



Terry Nation: The Man Who Invented the Daleks

Alwyn W. Turner

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The Daleks are one of the most iconic and fearsome creations in television history. Since their first appearance in 1963, they have simultaneously fascinated and terrified generations of children, their instant success ensuring, and sometimes eclipsing, that of Doctor Who. They sprang from the imagination of Terry Nation, a failed stand-up comic who became one of the most prolific writers for television that Britain ever produced. Survivors, his vision of a post-apocalyptic England, so haunted audiences in the Seventies that the BBC revived it over thirty years on, and Blake's 7, constantly rumored for return, endures as a cult sci-fi classic. But it is for his genocidal pepperpots that Nation is most often remembered, and on the 50th anniversary of their creation they continue to top the Saturday-night ratings. Yet while the Daleks brought him notoriety and riches, Nation played a much wider role in British broadcasting's golden age. He wrote for Spike Milligan, Frankie Howerd and an increasingly troubled Tony Hancock, and as one of the key figures behind the adventure series of the Sixties – including The Avengers, The Saint and The Persuaders! – he turned the pulp classics of his boyhood into a major British export. In *The Man Who Invented the Daleks*, acclaimed cultural historian Alwyn W. Turner, explores the curious and contested origins of Doctor Who's greatest villains, and sheds light on a strange world of ambitious young writers, producers and performers without whom British culture today would look very different.

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