, the games, the USA Tour, and every imaginable fan activity including cosplay, fan films and audios, PBS pledge drive volunteering, websites, podcasts, and much more, to the new heights of success, popularity, and fandom participation in the 21st century. It’s an enlightening and entertaining journey for everyone who admires *DOCTOR WHO*...and not just for American fans, but devotees around the globe.

Think you know everything there was to know about our favorite Time Lord and his history? Get ready to discover a “New New World” in *RED WHITE AND WHO: THE STORY OF DOCTOR WHO IN AMERICA!*

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