

# DEATH, MEMORIALIZATION AND DEVIANT SPACES

## **Emerald Studies in Death and Culture**

**Series Editors:** Ruth Penfold-Mounce, University of York, UK; Julie Rugg, University of York, UK; Jack Denham, York St John University, UK

**Editorial Advisory Board:** Jacque Lynn Foltyn, National University, USA; Lisa McCormick, University of Edinburgh, UK; Ben Poore, University of York, UK, Melissa Schrift, East Tennessee State University, USA; Kate Woodthorpe, University of Bath, UK

*Emerald Studies in Death and Culture* provides an outlet for cross-disciplinary exploration of aspects of mortality. The series creates a new forum for the publication of interdisciplinary research that approaches death from a cultural perspective. Published texts will be at the forefront of new ideas, new subjects, new theoretical applications and new explorations of less conventional cultural engagements with death and the dead.

### **Published titles**

Brian Parsons, *The Evolution of the British Funeral Industry in the 20th Century: From Undertaker to Funeral Director*

Ruth Penfold-Mounce, *Death, the Dead and Popular Culture*

### **Forthcoming titles**

Tim Bullamore, *The Art of Obituary Writing*

Racheal Harris, *Meaning and Symbolism in Pet Inspired Memorial Tattoos: Echoes and Imitations of Life*

# DEATH, MEMORIALIZATION AND DEVIANT SPACES

BY

MATTHEW SPOKES  
JACK DENHAM  
BENEDIKT LEHMANN  
*York St John University, UK*



United Kingdom – North America – Japan  
India – Malaysia – China

Emerald Publishing Limited  
Howard House, Wagon Lane, Bingley BD16 1WA, UK

First edition 2018

Copyright © Matthew Spokes, Jack Denham and  
Benedikt Lehmann. Published under exclusive licence.

**Reprints and permissions service**

Contact: [permissions@emeraldinsight.com](mailto:permissions@emeraldinsight.com)

No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, transmitted in any form or by any means electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without either the prior written permission of the publisher or a licence permitting restricted copying issued in the UK by The Copyright Licensing Agency and in the USA by The Copyright Clearance Center. Any opinions expressed in the chapters are those of the authors. Whilst Emerald makes every effort to ensure the quality and accuracy of its content, Emerald makes no representation implied or otherwise, as to the chapters' suitability and application and disclaims any warranties, express or implied, to their use.

**British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data**

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-1-78756-574-6 (Print)

ISBN: 978-1-78756-571-5 (Online)

ISBN: 978-1-78756-573-9 (Epub)



Certificate Number 1985  
ISO 14001

ISOQAR certified  
Management System,  
awarded to Emerald  
for adherence to  
Environmental  
standard  
ISO 14001:2004.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

# CONTENTS

<i>List of Figures</i>	vii
------------------------	-----

<b>Introduction</b>	1
I.1. Doing Things with Heritage	3
I.2. Death, Memorialization and Deviant Spaces	7
I.3. Structure	9
I.3.1. Theatrics	9
I.3.2. Consumption	10
I.3.3. Politicization	10
I.4. The Aims of This Book	11
<b>1. Heritage and Space: Some Theoretical Perspectives</b>	13
1.1. Questions of Power and Scale	15
1.2. Space as Relational, Space as Social	20
1.3. Turning Back to Lefebvre	22
<b>2. Theatrics (The Tyburn Gallows, York)</b>	27
2.1. Unpacking Lefebvre's Spatial Triad	31
2.2. Tyburn as a Historically and Topographically Conceived Space	37
2.3. Tyburn as a Lived Space	48
2.4. Tyburn as a Perceived Space	57
2.5. Tyburn as Theatrical Space	65
2.6. Conclusion	76
<b>3. Consumption (Number 25 Cromwell Street, Gloucester)</b>	79
3.1. Some Context	82
3.2. Number 25 as Perceived Space	87
3.3. Number 25 as Conceived Space	88

3.4.	Number 25 as Lived Space	92
3.5.	Theatrical Space or Watched Space?	96
3.6.	Theatrical Space as Contradictory Space	99
3.7.	The Space of Consumption	102
3.8.	Conclusion	104
4.	<b>Politicization (Neumarkt, Dresden)</b>	107
4.1.	Dresden's Neumarkt as Conceived Space	109
4.2.	Dresden's Neumarkt as Perceived Space	115
4.3.	Spatial Practice and Political Subjectivities	122
4.4.	Conclusion	126
5.	<b>Conclusions</b>	131
C.1.	Where Next?	136
	<i>Bibliography</i>	141
	<i>Index</i>	155

# LIST OF FIGURES

## Chapter 2

Figure 2.1	Tyburn Detail . . . . .	27
Figure 2.2	Surrounding Woodland, from Tyburn . . . . .	29
Figure 2.3	Information Board Detail: Floral Tributes . . . . .	30
Figure 2.4	Lefebvre's Spatial Triad. . . . .	32
Figure 2.5	Samuel Parson's 1624 Map . . . . .	40
Figure 2.6	1853 Map of Micklegate Stray. . . . .	42
Figure 2.7	1853 Map of Micklegate Stray (St. Mary Bishophill Detail). . . . .	43
Figure 2.8	1910 Tyburn Map. . . . .	44
Figure 2.9	1932 Tyburn Map. . . . .	45
Figure 2.10	2017 Tyburn Map. . . . .	46
Figure 2.11	Tyburn Information Sign . . . . .	48
Figure 2.12	Tyburn Site with Bench . . . . .	49
Figure 2.13	Dick Turpin's Grave . . . . .	50
Figure 2.14	Three Legged Mare Sign Detail . . . . .	51
Figure 2.15	Medieval Boundary Stone . . . . .	52
Figure 2.16	Little Hob Moor Noticeboard . . . . .	53
Figure 2.17	Cycle Route across Little Hob Moor . . . . .	53

Figure 2.18	Distance Marker on Tadcaster/Hob Moor Road . . . . .	54
Figure 2.19	The Hob Stone (left) . . . . .	55
Figure 2.20	The Plague Stone Plaque . . . . .	56
Figure 2.21	New Tree Growth at Knavesmire . . . . .	58
Figure 2.22	Fenced-off Saplings . . . . .	59
Figure 2.23	Grass Meadow South of Tyburn . . . . .	60
Figure 2.24	Sign for Dog Walkers . . . . .	61
Figure 2.25	Path Adjacent to Racecourse . . . . .	63
Figure 2.26	Path through Woodland Facing North. . . . .	64
Figure 2.27	Path through Woodland Facing South. . . . .	65
Figure 2.28	Tributes to the Jacobite Rebels in 2007 . . . . .	69
Figure 2.29	Tributes to the Jacobite Rebels in 2007 . . . . .	70
Figure 2.30	John Thornton Memorial Plaque . . . . .	71
Figure 2.31	Jimmy Corr Memorial Plaque . . . . .	72
Figure 2.32	Cycle Crossing . . . . .	73
Figure 2.33	Tyburn from Below . . . . .	74
Figure 2.34	Tyburn from Below [shade detail] . . . . .	75
Figure 2.35	Tyburn Reverse Angle . . . . .	77



# INTRODUCTION

The USA has spent much of 2017 in the throes of far-right marches that glorify confederate statues, and violence has sadly been the outcome of a recent example of this in Charlottesville (as of August 2017). James Glaser (2017, p. 1) asks what to do with the oft-glorified ‘difficult heritage’ symbols of confederate statues during America’s recent swing towards the political right, writing: ‘do we just toss them into the ash bin of history, purging them as if they never existed’?

The answer to his question is complex and one that acts as a jumping off point for this book. In some instances, it can be a straightforward ‘yes’. Sharon Macdonald (2009) has written of the remnants from large-scale, national atrocities and the ways in which they have been systematically destroyed and deleted from history – like swastika-laden ceilings at Nuremburg, Germany. Dark tourism theorists, on the other hand, have considered how these sites can and have been monetised for the financial gain of private interests and national governments alike (see, for example, Braithwaite and Lee, 2006; Sharpley and Stone, 2009; Stone, 2011).

Glaser is asking a question that has become more complicated of late. An increasing media focus on violence and death is turning the spotlight on exponentially greater number of spaces – making it relevant to those who study

criminal-celebrity, who have focused on the memorialization of individuals (see, for example, Kooistra, 1989; Hobsbawm, 2001; McCorristine, 2014). His question also calls to mind research in the area of difficult heritage that has traditionally focused on the politics and architecture of large-scale national atrocities, such as this work from Macdonald. But it also brings up theories of dark tourism that have, for over two decades, contributed much to our understanding of the consumption of death as it is experienced in physical places. Lastly, his question is relevant to spatial theorists who are likely to be more interested in the ways in which the ‘difficult dead’ – our term for the situating of the dead in problematic spaces – manage to hang around, often unwanted, experienced in myriad ways by local communities despite various efforts to turn these sorts of infamous sites into ash.

This book sits at the meeting point of these approaches and in response to the following questions: how can you memorialize the dead and preserve the architecture of the past without enshrining a space for dark tourists to make their own? Or perhaps, in a more capitalistic sense, how can you develop a thriving dark tourist business without sensationalising the event and offending the sensibilities of the community? As they are often inclined, local councils find themselves trying to toss a space into the bin in a way that would put a halt to any sort of consumeristic tourist interest and unwanted media attention. But instead of just thinking about the legacy of some criminal individuals, or analysing the political position of difficult heritage architecture, or critiquing the monetization of the dead – this employs and develops spatial theory alongside these ideas to explore how three scalar case studies can assist us in understanding the memorialization of the difficult dead. Stone (2011, p. 318) has called for such an interdisciplinary approach before, stating that:

*Dark tourism research has been characterised by a banality that either illustrates deficient conceptual underpinning or provides for limited disciplinary synthesis. Thus, in order to assuage any structural deficiencies in dark tourism as a coherent body of knowledge, I suggest scholars need to transgress traditional disciplinary borders and interests.*

This book, then, is the synthesis of several relevant research areas offered as a way of unpacking questions about deviance, death and memorialization through three escalating case studies: a bench on the site of an old gallows; the space between some terraced housing and a church; and the recreated historic town centre of a German city.

## 1.1. DOING THINGS WITH HERITAGE

By way of introduction, let us briefly think about what these research areas have offered, starting with ‘difficult heritage’. History is rife with examples of difficult heritage being used for political gain. For instance, Nieves considered difficult black heritage in South Africa and the utilisation of places of pain as tools for social justice (Nieves, 2009). This comes after Litter’s (2005) paper considering the use of British race heritage as a catalyst for social change and equality (Litter, 2005). The negative connotations of the past and the associated oppressive regimes have long been researched as places for the incitement of reform, commemoration and reorganization. In Hiroshima, Utaka (2009) has argued that the 25-metre high ‘A Bomb Dome’ is a memorial for the over 100,000 lives lost in the closing stages of World War II, but it is also billed as an international ‘peace memorial’. This piece of architecture is a strong symbol of difficult heritage,

war crime and suffering. When Auschwitz was first declared a museum by Poland it was, according to Young (2009), an attempt to 'glorify Polish martyrdom' without a single mention of the word 'Jew' throughout the exhibition. This heritage site was manipulated and presented as a place of Polish pain and suffering – difficult heritage again becoming a political tool.

These findings show the power attached to heritage and heritage architecture. This power is in part due to political manipulation through the preservation process but without the sheer scale of exposure that these national atrocities possess, the use of heritage in this way would not be possible. 'The politics of display',<sup>1</sup> then, can refer to the political might of the displays themselves as well as the often heated arguments that resonate around what should be done with a site so closely associated with atrocity in the public consciousness.

Until recently, small-scale local difficult heritages have been relatively immune to political manoeuvre due to this lack of exposure. The late twentieth century has seen a meteoric rise in international media and online communications framing them as material for political debate and allowing them to be studied alongside these national atrocities. Sharon Macdonald dedicated three chapters to 'structures' in her book *Difficult Heritage: Negotiating the Nazi Past in Nuremberg and Beyond* (2009). 'Building Heritage', 'Demolition' and 'Preservation' help us understand the sheer importance of architecture to heritage and the symbolic power attached to buildings for instance. But this symbolic power extends beyond buildings to other material representations of heritage, for example, the 'Arbeit Macht Frei' gate at Auschwitz (Young, 2009). As tourists walk through the concentration camp they are greeted by the infamous sign under which millions greeted death and depravity. The sign still carries this symbolism and evokes powerful emotions in tourists

despite the fact that it has been moved and no longer marks the space where victims arrived at Auschwitz nor where any met their death (Young, 2009). For Young, the power in the buildings at Auschwitz is in their disrepair and lack of preservation. Tourists feel the 'raw' experience not mediated by museum information or formalized on-site narratives. In contrast, heritage is negotiated very differently when obscured through layers of sign, information and politics, for example, as can be seen in the Nuremberg Documentation Centre (Macdonald, 2009). Museums, on the other hand, have often been the subject of research into dark tourism with Stone arguing that their position atop the tourism infrastructure of many locales meant that they were some of the 'lightest' dark tourism sites on his spectrum (2006, p. 151).

Modern (read: 'Western') society is awash with these sites of pain (Logan and Reeves, 2009) and violent history, and dark tourism research has offered us interpretations of the popularity and commercial success of these 'black spots' (Rojek, 1993) in recent years and decades. Graham Dann used the phrase 'milking the macabre' to describe Western fascination with – and capitalization of – sites of death and destruction (1994), whereas Seaton preferred 'thanatourism' (1996), but 'dark tourism' has dominated since Foley and Lennon coined the term (1996), encompassing all research into the commercialization of dark places. This research, on the other hand, will contribute quite the opposite – research into the resistance of commercialization in dark spaces. Further, governments are increasingly concerning themselves with resistance strategies as more and more places become the focus of unwanted, unsavoury media attention. Investigation into criminal-celebrity goes some way in explaining our fascination with these sites of pain: key texts here include Duclos and Pingree's *The Werewolf Complex* (1998) and

Mike Presdee's ground-breaking work on the *Carnival of Crime* (2000).

However, both dark tourism and celebrity-criminal schools of thought still address spaces or the people attached to them through the lens of consumption. Research has variously considered the consumer of violent heritage, the 'thanatourist' (Seaton, 1996) or the criminal fan (Jenks and Lorentzen, 1997) and related commercial consequences (Fiske, 1992). Our contention is that there is a theoretical gap in assessing the local negotiations of the said 'black spots' from the point of view of those blighted by their neighbourhood's immortal association with death and suffering. What are the local, non-commercial consequences of violent criminal difficult heritage? What impact does infamous death, and its highly contested memorialization, have on everyday spatial experiences?

Expanding markets of dark tourism have complicated 'difficult heritage' debates as has the proliferation of criminal-celebrity. It is not just places like Hiroshima or Nuremberg that are negotiating the minefield of their own deviant pasts. Large-scale media exposure, and the proliferation of the celebrity-criminal, means that local communities are also finding themselves in the challenging position of managing their deviant pasts. Structures, in general, carry memory without the need for premeditation like Nuremberg. Strange and Kempa (2003) note that Alcatraz, a popular American dark tourist attraction, has a haunting and cruel atmosphere associated with the powerful and imposing structure of the prison sat atop the island, and it is this embedded deviancy and the impact of memorial and anti-memorial that this book will address through three case studies. We will look at the use of space of differing kinds as a way for cities and local authorities to work through difficult heritage, here seen through the application of spatial theory to our case studies of Tyburn (York), Cromwell Street (Gloucester) and Dresden (Germany).

## 1.2. DEATH, MEMORIALIZATION AND DEVIANT SPACES

‘Difficult heritage’ has traditionally considered macro cases of national atrocity. Studies into celebrity crime or infamous death have been local, often individualized, case study based. ‘Dark tourism’ has been studied in both contexts. This research project will develop the concept of ‘difficult heritage’ by exploring the intersection between local political discourses, media constructions of violent death and, crucially, spaces of memorialization in England and Germany. Where difficult heritage has previously focused on how ‘[...] a city and a nation deal with a legacy of perpetrating atrocity’ (Macdonald, 2009, p. 1), this project will explore the concept at a micro-level. The intention of the project is to understand the interrelationship between the social, spatial, temporal and political contingencies of these localities, with an emphasis on analysing the contested cultural meanings of space and memory in our chosen heritage sites. In doing so, we seek to develop a conceptual toolbox that responds to Harvey’s recent concerns (2015) about the lack of scalar thinking in heritage discourses. The sites we have chosen to focus on are unique because of their media coverage (or lack thereof) and their infamous status. With that in mind, the book asks:

- What are the conceptual tools that can help us to understand the relationship between spatial concerns, local (community) consequences and the memorialization of infamous death?
- How do local communities negotiate ‘difficult heritage’ under these circumstances?
- What is the context for the interplay and conflicting demands of ‘difficult heritage’, ‘dark tourism’ and ‘memorialization’ through space?

In pursuit of answers, this book attempts to do three things. It rearticulates Lefebvrian spatial theory in relation to dissimilar memorial sites; accounts for scale in debates about difficult heritage, including smaller, more intimate negotiations that have presented themselves to local communities (in part due to ever-expanding media coverage of an ever-widening series of deviant events); and does this through the application of theory to three escalating case studies. Ultimately, this book is an opportunity to gauge how spatial approaches to heritage debates around death and memorialization might be constructed as a workable conceptual toolbox.

This book explores ways of thinking about how the dead continue to inhabit space and place, and how this impacts and reflects differing approaches to memorialization. It makes use of Lefebvre's spatial triad as a way of theorizing conflicting agendas in the spaces of infamous death ranging from the State-sponsored execution of thousands of people between the fourteenth and early nineteenth centuries, through the serial murder of up to 30 people in Gloucester in the mid-to-late twentieth century, right up to contemporary protests over the politicization of a site where between 35,000 to 150,000 people were killed in the closing stages of World War II (Taylor, 2008). We have chosen to focus on three deliberately different case studies to effectively test the adaptability of Lefebvrian theory in relation to the memorialization of the difficult dead. In doing so, we draw on three areas of scholarship that are increasingly overlapping; the way in which the state negotiates histories and memorials that are unsavoury or 'difficult' such as war; dark tourism and the fetishization of sites of death and suffering; and the expanding media coverage and celebration of violent deaths and violent people.



### 1.3. STRUCTURE

This book follows three case studies that can be read separately, but build gradually from one to the other. Through these three, sometimes disjointed cases, we will specifically focus on adapting, enhancing and applying elements from Lefebvre's spatial corpus that are routinely overlooked; while we start with the spatial triad as many have done before (see Chapter 2) we use this as a stepping-off point to consider, among other things, the theatrical nature of Lefebvre's work on the everyday functioning of urban reality under advanced capitalism, or the notion of contradictory space with regard to consumptive practices. After exploring the utility of varying arguments around space as representational or social in the chapter following this one, we take Lefebvre's work forward and apply it to 'theatrics', 'consumption' and 'politicization'.

#### 1.3.1. Theatrics

The first case study, of the Tyburn memorial and associated environs in suburban York, begins by unpacking the three interconnected elements of Lefebvre's spatial triad, as outlined in *The Production of Space* (1991). The case study is explored through ethnographic and photographic data, including historical records, mapping and field notes/photographs from the site, collected across a two-month period (May–June 2017) and articulated in relation to conceived space, lived space and perceived space before developing the lesser-known concept of 'theatrical space' in an effort to capture the unique aspects of the site as a problematic memorial to State-sanctioned execution. In taking this approach, the case study underscores the challenges of putting together a conceptual toolbox in the light of the variety of competing

interests and activities undertaken at the site (local government framing, the narratives told by historical societies, the use of the space for leisure activities and the like).

### 1.3.2. Consumption

Building on the concept of theatrical space, the second case study – of Number 25 Cromwell Street in Gloucester, or rather the space that was formally occupied by that address – explores Lefebvre through consumption and notion of contradictory space. This involves an analysis of the Cromwell Street walkway in Gloucester and argues that theatrical space is particularly useful when considering cases with high level media exposure (in contrast to the low exposure of Tyburn). In using Lefebvre's notion of 'contradictory space', the chapter unpacks the variety of differing interpretations and usages of the space – from mass media to local governments – as a way to theorize conflicting agendas in the memorialization of famous death. This second case study also uses the theoretical groundwork laid in the first, and begins to embed this alongside theories of consumption, dark tourism and difficult heritage as contributing factors to the production of infamous memorial spaces.

### 1.3.3. Politicization

Working towards reconnecting with the wider debates of difficult heritage and dark tourism, we return to the genesis of much of the work in these fields of study: the aftermath of World War II. How might the spatial triad, or rather our articulation and emphasis on differing aspects of the triad, enable us to connect our conceptual framework of the local

with the international? Is that even possible? The third case study, looking at the annual human chain which is used to ‘protect’ the historic city centre of Dresden against the far right, draws on Lefebvre’s spatial triad to think through human agency and imagined space that combines the physical – the city centre – with the political, namely the use of a human chain as a barrier, both tangible and symbolic. This particular space has become a symbolic protest ground for right-wing groups, such as PEGIDA, whose disaffected supporters find their sense of pride and injury confirmed in the historical legacy of this place, and to build on the theoretical framework from the previous chapters complimentary and contrasting theories will be unpacked, to properly test the validity of our adapted Lefebvrian concepts.

While this book has been collaboratively written, each case study has been principally authored by Matthew Spokes (Tyburn), Jack Denham (Cromwell Street) and Benedikt Lehmann (Dresden).

#### 1.4. THE AIMS OF THIS BOOK

The aim of this book is to identify overlaps and posit ways forward for understanding difficult heritage and dark tourism through the prism of spatial theory; to that end, our concluding remarks on the conceptual framework we have underlined in this volume will suggest the points of departure for further research on the intersection between death, spatiality and infamy.

The book takes the unique approach of considering the memorialization of crimes and deaths that communities and councils sometimes do not wish to be remembered by focusing firstly on scale and secondly on lesser-known applications of Lefebvrian theory. The differing case studies introduced

here enable us to challenge the variety of difficult heritage and dark tourist spaces that are encountered on an everyday basis, from a bench on an arterial road to a German city centre, and push at the boundaries of theories that can help us illuminate the competing agendas and rationales that operate in these locales from local government decisions to the effects of excessive media exposure.

Ultimately, the three case studies in this book respond to Harvey's (2015) call for a more considered approach to the problems of scale in heritage – which we will explore in detail in the next chapter – and in doing so we show some of the ways in which theoretical notions of space can be developed and applied on a scalar level to better capture the interstitial nature of contested memorializations of deviant space(s).

## NOTE

1. See Macdonald, 1998, on the 'politics of preservation'.