Amanda Potter, "Entry on: The Sarah Jane Adventures: Eye of the Gorgon by Phil Ford", peer-reviewed by Susan Deacy and Elżbieta Olechowska. Our Mythical Childhood Survey (Warsaw: University of Warsaw, 2018). Link: http://omc.obta.al.uw.edu.pl/myth-survey/item/550. Entry version as of November 03, 2026.

Phil Ford

The Sarah Jane Adventures: Eye of the Gorgon

United Kingdom (2007)

TAGS: Gorgon(s) Medusa Perseus





We are still trying to obtain permission for posting the original cover.

General information	
Title of the work	The Sarah Jane Adventures: Eye of the Gorgon
Country of the First Edition	United Kingdom
Country/countries of popularity	United Kingdom
Original Language	English
First Edition Date	2007
First Edition Details	Phil Ford, *The Sarah Jane Adventures: Eye of the Gorgon.* London: Penguin, 2007, 128 pp.
ISBN	9781405903998
Official Website	Official BBC website (accessed: October 17, 2018)
Genre	Adaptations, Fantasy fiction, Illustrated works, Novels
Target Audience	Children (Children's Science Fiction television novelization, with large print and colour photographs from the television episodes)
Author of the Entry	Amanda Potter, Open University, amanda.potter@caramanda.co.uk
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This Project has received funding from the European Research Council (ERC) under the European Union's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme under grant agreement No 681202, *Our Mythical Childhood… The Reception of Classical Antiquity in Children's and Young Adults' Culture in Response to Regional and Global Challenges*, ERC Consolidator Grant (2016–2021), led by Prof. Katarzyna Marciniak, Faculty of "Artes Liberales" of the University of Warsaw.

Creators



Phil Ford , b. 1950
(Author, Scriptwriter)

Phil Ford is a British television writer who has written episodes for a number of series for adults and children. From 1997 he worked on a number of series aimed at adults for ITV including soap opera *Coronation Street* and drama series *The Bill* and *Bad Girls*. His first work on science fiction for children was the animated ITV series *Gerry Anderson's New Captain Scarlett* in 2005, prior to working on *Doctor Who*, *The Sarah Jane Adventures* and *Wizards vs Aliens* for the BBC, alongside Russell T. Davies. He has written novelizations of three of his *Sarah Jane* television episodes, *Eye of the Gorgon*, *Day of the Clown* and *The Lost Boy*, and *The Sarah Jane Adventures Quiz Book* – all published by Penguin for BBC Children's Books – and an original *Torchwood* book, *Skypoint*. He also created the *Doctor Who Adventure Games*, computer games linked to the series. Ford describes himself on Twitter as "Screenwriter. A lot of sci-fi and fantasy. I admit it, I like to scare people and make them cry" (accessed: July 3, 2018).

Bio prepared by Amanda Potter, Open University, amanda.potter@caramanda.co.uk

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Additional information

Summary

[See episodes summary]

A primary difference from the episodes is how information about the Gorgon is introduced. In the episode,s Sarah Jane and Maria read a book about Greek mythology from Sarah Jane's bookshelf, but in the novelization they first discuss this in the car (without the aid of a book) and then Sarah Jane reads from "an elaborate volume on Greek Mythology" which she finds when she is locked in in the Abbey library by the nuns. This allows more information to be provided in the novelization on the story of Perseus and Medusa, than is provided in the episodes.

Analysis

Following the two television episodes *Eye of the Gorgon* parts 1 and 2, the novelization brings the mythological creatures (the Gorgons) into the modern world, explaining that they are actually aliens from another planet. As a novelization rather than a separate novel, the story is adapted from the television episode content, and follows the plot closely. It is aimed primarily at children who have watched the series. It allows children who have seen these particular episodes to revisit the story in more detail. However, the novelization can stand alone, and does not rely on information from the episodes to aid understanding. Therefore, children who are interested in the series but have not seen these particular episodes would also be part of the target market,

The novelization provides more background about the mythical characters than the television episodes, so a fuller version of the story of Perseus is included, In the television episode, Sarah Jane tells Maria that "Perseus killed Medusa as a challenge", but in the book readers are told that King Polydectes sent Perseus to kill Medusa and bring back her head as a wedding present, as he was forcing Perseus' mother to marry him, and that Perseus obtains a sword and shield from the gods. Perseus uses the shield as a mirror to allow him to kill Medusa without being turned to stone, and on his return uses Medusa's head to turn Polydectes to stone. Also, readers learn that the ancient Greeks had poets "like Homer" instead of news reporters, and that the origins of stories about monsters could be encounters with aliens, which is a familiar trope in science fiction generally,

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	including *Doctor Who*. As the novelization is aimed at children rather than adults this knowledge is aimed at the child readers. Like the episodes, the book does not draw on any ancient sources, and does not require any knowledge of Greek mythology, as the story of Perseus and Medusa is explained sufficiently to allow readers to connect the polished shield of Perseus with Bea's mirror. Homer is mentioned as a Greek poet, but no further information about him is given.
Classical, Mythological, Traditional Motifs, Characters, and Concepts	Gorgon(s) Medusa Perseus
Other Motifs, Figures, and Concepts Relevant for Children and Youth Culture	Child, children Family Friendship Knowledge Learning Parents (and children)
Further Reading	Burge, Anthony, Jessica Burke and Kristine Larsen, eds., *The Mythical Dimensions of Doctor Who* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing, 2010. Butler, David, ed., *Time and Relative Dissertations in Space: Critical Perspectives on Doctor Who*, Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2007. Garner, Ross P., Melissa Beattie and Una McCormack, eds., *Impossible Worlds, Impossible Things: Cultural Perspectives on Doctor Who, Torchwood, and The Sarah Jane Adventures*, Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars, 2010. Hills, Matt, ed., *New Dimensions of Doctor Who: Adventures in Space, Time and Television*, London and New York: IB Tauris, 2013. Keen, A. G., "It's about Tempus: Greece and Rome in "classic" *Doctor*

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Who', David C. Wright, Jr. and Allan W. Austin, eds., *Space and Time: Essays on Visions of History in Science Fiction and Fantasy Television,* Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2010, 100–115.

Potter, Amanda, "Greek Myth in the Whoniverse" in Amanda Wrigley and Fiona Hobden, eds., *Broadcasting Greece: Engagements with Ancient Greece on British Radio and Television*, Edinburgh, EUP, 2018 (forthcoming).

Useful fan sites:

tardis.wikia.com (accessed: August 17, 2018).

thedoctorwhosite.co.uk (accessed: August 17, 2018).

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