

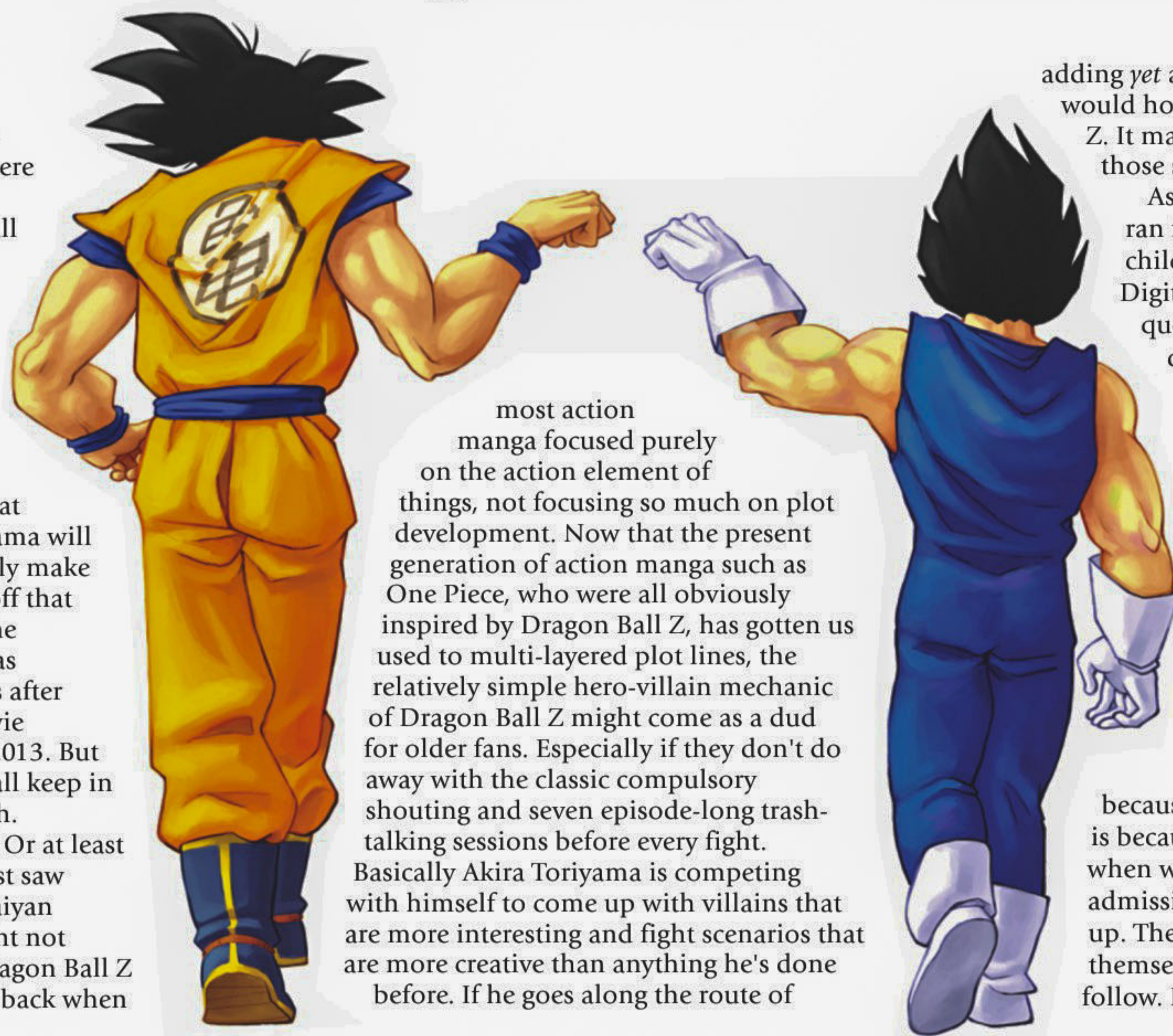
The return of Dragon Ball and Digimon

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Anime is a global thing now. But back when anime wasn't so mainstream, there were a few shows that slowly opened anime to a wider audience. Dragon Ball and Digimon were among the shows that led that movement. So it's honestly quite exciting that both shows are making a comeback this year. But once the initial euphoria wears off, you have to ask, will the comebacks be good?

For the new Dragon Ball series, Dragon Ball Super, a saving grace is that the series' original creator Akira Toriyama will be writing it. That should automatically make it better than Dragon Ball GT, a spin-off that didn't quite pick up although it was the 'sequel' to Dragon Ball Z. Toriyama was supposedly inspired to write the series after seeing the warm reaction that the movie Dragon Ball Z: Battle of Gods got in 2013. But there are a few things that we should all keep in mind before we get our hopes too high.

One, we're not quite kids anymore. Or at least not the same age we were when we first saw Dragon Ball Z. So things like Goku, Saiyan Transformations and all that jazz might not seem like such a novelty. Secondly, Dragon Ball Z is from another age of Anime/Manga, back when



most action manga focused purely on the action element of things, not focusing so much on plot development. Now that the present generation of action manga such as One Piece, who were all obviously inspired by Dragon Ball Z, has gotten us used to multi-layered plot lines, the relatively simple hero-villain mechanic of Dragon Ball Z might come as a dud for older fans. Especially if they don't do away with the classic compulsory shouting and seven episode-long trash-talking sessions before every fight. Basically Akira Toriyama is competing with himself to come up with villains that are more interesting and fight scenarios that are more creative than anything he's done before. If he goes along the route of

adding *yet* another stage to Super Saiyan then I would honestly be very let down. It's Dragon Ball Z. It made action anime. It has to maintain those standards.

As for Digimon, this is also a show that ran four distinct generations of 'chosen children' being transported into a world of Digital Monsters and fighting bad guys. The question will remain the same, what new can you throw at us?

It's the same situation for both. These shows will be competing with two things. One, the new generation anime such as One Piece and Attack on Titan, shows that have taken the classic action elements and added intricate plots to revolutionize how we see anime. Second, they'll be competing with themselves. Every second we watch these shows we'll be thinking back to when we saw the original shows year ago. I personally don't think it will ever be the same

because a part of why these shows are special is because they come from a simpler time, when we didn't have to sweat over university admissions and what not. Don't get your hopes up. The only acts they're following are themselves. And they are very tough acts to follow. Dragon Ball GT already showed us that.

"Doctor Who" for people who don't watch "Doctor Who"

RAFEE SHAAMS

I've been asked on many occasions what that British sci-fi show, with a madman in a blue box, is all about. This article is all about me telling you what it is about, why you should watch it and where (I think) you should start from.

For those who are totally clueless, here's a quick intro: "Doctor Who" is about a timelord from the planet Gallifrey who we know as "The Doctor". He travels across planets and universes in his TARDIS (the blue police box so ubiquitous with the show), a space time vehicle that can move in space *and* time. Also, the TARDIS is bigger on the inside. Usually, he brings along companions (usually humans from Earth) with him in his travels.

Question: Why does the Doctor have so many Faces? The Doctor can cheat death by regenerating into a new body. Hence the new face. Back in the 60s, William Hartnell, the first Doctor, had to leave the show due to deteriorating health and the producers came up with the unique idea of the doctor being able to regenerate himself into a new, fresh body. Thus, paving the way for a new actor to play the Doctor.

(If we think about it, a lot of these awesome concepts in our favourite shows came into being due to reasons like this. Teleportation exists in Star Trek for the sole reason that having space pods land on planets would've been too much on the budget. It's also for budgetary reasons that we have the TARDIS, as it eliminates the need to show a spaceship/time machine flying into or landing onto somewhere, thereby saving money.)

By now 12 actors have portrayed the Doctor, with Peter Capaldi being the current one.

Now why should you watch this?

"Doctor Who", at the end of the day, is a children's show. It will follow a certain format and won't be like the "gritty", "edgy" TV shows we are used to drooling

over nowadays. Steven Moffat, the current show runner of Doctor Who, who has a certain affinity for throwing characters off buildings, once told reporters: "The guy who wrote 'The Wire' said, 'F*** the casual viewer.' And

I understand that. The casual viewer cannot catch up with a show like that, or 'Breaking Bad.' 'He's a chemistry teacher? Huh?' But on a show like this, we want the casual viewer."

What I mean to say is that there *will* be many episodes that would have cringeworthy elements (an episode named "Fear Her" particularly comes to mind) but the beauty of "Doctor Who" is it manages to be inventive, moving and all around brilliant (I know this sounds fangirlish) staying within that age appropriate children's show format.

Where should you start from?

Doctor Who started airing from 1963 and continued till 1989 for 26 seasons before being cancelled. There was a TV movie in 1996, but apart from that "Doctor Who" remained off air till 2005 when BBC resurrected it (with the ninth Doctor, in *leather!*). Post-2005 "Doctor Who" is known as modern Who and we've had about 8 seasons of that, as of now. So that's a total of 34 seasons and a TV movie (not counting the innumerable specials). We can realise how one can easily feel lost when attempting to go into it.

What I did was I started watching from the very first season of classic "Doctor Who", but then I ditched it and started modern Who, finished watching that, then went back to classic Who from the start. Don't do that.

I'd advise you start from Season 5 of Modern Who, that's when the 11th Doctor (played by Matt Smith) starts his tenure. Or, if you want to begin with some Classic Who, start with Season 12.

Rafee Shaams is an amalgam personality, an accretion of various sub-personas, identities that are individual facets of a great jewel mind whose various facets exist beyond normal three-dimensional space and can only be perceived by children and the insane. He can be reached at rafeeshaams@gmail.com.

