

COURAGEOUS COMPANIONS

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EXPLORING EFFECTIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES THROUGH POPULAR CULTURE

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COURAGEOUS COMPANIONS

Followership in Doctor Who

BY

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United Kingdom – North America – Japan
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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

*This book is dedicated to everyone who strives for the courage to laugh hard,
run fast, and be kind.*

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Kimberly Yost writes about the intersection of popular culture and leadership to discover how popular culture influences our understanding of leaders and the practice of leadership. She is the author of *From Starship Captains to Galactic Rebels: Leaders in Science Fiction Television*, co-editor of *Leadership, Popular Culture, and Social Change* with Kristin M.S. Bezio, and contributed to various edited volumes, including *Gender, Media, and Organization: Mis(s)Representations of Women Leaders and Managers*, *Leadership, Populism, and Resistance*, *The Embodiment of Leadership*, *The Routledge Companion to Leadership*, and *The Sage Encyclopedia of Leadership Studies*. She is an editorial board member for the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Leadership Studies*. Dr Yost is an Assistant Professor at Pennsylvania Western University, California Campus, USA teaching management, organizational behavior, teamwork, and leadership courses.

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PREFACE

As a scholar who uses popular culture narratives – and particularly science fiction narratives – to explore concepts about leadership and organizations, I have always wanted to write about the *Doctor Who* series. While I'm not the ultimate Whovian, I enjoy the show very much. But for many years I just couldn't seem to find my way into the connection between The Doctor and leadership.

In the Fall of 2022, as I was preparing my syllabus for a class on teamwork and leadership, I had a moment of clarity when developing a module on followership. I had been thinking about the chronicles of The Doctor from the wrong perspective. I discovered the series is properly examined from the perspective of the Companions. The lessons to be learned come from Rose Tyler, Martha Jones, Donna Noble, Amy Pond, Rory Williams, Clara Oswald, Bill Potts, Yasmin Khan, Ryan Sinclair, River Song, Wilfred Mott, Harriet Jones, Captain Jack Harkness, The Osgoods, and so many more. Without the wisdom and strength of the Companions, The Doctor would inflict even greater chaos and vengeance across the universe. There would be no one to rein in the excesses or offer alternative solutions and crucial assistance. There would be no one to balance the wrath with compassion. There would be no one who could courageously stand up to The Doctor. Followership was the key to understanding *Doctor Who*.

While learning about leadership through popular culture is relatively commonplace now, I knew there would be a challenge in finding anyone who may be interested in the connection between followership and popular culture beyond the idea of the hero's sidekick. Happily, a colleague recommended *A Manager's Guide to Using the Force: Leadership Lessons from a Galaxy Far Far Away* by Michael J. Urick and I discovered Emerald Publishing's series on Exploring Effective Leadership Practices Through Popular Culture. I knew this could be a great vehicle to share my ideas and enthusiasm for the series and connect it to followership theory.

I am fortunate Michael Urick and Fiona Allison at Emerald Publishing agreed with me, and I hope you do, too. Enjoy!

Kimberly Yost
Spring 2023

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