

LSP 112: Focal Point Seminar

The Fifty Year History of *Doctor Who*: Production and Fandom

I will answer every email I get within 24 hours (weekday). If you do not hear from me within one day, you can assume that I did not get your email. You may also contact me via Twitter (@pbooth81).

Course Description:

This course offers an introduction to different types of critical lenses, through which students will examine the television program *Doctor Who*. But *Doctor Who* is more than just a television program; it is a brand, a multi-media experience, a cult object, and a lens through which viewers can learn about the past fifty years of cultural history. Through screenings, readings, and discussion, students will explore *Doctor Who* in order to learn different characteristics of television criticism. Students will be encouraged to develop a critical voice of their own, all the while learning to understand the popularity and cultural impact of this important television milestone.

Course Rationale:

Doctor Who is a British television program that started in 1963. Throughout its fifty year history, the show has changed and adjusted its focus, style, narrative, genre, and audience multiple times over. For this reason, *Doctor Who* provides a useful text through which changing patterns of cultural criticism can be enacted. Furthermore, *Doctor Who* is more than just a television program – with multiple books, comics, web series, fan work, games, and physical locations, it is a multi-media experience. In fact, today’s *Doctor Who* brand is one of the most popular and viable across the world. *Doctor Who* is historical; *Doctor Who* is contemporary.

This focal point seminar seeks to explore the various cultural lenses through which *Doctor Who* – and through *Doctor Who*, television itself – can be critiqued. More people can—and do—write critically about television, both in a scholarly setting and in a popular press setting. But what makes a good critic? How to differentiate the quality opinions from the less-thoughtful? What’s the difference between a *review* and a *criticism* when it comes to writing about television? At the end of the course, students will come away with a better understanding of the role of television and critical thinking in their own lives and become more thoughtful and engaged critics.

DePaul Liberal Studies course:

As part of DePaul’s Liberal Studies course, this course fulfills the learning outcomes outlined by the Liberal Studies Council. At the end of the course,

1. Students will discuss and analyze work from at least three different fields in their written work for the course.
2. Students will participate actively in advancing the collective intellectual understanding of the course topic through class discussions.
3. Students will be able to distinguish between primary and secondary sources, and to assess varying degrees of mediation and interpretation in specific source materials.
4. Students will construct arguments based on evidence and the work and interpretations of other sources.
5. Students will revise papers in response to the instructor’s comments.
6. Students will produce a project with a central argument, in which all parts of the project support the central argument

Writing Expectations:

In addition, the Focal Point Seminar is designated a writing intensive course in the Liberal Studies Program; assignments are designed to develop writing skills. A minimum of 12-20 pages of writing is required with at least one piece of formal writing that goes through a revision process based on feedback from the instructor.

Class Readings

Required to Buy: (DePaul Loop bookstore, or online)

- Booth, Paul, ed. *Fan Phenomena: Doctor Who*. Bristol, UK: Intellect Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-178320-0207
- O’Donnell, Victoria. *Television Criticism*, 2nd ed. Los Angeles, CA: Sage Publications, 2013. ISBN: 978-1412991056. (The first edition of this book (ISBN 978-1412941679) is easily accessible and perfectly acceptable to use for the class).
- Lewis, Courtland and Paula Smithka, eds. *Doctor Who and Philosophy*. Chicago: Open Court, 2010.

Recommended to Buy (DePaul Loop bookstore, or online)

- Leach, Jim. *Doctor Who: TV Milestones*. Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 2009. ISBN: 978-0814333082

Screenings to purchase:

For this course students will be expected to watch episodes of *Doctor Who* out of class. The most cost effective way to do this is to purchase a subscription to Netflix or Amazon Prime. Students may also wish to purchase the DVD box sets of *Doctor Who: The Doctors Revisited* (vol 1 is Doctors 1-4; vol 2 is Doctors 5-8; vol 3 is Doctors 9-11).

Additional readings will be available via D2L. Readings should be done before class on the day that they are due.

Grading and Assignments:

Student grades are based on 600 points.

- Short Syntheses: (10 x 10 points each): 100 points
- Media Studies Paper: 100 points
- Cultural Studies Paper: 100 points
- Philosophy Paper: 100 points
- Final synthesis: 50 points
- Peer Review: 50 points
- Participation: 100 points

Short Syntheses

Each week, students will watch out-of-class at least one episode of *Doctor Who*, and in 300-500 words, synthesize the episode with the readings and in-class screening due that week. Reflection papers can be reused (with revision) for the three Criticism papers. Please see D2L and the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.

Media Studies Paper (Feb 02, 3pm)

In 1000-1200 words, students will write an analysis of an episode of *Doctor Who*, using two of the following Media Studies techniques:

- Auteur Theory
- Political Economic Analysis
- Narrative Analysis
- Genre Criticism

Students should include a thesis statement that describes why Media Studies is a useful tool for analyzing *Doctor Who* in this context. Please see D2L and the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.

You will rewrite this paper (due Feb 16, 3pm), taking into account the feedback from students and your professor,

Cultural Studies Paper (Due Mar 02, 3pm)

In 1000-1200 words, students will write an analysis of an episode of *Doctor Who*, using two of the following Cultural Studies techniques:

- Rhetorical Criticism
- Representational Analysis
- Fan Studies

Students should include a thesis statement that describes why Cultural Studies is a useful tool for analyzing *Doctor Who* in this context. Please see D2L and the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.

Philosophy Paper (Due Mar 16, 2:40pm)

In 1000-1200 words, students will write an analysis of an episode of *Doctor Who*, using two of the following philosophical lenses:

- Aesthetic Analysis
- Postmodern Analysis
- Ethical Analysis

Students should include a thesis statement that describes why Philosophy is a useful tool for analyzing *Doctor Who* in this context. Please see D2L and the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.

Final Synthesis

The final paper for this class asks students to pick an episode of *Doctor Who* not used in class and decide what attributes of the episode would be appropriate for a Media Studies analysis, which would be appropriate for a Cultural Studies analysis, and which would be appropriate for a Philosophical analysis. This short synthesis should be about 1000 words. Please see D2L and the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.

Paper Revision (Due Feb 16, 3pm)

Taking into account my feedback as well as the peer review feedback of your colleagues, students will revise the Media Studies Paper. Although it is not required, students may also choose to revise the Cultural Studies Paper. Please see D2L and the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.

Peer Review (Due Feb 09, 3pm)

You will read and critique (but not grade) another students' Media Studies Paper. Reviews will be anonymous. I will try to pair majors together so that majors will review each others' papers. Your job in peer review is to (a) compliment, (b) critique, and (c) complement; that is, you should note where the students' paper was well-done, where (specifically) it could be improved, and give some tips/hints for future work. When you receive the peer review on your own paper, you may find it helpful to integrate that feedback into your other television criticism paper. You will rewrite your Media Studies Paper, taking into account both the instructor feedback as well as the other students' feedback, for a higher grade. Please note that the peer review should not offer a grade on the Media Studies Paper, and the professor will grade the Media Studies Papers as well. Please see D2L and the assignment sheet for more detailed instructions.

In Class Schedule

Day 01: Monday Jan 05		
TOPIC: INTRODUCTION		
In class screening: <i>An Uncarthly Child</i> ep 1		
<u>Readings Due:</u> • Leach pp. 1-19	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> None	<u>Assignments Due:</u> None

Day 02: Wednesday Jan 07		
TOPIC: INTRODUCTION		
Out-of-class Screening: "Rose" In class screening: <i>The Aztecs</i> ep 1		
<u>Readings Due:</u> • Asher-Perrin: "Davies Era..." • O'Donnell pp. 9-18 • Phillips (in Booth): "Nostalgia" • Turner: Barbara Wright	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> Sleight: "The Autons"	<u>Assignments Due:</u> Short Synthesis

Day 03: Monday Jan 12		
TOPIC: MEDIA STUDIES		
ECONOMIC ANALYSIS AND AUTEUR ANALYSIS		
In Class Screening: <i>Power of the Daleks</i> reconstruction		
<u>Readings Due</u> • Hills: "Brining Back a TV Icon" • Wallace (in Booth): "Joint Ventures" • Wood and Miles: "What Was Children's TV like" • Wood and Miles: "Did the BBC Like Dr. Who?"	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> Leach: 20-28	<u>Assignments Due:</u> None
Special guest: Derek Kompare		

Day 04: Wednesday Jan 14		
TOPIC: MEDIA STUDIES ECONOMIC ANALYSIS AND AUTEUR ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: "The Eleventh Hour" In Class Screening: <i>The Mind Robber</i> ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u> • Hewett: "Who is Matt Smith?" • Hills: " 'New New' Doctor Who"	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> None	<u>Assignment Due</u> Short Synthesis

Day 05: Monday Jan 19		
TOPIC: MEDIA STUDIES NARRATIVE ANALYSIS		
In-Class screening: <i>Day of the Daleks</i> ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u> • Britton: "The Very Fabric of Time and Space" • Morris (in Booth): "Britain as Fantasy" • Wood and Miles: "Does Plot Matter?"	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> None	<u>Assignments Due:</u> None

Day 06: Wednesday Jan 21		
TOPIC: MEDIA STUDIES NARRATIVE ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: "Blink" In-Class screening: <i>The Daemons</i> ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u> • O'Donnell: pp. 69-81 • Saint and French (in Lewis and Smithka) • Sleight: "The Weeping Angels"	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> Sleight: "The Daemons" Leach: 29-38	<u>Assignment Due:</u> Short Synthesis

Day 07: Monday Jan 26		
TOPIC: MEDIA STUDIES GENRE ANALYSIS		
In-Class Screening: <i>City of Death</i> ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u> • McKee: "Why is City of Death..." • Miles and Wood: "Is this Sci-Fi?"	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> Leach: pp. 39-64 <u>Optional Screening:</u> <i>Robots of Death</i>	<u>Assignment Due:</u> None

Day 08: Wednesday Jan 28		
TOPIC: MEDIA STUDIES GENRE ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: "The Unicorn and the Wasp" In-Class Screening: <i>The Brain of Morbius</i> , ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u> • Freund (in Booth): "We're Making Our own Happy Ending"	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u> None	<u>Assignment Due:</u> Short Synthesis

• O'Donnell: pp. 92-101; 113-118		
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Day 09: Monday Feb 02		
TOPIC: CULTURAL STUDIES: RHETORICAL ANALYSIS		
In-Class Screening: <i>Kinda</i> , ep. 1		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> McMurtry (in Booth): "Do It Yourself" Tulloch and Alvarado: "Conditions of Production and Performance" Miles and Wood: "The JNT Era" 	None	Media Studies Paper

Day 10: Wednesday Feb 04		
TOPIC: CULTURAL STUDIES: RHETORICAL ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: "The Beast Below"		
In-Class Screening: <i>The Five Doctors -parts</i>		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> O'Donnell: pp. 132-141 Gupta: "Doctor Who, Cricket, and Race" 	Leach: pp. 55-64	Short Synthesis

Day 11: Monday Feb 09		
TOPIC: CULTURAL STUDIES: REPRESENTATIONAL ANALYSIS		
In-Class Screening: <i>Vengeance on Varos</i> , ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deller (in Lewis and Smithka) <i>Queers Dig Time Lords</i>, pp. 7-23 Wood: "Is the Doctor Good?" 	Leach: pp. 64-76	Peer Review
Special guest: Michael Damien Thomas, editor of <i>Queers Dig Time Lords</i>		

Day 12: Wednesday Feb 11		
TOPIC: CULTURAL STUDIES: REPRESENTATIONAL ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: "Planet of the Ood"		
In-Class Screening: <i>The Mysterious Planet</i> ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foss: "Ood as Slave Race" O'Donnell: pp. 150-160 Sleight: "The Ood" 	None	Short Synthesis

Day 13: Monday Feb 16		
TOPIC: CULTURAL STUDIES: RECEPTION ANALYSIS		
In-Class Screening: <i>Remembrance of the Daleks</i> , ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignments Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bolton-Gabrielsen: "Ace Through the Looking Glass" Hills: "Doctor Who Mafia" Perez (in Booth): "Gif Fics" Sleight: "The Daleks" Thomas: "Marrying into the TARDIS" 	Leach: pp. 76-85	Revision Media Studies Paper
Special guest: Lynne M. Thomas, author of "Marrying into the TARDIS"		

Day 14: Wednesday Feb 18		
TOPIC: CULTURAL STUDIES: RECEPTION ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: "The Idiot's Lantern" In-Class Screening: <i>The Curse of Fenric, ep 1</i> (clip of <i>Greatest Show in the Galaxy</i>)		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booth (in Booth): "Introduction" • Booth (in Booth): "The First Time" • Busse: "Fans, Fandom, and Fan Studies" • Hanley (in Lewis and Smithka) • Hills (in Booth): "The Eleven Fandoms" 	None	Short Synthesis

Day 15: Monday Feb 23		
TOPIC: PHILOSOPHY: AESTHETIC ANALYSIS		
In Class Screening: <i>TV Movie</i> (first half)		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignments Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Britton: "Towards an Aesthetics..." • Jones (in Booth): "Life in the Hiatus" • Miles and Wood: "Film or Video?" • Wood and Miles: "Is Doctor Who Camp?" 	None	None
Special guest: Piers Britton, author of <i>TardisBound</i>		

Day 16: Wednesday Feb 25		
TOPIC: PHILOSOPHY: AESTHETIC ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: <i>The Girl in the Fireplace</i> In Class Screening: <i>TV Movie</i> (second half);		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cazeaux (in Lewis and Smithka) • Kalyniuk (in Lewis and Smithka) • Lewis (373-378 in Lewis and Smithka) • O'Donnell: pp. 51-63 	None	Short Synthesis
Special guest: Craig Jones, author of "Life in the Hiatus"		

Day 17: Monday Mar 02		
TOPIC: PHILOSOPHY: POSTMODERN ANALYSIS		
In-Class screening: "The Night of the Doctor" and <i>The Day of the Doctor</i> (first half)		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Littmann (in Lewis and Smithka) • Perryman: "Transmedia Storytelling" • Porter: <i>The Doctor Who Franchise</i> 	Leach: 85-97	Cultural Studies Paper

Day 18: Wednesday Mar 04		
TOPIC: PHILOSOPHY: POSTMODERN ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: <i>Chimes of Midnight</i> In-Class screening: <i>The Day of the Doctor</i> (second half)		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hellekson (in Booth): "Doctor Who Unbound" • O'Donnell: pp. 165-170; 173-176' 		Short Synthesis
Special guest: Robert Shearman, author of <i>Chimes of Midnight</i>		

Day 19: Monday Mar 09		
Topic: PHILOSOPHY: ETHICAL ANALYSIS		

In Class Screening: <i>Scream of the Shalka</i> , ep 1		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cherry (in Booth): "Extermin-knit!" Decker (in Lewis and Smithka) Stoeber: "The Night of the Doctor" Vultee (in Booth): "The Language(s)" 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cornell: The Making of <i>Scream of the Shalka</i> 	Revision of Cultural Studies Paper (optional)

Day 20: Wednesday Mar 11		
Topic: PHILOSOPHY: ETHICAL ANALYSIS		
Out-Of-Class Screening: "Kill the Moon"		
In-Class Screening: "Listen"		
<u>Readings Due</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Forde (in Booth): "You Anorak" Riggio (in Lewis and Smithka) Webb and Wardecker (in Lewis and Smithka) Worley (in Lewis and Smithka) 	None	Short Synthesis

Final Day: March 16, 2015, from 2:45 PM to 5:00 PM		
<u>Readings Due:</u>	<u>Optional Reading Due:</u>	<u>Assignment Due:</u>
None	None	Philosophy Paper Due Synthesis Paper Due

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