The Thanatourist: collected tales of the thanatourism experience

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Whilst tourists' fascination with visiting sites associated with death and human tragedy has received considerable academic and media attention, the scholarly literature on so-called 'dark' or thanatourism remains fragmented. Subsequently, this thesis draws on a wide range of interdisciplinary literature and in depth, qualitative fieldwork to provide insights into thanatourism experience. The research was conducted in three phases. During the first phase I developed a thanatourism framework which recognises thanatourism as a complex and variegated concept. The framework was used as a conceptual starting point through which I identified a range of thanatourism sites at which to conduct my fieldwork. Thanatourist experiences are exceptionally personal and emotional and thus required a 'hot approach' to research in order to reach the deep wells of tourist emotion. In the second and third phases I involved nine thanatourists in an iterative series of creative conversations before, during and after visits to various sites. Adopting a reflexive approach and using the participants' own photographs I focus on understanding the motivations and the emotional perceptions of those who visit thanatourist sites. Also, using autoethnography enabled me to vividly reconstruct my experiences, enriching the study and providing valuable insights into my own motivations and emotions. The research is underpinned by an interpretivist paradigm, and I use a bricolage of fieldwork and writing methods. Co-constructing the participants' narratives strengthens the reflexivity and ensures that the researcher's voice is not privileged, and thus the voices of the participants are heard alongside mine. Finally, the accounts of the thanatourists are presented creatively through narrative, poem and play. Adopting this interesting and compelling way to present material allowed me to be playful in my fieldwork and to present emotionally evocative stories of thanatourism experience through a chorus of voices. The study illustrates that thanatourism experiences are complex and deeply meaningful for the individuals who choose to embark on them.

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The Thanatourist: collected tales of the thanatourism experience. Bookmark. Download. They also explain their contribution to the wider evaluation of the community-led projects. This paper reflects on the facilitator experience of the program's outcome-led evaluation process. In turn, it also explores how the groups they supported experienced the process. The facilitator's narratives reveal that often community-group objectives did not align with predefined outcomes established through theory of change or logic model methodologies, which had been devised in attempt to align to program funder aims.

Tourism: Tourism, the act and process of spending time away from home in pursuit of recreation, relaxation, and pleasure, while making use of the commercial provision of services. It is a product of modern social arrangements, beginning in western Europe in the 17th century, although it has antecedents in Classical antiquity. Tourism has also made use of history, as historic sites attract cultural tourists and collectors of iconic images.

Thanatourism is a difficult word to define because it is rarely used. So when we do use it, what exactly do we mean? The most accepted scholar is probably A.V. Seaton. In his 1996 article, From Thanatopsis to Thanatourism: Guided by the Dark, Seaton argues that thanatourism is dependent on the traveller’s frame of mind. The thanatourist is “motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death.” Seaton claims that there are various degrees of thanatourism: 1. Travel to watch death (public hangings or executions). 2. Travel to sites after death has occurred (Auschwitz). 3. Travel