

ENGL 6650 | 7650

Special Topics in Popular Culture Studies:



Fall 2016 | Room: PH 319 | Th 600-900 pm

Website: http://davidlavery.net/Courses/Game_of_Thrones/

Course Blog: <https://gotcourse.blogspot.com/>

About the Course

An in-depth investigation into the George R. R. Martin epic fantasy series *A Song of Ice and Fire* (*A Game of Thrones* [1996]; *A Clash of Kings* [1999]; *A Storm of Swords* [2000]; *Feast for Crows* [2005]; *Dance with Dragons* [2011]; *The Winds of Winter* and *A Dream of Spring* [forthcoming] and *Game of Thrones* (2011-), the unprecedented HBO adaptation of it. The course will thus present a complex study of both epic literary fantasy and television narrative. Students will be expected to have seen each season of the television series prior to discussion (see Agenda) and read all five existing novels prior to the end of the semester. **Warning to those averse to spoilers:** from day one I will show no mercy.

Dr. David Lavery

Office PH 316A | **Office Hours** M: 100-400 pm | T: 900-1100 am; 100-300 pm | W: 900-1100 am; 100-300 pm | Th: 900-1100 am; 100-300 pm | **E-mail** david.lavery@mtsu.edu | **Office Phone** | **Voice-Mail** 615-898-5648 | **Home Page** <http://davidlavery.net>

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-convener 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*, *The Financial Times*, *USA Today*, and from 2006-2008 taught film and television at Brunel University in London. He is currently working on two books: *Genius at Work: Wallace Stevens, Charles Ives, Benjamin Lee Whorf and the Imagination of insurance* and ". . . and imagination can see them again": *Four Exercises in Barfieldian Poetics*.

Course Requirements

Writing: Completion of two 2000 word (MA students) | 3,000 word (PhD students) studies. One of these essays—your choice—should be fully researched. The other may rely on sources but should primarily be the product of your own reading/viewing/thinking. **Weight:** Each worth 35% of course grade. **Due:** See the course agenda. Submit via the appropriate D2L drop boxes.

I am open to all sorts of essay subjects, including the following:

- [A] a single episode of *GoT*;
- [B] a single season of *GoT*;
- [C] a single book of *SIF*;
- [D] a study of one of *SIF*'s/*GoT*'s (1) houses [[see the Power Point here](#)]; (2) places [[see the Power Point here](#)]; (3) entities/groups [[see the Power Point here](#)]; (4) supernatural creatures/powers/beings [[see the Power Point here](#)]; (5) religions [[see the Power Point here](#)].
- [D] any aspect of one or more *SIF* books: character(s) | language | structure | narrative | point of view | setting | *SIF* compared to *Lord of the Rings* | *SIF* as literary fantasy | another topic approved by me;

[E] *Game of Thrones* as a television series: acting | authorship | character | costuming | directing [[see the Power Point here](#)] | editing | fandom | gender | genre | HBO and *GoT* | history | intertextuality | self-referentiality | language | mise-en-scène | music | narratology | nudity | paratexts [[see the Power Point here](#)] | point of view | profanity | race | realism | semiotics | violence | another aspect approved by me;

[F] *Game of Thrones*' adaptation of *SIF*: any of Phil Shafer's "adaptation topos" (inclusion, exclusion, compression, extension, substitution, re-sequencing, invention); comparison and or contrast of *SIF* and *GoT*: Martin and HBO's creation of imaginary 'verses | fandoms | characters | houses | places | factions | groups | entities | story arcs | structures | gender | sexuality | violence | another aspect approved by me.

Class participation [20% of grade]:

[A] involvement in class discussion of daily readings/screening.

[B] ten to fifteen minute presentations on: [1] one of *SIF's/GoT's* **characters** [[see the Power Point here](#)]; [2] a *Game of Thrones* episode. See Agenda for dates.

E-mail me to claim a character and an episode. **Nota bene:** presenters may use any/all of the following in their presentations: handouts, Power Points/Prezis, audio/video clips.

Agenda

[links on titles are to HBO's official pages for each episode]

8|25/16 | **Meeting 1** | Introduction to the Course | **Power Point(s):** [Meeting 1](#)

9/1/16 | **Meeting 2** | *Game of Thrones*: Season 1 (episodes 1-5)—"[Winter Is Coming](#)" | "[The Kingsroad](#)" | "[Lord Snow](#)" | "[Cripples, Bastards, and Broken Things](#)" | "[The](#)

Wolf and the Lion" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 2 | **Guest Speaker:** Dr. Phil Shafer (Tennessee State University) on Film|TV Adaptation of Complex Novels

9/8/16 | Meeting 3 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 1 (episodes 6-10)—"A Golden Crown" | "You Win or You Die" | "The Pointy End" | "Baelor" | "Fire and Blood" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 3 | **Character Presentation:** Ned Stark (Corey Cummings) | **Guest Speaker:** Dr. Brian Attebery (Idaho State University) on Fantasy & the Remaking of Myth

9/15/16 | Meeting 4 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 2 (episodes 1-5)—"The North Remembers" | "The Night Lands" | "What Is Dead Can Never Die" | "Garden of Bones" | "The Ghost of Harrenhal" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 4 | **Character Presentation:** Arya (Feher)

9/22/16 | Meeting 5 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 2 (episodes 6-10)—"The Old Gods and the New" | "A Man Without Honor" | "The Prince of Winterfell" | "Blackwater" | "Valar Morghulis" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 5 | **Character Presentation:** Tyrion (Jensen)

9/29/16 | Meeting 6 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 3 (episodes 1-5)—"Valar Dohaeris" | "Dark Wings, Dark Words" | "Walk of Punishment" | "And Now His Watch Is Ended" | "Kissed by Fire" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 6

10/6/16 | Meeting 7 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 3 (episodes 6-10)—"The Climb" | "The Bear and the Maiden Fair" | "Second Sons" | "The Rains of Castamere" [Kenna Day] | "Mhysa" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 7 | **Character Presentation:** Daenerys (Day)

10/8-10/11: Fall Break

10/13/16 | Meeting 8 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 4 (episodes 1-5)—"Two Swords" | "The Lion and the Rose" [Jensen] | "Breaker of Chains" | "Oathkeeper" | "First of His Name" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 8 | **Character Presentation:** Brienne of Tarth (Anderson)

10/20/16 | Meeting 9 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 4 (episodes 6-10)—"The Laws of Gods and Men" | "Mockingbird" | "The Mountain and the Viper" | "The Watchers on the Wall" | "The Children" [Feher] | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 9

10/27/16 | Meeting 10 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 5 (episodes 1-5)—"The Wars to Come" | "The House of Black and White" [Campos] | "High Sparrow" | "Sons of the Harpy" | "Kill the Boy" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 10

11/3/16 | Meeting 11 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 5 (episodes 6-10)—"Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken" | "The Gift" | "Hardhome" [Anderson] | "The Dance of Dragons" | "Mother's Mercy" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 11 | **Character Presentation:** Jager (Campos)

11/10/16 | Meeting 12 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 6 (episodes 1-5)—"The Red Woman" | "Home" | "Oathbreaker" | "Book of the Stranger" | "The Door" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 12

11/17/16 | Meeting 13 | *Game of Thrones*: Season 6 (episodes 6-10)—"Blood of My Blood" | "The Broken Man" | "No One" | "Battle of the Bastards" [Cummings] | "The Winds of Winter" | **Power Point(s):** Meeting 13 | **Character Presentation:** Sansa (Zumwalt)

11/24/16 | Thanksgiving—No Class

12/8/16 | Meeting 14 | Power Point(s): Meeting 14