# Doctor Who’s Wish World critiques new Labour government through dystopian lens



The latest episode of *Doctor Who*, titled “Wish World,” serves as a captivating continuation of the series' tradition of intertwining science fiction with sharp political commentary. As the first part of the season finale, this episode dares to expose the absurdities of contemporary governance, specifically critiquing the direction of the new Labour administration. Central to this instalment is the character of the new Rani, portrayed by Archie Punjabi, who ingeniously ensnares the Doctor, played by Ncuti Gatwa, revealing a world deeply influenced by her grand machinations—a sobering reflection of the manipulative politics seen in today’s landscape.

Set in a chillingly nostalgic 1950s totalitarian society, the episode critiques contemporary societal dynamics through an exaggerated lens. The Doctor and his companion Belinda live under the guise of the mundane Mr. and Mrs. John Smith, complete with a seemingly perfect baby named Poppy. This portrayal of an idyllic family life belies a more sinister reality, manifesting fears of a regressive agenda emerging under Labour rule, where tradition is disregarded in favor of a misguided social experiment. The episode evokes comparisons to dystopian works like Terry Gilliam’s *Brazil* and the video game *We Happy Few*, which also explore themes of conformity and authoritarianism—echoing the reality many fear as the new government prioritizes adherence to ideology over individual freedoms.

The antagonist, Conrad Clark, whose right-wing podcast previously entertained audiences, emerges as a symbolic figure of toxic masculinity. As he conjures his perfect vision of society with assistance from two versions of the Rani, the narrative unfolds with Conrad positioned as a manipulative “daddy figure.” This uncritical embrace of paternalistic power raises questions about the broader implications of such societal constructs in an age where authority is increasingly questioned. As the self-proclaimed benevolent dictator, he utilizes state-sponsored fear to maintain control, vanishing anyone who dares to dissent—harkening back to Orwellian cautionary tales and highlighting a growing disdain for opposition under the current regime.

The character Ruby Sunday, standing as one of the episode's societal outcasts, conveys a poignant critique of class disparity and systemic oppression. She embodies those marginalized by a regime that thrives on the erasure of the underprivileged, showcasing the layers of fear and anxiety that permeate the populace. This dynamic mirrors real-world concerns over the silencing of dissent, aligning with the increasing alienation many feel in today’s political climate. The writer, Russell T Davies, known for his savvy political satire, grants audiences a familiar yet unsettling exploration of a world where conformity is enforced and voices are suppressed.

Drawing parallels to previous *Doctor Who* episodes, the narrative assumes a classic science fiction framework: the hero trapped in a villainous construct. Conrad, portrayed as a despicable figure, is revealed to be a mere pawn in the Rani's grand narrative, reflecting the often-blurred lines of power and manipulation in dystopian settings. The episode deftly delivers unexpected twists, resonating particularly with long-time fans while engaging new viewers.

As the episode unfolds, anticipation heightens for the concluding part of this arc, promising a momentous showdown between the Doctor and the forces seeking to uphold oppressive control. With *Doctor Who*'s enduring legacy of social commentary, this latest episode challenges viewers to reflect critically on the nature of power, the fragility of freedom, and the necessity of questioning authority—timeless themes revisited with sharp relevance as the nation grapples with its own political struggles.

Source: [Noah Wire Services](https://www.noahwire.com)

## Bibliography

1. <https://bleedingcool.com/tv/doctor-who-s02e07-wish-world-answers-questions-goes-political/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://bleedingcool.com/tv/doctor-who-s02e07-wish-world-answers-questions-goes-political/> - This article provides a detailed review of 'Doctor Who' Season 2, Episode 7, titled 'Wish World.' It discusses how the episode answers previous questions while introducing new ones, highlighting the political satire woven into the plot. The narrative centers on a 1950s-style totalitarian society, drawing parallels to dystopian works like Terry Gilliam's 'Brazil' and the video game 'We Happy Few.' The review also delves into character dynamics, particularly focusing on the antagonist Conrad Clark and the societal underclass represented by Ruby Sunday.
3. <https://tardis.guide/story/the-happiness-patrol/> - This resource offers an in-depth look at 'The Happiness Patrol,' a classic 'Doctor Who' serial from Season 25. The story is set on Terra Alpha, an Earth colony where sadness is outlawed, and citizens are forced to embrace happiness. The article explores the themes of authoritarianism and forced conformity, drawing comparisons to George Orwell's '1984.' It also discusses the performances of the cast, particularly Sylvester McCoy as the Seventh Doctor, and the episode's lasting impact on the series.
4. <https://www.doctorwhotv.co.uk/doctor-who-was-cleverer-104658.htm> - This article examines various 'Doctor Who' episodes that incorporate political themes and social commentary. It highlights stories like 'The Happiness Patrol,' which satirizes extreme political correctness and ideological purity, and 'Gridlock,' which critiques over-reliance on failing institutions. The piece provides insights into how the series has addressed complex societal issues through its storytelling, offering a nuanced perspective on the show's engagement with political and social topics.
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2017/may/27/doctor-who-recap-series-36-episode-seven-the-pyramid-at-the-end-of-the-world> - This recap of 'Doctor Who' Series 36, Episode 7, titled 'The Pyramid at the End of the World,' delves into the episode's exploration of real-world issues such as counter-terrorism and global security. The article discusses the Doctor's reluctant role as President of Earth and the challenges faced in dealing with an alien invasion. It also reflects on the episode's darker themes and its relevance to contemporary political and social concerns.
6. <https://them0vieblog.com/2017/05/28/doctor-who-the-pyramid-at-the-end-of-the-world-review/> - This review of 'Doctor Who' Episode 'The Pyramid at the End of the World' analyzes the episode's political allegories, particularly focusing on themes of fear and human decision-making. The article draws parallels between the episode's narrative and real-world political events, discussing how fear influences human behavior and decision-making processes. It also examines the episode's commentary on the consequences of surrendering autonomy and freedom in the face of fear.
7. <https://www.tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/WMG/DoctorWhoS35E12HellBent> - This page on TV Tropes presents fan theories and speculative discussions about 'Doctor Who' Season 35, Episode 12, titled 'Hell Bent.' It explores various interpretations and potential plot developments, including the Doctor's interactions with Gallifrey and the High Council. The article delves into the political dynamics within the Time Lord society and speculates on the implications of the Doctor's actions and decisions in the episode.