



Doctor Who : the episode guide

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The longest running science fiction television show, with a cult following on a par with Star Trek, the story of *Doctor Who* is the story of British television over the past four decades. Every taste is catered for in the world of *Who*, and this guide covers every shocking revelation and melodramatic cliffhanger, every heartache and death, as well as the liberal doses of humor—both intentional and otherwise. With an informative introductory essay, each Doctor's era is put under the microscope with facts and opinions on all the stories. An in-depth reference section details further reading, fascinating and bizarre *Doctor Who* websites, and a short history of spin-off stories and merchandising.

Doctor Who : the episode guide Details

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From Reader Review Doctor Who : the episode guide for online ebook

Nadine says

Useful to settle arguments

David says

A very useful episode guide with solid criticism.

2016: Three years later and I'm still going back to this sweet little book. This is the single best Doctor Who reference book I've come across. Not that I've looked at every single competing guide but it is the best in my opinion. Love this book!!

If you're looking for a gift for a Dr Who fan - this is a great choice.

Jacqueline O. says

When I found this book, I was so excited. Finally, an updated *Doctor Who* episode guide and in hardcover! But the book is awful! It fails to point out on the back or in the book's description that this is an **opinionated** guide to *Doctor Who* and the opinion of the author is he doesn't like it very much!

Not only does Campbell not like *Doctor Who*, he really doesn't get it. I'm not going to insist the show is perfect... far from it, it's had it's issues, and there are stories and episodes that are just plain bad. But Campbell seems to relish ripping up many of the series **best** episodes, while extolling many of the **worst** ones, such as "The Gunfighters" as the best TV has to offer? "The Gunfighters", Really? May you be cursed with "The Ballad of Jonny Ringo" in your head for years. Campbell also praises "Love and Monsters" one of the few David Tennant episodes that I really hate, and having seen it twice, have no desire to **ever** watch again.

However, this book even fails as an episode guide. The summaries are too short, frequently only a single sentence. The cast lists for each story are incomplete. And, again, I could have done without the commentary. Completely.

Save your money and skip this book. Try to find Jean-Marc Lofficier's *Doctor Who The Programme Guide* instead, it's out of date, but at least it's accurate and has the minimum of annoying, opinionated, ridiculous commentary.

Read this instead: <http://www.goodreads.com/book/show/30...>

Andy Hickman says

Mark Campbell, *Doctor Who: The Complete Guide* (London: Robinson, 2010)

This book provides a thorough catalogue of every Dr Who episode, film and spin-off series. Handy book however I was somewhat surprised by the pessimist criticism that opens the book.

"Torchwood", "The Sarah Jane Adventures", "K-9", etc, I had no idea these spin-off TV shows existed. There's a whole Whovian universe out there.

A comment I liked in the 'Afterword':

"'Doctor Who' isn't about special effects. 'An Unearthly Child' (1) had some amazing ones for its time but, in telling a beautifully paced small-scale story with characters whom one could instantly empathise, it provided the perfect template for all future adventures. Reality mattered. This was not airy-fairy fantasy or nuts-and-bolts hard SF. This was a human story set in a credible alternate world." (page 204)

"It's still all about the people." (page 205)

"... the 2000s series has rarely touched politics, preferring instead to highlight spiritual and religious themes: 'The Impossible Planet' / 'The Satan Pit' (174), 'Gridlock' (181), 'HumanNature' / 'The Family of Blood' (185). Christian imagery features heavily in 'Father's Day' (163), 'Blink' (186) and 'Voyage of the Damned' (188)." (page 206)

Interesting to read that Peter Cushing (whose best-known roles outside the Hammer productions include Grand Moff Tarkin in 'Star Wars' (1977) was Dr. Who in "Dr. Who and the Daleks" (1965) and "Daleks – Invasion Earth: 2150 A.D." (1966).
(pages 235-236)

Whereas there are some episodes considered 'the best' by other people, Campbell has little to admire about giving them a low rating, e.g.

William Hartnell's THE DALEK INVASION OF EARTH (1965), p12; and THE MEDDLING MONK (1965), p17

Sylvester McCoy's THE CURSE OF FENRIC (1989), p146-7

David Tennant's LOVE AND MONSTERS (2006), p166

Matt Smith's THE BEAST BELOW (2010), p194-195

Still, based on Campbell's reviews I plan to track down and watch:

Patrick Troughton's TOMB OF THE CYBERMEN (1967)

John Pertwee's THE GREEN DEATH (1973), p62-3

Tom Baker's GENESIS OF THE DALEKS (1975), p71-72; THE BRAIN OF MORBIS (1976) p75-76; THE SEEDS OF DOOM (1976), p76-77; and THE ROBOTS OF DEATH (1977), p82

Peter Davidson/Colin Baker's THE CAVES OF ANDROZANI (1984), p124

David Tennant's THE GIRL IN THE FIREPLACE (2006), p163-164; BLINK (2007), p176; and MIDNIGHT (2008), p186

THE FIRES OF POMPEII with Peter Capaldi as Caecilius (2008), p182

Matt Smith's THE ELEVENTH HOUR (2010), p193-194

Steven says

A book by a Doctor Who fan for Doctor Who fans—but that's about it. It's a bare-bones examination of the series from William Hartnell's debut in 1963 through Matt Smith's next-to-last season in 2012, but unless you're a dyed-in-the-wool Whovian there isn't much here for a novice viewer to gain insight to the popularity of the long-running series.

Diane Heath says

Rather than a look at the actors, this is a list of episodes with a one or two sentence synopsis. It manages to reduce any interest in Dr Who to negligible levels.

Warreni says

Campbell's book is surprisingly shallow. The synopses of the televised productions are thin, usually encompassing 1-2 sentences at most and his individual reviews are equally as short. The reviews of the extensive library of novels consist simply of a rating from 1-10. Speaking of the this numerical rating scale, I can't remember seeing any 1/10s but the book is loaded with 10/10s. It's as though no one ever told him that when you overuse something it tends to lose its meaning.

Scott says

A good general introductory guide to Doctor Who with capsule reviews for all the tv stories and brief rankings for the various audio dramas, novels and spin-offs.

A quick read but a good one.

Some of Campbell's reviews are likely to inspire discussion (he scores 7/10 for both *The Underwater Menace* and *The Power of the Daleks* and is generally very dismissive of the Troighton era generally.)

His overt enthusiasm for the new version of the series is also a little disheartening.

Otherwyrld says

In an age of instant internet access, an episode guide to a TV series would have to be something pretty special - a lavish coffee table book perhaps, or a really witty personal guide.

This is not that book.

At first glance it looks nice enough. An attractive hardback book with a nice cover. It's only when you delve inside that you start getting that sinking feeling. For a start, the paper used for the internal pages is really poor quality and there are no photographs whatsoever, which is pretty bad for a book that costs £12.99. It's only when you look at the actual content that you realise you've been sold a lemon, because the "contents" for each serial/episode consists of less than half a page for each one with a cast list, a **very** brief description of the story, and a few lines describing what the author thought of it. And that's all you get - I could get more information from a Wikipedia entry.

The kicker though is that this was produced in 2010, when such books are totally unnecessary thanks to the aforementioned internet. I can only see this kind of book ever being produced again if the internet gets closed down (or bought out by the big companies and commercialised until the average user is priced out of the market, which could still happen). There is a foreword by Kim Newman, who I'm told is a good author but has bugger all to do with Doctor Who as far as I can see. He has the cheek to say that this copy is unlikely to be the last edition of [this] useful little book. Sorry Kim, wrong **WRONG WRONG**

I feel I am being really generous with a 2 star rating, it's 1 1/2 stars at best.

Ben Duff says

Far, far, FAR too opinionated. When it comes to the classic episodes he rates the Gunfighters 10/10 and rates the Ice Warriors 6/10. Mr Campbell obviously has little knowledge or like for the larger Doctor Who universe and seems to rate the episodes more or less on how annoying the companions were and how believable they seemed. Also, he writes page after page on New Who episodes yet sometimes only writes a sentence on Classics. For a complete guide this is seriously lacking.

Jim says

i'm dissappointed, but probably my own fault for not reading a better description.
the index isn't much help, the episodes are reviewed, not described, thought it would have episode guides to Torchwood, Sarah Jane adventures etc - it doesn't. published by "pocket essentials" it is pocket size only if you wear Tom Baker's coat. thought there would be check lists for the episodes and main characters that i could refer to and check off. i think the earlier editions are probably better, so find a copy in a second-hand bookstore if you have to have it.

Nicol says

This guide goes over every episode - detailing the actors, products, writers, etc. It gives a one to two sentence summary of the episode then hands down a judgement on the quality of acting, plot and writing. It is a nice reference guide if you want to quickly remember which actor played who in what episode or season - other than that this is not the in depth guide to give you details about each episode or season.

Stuart Hill says

Essentially an updated version of the old Doctor Who programme guides by Jean-Marc Lofficier this is a pretty slight effort. It mostly consists of a bare bones listing of cast and crew for each story, a summary of what the serial was about, a few production details and the author's opinions on whether it was any good or not alongside marks out of 10.

It's hard to tell who the intended audience for this book is; the information provided is unlikely to be unfamiliar to those who have been following the show for a long time and relative newcomers will find the summaries far too brief (they mostly consist of one-liners) to enable them to come to any conclusion about what the stories were about and their distinguishing aspects.

Alongside the episodes guide there are a few other sections which are even more perfunctory; the audio and book releases parts are just lists of each with scores awarded by the author and no further information such as plot summaries or author biographies. The books section also ignores the many novelisations which were published and is purely devoted to original fiction based on the whoniverse. Although there is an index it only covers episode titles and famous monsters featured in the show so if you fancy looking up the work of a particular, actor, writer or director within the show, forget it. Another curious omission is that although DVD releases are mentioned in each summary there are no reviews of them which would seem valid considering they contain additional material such as making of documentaries etc.

The most enjoyable part of the book was Campbell's opinions on each story which are occasionally contentious, perhaps deliberately so in order that they didn't amount to a collection of 'received wisdom' on each show. Whether you agree with the verdicts given or not it would be hard not to find some entertainment in a book which contains lines like: "With the exception of the giant prawn, the effects are generally top-notch".

The publication date of 2010 means that coverage goes up to Matt Smith's first season, the Blu Ray releases of Spearhead from Space and the Dalek movies from the 60s aren't included and the missing episode guide is thankfully outdated.

Overall, calling the book The Complete Guide seems misleading as there is so much missing. There isn't an explanation of how the programme was originally created for example. As far as it goes the book was acceptable but there are certainly better books available on the show.

Ole Imsen says

This is a brilliant little guide to Doctor Who. I say little, but it does cover every television appearance up to the end of season five. And it also has a list of every CD and book appearance up to 2009. Add to that the list of missing episodes and a reference list that includes both books and the Internet, and you get a pretty comprehensive guide to most things about Doctor Who.

For every TV episode Campbell gives a list of the cast and crew, a(very) brief description of the episode, some observations and finally his own verdict on the episode in question.

I found this to be a great format for this kind of guide. Although every episode gets only a brief mention, it is more than enough for quick reference. And the observations are almost always fascinating, and includes such information as where it was filmed and often information on cut scenes etc.

Campbell includes his own verdict on each of the episodes and adds a score of 1-10. This part is not really necessary, but it works well. But I must say I did not always agree with Campbell, but that is to be expected -it is after all his personal opinion.

As a quick reference guide this works wonderfully. I had already checked out several episodes I saw mentioned when I started reading the whole thing for this review. There is lots of information here, and I'm sure almost anyone will learn something new by reading it.

I also found that if you want a quick overview of what an episode is about this book beats the Internet for speed. -Yes, I tried it.

The lack of any pictures may be a turn off for some, but I don't think it should be. The small format (B-format paperback) makes it very handy to have near by, and the information is excellent.

This book should be present in every Doctor Who fan's library. Whether you have come to the series after the turn of the millennium or you have followed it since the beginning.

This review was originally published on my blog: <http://weirdmage.blogspot.com>

Daniel Kukwa says

Another Doctor Who book where opinions find no middle ground. Many people seem to be put off by it, but I find Mark Campbell's book a solid, readable, quick-guide that works on the lines of a more straightforward/non-humorous version of "The Discontinuity Guide". Other reviewers complain about Campbell's critique...but they're no worse and no less varied than anyone else's analysis. I don't agree with every one of his opinions on each story...but as the Doctor himself would say, that's democracy for you.
