Symbolic and Cued Immersion: Paratextual Framing Strategies on the *Doctor Who Experience* Walking Tour

Abstract:

This article employs autoethnographic reflections to contribute towards debates concerning film-induced tourism (Beeton, 2005) by analysing the officially-endorsed *Doctor Who Experience* Walking Tour around filming locations from the BBC series in Cardiff Bay, Wales. Approaching this tour as an example of paratextuality (Gray, 2010), the article pursues two arguments. Firstly, it reflects upon the attempts used within the tour for encouraging connection between participants and the locations visited from the perspective of immersion. However, noting preceding positions (Brooker, 2005), it is recognized that the tour constructs forms of imaginative immersion. The terms symbolic and cued immersion are subsequently introduced to consider the strategies that the tour employs to position fans and engage them with its frequently quotidian spaces. Secondly, the article explores the links between the tour's immersive strategies and its institutional context arguing that these assist in reinforcing core brand values regarding BBC Worldwide.

Keywords:

Media tourism, paratexts, *Doctor Who*, BBC, immersion.

Symbolic and Cued Immersion: Paratextual Framing Strategies on the *Doctor Who Experience* Walking Tour

The *Doctor Who Experience* Walking Tour (*DWE*WT hereafter) is an hour-and-a-half organized excursion around places in, or in close proximity to, the Mermaid Quay area of Cardiff Bay which have been used for filming the globally-successful (Chapman, 2013, p. 270) BBC series *Doctor Who*. The tour is a paid-for attraction, costing an extra £3 on top of the entry fee for the *Doctor Who Experience*, and is offered infrequently to paying *Experience* visitors throughout the year (typically on weekends, school and/or public holidays). The tour is promoted as offering the opportunity to "[s]ee over 30 filming locations from *Doctor Who* in this one-and-a-half mile walk" ("Walking Tours", n.d., para. 2). The Tour's marketing thus discursively distinguishes itself by employing "authenticities of place" (Hills, 2006, p. 71), which translates as a geographical ""closeness" to the text" (Hills, 2006, p. 69), arising from both Cardiff's status as *Doctor Who's* contemporary production base and the *Experience* and Tour's proximity to BBC Wales' Roath Lock studios where the programme is shot (the studios are visible from the *Experience* building and at points throughout the tour). These appeals to distinction are further reinforced by the *DWE*WT's status as a product affiliated with BBC Worldwide – the BBC's commercial operations wing – which is required to "build the BBC's brands, audiences, commercial returns and reputation across the world …through investing in, commercializing and showcasing content from the BBC" (BBC Worldwide, n.d., para. 1). Writing in relation to the *Doctor Who Experience* proper, Melissa Beattie (2013, p. 179) summarizes the institutional context(s) surrounding the attraction: "The "*Doctor Who* Experience" itself is a large, purpose-built facility that houses a number of props from both classic and new *Doctor Who*. It is owned by Cardiff County Council but rented and run by BBC Worldwide". The *DWE*WT is an extension of this context and so is framed by the same institutional concerns. The *DWE*WT is therefore an example of what Matt Hills (2002, p. 144) names "cult geography …diegetic and pro-filmic spaces

…which cult fans take as the basis for material, touristic practices" but arises from an official

institutional position rather than being self-organized by fans (see Brooker 2004, 2007a) or

provided by an unlicensed third party (Reijnders 2009, 2010).

Using the *DWE*WT as a case study, this article contributes towards scholarly

discussions concerning "film-induced tourism" (Beeton, 2005, p. 9) by treating the tour as an

official paratext which "set[s] the frames through which audience members …make sense of"

(Gray, 2010, p.10) both *Doctor Who* and the BBC. The discussion analyses how the *DWE*WT

constructs strategies to align participants with institutional ideologies concerning the BBC

and its status as a globally-recognized, 21st Century public service broadcaster. I argue here

that key to encouraging this alignment are strategies concerning immersion. Scott Lukas

(2013, p. 136) defines spatial immersion as "the ways that the guest feels able to be part of [a]

space" whilst Jinsil Seo and Diane Gromala (2007, p. 4) similarly identify that a sense of

"submerging" and "enveloping" within one's surroundings is important to how individuals

become (re-)connected to embodied spaces. Both Lukas' (2013) and Seo and Gromala's

(2007) arguments occur in relation to different spatial contexts (theme parks and art

installations respectively) and such forms of connection have been rightly disproved in

relation to location visiting practices. As Will Brooker (2005, p. 13) asserts in relation to

Blade Runner (Scott, 1982) tourism in Los Angeles, "these locations do not offer a fully

immersive, transcendent experience …Instead, they can only provide a less heightened

feeling of inbetweeness". Because visited filming locations immediately denote their

'everydayness' complete immersion within the fictional frame is denied. Such experiences

have thus been discussed through Victor Turner's (1995 [1969]) ideas concerning liminality

as "travellers …never reach the peak of intense connection with the 'promised land' …they

stand on the threshold" (Brooker, 2005, p. 13) of their favoured (media) texts (see also Aden,

1999; Brooker, 2007a, p. 430-4). Nevertheless, visitors to these spaces desire immersive

connections by recreating characters and sequences from favoured texts (Winter, 2002, p. 334). However, whilst Matt Hills – writing from a psychoanalytically-informed perspective concerning audience pleasures – has argued for "moving beyond reductive notions of …'immersion'" (2013, p. 84), ideas proposed by Seo and Gromala (2007) and Lukas (2013) demonstrate how attempts at immersion are always designed and constructed. Adapting Catherine Johnson's (2005, pp. 6-7) distinction between "textual" and "production" strategies, where the former constitute aspects of textuality which have been "put in place at the point of production …and enable us to understand how that context shaped" the approach taken, provides a suitable approach for analysing how attempts at connecting participants on the *DWE*WT with embodied and seen spaces operate as "immersive strategies". Given that Gray (2010, p. 3) argues that paratexts "establish frames and filters through which we look at …and interpret the texts that they hype", this article considers how an official paratext such as the *DWE*WT frames interpretation and encourages (imaginative) immersion whilst also connecting these strategies with institutional discourses concerning the BBC and BBC Worldwide.

The article posits that the *DWE*WT constructs two-interlinking strategies that I name "symbolic" and "cued immersion". Symbolic immersion concerns how adopting an institutionally-defined reading position is encouraged at the tour's beginning by crossing denoted thresholds which signify that tour participants have imaginatively transitioned to an alternative disposition. In comparison, cued immersion concerns how the tour's "collective gaze" (Urry and Larsen, 2011, p. 202) becomes constructed through the tour guide's commentary which encourages the intended relationship between participants, visited spaces and institutional values. By teasing out these strategies, points concerning the relationship between immersive reading positions and institutional contexts emerge.

Regarding methodology, the period of data collection for the *DWE*WT was the summer of 2014 and formed part of an ongoing investigation of *Doctor Who*-derived media tourism in Cardiff (an additional unofficial tour offered by Brit Movie Tours was also undertaken and provides an infrequent point of comparison below). The data gathered relates to the *DWE*WT offered until the end of August 2014 and the "Eleventh Doctor" incarnation of the *Experience* building. Coinciding with Peter Capaldi's debut as the Twelfth Doctor, the *Experience* was closed and re-themed in September 2014 to incorporate the show's change in lead actor. Walking tours were reintroduced for the summer 2015 season but the version of this article refers to the 2014 version of the *DWE*WT. The tour was undertaken twice to ensure data validity and extensive field notes regarding registering for, joining and partaking in the tour, as well as the guide's commentary, were made on both instances. Although there was a different guide for each tour (one was male, one was female; both were in their mid-twenties), the commentary provided and places visited remained broadly consistent. The interpretation of the data undertaken here is autoethnographic but, to display reflexivity (Hills, 2002, p. 72), is indicative of my status as a white middle-class male, aged in his early thirties who is a resident of the UK and a life-long *Doctor Who* fan. Additionally, to support this article's arguments and off-set connotations of idiosyncratic interpretations which can arise when using autoethnographic methodologies (see Booth, 2015, p. 107), the points are related back to institutional arguments concerning BBC Worldwide.

Immersion, Paratextuality and Organized Filming Location Tours

Reflecting on the construction of televisual narrative worlds, Sara Gwenllian-Jones (2004, p.85) observes that immersion within a fictional and continually-developing (hyper)diegesis (Hills, 2002, p. 136) is fragmentary, cumulative and subject to industrial

processes including licencing and franchising where paratexts cement and/or expand the diegesis (Gwenllian-Jones, 2004, p. 86). For cult TV fans, the "[i]mmersive experience is an alchemical effect of text and imagination …drawing on memory as well as imagination to reinforce its perceptual substance." (Gwenllian-Jones, 2004, p. 84). Gwenllian-Jones reinforces how becoming connected to a fictional world, whether through watching a programme (Brooker, 2007b), reading spin-off novels or visiting locations used in its filming requires a "leap of imagination" (Brooker, 2005, p. 23) to feel immersed within the fictional frame. Media fans therefore become *imaginatively immersed* within the textual and/or spatial dimensions of their favoured object.

This imaginative dimension is key to the experience of visiting filming locations. As Nick Couldry (2007, p. 143) astutely observes media tourism brings together "three spaces …: (1) the space of general tourism, (2) the space of media tourism, and (3) the imaginary action-space "within" the fictional narrative that (2) sometimes generates." Locations visited on the *DWE*WT are similarly triple-coded: the Wales Millennium Centre has featured as multiple diegetic action-spaces within the series (most recently as the alien Two Streams facility in 'The Girl Who Waited' (MacRae and Hurran, 2011)), whilst also remaining a leisure hub for visitors to Cardiff Bay and a place of employment. Participants on the *DWE*WT could therefore be thought of as displaying what Leshu Torchin (building upon Chris Rojek's (1997) discussion of tourism practices) deems "restless movement …negotiat[ing] the path between incommensurate spaces of actuality and virtuality" (Torchin, 2002, p. 250).

Given these ongoing negotiations between referential frames, organized tours like the *DWE*WT must employ strategies to ensure that participants engage with the embodied and seen spaces in the expected manner. Writing at a non-media specific level, John Urry and Jonas Larsen (2011, p. 202) recognize that "the collective gaze is socially and materially

orchestrated by guides upon sightseeing tours". This aligns with Gray's (2010, p. 25) understanding of paratextuality as he identifies that "[e]ach paratexts acts like an airlock to acclimatize us to a certain text, and it demands or suggests certain reading strategies". Organized tours around filming locations such as BBC Worldwide's *DWE*WT will therefore employ strategies to guide both interpretation of the spaces visited and the intended disposition that participants should adopt throughout the tour. Recognizing this raises two questions. Firstly, issues concerning how the tour's object of focus, as well as its production context, becomes framed in relation to institutional concerns arise. Secondly, how participants are invited to adopt the tour's constructed reading position can be addressed.

These issues have, for various theoretical and/or methodological reasons, been downplayed in preceding studies. In academic work exploring cult geography, the focus has been on reflexive analysis of self-organized examples of location visiting and alternative theoretical perspectives, such as the aforementioned concerns with liminality, have taken precedent (Brooker 2005, 2007a; Beattie 2013). Although points regarding immersion (and frequent barriers to this) have been noted, consideration of paratextual framings and institutionally-located strategies for engaging participants with locations have been less relevant. However, interesting points have been suggested in previous studies of organized media tourism but not explored from the perspective being suggested here. Ashley Nelson's (2004, p. 231) comments concerning an unofficial tour of *Sex and the City* locations expresses displeasure towards the tour's framing strategies as the constructed reading position foregrounded the series' consumerist discourses over alternative feminist interpretations. In other words, the discursive framing of this "non-corporate controlled" (Hardy, 2011, p. 8) paratext encouraged a connection with the embodied and seen spaces, as well as the series itself, in a way that jarred with Nelson's feminist-indebted position. Due primarily to the piece's succinct nature, reflection upon how participants were encouraged to

adopt the tour's preferred reading position, and how this relates to institutionality, are overlooked.

Elsewhere, Torchin's (2002, p. 254) study of an unofficial tour of film and TV locations around New York demonstrates how "the majority of [the] tour offers the deliberate display of discrepancy, or 'bloopers', which call attention to the gaps between virtual worlds and the world before us on the tour". These "bloopers" include pointing out incongruities like the disparities between the jobs assigned to the characters in *Friends* and rental prices in the areas of the city that the programme depicts (Torchin, 2002, p. 259). Torchin is not alone in noting such framings of production contexts on unofficial tours: Reijnders (2010, p. 45) notes how "guides are happy to point out the practical impossibility of certain scenes" on tours related to *Inspector Morse* in Oxford, England, whilst Sue Beeton (2005, p. 38), when discussing the same tour company as Torchin (2002), identifies that its marketing highlights "the opportunity to straddle fiction and reality". Cumulatively, these tours suggest that an ongoing sense of imaginative connection between the programme and the participant is denied as the framing strategies encourage movement between the different referential levels that Couldry (2007) mentions. Rather than exploring the approaches taken by these tours as examples of "unofficial" paratextuality, these studies instead prioritize other concerns. Torchin, for example, approaches her object of study from a sociological perspective, investigating issues of hyperreality and "the discursive binary of authenticity and artifice" (2002, p. 249) that recurs in many studies of tourism (MacCannell, 2013 [1976]; Buchmann, Moore and Fisher, 2009; Urry and Larsen, 2011). The links between the tour's framing strategies and its institutional context are subsequently overlooked.

Conversely, Reijnders (2010, p. 48) moves towards addressing such issues by positing that organized tours of sites linked to TV detective programmes frame the locations visited as "*lieux d'imagination* …places …which, for certain groups in society, serve as physical points

of reference to an imagined world …[where] tourists are able to construct and subsequently cross a symbolic boundary between an 'imagined' and 'real' world." This argument is useful for various reasons. Firstly, the imaginative sense of immersion between tour participants and fan object encouraged by these tours is again noted. Secondly, by mentioning constructions of symbolic boundaries here – albeit in this instance between the 'fictional' and the 'real' – Reijnders' statement intersects with Couldry's (1998) study of fans visiting the set of British soap opera *Coronation Street* in Manchester, England. Drawing upon Barbara Babcock's (1978) discussions of symbolic power, Couldry (1998, p.100) argues that "[a] lot of the humour …arises from a detailed play with boundaries …where a threshold is crossed" on the *Granada Studios* Tour as tourists are invited to temporarily enter into unfamiliar spaces of media production. Issues concerning symbolic boundaries are returned to shortly as they are significant to understanding how the *DWE*WT positions its participants - especially regarding symbolic immersion strategies. Despite these insights, Reijnders (2010) emphasizes the experiences of tour participants over the strategies that the studied tours employ to imaginatively connect participants with the spaces visited as well as institutional contexts. Although noting how "guides …encourage and contribute to …consumptive forms of ostentation on the part of the tourists, re-enacting certain scenes from the TV series on location" (Reijnders, 2010, p. 49), the framing of these recreations, the programme itself and/or the production context(s) through institutional concerns is underplayed.

What's more, the tours discussed in these articles all constitute "unofficial" examples. In contrast, the *DWE*WT is an official tour linked to the programme's production context via BBC Worldwide. Analysing this tour means that such considerations as how relationships between participants, the locations embodied and seen, and official institutional discourses such as BBC Worldwide's responsibilities in marketing BBC products can be explored. Writing in relation to the official *Doctor Who* 50th Anniversary Celebration convention run

by BBC Worldwide, Hills (2014) has touched upon overlapping issues by arguing that this semi-centennial event "lack[ed] …brand congruence between commercial contexts and the BBC's overarching public service identity" (p. 172). Expanding further, he states

> the 'Celebration' seem[ed] like an indeterminate admixture of commercial and public service environments: at one moment paying attendees could be addressed as consumers, and in the next moment greeted as members of the public or recognized as loyal fans …there was not an outright hybrid of public service and exchange value on show, but neither was there a sustained separation of public service and commercial environments.

Hills' focus concerns how core tensions presently impacting upon the BBC, namely its ongoing balancing of public service and commercial responsibilities (see also Johnson, 2012, pp. 96-108; Johnson, 2013), are managed (or not, in this instance) within a particular paratextual example. Whilst not concerned with strategies for immersing fans within the convention's spaces, his argument indicates how institutional priorities for BBC Worldwide can structure paratextual construction. Extending this point, but combining it with consideration of how imaginative connection with embodied and seen spaces visited on organized tours are constructed, informs the ensuing analysis of the *DWE*WT. To begin with, I will outline strategies of what I have named "symbolic immersion" employed at the start of the tour that encourage participant alignment with the institutionally-defined reading position constructed for the tour's duration.

Symbolic Immersion

Publicity framings for the *DWE*WT employ multiple discourses including appeals to distinction via foregrounding a subculturally-recognisable author (it is "[p]roduced by Doctor Who novelist Gary Russell"; "*Doctor Who* Walking Tour Dates Extended", 2014, para. 2) and promising to be "informative and entertaining" ("Walking Tours", n.d., para. 1). Suggestions of immersion also arise through participants being offered the opportunity to "get even closer to your favourite show" ("*Doctor Who* Walking Tour Dates Extended, 2014, para. 2) by partaking in a journey that takes tour members to "Victorian London, New New York, Apalapucia …(even Colchester!)" ("Walking Tours", n.d., para. 1). From the perspective of paratextual framing, this discourse connotes immersive possibilities via suggesting that opportunities for "being a part of the world and the story" (Lukas, 2013, p. 137). This is because, alongside learning information about *Doctor Who*'s production in Cardiff, the discourse suggests imaginatively echoing the Doctor's footsteps by visiting multiple spatio-temporal locations during the tour. BBC Worldwide's institutional requirement to extend the brand meanings and reputation of its core products are identifiable as the *DWE*WT is promoted as echoing the TARDIS' footsteps.

Replicating text-based pleasures has been recognized as a motivation for participants to partake in organized examples of media tourism. Reijnders (2009, p. 173) posits that "[t]he detectives in …*Morse*, *Baantjer* and *Wallander* are always on the go, travelling from suspect to police station" and so "by following in the character's tracks …, the story can be relived and at the same time supplanted with new sensory impressions." (Reijnders, 2009, p.174). The *DWE*WT could be aligned with these perspectives as its promotion foregrounds the programme's promise of "all of time and space" when visiting its filming locations. However, specifically in relation to filming locations tours, previous studies have not considered the institutionally-constructed strategies that tour groups use to *position and encourage* imaginative immersion. Instead, where these ideas have been discussed, they have

been directed towards self-enclosed themed spaces. Both Couldry (2000, p. 83) and Beattie

(2013, p. 179) identify that visitors are required to "cross through the screen" when entering

into themed and/or filming spaces concerning *Coronation Street* and *Doctor Who*

respectively. Central to being encouraged to imaginatively enter into the fictional frame, then,

is "crossing various thresholds" (Beattie, 2013, p. 179) that demark boundaries between

'everyday' and 'media' spheres. In comparison, external spaces visited on organized filming

location tours cannot "offer a convincing experience of entering a fictional diegesis"

(Brooker, 2005, p. 14) due to their quotidian nature. Nevertheless, in the case of the

*DWE*WT*,* coded thresholds are constructed and crossing these constitutes institutional

strategies of what I have called "symbolic immersion". Symbolic immersion occurs

cumulatively at the start of the *DWE*WT, but continues throughout its duration, to encourage

alignment with the tour's intended reading position.

Firstly, like all visitors entering the *Experience*, participants have to cross a symbolic

boundary via passing through the attraction's front door. The *Experience* has one main

entrance (there is another, to the side, which leads you directly into the café and bathroom

facilities) which initially looks like an ordinary push/pull door. However, the door's main

component is glass which has been overlaid with a graphic replicating the programme's

swirling blue time vortex design (Figure 1). The entrance not only builds anticipation as, by

covering the entrance in a recognizable design used in the title sequence from the series'

rebranded fifth series (Hills, 2014), entry into the *Doctor Who Experience* becomes a

symbolic act. Visitors cross a denoted threshold and begin entering into the world of *Doctor*

Who by symbolically replicating the beginning of an episode. This meaning is then reinforced

as you walk into the foyer area as recognizable music from the programme's history is

audible. Just as television title sequences function as "self-presentation and self-promotion

…express[ing] a particular affective mode which the producers wish to be associated with it"

(Gripsrud, 1995, pp. 183-4), the recreation of such paratextual elements for visitors entering

the *Doctor Who Experience* signifies core programme brand values of adventure, dynamism

and excitement. What's more, these strategies encourage visitors to adopt an alternative

disposition after entering as it is suggested that they are now within the spectacular,

commodified, and mediated (Sandvoss, 2005, p. 49-51) world of *Doctor Who* and the BBC.

Figure 1: Entrance to the Doctor Who Experience.

However, participants are not yet fully symbolically immersed and aligned with the

*DWE*WT's intended reading position. Instead, subjects inhabiting the building's foyer are

better thought of as displaying a liminal identity in-between the "fictional" and the "real" as

the everyday (people seeking refreshment, using bathroom facilities) and the imaginary

(diegetic props) intermingle. For participants on the *DWE*WT, taking up the tour's preferred

reading position is further encouraged by an additional symbolically-coded act which aims to

imaginatively transform participants' relationship with the tour's visited locations. This second stage occurs when participants register for the tour and are required to put on a branded *Doctor Who Experience* lanyard that identifies them as a member of the party.

The lanyard itself is unspectacular as it is made of polyester and features the attraction's logo against a plain black backdrop. Acquiring and putting on the lanyard fulfils various functions, not all of which are connected to symbolic immersion, and so can be interpreted from a number of perspectives. On the one hand, the lanyard fulfils an administrative function as it allows the guide to monitor participants' whereabouts (Weiler and Ham, 2001, p. 256). On the other, wearing the lanyard could be viewed as a detraction from imaginative immersion within the (extra)diegetic world of *Doctor Who* due to the connotations it potentially generates. Wearing lanyards is contemporaneously associated with spheres of work as they frequently indicate corporate (Kerr, Dombkins and Jelley, 2012, p. 246) or professional identities (Avery, 2012, pp. 141-2). The intrusion of these objects into a leisure-coded activity such as visiting *Doctor Who* filming locations may provide a barrier to becoming aligned with the tour's intended reading position for some participants. Whilst empirical audience research would provide a way of exploring participants' reactions towards the lanyards, the autoethnographic approach which this article adopts, written from the perspective of an aca-fan invested in both *Doctor Who* and the BBC, permits considering acquiring and displaying the lanyard as another stage within symbolic immersion. This is because the process arguably builds excitement and anticipation for the tour by providing a second symbolic threshold which must be passed. Similar to how Gray (2010, p.73) argues that television pre-texts such as trailers and credits sequences "serve [as] an entryway for new audiences, introducing them to …genre, themes …and general subject matter", the *DWE*WT's construction of symbolic thresholds encourages an adjustment in the interpretive frame(s) of tour participants towards the locations they will visit.

Moreover, gaining and wearing the lanyard intersects with ideas concerning transition which have been discussed in relation to immersion. This occurs in two ways: firstly, it is an exclusive item (it is not available for purchase in the *Experience's* shop) and is unique to the tour as it distinguishes tour members' from other visitors to the *Experience* (as well as those visiting Cardiff Bay) on the day. Instead of looking like other inhabitants occupying the *Experience's* foyer, *DWE*WT participants suddenly echo the look of their guide who, although symbolically-differentiated from tour participants by wearing an official BBC-branded uniform, also wears a (different BBC) lanyard as an indicator of their professional identity. Secondly, participants are only in possession of the lanyard for the tour's duration; as the *DWE*WT begins, the guide informs group members that they can leave at any time by returning the lanyard to them. Acquiring and displaying, and then removing and relinquishing, the lanyard therefore represents the start and end of the tour to participants and so is associated with transitioning to and from group membership. Seo and Gromala (2007, p.6) argue that "[i]mmersion is often described as a transition, a passage from one realm to another" which, in the context of this tour, concerns how coded boundaries between 'reality' and 'fiction', and worlds of media 'production' and 'reception', have been crossed and that participants' subject positions have altered. Whilst, as discussed above, complete transcendence is impossible, putting on the lanyard connotes the beginning of a "symbolic journey" (Brooker 2007a, p. 430) and a state of transition towards adopting the institutionally-defined disposition that the tour will provide. The lanyard can therefore be read as another strategy of symbolic immersion for tour participants by communicating that they are occupying a privileged-yet-temporary position (Earl, 2008) via gaining information about *Doctor Who* and its production in Cardiff.

The distinctiveness of the *DWE*WT's symbolic immersion strategies can be demonstrated by contrasting them with those employed by Brit Movie Tours. The latter tour

incorporates a "cold start" as registration occurs through having your name ticked off on a piece of (unbranded) paper by the guide within the foyer of the Wales Millennium Centre (which is being occupied by other non-fans). Symbolic thresholds are not provided here and this creates a jarring effect as participants are expected to immediately adjust their disposition towards the world(s) of *Doctor Who* (to aid this, the guide uses a flip folder containing screengrabs from the series to verify what he is saying). Additionally, foregrounding symbolic immersion strategies at the start of the *DWE*WT is necessary because, immediately after exiting the *Experience* building, places that may already have been encountered (and potentially ignored) whilst journeying to the exhibit are identified as filming locations. Having crossed back over the bridge linking the *Experience* with the main areas of Cardiff Bay, the guide informs participants that the stretch of water they are looking at (and may have seen before) has doubled for London in 'The Sontaran Stratagem' (Raynor and Mackinnon, 2008) and, via the use of additional model work and CGI, the North Pole in 'Cold War' (Gatiss and Mackinnon, 2013). Symbolic immersion aims to ease the transition to reconsidering pre-seen locations as spaces of diegetic-action because it has already been connoted to participants that they should have adopted an alternative understanding of their surroundings as one which is now informed by BBC production discourses.

However, whilst symbolic immersion is cumulatively employed at the start of the tour and continues throughout, another set of immersive strategies that I have named "cued immersion" are implemented for the tour's duration and work alongside those discussed above. The next section discusses cued immersion in greater detail and it is here where the articulation of specific BBC brand values becomes visible.

Cued Immersion

When discussing organized tours, John Urry and Jonas Larsen (2011, p. 202) argue these construct a "collective gaze" as guides provide participants with a commentary that instructs "the consumption of what to see …[and] how to see it" (Urry and Larsen, 2011, p. 203). As paratexts similarly generate frames which locate and guide audience interpretations, these two perspectives can arguably be unified. Considering the scripted (and authored) commentary for the *DWE*WT as a paratext raises questions concerning how interpretation of the tour's embodied and seen spaces, as well as *Doctor Who*'s production context, becomes constructed, how participants are encouraged to engage with the tour's locations and how these represent strategies implemented by BBC Worldwide to assert programme and/or institutional brand values.

Throughout the *DWE*WT, whenever a new place is arrived at, participants are asked by the guide if they recognize the inhabited and/or viewed space(s). Such enquiries can be viewed as momentary opportunities for displays of "fan cultural capital" (Hills, 2002, p. 52) as participants are given opportunities to demonstrate their accumulated knowledge. However, if read from a paratextual perspective, these exercises – and the frequently blank responses elicited – eventually provide aural triggers which summarize the scenes and episodes filmed in the inhabited locations and combine this with information concerning how the spaces were transformed (whether on-site or during post-production). The *DWE*WT guide's script therefore imbues the location with diegetic and/or extra-diegetic significance through intertwining narrative and production discourses. This commentary constitutes an additional set of immersive strategies, which I would name "cued immersion", as the information disclosed provides cues which are designed to fulfil two functions and connect tour members to the space. Firstly, the commentary intends to stimulate memories of the sequences filmed within that location. The form of remembrance encouraged here is likely to combine memories of the episode(s) mentioned with those concerning the accompanying

viewing context(s) (Holdsworth, 2011, p. 7). Attachment to the space is thus encouraged

through stimulating and intertwining both personal (or group) identity with (extra)diegetic

discourses. Secondly, the guide further encourages cued immersion by revealing how the

seen and embodied spaces relate to *Doctor Who* on- and off-screen. Elizabeth C. Fine and

Jean Haskell Speer (1985, p.80) have argued that tour guides assist in "unlock[ing] the doors"

of embodied spaces to visitors. Although this argument is made in relation to denoted acts

occurring on tours, Fine and Haskell's metaphor can be extended because, as they note, the

use of "verbal devices to …enhance, and elevate" (1985, p.80) is an additional expectation of

tour guide commentary. The idea of unmasking connects to immersive possibilities because,

as Lukas (2013, p. 137) argues, "the feeling of awe" is important to immersive feelings as

"the person feels part of something bigger" (Lukas, 2013, p.137). Although immersion

remains at the imaginative level due to the mundane nature of many locations and other non-

fans occupying these spaces, the guide's commentary cues connection by revealing its

relevance to *Doctor Who* and how it was transformed by BBC Wales' production team.

Discussing an example of cued immersion demonstrates the concept and its uses for

analysing the *DWE*WT-as-paratext. On both tours, the party stopped outside of The

Waterguard pub in Cardiff Bay. When probed as to whether anyone knew of its significance

to producing *Doctor Who*, a silent response was drawn and so the guide asked us to

remember both the episode 'The Runaway Bride' (Davies and Hawes, 2006) for which the

interior had been used and, regarding the exterior that was being immediately looked at, the

episode 'Adam' (Treganna and Goddard, 2008) from spin-off series *Torchwood*. From here

the group was informed that, with the assistance of CGI work and many tonnes of sand, the

viewed location had featured as the home of the young Captain Jack Harkness (Jack

Montgomery) from the latter episode. This diegetic information was then expanded upon via

a humorous anecdote concerning how, after setting up the location for shooting one evening,

some freak overnight weather had washed away the sand deposits and so, upon returning to

the location in the morning, quick thinking had to be employed to promptly replace it so that

the shoot could commence. This commentary encourages connection with the location at two

levels: firstly, imaginative immersion is encouraged diegetically via the narrative cues

provided. However, acknowledging both the potential range of interests in *Doctor Who* on

the tour (participants ranged from young children to people in their later years and included

families and couples – a point recognized at the start by the guide by enquiring who had

"been dragged along under sufferance") and/or the CGI-heavy nature of the sequence.

Connection to the space is also encouraged extra-diegetically as the cues suggest that an

appreciative stance should be taken towards the skill and professionalism that working for the

BBC requires. The guide's commentary thus sets the *DWE*WT's discursive tone and so

suggests that participants can feel imaginatively immersed at either diegetic and/or extra-

diegetic levels.

  However, tying in the *DWE*WT's institutional contexts, the spatial connections

suggested via cued immersion strategies assist in reinforcing core BBC brand values.

Paratextual material is understood as forwarding certain readings of a media text (or

institution) over others. By extension, the *DWE*WT guide's commentary and cues can be seen

as encouraging how participants should read and become connected to the tour's locations.

Official paratexts are underpinned by institutional ideologies seeking to accentuate specific

meanings regarding the text (and its producing institution). Briefly comparing the *DWE*WT's

commentary to that provided by Brit Movie Tours on their Cardiff Bus Tour is indicative of

this because, whilst the Waterguard was also visited on this excursion, information

concerning the sand's removal was not provided. Such differences are significant for

analysing the *DWE*WT as BBC Worldwide's remit identifies that "any product or service

associated with the BBC might impact on its brand reputation and …, as a consequence, it

needs to ensure that all activities that use the BBC brand are congruent with its core public

purposes." (Johnson, 2013, p. 326) Cued immersion strategies assist in these processes by

reinforcing meanings concerning the BBC as a producer of "quality" drama series (BBC

Trust, 2012, p. 1) such as *Doctor Who* (Hills, 2010, pp. 147-170).

　　　　Mary Debrett (2009, p. 35) identifies that "quality" contains "vari[ous] interpretations

(high culture, diversity, impartiality, professionalism, and serving the public interest)" for the

BBC at present. Aforementioned aspects of the *DWE*WT overlap with different parts of this

definition: joking about the various levels of interest towards *Doctor Who* suggests discourses

of diversity via the Corporation's requirement to "deliver its [public service] remit through

…wide appeal" (BBC Trust, 2012, p. 2) as more casual viewers are not alienated. However,

one of the primary ways that cued immersion reinforces core BBC brand values occurs at the

extra-diegetic level is by reminding participants that *Doctor Who* "demonstrate[s] high

production values, and feature[s] the best talent" (BBC Trust, 2012, p. 2) on both sides of the

camera. For example, whilst looking at a derelict building site on the outskirts of Cardiff Bay

which became an abandoned New York building that River Song (Alex Kingston) jumps

from in 'Day of the Moon' (Moffat and Haynes, 2011), the guide's cues invite participants to

connect with the location not only as a diegetic action-space but also extra-textually by

considering the skills required by production personnel (e.g. location scouts, set designers,

cinematographers, post-production workers) to transform the space into its fictional referent.

Cued immersion again suggests the required disposition towards these sites and reminds

participants of the skilled nature of those who work on the series, reinforcing core brand

values regarding the Corporation's role as a producer of "well-funded and well-produced

programmes" (Petley, 2006, p. 44).

　　　　Yet, arguing this point prompts reflection concerning whether encouraging

interpretation of the source material and its producing institution, as "quality" would be

solely limited to the context of *Doctor Who* and the BBC. In era of widespread tele-branding

practices (Johnson, 2007, 2012), it is difficult to imagine a comparative official tour of

filming locations that would want to encourage "non quality" evaluations. However, two

points should be recognized regarding the *DWE*WT that suggest why "quality" discourses are

accentuated for this example. Firstly, BBC Worldwide's requirement to "build the

…reputation of the BBC" (BBC Worldwide, 2014, p. 3) should not be understated. Given

that "los[ing] confidence in the integrity of …our output or the BBC brand" (BBC

Worldwide, 2014, p. 29) constitutes a major risk for BBC Worldwide's operations,

reinforcing "quality" associations for both *Doctor Who* and the BBC is a significant concern

both globally and domestically (a point underlined by the tour's international make-up as

participants from Brazil, the Middle East and different areas of the UK were observable).

However, *Doctor Who*'s science fiction elements also assist in cueing *DWE*WT

participants to engage with the seen and embodied spaces through discourses of "quality".

For example, whilst discussing guide commentaries on TV detective fiction tours, Reijnders

(2010, p. 45) notes how they also "point out camera techniques which make buildings appear

larger or smaller …[thus providing] tourists [with] a "glimpse behind the scenes"". The

commentary on these tours seemingly echoes that provided on the *DWE*WT as a similarly

appreciative stance towards production techniques appears to be encouraged. Televisual

crime series, especially British examples, are nevertheless frequently associated with

aesthetics of "realism" and a pseudo-documentary style (Turnbull, 2014, pp. 57-8). In terms

of visiting locations for these series, then, the appreciative stance towards the production

context that tour participants can adopt appears primarily coded in terms of re-scaling the

destinations visited. In comparison, as James Chapman (2013, p. 221) recognizes about

Doctor Who, "action and spectacle …ha[s] characterised the series since its 2005 relaunch."

Many of the locations visited on the *DWE*WT have thus been transformed into diegetic

action-spaces via heavy uses of CGI, model work and other post-production techniques. This

means that the appreciative stance encouraged by the tour's cues becomes heightened as

participants are not only invited to note how aspects such as camera lenses re-envisage spaces

(Brooker, 2005, p. 19), but to also consider the effort required to change an everyday site into

an alien landscape or "past" location. Moreover, this "quality" reading position encouraged

via strategic cues is also demonstrated by inviting participants to consider how particular

locations on the tour have been re-used multiple times. The aforementioned stop at the Wales

Millennium Centre best demonstrates this as the commentary positions participants to

consider the skill involved in reconfiguring this space as multiple Earth-bound and extra-

terrestrial locations. Whether reflecting upon the skills needed to transform spaces into other

worlds, places and times or re-using the same space, the cues provided encourage *DWE*WT

participants to connect with these spaces extra-diegetically through discourses of quality and

professionalism. By doing this, the tour's immersive strategies protect and reinforce core

elements of the BBC's brand identity.

Conclusion

This article has contributed towards debates concerning media-derived tourism and

cult geography by focusing on an official organized example of these practices. Focusing on

issues concerning immersion, and whilst noting that complete absorption within the fictional

fame remains impossible within this context, the arguments pursued here have considered the

*DWE*WT from the perspective of paratextual analysis and recognized that attempts at

connecting participants with the locations visited on the tour are designed according to

institutional concerns. To this end, analysis of the *DWE*WT has introduced the concepts of

symbolic and cued immersion which are ongoing throughout the tour's duration and

encourage participants to adopt an alternative, institutionally-constructed reading position and engage with the spaces embodied and seen on the tour at both diegetic and extra-diegetic levels. One consequence of these strategies for engaging participants on the *DWE*WT is that they become invited to reflect upon the skills required for shooting and re-using locations around Cardiff Bay which have been used for filming *Doctor Who*. Consequently, the *DWE*WT's immersive strategies can be aligned with institutional priorities structuring BBC Worldwide's remit at present as, alongside accommodating *Doctor Who*'s contemporary "telefantasy-as "consensus" audience grabber" (Hills, 2010, p. 211) by recognizing the diversity of enthusiasm across group membership (Weiler and Ham, 2001, p. 256), participants are encouraged to consider the programme as a "quality" product by a "quality" television institution. As a result, the strategies of symbolic and cued immersion discuss here support aspects of BBC Worldwide's remit by reinforcing important contemporary brand values for the Corporation.

By exploring the immersive strategies discussed here and their relation to institutional contexts it is hoped that these will provide opportunities for further academic discussion in different tourist and/or institutional contexts. Consideration of how denoted themed spaces such as the Disneyland or Universal Studios resorts, or specific attractions within these themed spaces derived from individual franchises or properties, provides one avenue for further discussion, critique and application. Alternatively, consideration of these ideas in relation to organized walking tours linked to mediated historical mediated figures, such as Jack the Ripper or Sherlock Holmes in London, provide other cases for consideration. Nevertheless, irrespective of the examples employed, exploring the links between how tourists are encouraged to become connected to spaces, the strategies for constructing preferred readings and the institutional contexts that these arise from should be debated further.

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