



Fans Respond to Jodie Whittaker As First Female "Doctor Who"™

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It's no secret that a Time Lord can regenerate as a woman, but that didn't stop the backlash from some Doctor Who fans when BBC One revealed Jodie Whittaker as the thirteenth doctor.

She is the first female to assume the leading role in the history of the 54-year-old sci-fi series about a time-traveling alien with two hearts.

Whittaker will succeed Peter Capaldi, who took over as the doctor in 2013, and will end his stint in this year's Christmas special. Chris Chibnall, creator of Broadchurch starring Whittaker, will also take the reins from Steven Moffat as showrunner.

"I always knew I wanted the thirteenth doctor to be a woman and we're thrilled to have secured our number one choice," Chibnall said.

Capaldi also showed his support, saying he wanted a woman to replace him.

"Anyone who has seen Jodie Whittaker's work will know that she is a wonderful actress of great individuality and charm," Capaldi said in a BBC press release. "She has above all the huge heart to play this most special part. She's going to

be a fantastic doctor."

Whittaker, 35, called it "overwhelming, as a feminist" and "more than an honor" to be chosen for the role.

"I'm beyond excited to begin this epic journey-with Chris and with every Whovian on this planet," she told the BBC.

But not everyone felt that way.

The casting decision sparked criticism from some fans, who tweeted the show was "ruined" and created the #nursewho hashtag based on an opinion that women can't be doctors.

I have not dedicated 10 years of my life to #DoctorWho to see a woman destroy this show. This will be the last season. #Stop #NurseWho

- Frank Drubel (@DrubelFrank) July 16, 2017

To which Merriam-Webster responded:

'Doctor' has no gender in English.

- Merriam-Webster (@MerriamWebster) July 17, 2017

Some claimed the series was ruined and vowed to stop watching it:

Raging, ruined an amazing programme with a female doctor!

- shazza (@shazzababy89) July 16, 2017

No more dr who for me and my son what have you done

- Martin Evans (@Ladstrong) July 16, 2017

Yet there was no shortage of tweets defending a woman in the role.

For each sexist bigot threatening to not watch, there'll be a young girl with a new hero they didn't have before #GoodRiddance #Doctor13

- Gryph Lane (@MxGryphLane) July 16, 2017

To misogynists moaning about #Doctor13: You're not the target audience. It's aimed at children w/ grown-up minds, not the other way around.

- Richard Littler (@richard_littler) July 16, 2017

Former doctor Colin Baker also weighed in on why a female doctor fits with the premise of the show.

"I have never been able to think of any logical reason why an alien being capable of regenerating in extremis would necessarily retain all or indeed any of the characteristics of his (or her) pre-renewal self," he said. "The world we live in has a history of male domination, of stereotyping, of resistance to change, of playing it safe. Doctor Who has never been about that. The Doctor in all his incarnations has always been a passionate defender of justice, equality, fairness and resisted those who seek to dominate or destroy."