

# Undergraduate Syllabus

## *Doctor Who*

**CCSA, London Winter, 12/26/2013-1/8/2014**

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**Dr. David Lavery** is Professor of English at MTSU (1993- ), where he won the University's 2006 Distinguished Research Award. The author of over one hundred and fifty published essays, chapters, and reviews, he is author / co-author / editor / co-editor of over twenty 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 on *The Sopranos*, co-founder of the Whedon Studies Association, and founding co-editor of the journals *Slayage: The Online International Journal of Buffy Studies, Critical Studies in Television, and Series/Season/Show*, he has lectured around the world on the subject of television (Australia, Turkey, the UK, Portugal, New Zealand, Ireland, Germany) and has 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*. From 2006-2008, he taught at Brunel University in London. In the Fall of 2013, he will become the Director of Graduate Studies in English.

### **About the Course**

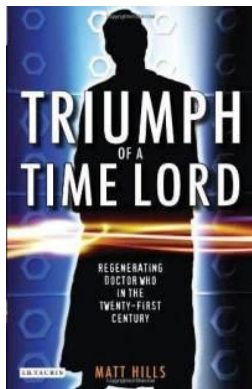
One of the longest running television series in the world, [\*Doctor Who\*](#) (BBC, 1963- ) chronicles the adventure of an ageless, extraterrestrial time-lord, the last of his race, who travels the universe in The TARDIS (an acronym for Time and Relative Dimensions in Space), his spaceship/time machine, 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.

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

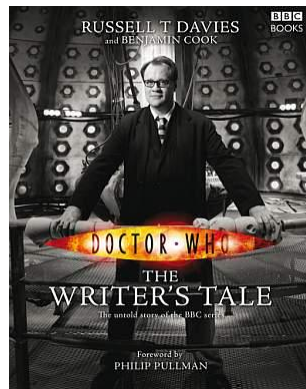
- Examine the history of *Doctor Who*.
- Track the Doctor's many reincarnations/transformations.
- Compare and contrast the British and American television industries.
- Compare and contrast British and American series.
- Trace cultural and media influences on the *Who* reboot.
- Compare and contrast the new *Who* under the control of its two showrunners: Davies and now 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

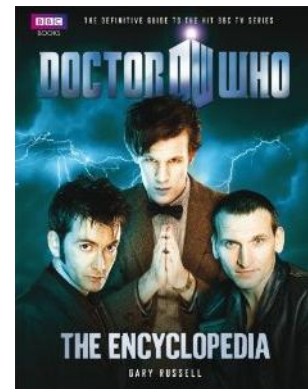
Click on each cover to order from Amazon.



Required



Optional



Optional

## Course Requirements

**A Journal**—Students will watch at least twenty episodes either prior to or during our time in London and in a journal will record their responses to at least twelve in entries of not less than 500 words each. Due by no later than January 31, 2014 (submitted as an e-mail attachment). **Course Weight: 20%**

**A Paper**—Students will write a critical/analytical essay of not less than 1500 words on a particular episode of *Who*. Due by no later than January 31, 2014 (submitted as an e-mail attachment). **Course Weight: 30%**

**Summative Component**—Each class member will write a source paper of at least 2,000 words on some aspect of *Doctor Who* (the subject must be approved by me), making use of at least ten sources. This paper will be due by March 1, 2014 (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).

**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.

**Grading Scale:** 90-100%=A | 80-89%=B | 70-79%=C | 60-69%=D | 0-59%=F.

## Agenda

Day	Date	Mtg	Activity	Whos of the Day
Th	12/26/13		Depart for London	
F	12/27/13		400: Orientation; 530: Dinner	
Sa	12/28/13	1	London Sightseeing	"Aliens of London"—"World War Three"—"The Empty Child"—"The Doctor Dances"
Su	12/29/13	2	900 am: Breakfast Meeting; <a href="#">Trip to Forbidden Planet and Alexandra Palace</a>	"The Christmas Invasion"—"The Idiot's Lantern"—"Love and Monsters"
M	12/30/13	3	1000-1200: Classroom Meeting; Trip to Canary Wharf	"Army of Ghosts"—"Doomsday"—"Blink"
Tu	12/31/13		Group Excursion to Stonehenge & Bath	
W	1/1/14	4	900 am: Breakfast Meeting	"Sound of Drums"—"Last of the Time Lords"—"Turn Left"
Th	1/2/14	5	900 am: Breakfast Meeting	"The Stolen Earth"—"Journey's End"—"Vincent"
F	1/3/14	6	100-400: Classroom Meeting—Presentation by <a href="#">Dr. Steven Peacock</a>	"The Pandorica Opens"—"The Big Bang"
Sa	1/4/14		Group Excursion to Cardiff (to and from Paddington Station)   <a href="#">The Doctor Who Experience</a>	
Su	1/5/14	7	900 am: Breakfast Meeting	"The Impossible Astronaut"—"Day of the Moon"—"The Doctor's Wife"
M	1/6/14	8	1000: Lounge Meeting; Tour of the <a href="#">BBC Television Centre</a>	"Let's Kill Hitler"—"Closing Time"—"The Wedding of River Song"
Tu	1/7/14	9	100-200: Classroom Meeting—Evaluations	TBA: Episodes of Seasons 7 and 8
W	1/8/14		Depart for the United States	