

Graduate Syllabus

Doctor Who

CCSA, London Winter, 12/26/2016-1/8/2017

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Dr. David Lavery is Director of Graduate Studies and Professor in the English Department at Middle Tennessee State University (1993-). The recipient of the University's 2006 Distinguished Research Award, he is the author of over one hundred and fifty published essays, chapters, and reviews and the author / co-author / editor / co-editor of twenty-one books, including *Joss Whedon, A Creative Portrait: From Buffy the Vampire Slayer to The Avengers, TV Goes to Hell: An Unofficial Road Map of Supernatural, The Essential Cult Television Reader, and The Essential Sopranos Reader*. The co-convenor of international conferences on *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and the work of Joss Whedon and *The Sopranos*; co-founder of the Whedon Studies Association and its journal *Slayage* and founding editor of *Critical Studies in Television*, he has lectured around the world on the subject of television (Australia, Turkey, the UK, Portugal, New Zealand, Ireland, Germany), been a guest/source for the BBC, NPR, the Australian Broadcasting Corporation, *The New York Times*, *A Folha de Sao Paulo* (Brazil), *Publica* (Portugal), *Information* (Netherlands), AP, *The Toronto Star*, *USA Today*, and *The Financial Times* and from 2006-2008 taught film and television at Brunel University in London.

About the Course

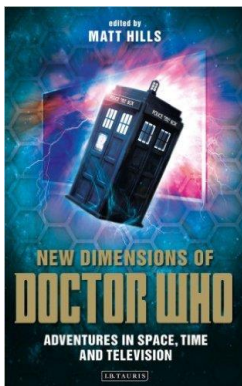
One of the longest running television series in the world, [*Doctor Who*](#) (BBC, 1963-) chronicles the adventure of an ageless, extraterrestrial time-lord, the last of his race, who travels the universe in The TARDIS (an acronym for Time and Relative Dimensions in Space), his spaceship/time machine, which appears from the outside in the guise of a 1950s British police call box. The Doctor (we never learn his actual name) has always exhibited a profound interest in the UK, which needs frequent rescue from a wide variety of cosmic threats. A series originally intended as educational (hence the Doctor's frequent visits to moments in history and encounters with famous Brits) but also capable of scaring children for several generations, *Doctor Who* rebooted in 2005 under the control of Russell T. Davies, who, under the influence of American cult TV shows like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, brought the series into the 21st century and extended *Who's* global reach. From 2010 to 2015, Steven Moffat served as showrunner. When the series returns in 2017, Chris Chibnall will be in charge.

Focusing primarily on the new *Doctor Who* (2005-), we will:

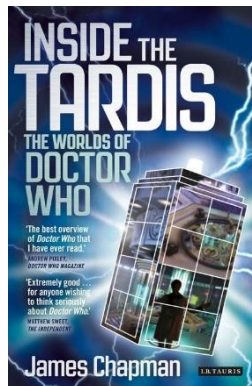
- Examine the history of *Doctor Who*.
- Track the Doctor's many reincarnations/transformations.
- Compare and contrast the British and American television industries.
- Compare and contrast British and American series.
- Trace cultural and media influences on the *Who* reboot.
- Compare and contrast the new *Who* under the control of its two showrunners: Davies and Steven Moffat.
- Explore *Who*'s key themes.
- Understand the nature of the Doctor's many "companions."
- Investigate the *Who* fandom.
- Consider *Who* as science fiction television.
- Consider *Who* as an example of cult television.
- Explore *Who*'s Britishness.
- Map *Who*'s locations (visiting several settings in and around London).
- Apply the latest insights of methods like semiotics and narratology to *Doctor Who*.
- Place *Who* as an example of a "multi-platform" popular culture phenomenon.
- Consider *Who* as an international television phenomenon.

Books

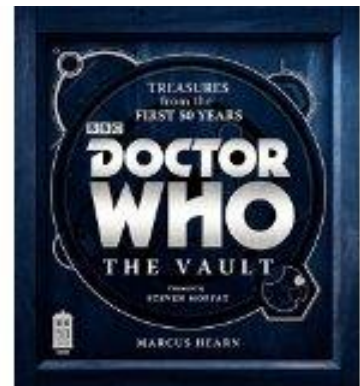
Click on each cover to order from Amazon.



Required



Required



Optional

Course Requirements

A Paper—Students will write a critical/analytical essay of not less than 2000 words on a particular episode of *Who*. Due by no later than January 31, 2017 (submitted as an e-mail attachment). **Course Weight: 30%**

Individual or Group Project / Presentation—Students will prepare one of the following. Due by no later than January 31, 2017 (submitted as an e-mail attachment). Some possibilities:

- A *Who* course syllabus
- A *Who* website
- A *Who* power point presentation
- A *Who* annotated bibliography/videography
- Another comparable *Who* project approved by me. **Course Weight: 20%**

Summative Component—Each class member will write a source paper of not less than 4,000 words in length. Due by no later than March 1, 2017 (submitted as an e-mail attachment). **Course Weight: 40%**

Class Participation—Each student’s participation in the class, including leading class discussion (alone or in collaboration with another class member) of a particular *Who* episode. Will be evaluated on a scale of 1-10. **Course Weight: 10%**

Course Policies

Participation. Attendance is mandatory at all class meetings and excursions, both inside and outside London. An unexcused absence will result in a letter grade reduction.

Viewing of *Who* Episodes: Please make every effort to watch those episodes listed on the Agenda prior to class meetings. Episodes will not be screened in class (though we will watch and discuss clips).

Reading: Please make every effort to read *Triumph of a Time Lord* and *A Writer’s Tale* before the class begins.

Plagiarism/Cheating: The unacknowledged use of the words / ideas / insights / original research of another is, of course, prohibited. Should I catch you plagiarizing, or cheating in any way, you will receive a grade of "0" on the assignment in question, the violation may be reported to university authorities, and you may fail the course.

Students with Disabilities: Any student with a disability will be given all the rights and privileges guaranteed under the Americans with Disabilities Act if he/she (1) notifies your professor and (2) is registered with your university’s disabled student services office.

Agenda

Day	Date	Mtg	Activity	Whos of the Day
M	12/26/16		Depart for London	
Tu	12/27/16		400: Orientation; 530: Dinner	
W	12/28/16	1	London Sightseeing	Old <i>Who</i> ; New <i>Who</i> [NW] Season 1
Th	12/29/16	2	900 am: Breakfast Meeting; Trip to Forbidden Planet and Alexandra Palace	[NW] Season 2
F	12/30/16	3	1000-1200: Classroom Meeting; Trip to Canary Wharf	[NW] Season 3
Sa	12/31/16		Group Excursion	
Su	1/1/17	4	900 am: Breakfast Meeting	[NW] Season 4
M	1/2/17	5	900 am: Breakfast Meeting	[NW] Season 5
Tu	1/3/17	6	100-400: Classroom Meeting—Presentation by a British <i>Who</i> Scholar	[NW] Season 6
W	1/4/17		Group Excursion to Cardiff (to and from Paddington Station) The Doctor Who Experience	
Th	1/5/17	7	900 am: Breakfast Meeting	[NW] Season 7
F	1/6/17	8	1000: Lounge Meeting; Tour of the BBC Television Centre	[NW] Season 8
Sa	1/7/17	9	100-200: Classroom Meeting—Evaluations	[NW] Season 9
Su	1/8/17		Depart for the United States	