

# Seven Ways of Looking at Captain Jack

By Mary Anne Mohanraj and Jed Hartman

## WE MEET JACK AND FALL IN LOVE

(Mary Anne)

When we first meet Jack, he is marked first and foremost as a sexual being, chided for thinking about sex when he should have his mind on the job.

**Jack** [watching Rose through binoculars]: Excellent bottom.

**Algy** [facing the other direction, thinking Jack's talking about him]: I say, old man. There's a time and a place.

**Jack**: Sorry, old man. [He laughs.] I've got to go and meet a girl. But you've got an excellent bottom too. [He slaps Algy's bottom on the way out; Algy looks neutral for a moment, then smiles.]

That introduction captures so much of who Captain Jack Harkness is, initially at least. Stunningly handsome -- everyone Jack meets responds to his flirting, even the Doctor. He's sexual to a fault -- a cheerful, charming playboy who puts pleasure before work. Clearly bisexual, and openly so, which was shockingly satisfying to me, since I identify as bisexual and as far as I can remember, have *never* seen a bisexual character on tv<sup>1</sup> (and only in a very few movies).

To make it even better, Jack possesses a broad and open sexuality that can encompass appreciation of multiple people at once; he may not call himself poly, but he certainly reads that way. He's very far from the polygamous Mormon characters in *Big Love* -- the only poly characters I've ever seen on TV. And as that first episode continues, these bi / poly / joyfully sexual impressions are reinforced -- Jack flirts wildly with Rose, insists on drinking champagne when discussing business, and finally reveals that he's a con man, that he's been trying to con Rose and the Doctor into buying what Jack believes is a piece of junk.

---

<sup>1</sup> Jed: There've been a few—Wikipedia has a list—but not many.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_media\\_portrayals\\_of\\_bisexuality#Television](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_media_portrayals_of_bisexuality#Television)

Mary Anne: After looking at the Wikipedia list, I do remember seeing a few of the bisexual women mentioned (mostly on mainstream shows, not SF/F). And in most of those examples, the women seem to be bi primarily to demonstrate their so-liberal credentials -- rather than appearing realistically portrayed, with actual ongoing relationships, such as Jack's and Ianto's on Torchwood.

Jack holds within himself a contradiction -- outrageously open, in ways that our modern world isn't used to seeing represented, but at the same time, a deceiver, a cheat, a fake.<sup>2</sup> In that first episode, he's a tease, offering us a glimpse of paradise, and then yanking it away again.

When asked to write this essay, my first thought was that all I wanted to do was go "Squeee!" about Captain Jack. Because that's how I feel about Jack; I love him quite madly. I was recently on a panel at a comics convention, about Geek Girls and Artists, and while the discussion ranged far and wide, we kept coming back to Captain Jack as a common denominator. No matter where you fell on the geeky or girly scale, there was a place for you to love Captain Jack. As one of us said that night, "Captain Jack is the great equalizer."

I don't know why everyone loves Jack. For me, it's because he reflects a part of me that I rarely see represented in the world. Jack loves everyone, Jack would like to have sex with everyone, and even though practicalities tend to intervene making that impossible (for Jack as well as for myself), that's a reflection of my own reality.

I'm poly, and bi, and have had sex with a lot of people -- not as many as Jack, but then, I'm not immortal. And for the most part, I've succeeded in resisting the world's attempts to make me ashamed of any of that, although being unabashed gets harder as I get older. When I was in college, it wasn't easy juggling four partners at once, but the difficulties were mostly logistical; I was very clear on what I wanted, at least, even if it was sometimes hard to put into practice. Now that I'm in my 40s and have small children, now that I live with a male long-term partner and easily pass for a married soccer mom, it's sometimes hard to remember how transgressive and scandalous my desires really are. Jack reminds me.

Jack speaks to that inner slut that really would like to have sex with everyone, if only because it would be so interesting. Jack would have sex with them joyfully. The joy is key -- and something that he has a hard time hanging on to, as the series goes on. But at least in that initial moment of meeting him, Jack reminds me, reminds all of us, that sex can be delightful.

What's sad is how shocking it was to see that on television.

## **FROM ASEXUALITY TO AVID SEXUALITY**

(Jed)

When I was in high school, watching Tom Baker and company on KTEH San José every Saturday night until 2:30 in the morning, one of the things I loved about *Dr. Who* was the lack of sexuality.

At the time, I didn't really get what the big deal was about sex in real life. Friendship, yes; loyalty, sure; and I wasn't *opposed* to sex, just didn't see it as terribly important, and kind of resented that so many

---

<sup>2</sup> Mary Anne: To be fair, at the end of the episode, we learn that Jack believed that Rose and the Doctor were part of an organization that had stolen two years of his life, so if he's a con man, it is, in some sense, in the service of a twisted sense of justice. Jack is always more than he seems; his slight, charming presentation is a mask for greater (and darker) depths.

grownups seemed to be so totally obsessed with it. And although I doubt I would've articulated it this way, I think that seeing these characters on *Dr. Who* who were friends and companions, but who never dealt with any of that sex stuff, was comfortable and comforting to me.

But during college, I started getting more interested in sex. After college I gradually figured out I was bi, and started learning about what happened to queer characters in movies and TV (on the rare occasions when they existed at all), and started wanting to see more of them.

When *Dr. Who* came back, after a long sad Doctorless hiatus, I started watching it again, and loved it. And that first scene with Captain Jack, the exchange with Algy about bottoms, was delightful.

The names would have been a clue (being the names of characters from *The Importance of Being Earnest*), but the name "Algy" wasn't spoken until later.<sup>3</sup> But the "you've got an excellent bottom too" line was another clue, a big one that made me laugh out loud with delight—could they really be going there?

And they were, and they did. And I loved every moment of Captain Jack's screen time in those first two episodes.<sup>4</sup> I had already been really liking the new series, but Jack was what sealed the deal for me. I loved the new Doctor (with his deep sadness overlaid on the old Doctor)<sup>5</sup>, I loved Rose (with her penchant for befriending the lower classes wherever she went), but I totally adored Captain Jack. Funny, charming, bi, and totally hot—what's not to like?

The exchange at the end of "The Doctor Dances" may have been my favorite bit of season 1:

**Rose:** I thought Jack might like this dance.

**Doctor:** I'm sure he would, Rose. I'm absolutely certain. But who with?<sup>6</sup>

I didn't love the foreground plot of that two-part episode. But Jack's presence made it among my favorite

---

<sup>3</sup> Jed: I also liked the handling (as it were) of Algy throughout the episode. Perhaps especially the bit where Rose gears up to distract Algy with her feminine wiles, and Jack says she's not his type; I loved that as a subversion of the "female agents use sex as a tool" trope.

<sup>4</sup> Jed: And not just the bi/poly stuff. "Who looks at a screwdriver and thinks, 'Ooo, this could be a little more sonic'?"

<sup>5</sup> Jed: There's a whole other discussion to be had about the Doctor's sexuality in the new series, but that's out of scope for this essay, and I imagine other pieces in this book will talk about that anyway. But the short version of my feeling about the revived-series Doctor's sexuality is that (a) he's basically personsexual, only interested in a few people, most of whom happen to be female; (b) he continues to most of the time be more interested in having fun, saving the world, and running than in sex or romance; and (c) it depends a lot on the writer—I don't feel that his characterization has been consistent in this regard.

<sup>6</sup> Mary Anne: In my fuzzy memory of that episode, Jack then waltzes off with the Doctor. Which isn't what actually happens -- the Doctor dances away with Rose. But how delightful that Jack and the Doctor was even a possibility!

Jed: Funny that we both misremembered that ending; I had remembered it as ending with the open question, with Jack looking at both of them, and I was a bit disappointed when I rewatched it and saw that the scene ends with the Doctor and Rose dancing. But yes, agreed about the excellence of the possibility.

*Dr. Who* episodes ever.

## IS IT JACK, OR IS IT THE COAT? (OR CAN YOU SEPARATE THE TWO?)

(Jed and Mary Anne)

Mary Anne: Part of what we love about Jack, of course, is how everybody loves him back. Part of the fantasy of Captain Jack Harkness is that not only would he sleep with anything that moves, but anything that moves (human or alien) would also sleep with him. If you identify with Jack, then you get to stand with him in that place of utter desirability. He's tremendously sexy, and part of that is the actor's sheer physical beauty and appeal. But part of it, I have to believe, is actually the coat.

Jed: The coat is awesome. Standing on a rooftop, looking out over the city, he'd be pretty hot regardless, but the addition of the coat makes him hot *and* heroic.

I think *Doctor Who* has always featured interesting clothing choices; for example, the Doctor's wardrobe has always said a lot about him.<sup>7</sup> In various incarnations, he's worn frilled shirts and velvet smoking jackets; a scarf; celery; a leather jacket; and, of course, the ultimate in cool, a bow-tie and a fez. He's been a dandy; he's been a tough guy; he's been, well, odd. (Celery?) Or at least eclectic. His clothing choices have sometimes been class signifiers as well as personality markers. But I feel like in most of his incarnations, he hasn't been particularly masculine (whatever that means).

Whereas Jack is. It seems to me to be a sort of Errol Flynn masculinity; a bit light on his feet, as they say. A form of masculinity that's more about grace and agility and wit than about pure brute strength. Not to say Jack doesn't have muscles, but he doesn't read terribly butch to me. And the coat is, to me, part of that not-strongly-butch masculinity. But maybe that's just me?

And speaking of butchness and clothing: is relying on impeccable clothing to add to one's appeal a femme thing?

Mary Anne: I think Jack's style is in line with Beau Brummel, who "established the mode of dress for men that rejected overly ornate fashions for one of understated, but perfectly fitted and tailored clothing." ([http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beau\\_Brummell](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Beau_Brummell)) Jack isn't a Byronic sickly languishing poet -- he's a strong, manly man of action. But beautifully dressed, and in perfect taste.

Jed: And maybe the masculinity of it is helped by it being a military coat, or at least adapted from one. Which parallels the real-life adaptation of the WWI trench coat from military officer coat into fashion item. I'm not a costumer, but (speaking of Beau Brummel) I think there've been connections between military uniforms and fashion at least since the Regency.

Mary Anne: I'm not an expert in the history of fashion, but my understanding is that military history and fashion were deeply intertwined. "In 1804, Napoleon hoped that France would become a fashion leader.

---

<sup>7</sup> Jed: As does the fact that he travels through time and space with a vast closet full of outfits from all of history.

He halted the import of British textiles, revived French lace making, and forbade women to appear at court in the same dress more than twice. Napoleon's wife, the Empress Josephine was a fashion icon, a trend setter of the day".<sup>8</sup> Although according to a lecture I attended recently, Josephine had a fondness for British muslin and insisted on wearing it, to Napoleon's deep irritation.

Napoleon and his coterie were a "recently elevated military social group seeking to express to the world in no uncertain terms both their new importance and their joy in its possession."<sup>9</sup> In other words, Jack's coat is never just a coat -- it's a statement of power and manly grace.<sup>10</sup>

What's particularly interesting is *how* Jack wears the coat -- he's tall and broad-shouldered, muscular and strong -- he fills out the military coat really nicely, which then gives him leeway to be flirty and feminine and pretty.<sup>11</sup> The man and the coat work together, allowing Jack to present himself with both masculine and feminine aspects, combining to create a being who, for many, becomes immensely desirable. Which implies interesting things about the way we, Jack's fan club, are reading both gender and sexual orientation in the modern world.

## JACK GOES DARK

(Mary Anne)

For me, Jack gets really interesting when he makes the shift from charming con man to hero. When we first meet him, he's running a con, and he explains it to the Doctor:

**Jack:** Simple enough, really. Find some harmless piece of space-junk... let the nearest Time Agent track it back to Earth. Convince him it's valuable, name a price. When he's put 50% up front - oops! A German bomb falls on it, destroys it forever. He never gets to see what he's paid for. Never knows he's been had. I buy him a drink with his own money, and we discuss dumb luck. The perfect self-cleaning con.

**Doctor:** Yeah. Perfect.

**Jack:** The London Blitz is great for self-cleaners - Pompeii's nice if you want to make a vacation of it, though, but you've got to set your alarm for volcano day.

---

<sup>8</sup> <http://doloresmonet.hubpages.com/hub/Fashion-History-Early-19th-Century-Regency-and-Romantic-Styles>

<sup>9</sup> *The Psychology of Dress*, Frank Alvah Parsons

<sup>10</sup> Jed: By the way, the coat that Jack wears in "The Empty Child"/"The Doctor Dances" isn't the same coat he wears later. That first coat, which he only wears intermittently, is a thick winter coat, and it presumably gets blown up with his ship; he's not wearing it when he's rescued. I'm guessing that The Coat that he wears later, the lighter-weight ~~swishier~~ more flowing trenchcoat, comes from somewhere deep in the TARDIS's closets. (Although it didn't appear until Torchwood, so possibly it's something Jack picked up while living through the 20th century.) Russell T. Davies had originally intended Jack to always wear period-specific clothing, but he changed his mind.

<sup>11</sup> Jed: After writing this essay, we came across an academic piece by Sarah Gilligan, "Fashioning Masculinity and Desire," that discusses related issues, such as the way the coat "feminize[s] and eroticize[s]" Jack. We saw it too late to be able to respond to it here, but it's well worth a look, and it has lots of footnotes pointing to other related material. It's in the 2010 anthology *Illuminating Torchwood: Essays on Narrative, Character and Sexuality in the BBC Series*, edited by Andrew Ireland.

[He laughs at his own joke. The Doctor just looks at him. Jack's laughter dies away.]

**Jack:** Getting a hint of disapproval.

Jack eventually realizes that his con has caused people a lot of pain, and is shamed into helping with the clean-up. He disappears, and at first, the Doctor thinks he's fled, but Rose trusts that Jack will come back. "I trust him 'cause he's like you. Except with dating and dancing." And Jack does indeed come back, teleporting them to his ship, with a punchline about his dress.

**Doctor:** If ever he was a captain, he's been defrocked.

...

**Jack:** Actually, I quit. Nobody takes my frock.

Then when everything's falling apart later, he again seems to flee. The teleporter can only take one, and he goes, leaving the Doctor and Rose behind. But he comes back, to snatch away a bomb before it destroys them. The bomb needs to be removed, and Jack takes it away -- only to discover that he can't get away from it. He resigns himself to his fate, and is rescued at the last minute. Charming -- but not actually heroic. Never in this sequence does he choose to sacrifice himself. That comes later.

In a later episode<sup>12</sup>, Jack dies and is resurrected -- as a result of which, he comes back immortal. He can't die -- or rather, he can be killed, and is, sometimes in excruciating ways, but he always abruptly comes back to life. It's a radical shift, taking him from a charming, beautiful, capable human to pretty much a superhero.<sup>13</sup>

If one of the primary characteristics of the hero is his ability and willingness to endure suffering for the sake of a greater good<sup>14</sup>, then Jack, in his capacity (and willingness) to endure that suffering, is perhaps the ultimate hero. Even though he isn't any smarter or stronger than a normal human otherwise, and he doesn't get any flashy destructo-rays either.<sup>1516</sup>

In fact, that superpower functions much the same way the coat does -- it makes Jack hyper-strong (in endurance), and hyper-masculine. The fact that he can't die is what *allows* him to be pretty. Before his superpower Jack's a charming madcap sexy rogue (with some hints of mystery in his past); after becoming immortal, he gets darker and grimmer -- but also hotter to some of us. Now there's a danger

---

<sup>12</sup> "The Parting of the Ways," episode thirteen of the first season of the new *Doctor Who*.

<sup>13</sup> Jed: And by the way, superheroes rely on clothing for effect too, and various commentators have noted that The Coat is somewhat cape-like.

<sup>14</sup> Jed: A friend of mine has suggested that in many action movies, the hero's primary D&D attribute is Constitution; that is, the hero's main ability is to take lots of damage and keep moving. Immortality takes that one step further.

<sup>15</sup> Mary Anne: He does compensate for that lack with access to a whole lot of cool alien toys in *Torchwood*. And, of course, having travelled in time and being friends with the Doctor don't hurt.

<sup>16</sup> Jed: It's interesting that when we first meet him, he does have a flashy destructo-ray: the sonic blaster. But it's conveniently low on batteries (which are irreplaceable because the factory has been destroyed, which the Doctor hints was something he did), and it probably gets destroyed along with Jack's ship at the end of "The Doctor Dances"; I don't think we ever see it again. ...And by the way, at one point in that episode, the Doctor takes away Jack's destructo-ray and *slips him a banana*. Take that, people who think the Doctor is straight!

aspect, and he gets a lot darker over time.

I have to admit, I was the girl who would have picked Spock over Kirk, and Apollo over Starbuck, back in my teenage angsty days. I've always had a thing for the strong, suffering types. *Brood for me, my darling, and whisper the secret sorrow in your soul, which I alone among all women will be able to heal.* That's a seductive fantasy.

## BROODING IS OVERRATED

(Jed)

Here's one of the places where Mary Anne and I disagree: I don't really think of Jack's immortality as being essential to his character or his appeal. My personal canonical Captain Jack is the first one we meet, rather than the darker and longer-lived character he became later.

Or perhaps what I really mean is that what I love about Jack is his portrayal in *Dr. Who*. I watched the first season of *Torchwood*, and a couple second-season episodes, and *Children of Earth*; but Jack as portrayed in *Torchwood* doesn't work nearly as well for me (with some exceptions). I still think it's great that he's bi, of course, but for me he loses a lot of his appeal.

I can go for dark brooding leaders. (I liked Cyclops in the *X-Men* comics, for example, even after friends started mocking his angstiness.) But I like charming rogues more, and charming rogues who become semi-reluctant heroes even more. (And yet Han Solo did nothing for me. Maybe partly because I didn't find him especially attractive, or even especially charming?)

For me, a central part of the appeal of Jack's sexuality was his cheerfulness about it. He's sex-positive, which is lovely; and he's also people-positive. I get the feeling from him that not only would he enjoy sex with everyone he encounters<sup>17</sup>, he would enjoy it partly because he likes them.<sup>18</sup> Sure, he flirts with people on first meeting them, before he even knows whether he might like them; but he isn't arrogant about his sex appeal, he doesn't behave like someone who knows he's irresistible. His expectation doesn't seem to be "I can have anyone I want, 'cause I'm hot," but rather "You. You right there. You and I (and anyone else who wants to join in) would probably have a great time together, because we'd probably like each other and we'd probably enjoy sex together."

I think that adding the weight of the world to his shoulders could've been done in a way that I would've liked; the writers did that for the Doctor, after all. And I can imagine the story of the lone wolf learning to be a good team leader could've been a really appealing story to me. But instead, I felt that the writers of *Torchwood* constantly showed him being a *terrible* leader, but without anyone seeming to notice just how bad at it he was, and without his ever getting better at it.

And although I can totally go for wounded, if you take it a step further into tortured, the appeal lessens for

---

<sup>17</sup> Mary Anne: It's unclear what's on the table, but it could be anything, up to and including the table.

<sup>18</sup> Mary Anne: Agreed! The liking is huge.

me.

Of course, there are still lovely moments in *Torchwood*. Jack standing looking out over the city in that coat. Jack and his namesake having a brief moment together. Jack and Spike Captain John engaging in the best fanservice I've seen on TV.

And I'm probably buying into the stereotypes. Queer guys in TV and movies are supposed to be happy-go-lucky and fun and shallow, and constantly interested in sex (or else, to be nonthreatening, entirely uninterested in sex); if they have anything serious in their lives, either it's because they're tragically dying of AIDS or it has nothing to do with romance and sex.<sup>19</sup> (Or they're the sidekick and it's the protagonist's serious problem they're helping deal with.) So, sure, it's good to have subjectivity for queer characters, to give them real and nuanced emotional lives and problems that aren't about, but don't ignore, their sexuality.

But still: to me, the breathtaking and liberating (and hot) things about Captain Jack are mostly to do with his combination of action heroism, roguishness, wit, and cheerful sexuality.

## IS JACK OUR FUTURE?

(Jed and Mary Anne)

Jed: Another aspect of Jack's appeal may be the idea that he's not the only one of his kind.

In "The Doctor Dances," there are suggestions that Jack's sexuality is typical of 51st-century humans:

**Doctor:** Relax, he's a 51st century guy. He's just a bit more flexible when it comes to dancing.

**Rose:** *How* flexible?

**Doctor:** Well, by his time, you lot have spread out across half the galaxy.

**Rose:** Meaning?

**Doctor** [grinning]: So many species, so little time....

**Rose:** What, that's what we do when we get out there? That's our mission? We seek new life, and ... and ...

**Doctor:** Dance.<sup>20</sup>

Which seems to suggest that bi(/pan)sexuality is where we as a species are headed. I'm always both charmed and a little annoyed at that kind of thing.

---

<sup>19</sup> Jed: There are also some other tropes specific to bisexuality, of course. For example, the easiest way to *show* that a character is bi is to show them in a threesome with a man and a woman at the same time. It can be hard to make really clear that a character is bi without that. It's easy for me to slip into thinking of Ianto as gay, for example, even though it seems more likely to me that he's bi and monogamous.

<sup>20</sup> Jed: Which reminds me of a line from Tiptree's "And I Awoke and Found Me Here on the Cold Hill's Side": "Man is exogamous—all our history is one long drive to find and impregnate the stranger. Or get impregnated by him; it works for women too. Anything different-colored, different nose, ass, anything, man *has* to fuck it or die trying." In the Tiptree story, that's a dangerous drive to pursue with aliens; in "The Doctor Dances," it's presented as charming and fun.



I'm charmed because, sure, who wouldn't want their own desires to become universal? I like the idea of a world of happy bi poly people. But I also find the claim that that's our future a little annoying, because it seems to suggest that bisexual polyamory is (perhaps literally) more evolved than old-fashioned monosexual monogamy, and I think a lot of bi poly people are wary of that idea.

Mary Anne: Well, 'evolved' is certainly a problematic way to put it, implying that one option is more advanced or better than the other. But that's not really how I read it. My sense was more that in the 51st century, humanity has shed some of the strictures that have limited our choices to date.<sup>21</sup>

For one, given that research seems to indicate that a significant percentage of the population is some variant of bisexual, in practice, it seems plausible to me that in the future, there might be less social pressure pushing people towards affirming a strictly gay or straight identity.

Jed: Sure; I agree that reduction of anti-homosexual bias is likely to lead to more people being willing to identify (to themselves and/or publicly) as bi.

Mary Anne: As for polyamory -- well, I don't think most people are actually poly. I've seen too many people attempt poly, only to crash and burn on the realization that no, polyamory is not well suited to their own emotional needs and relationship desires. But given how high the incidence of cheating is in supposedly monogamous relationships, I wouldn't be surprised if the future brought us models of relationships that are, as the Doctor says, more 'flexible' than our current, culturally-constrained, models.

Jed: I'll go along with that too. I certainly think that we are becoming, over time, more flexible about such things; modulo the occasional backlash, I imagine that that trend will continue.

So I totally buy the idea that by the 51st century, there'll be a more diverse range of completely socially acceptable sexual orientations and identities and relationship models.

But to me, the Doctor's remark suggests that in the future, everyone will be like Jack. Whereas in my experience, being bi and poly is not a nonstop orgy of friendly frolicking<sup>22</sup>; people have human desires and needs and reactions, and everyone's different. So, tempting as the thought is, I don't believe that my own approaches to life are the inevitable universal outcome of future change; I think the future will be more diverse than that.

Of course, the Doctor doesn't actually say that all 51st-century humans are like Jack, and we've seen so few people from his time portrayed on the shows that it's hard to generalize. So perhaps the Doctor really just meant that pansexuality is the norm rather than the exception in the future.

Mary Anne: And really, his point there was more about humans having sex with aliens, in specific.

---

<sup>21</sup> Mary Anne: Much in the same way that the recent advent of mostly reliable birth control (when available and affordable) has revolutionized women's sexual practices and various societies attitudes towards marriage, child-rearing, etc.

<sup>22</sup> Mary Anne: If only.

Apparently, in the future, much of humanity is less constrained by xenophobia than we might be now -- at least where sex is concerned.

Jed: Good point about the alien-specificity. I may well have been reading too much into his comments, just 'cause I've seen other people say similar things about the likelihood of a glorious utopian future in which everyone just happens to match their beliefs and desires.

Mary Anne: Well, I do think he implied the bi and poly aspects as a stepping off point to the wanton sex with aliens. So you're not completely off-base, I think.

Jed: It's also worth mentioning, as Shoshana Magnet noted in her essay in *Chicks Dig Time Lords*, that there are real-world people with Captain Jack's proclivities. "People exactly like him exist in the 21st century. [...] Queerness and polyamory aren't fantastical imaginings from the 51st century, they're something that happens every Friday night down at Club Babylon."<sup>23</sup>

Mary Anne: Yes, exactly!

Jed: Still: to me, the idea that he'll be the norm in the future rather than a rare exception is itself interesting.<sup>24</sup> And the idea of living in a world—a galaxy!—full of Captain Jacks is awfully appealing. At least, if you ignore the dangers of being too overwhelmed by choice to know where to begin.

Mary Anne: Dip me in honey and throw me to the aliens.

## CONCLUSION

(Mary Anne and Jed)

In other words -- SQUEEE!! CAPTAIN JACK!!

\*\*\*\*\*

---

<sup>23</sup> Mary Anne: It's a shame that the show seems afraid to actually *show* us the future they evoke. If I have one complaint about Captain Jack, it's that as two series went on, the writers / director seemed to pull back on really making visible the range of his sexuality. You can walk down to Club Babylon today, as Magnet says, and see plenty of male on male action. But on the show, all that hot sex is kept firmly off-screen. Jack does get to have a relationship with another man on *Torchwood*, but we see almost no on-screen male/male sexual interactions -- especially in comparison to how much male/female, or even female/female sex is offered. I find that disappointing, and hope that as the series continues, they'll do a better job delivering the future that Jack so clearly promises.

<sup>24</sup> Jed: Then, too, the 51st century isn't the end of time; I wonder about 52nd-century humans. Have they given up on all this? I feel like we've seen a fair number of humans from very far in the future on *Dr. Who*, and few of them other than Jack and John are much like Jack; is it just that not many of them are from the 51st century per se?