THE RITUAL PERFORMANCE OF DARK TOURISM

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis is based on my original work, except for quotations and citations which have been duly acknowledged. I also declare that it has not been previously or concurrently submitted for any other degree at Brunel University or other institutions.

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DECLARATION

The following publications have been produced as a direct or indirect result of the research discussed in this thesis:

Papers in Edited Books

1. **Dermody, E.** (2017). Dark Tourism. In N. Thompson & G. Cox (Eds.),

   Handbook of the Sociology of Death, Grief and Bereavement: A Guide to Theory and Practice (pp. 194-209). New York: Routledge.

Other Publications

2. **Dermody, E.** & Brennan, M. (2014). Dark Tourism. In Brennan, M. (Ed.), The A-Z of death and dying: Social, medical and cultural aspects. Santa Barbara, CA. Greenwood, pp.128-131.

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ABSTRACT

Whether it be more recent public tragedies or more distant death related events, sites and gatherings associated with death and disaster present an opportunity to explore the social phenomenon described as "dark tourism". To study this social phenomenon, the current literature on dark tourism widely acknowledges that a multi-disciplinary approach is required and that much work remains to be done to fully appreciate the phenomenon.

This thesis draws upon the sociology of death to consider the dark tourism experience as part of a society's death system, and it draws upon a dynamic theory of ritual interaction from the sociology of emotions to consider the dark tourism visitor experience as a ritual performance. The thesis proposes that the visitor experience at some dark tourism sites may be usefully analyzed within the frameworks of inquiry proposed by Kastenbaum's (2001) death system concept together with a dynamic theory of emotion and ritual interactions proposed by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004). Specifically, this thesis proposes that where visitors have emotional "experiences of involvement" with the death event which is represented at the site, they may focus their attention and emotion on site components to engage in ritual interactions, which produce a momentarily shared new (emotional) reality that, in turn, may generate feelings of "solidarity" and "positive emotional energy" as an outcome of the visitor experience. These new realities and outcomes may serve to mediate the death event for visitors and to strengthen the social order. At present, there is very little theoretical work, and much less empirical research, to support this approach within the existing dark tourism literature. This thesis attempts to address part of the gap in dark tourism knowledge and in the study of this phenomenon by the sociology of death.

These theories are considered in the light of research conducted in a single qualitative case study at the 9/11 Memorial site in New York City. Interviews, observations and diarizing were carried out to identify the motivations, interpretations and experiences of 32 visitors, (including guides and volunteers) at the site. Most visitors to the 9/11 Memorial site had prior emotional connections or "experiences of involvement" of some type with the death event. Many visitors expressed that their motivation to visit the site was based on a sense of "obligation" or "duty" and reported interpretations of the visitor experience that are consistent with taking part in what Durkheim described as a piacular rite. Visitors focused their emotions and interacted with components of the site in such a way that four of the critical functions of the death system were identified in operation. Most visitors reported that through their visitor interactions they (a) found the site to be a (sacred) place of actual or symbolic disposition of the dead; (b) received social support or consolation; (c) interpreted the site in a way that made sense of the death event; and (d) took away from the site some form of moral or social guidance. These interactions were observed to have created a form of collective effervescence that made visitors' feel that they were part of something larger, a feeling that represented a shared new (emotional) reality. In turn, visitors reported that the visitor experience at the site created increased feelings of solidarity and calm or confidence or energy - or what Collins describes as emotional energy - in their personal and collective lives.

The thesis concludes that the role of dark tourism as a mediating institution between the living and the death event may sometimes extend beyond the mediation of death anxiety and the purchase of ontological security as proposed by Stone (2012). Through the ritual performance of dark tourism, a mediation of, by and through emotions takes place, the result of which is that the individual and collective self of visitors may be relieved from the negative emotions aroused by the death event and begin to feel a new sense of solidarity and emotional energy. Indeed, the death event itself may be transformed from something evil into something that is sacred; from something that brought death and chaos, into something that strengthens social order.

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INTRODUCTION

1.1 Tough Transitions...

Death and Travel have significantly shaped who I am and shaped my understanding of the role of social bonds and of social order in the face of death. I began my research journey with grand ideas and great enthusiasm only to experience challenges at almost every milestone until the very end of this long road. Many of these extremely painful challenges actually served to refresh my commitment to my work. Among the challenges were what I perceived as conflicting perspectives from successive supervisors who insisted upon a transition from a leisure and popular culture approach to a more classical sociological perspective. There was also the struggle over the meaning and role of emotion, specifically grief, in my work. I realize now that the challenges which I perceived to be so personal in nature, actually arose because a framework of inquiry that would permit me to consider the experiences of visitors at dark tourism sites was not readily available. Much of my work then deals with the development and application of a model based on frameworks of inquiry and theories of interaction ritual and emotion to study these experiences at some types of dark tourism sites, including the 9/11 Memorial site.

In order to understand the manner in which my particular learning journey came about and more importantly, how the central idea for my thesis arose, it is necessary to include a brief biography of the project and the processes I went through to produce this thesis. As Cryer (1996; 178) points out, it is important that "the final version of the thesis should be written with hindsight, knowing where one has been."

I am drawn to the social phenomenon known as dark tourism due to an almost inevitable collision between my experience in death care and my interest in travel. To start with, I was born into and I have worked extensively in what some might describe as the "oldest profession" associated with death events and hospitality - the funeral business. My work involves performing, observing and supporting the dignified disposal of the dead, the consolidation of social bonds changed by the death event, the process of making sense of

the death event and the moral meaning or guidance to be taken from the death event. I have also had a passion for travel. I began traveling internationally as an athlete-tourist, and now, what one might describe as an academic-tourist. Regardless of my reason or motivation, travel has always involved touristic activities such as visiting museums, cemeteries, sites of death events and places of mourning. Well before my research began, I had visited many commemorative dark sites, including those at the Taj Mahal, Nagasaki, Auschwitz-Birkenau and Arlington National Cemetery, to name only a few. As a result, I have had the opportunity to participate in, observe and then experience the death care and tourism sectors as providers of services and now appreciate that both involve emotion and important types of ritual performance.

My graduate work in travel and hospitality permitted me to explore some of the academic and practical aspects of the dark tourism phenomenon. Candidly, the study of dark tourism attracted me as it would allow me to gain a better understanding of the ritual performances I had witnessed at funerals and possibly even allow me to better operate our family funeral homes. A funeral home, with its collective gatherings, rituals, and emotions is analogous to a dark tourism site. It has most of the components and serves many of the functions that Robert Kastenbaum (2001) referred to in his work proposing the concept of a societal death system. So it was not surprising that in my master's thesis I explored Robert Kastenbaum's (2001) death system and theoretical concepts related to the study of death, dying and grief. I proposed that these concepts were relevant to further the relatively new study of dark tourism. "Dark Tourism" refers to the phenomenon by which sites of death and disaster serve as a source of visitor attraction. Although dark tourism has been observed in one form or another for centuries, the growth that it has experienced in the past decade has attracted attention in tourism studies from academics and practitioners alike. In a sense, the thought of visitors being attracted to death is almost counter intuitive, especially at a time when some have declared death rituals as archaic; or argued that death is sequestered or denied; or proposed that death anxiety diminishes our individual and collective ability to deal with death directly. In addition, as a result of my Master's research, it became clear that

emotions or emotional energy at the dark tourism sites investigated (Pere LaChaise Cemetery in Paris, France, The Anne Frank House in Amsterdam, Holland and the Pan Am Flight 103 Crash Site in Lockerbie, Scotland) proved crucial to help understand what motivates visitors to attend a site, then to understand how visitors interpret a site and finally, to observe how visitors react to the site and to death itself. My research suggested that dark tourism sites - sites such as public memorials, cemeteries, sites of death events, or even celebrity death - create opportunities for visitors to experience their feelings, emotions and grief, not solely in the context of their personal grief journey, but also in a collective way. The realization that emotional responses play such a large role in visits to these sites raised some interesting possibilities and exciting new research opportunities. *What do members of western society really experience when they visit a dark tourism site?* The manner in which visitors - both individually and collectively - may be emotionally involved with the death event, especially a death event with a public face and whether that involvement may affect society, is part of the broader focus of my work.

Whether it be more recent public tragedies such as the terrorist attacks in London, Manchester or Paris; or the commemoration of more distant events, the role and function of sites where gatherings mark these tragedies seems to evoke an individual and collective emotional response. Visitors appear to gather at these sites to participate in a form of mourning ritual. The death event is perceived as a loss or threat to the group or society with which visitors identify. Members of the group or society take action to gather together to mourn – even if the action comes years later. A telling example of this occurred in the summer of 2013, when I was just in the early stages of this present work. After 43 years a memorial site was established in Brampton, Ontario, Canada to acknowledge an event that one citizen described as having vanished from our collective memory (Perkel, 2013). This site honoured the second worst Canadian airline death event in history - the loss of 109 lives on Air Canada flight 621 on July 5, 1970. The response to this long overdue commemorative effort by those directly and indirectly affected by the loss was immediate and continues today. One family member expressed that the families of victims had lived with a "stone" –

another described it as a "life long sentence"- of grief worsened by the fact that the tragedy had been forgotten, if not ignored. Members of the local community had rallied civic leaders to provide a dignified place for the disposal of the dead (parts of whose remains had been left in an overgrown field) and to correct what was described as an unfortunate absence in our history (Perkel, 2013). The memorial seems to have provided, not just for immediate family but for others as well, a central focus point for those who shared a sense of involvement with the death event to come together and collectively mourn. It struck me then - as it does now – that the creation of the site and the mourning ritual undertaken there by family and others after 43 years was because somehow this death event mattered to them. Somehow, there was an involvement with this death event or the social bonds that connected those who gather there together to express their sorrow, to grieve and to console – to mourn – in a way that strengthened those visiting individually and the community collectively (Durkheim, 1995). (Of course, at this point in my journey (2013), I had no background in sociology, nor the tools to explore, observe or to provide a framework or model to inquire into this social phenomena from a strong sociological perspective).

The events of September 11th, 2001 also occurred more than a decade ago. Yet a sense of loss – an emotional reaction - to the tragedy has been experienced by many for a variety of reasons. Since this time, I have become intimately acquainted with the attraction, events and aftermath of the death event known as "9/11". The events of that day changed life in the western world in many ways, and my own life was no different. I did not lose anyone that I personally knew on that day. But like many other people in the western world, I too felt like I had a form of vicarious bond or attachment to this death event. I had a feeling or experience of being involved on an individual and collective level. I experienced feelings, emotions, and grief on that day and from time to time over the years. Not death anxiety per se, but a shared sense of involvement and loss that attracted me to a gathering at the site to mourn, to try to understand and to try to find a shared resolve or confidence going forward. Of course, this may have just been heightened by a chain of interactions with the event and rituals related to it. In the spring of 2002 while on a trip to New York City with family we

actually visited the site of the event (Ground Zero). Then, a few years later, while working on a cruise ship based in New York City, I made visits to the site of the event and met many first responders, family members and others directly impacted by the event, as well as tourists who were drawn to visit the site. Subsequently, in 2013 I made a visit to the 9/11 Memorial site which had opened a few years prior and which has become my research setting. I realized that over time my feelings of loss or grief had somehow changed into a new sense of confidence and that the painful feelings I had initially shared seemed to be not only relieved but displaced by a refreshed sense of confidence, acceptance and unity. This dark tourism experience in part inspired me to develop my research interest in the emotion experienced by visitors while visiting sites or observing events that are associated with death, tragedy or public memorials.

While my ideas, enthusiasm and foundations for my proposed project seemed to flourish within the first year, I found myself in a position - in part due to a complete change in supervisors – that forced me to re-structure my approach to finding a relevant framework of inquiry within which to analyze dark sites and to consider empirical data. In my original submission for this thesis I proposed that I would explore new analytical approaches to visitor behaviour and interpretation at dark sites using concepts from the study of "death and grief" to open up further research and study opportunities with which to explore dark tourism and its relevance to the grief journey. In late November 2013 as a result of a confirmation process involving my new supervisors, I was informed that many of my approaches and proposed frameworks based upon the prevailing grief literature were considered to be too reliant upon behavioural or psychological factors. I was advised that there was a "fundamental problem" with the approach and orientation of my work- the fact that, in the view of my new supervisors, a sociological perspective was not present. The search for a new foundation was on!

While other possible frameworks were suggested by my supervisors (and certainly deserve further consideration in the future), my interests seemed to be rooted more in death practices and emotional experiences at dark sites. Upon reflection, I became aware of a

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useful and critical distinction that has influenced my search for an appropriate framework of inquiry. I realized I was more interested in looking at the manner in which death practices and beliefs may profoundly affect or shape society, rather than the manner in which society may affect or shape individual death practices and beliefs (Walter, 2008). And upon undertaking further research, I discovered that indeed the study of grief and mourning has a strong sociological foundation that dates back more than a century – one that provides a very appropriate (yet often overlooked) framework of inquiry.

1.2   Where this Fits in within the Broader Work

Within this study, rather than the use of the term "tourist" or the "public" or "participants", those involved with visiting a site – including those with direct relationships to the dead such as family members of the deceased and even those who work on site, including guides and volunteers - will simply be referred to as "visitors".

In the first part of the literature review in the next chapter, the term "dark tourism" will be considered in greater detail. For present purposes, dark tourism may be generally considered to be the intriguing phenomenon by which sites of death and disaster serve as a popular source of visitor attraction. This is derived mostly from Stone's (2005:1) definition that "dark tourism is the act of travel and visitation to sites, attractions and exhibitions which has real or recreated death, suffering or the seemingly macabre as a main theme." The definition of dark tourism has since been extended to further its scope to include sites that are not only scenes of death and disaster, but also exhibitions that commemorate tragedy in which death and suffering are re-created (through artifacts, films and simulations) as their core theme. I would add to that sites at which gatherings occur in the wake of tragic death events including some sites of spontaneous memorialisation as witnessed recently in London, Manchester, Paris and other places. An attempt at a universal, interdisciplinary, definition has been problematic (Burns, 2004).

In order to refine the definition of the types of sites to which this work may be relevant and, for the purposes of this thesis, it will be proposed that a re-statement of the definition of

dark tourism include reference to a qualification that the sites must in some way provoke the social conscience of visitors (Stone, 2011) or connect visitors thoughts and emotions with the death event at the site (Lennon & Foley, 2000). This, of course, raises the complex problem of emotion. Significant progress has been made within the sociology of emotion to consider a role, a place, or a definition of emotion for social scientific purposes. As will be seen, the dark tourism literature faces this same conundrum – *what is the role of emotion in explaining or analyzing the dark tourism phenomenon?* For the purposes of this thesis it proposes that a re-statement of a definition of a dark tourism site, Barbalet's (2002) work from a sociology of emotions perspective will be adopted in the re-statement and in the consideration of the role emotion plays when visiting a dark tourism site. Barbalet (2002) defines emotion in part as an "experience of involvement". The proposed restatement of the definition will look to sites at which there is a "shared" experience of involvement, or shared mood or manner of interactivity among visitors'.

The thesis applies a framework of inquiry that in part is conceptually based on what Robert Kastenbaum (2001) defines as the components and functions of the death system in every society. The death system is used to consider the manner in which death or the death event shapes the social order. Within the context of a death system, it may be said that everything that makes a collection of individuals into a society and keeps that society or social order cohesive has implications to our link with loss (Kastenbaum, 2007). Though we tend to only consider our own personal circumstances when a death occurs, in reality, all of these individual confrontations occur within a dynamic society that continues to form bonds. In order to continue to investigate this idea, I thought it might be useful to consider and compare some of the outcomes at dark tourism sites to the functions witnessed in Kastenbaum's death system.

Additionally, because some of the academic foundations for Kastenbaum's (2001) concept of the death system were not as deep rooted as one might have expected, I also felt it was necessary to go back and explore some core foundations that might inform my proposed inquiry. And it was at that point that I discovered what attracted me to Emile

Durkheim in my search for frameworks that might be relevant to questions of visitor motivation, interpretation and experience was that he proposes that seeking or nourishing a social bond is a primary motivator for the individual and collective self, and that at times of loss, or death, members of social groups gather together and perform rituals to mourn their loss and to consolidate in a collective identity. It was Durkheim's description of the mourning or piacular rite that encouraged me to consider interaction rituals may be performed at some dark tourist sites Durkheim (1995; 399) observed that "when someone dies, the family group to which he belongs feels itself lessoned, and to react against this loss, it assembles...collective sentiments are renewed which then lead men to seek one another and to assemble together". In his description of Piacular Rites, Durkheim (1995; 405) observed that mourning (an "enfeeblement") "has the effect of bringing individuals close to one another, putting them into closer touch and inducing in them the same state of soul". In my mind, the concept of "Piacular Rites" that Durkheim (1995; 389) put forth in his work *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* may be applied to analyze visitor experiences at some dark tourism sites. In *Forms,* Durkheim (1995) dealt with the way that death or a death event or threat to members of a group may be met by action by the individual and collective self. In particular, the Piacular Rites – or mourning rites – proposed by Durkheim (1995) are of themselves a fascinating framework for an inquiry into the dark tourism phenomenon. In *Forms,* Durkheim (1995) proposes that through careful observation at a site where a group gathers in the face of a loss or a threat, the group is not merely calmed through its interaction, but indeed restores or enhances its own confidence. This observation by Durkheim in 1912 was brought to mind when reading Walter's (2008) observation about the reaction of some to the events of 9/11. Walter (2008; 317) sees this "coming together" of Americans in the face of 9/11 and its effects when he notes, "several thousand are dead, but America lives on, and will not be defeated. It is precisely when groups – from families to nations – are depleted by death that they reconstitute themselves, symbolically and practically". So the possibility that the dark tourism visitor experience may be seen as part of a ritual performance intrigued and motivated me.

The socially constructed performances within the confines of a dark tourism site were also something that seemed in need of more attention in order to understand visitor experiences. I learned that some aspects of "performance" and tourism have been considered. It was Irving Goffman's (1967) work applied to the performance of leisure and tourism by Tim Edensor (1998) that brought to mind the possible use of the metaphor of performance to analyze the actions and presentations of visitors and to observe the experience that may be at play at a dark tourism site. Visitors engage in a set of performances at sites framed by what matters to them. Visitors are motivated to travel to a site and the performances at the site may evoke emotional responses among the visitors (Edensor, 1998). This performance and presentation of self is often observed at tourist sites where social actors are giving a series of performances in the sense that each visitor may be said to present her or himself in an effort to create or manage specific impressions in the minds of others (Goffman, 1967). This was considered as an approach to explore in order to understand more about the front employed by actors to define the situation and for those observing the interaction at say a dark tourism site. While I decided to forgo the use of the dramaturgical metaphor as a central framework to analyze the visitor experience, its use is recommended for future work. Indeed, the dramaturgical approach could be the subject of an entire thesis.

But Goffman's body of work is still relevant to this thesis. Collins (2004) proposed a bold theoretical synthesis that builds upon both Durkheim (1912) and Goffman (1959; 1967) with an explanation of "interaction ritual" that suggests a broader and more generic model of the solidarity producing and symbol-sustaining actions, interactions and ritual of social life (Collins, 2010). It is this theory of interaction ritual proposed by Collins (2004) that largely forms the basis for the consideration of visitor interactions or experiences at a dark site. It is this use of a dynamic theory of emotions and interaction rituals that distinguishes this thesis from other works in dark tourism and other studies of the 9/11 Memorial site. While there is a substantial and ever growing body of work that examines 9/11 and its aftermath, it would appear that only three studies specifically pertain to dark tourism sites related to the event

(Light, 2017; 280). Stone (2012) considers how the thanatological condition of society (society's reactions to and perceptions of death), specifically the death anxiety that arises from the absent – present death paradox, may be said to play a role in visits to sites such as the 9/11 Memorial and how visitor experiences at the site may mediate death by filtering or bracketing out death anxiety and ontological insecurity. Sather-Wagstaff (2011) takes an anthropological approach to analyze the reason visitors attend the 9/11 Memorial site which emphasizes the use of the 9/11 Memorial space as memory spaces for private and public mourning. Potts (2012) considers the commoditization of 9/11 including the ethical and political issues raised by the Ground Zero "souvenir economy" offering such items as the 9/11 "snow globe" and the "FDNY bear", or ultimately what she describes as "Kitsch". To date, no studies have addressed the research question using Kastenbaum's (2001) death system as a framework of inquiry or dynamic theories of emotion and interaction ritual as a means to consider visitor experience at the 9/11 Memorial as proposed in this work.

1.3   Proposed Inquiry

In this thesis I explore whether dark tourism provides an opportunity for *some* visitors at *some* dark sites to share an experience of involvement through the performance of death rituals and emotional interactions, or mourning rites, within the dark site that relate to four of the functions of the death system and may be observed to provide visitors (and through them, the group or society in which the visitors are members) with outcomes suggested by Durkheim (2008), Goffman (1959;1967) and Collins (2004) in their respective works on interaction rituals.

This hypothesis is located, not within the analysis of consumption or production largely found within the existing dark tourism literature, but rather as part of a dynamic ritual theory of emotions and interaction at the sites. Focusing upon the shared experience of involvement and death rituals that arguably take place as part of the visitor experience within some dark tourism sites, rather than focusing upon the thanatological condition of society (or society's reactions to and perceptions of mortality), this thesis proposes a theoretical

framework and a ritual performance model for the inquiry into the visitor experience and then attempts to test the model by examining tourist experiences at the 9/11 Memorial site in New York City. It considers through an analysis of the visitor experience how death practices may influence society; how emotion – including feelings of grief and bereavement – may, through ritual outcomes, impact visitors and the social order in the face of some death events.

There is very little theoretical work, much less empirical evidence to support this hypothesis within the existing literature. Therefore the purpose of this thesis is to address this gap in dark tourism knowledge and in the study of this phenomenon, as well as to augment the dark tourism literature, by proposing selected theoretical frameworks and a ritual performance model of inquiry which may be implemented for future studies using a four point observation approach.

The data gathered in 2013 will be used to consider whether there is support for the proposal that the 9/11 Memorial site, through the ritual performances and emotional interactions of visitors within the site, functions as part of what Kastenbaum (2001) identified as a death system framework and provides outcomes suggested by Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1959; 1967) and Collins (2004) within the context of interaction rituals.

On this basis, the following research question and objectives were formulated:
Why are some social actors motivated to travel to, interpret, and encounter death at dark tourism sites, in particular the 9/11 Memorial?

To evaluate this, empirical research explores whether it is in part of or the need for:

- Social Consolidation (maintain social order and constructs).

- Making Sense of (or to make meanings that mediate or reconcile) the Death Event.

- Fulfilling Social / Emotional Factors that require death to be "mediated".

Having regard for the literature and the fieldwork that I have undertaken I am convinced that a dark tourist site features all of the components and permits or contributes to the fulfillment of at least four of the critical functions of the death system proposed by Robert Kastenbaum (2001), namely:

1) A place for actual or symbolic disposal of the dead.

2) A place at which social consolidation occurs.

3) A place at which visitors are able to make sense of death insofar as the site or narrative provided there allows visitors to mediate or filter or legitimate death (or their fear of death).

4) A place at which norms for killing or moral guidance may be contemplated and justified.

I am also convinced that the visitor experience at a dark site may operate in such a way that all four of these death system functions are not only present, but interact with one another to shape some aspect of the social order affected or impacted by the death event represented at the site. And I believe that examining these functions at work through the visitor experience at a dark tourist site such as the 9/11 Memorial will provide an appreciation of what may motivate visitors to visit the site, what these visitors interpret at or from, the site and what role the dark site plays in supporting social consolidation (adjustment or cohesion) or making sense of death (through meaning making and new realities) so as to mediate the visitors' experience with the death event, as well as to produce feelings of emotional energy and solidarity.

To this end, the operation of Kastenbaum's (2001) death system functions may be best viewed as and within the context of ritual performance(s) by visitors (including guides and volunteers) and as such the approach to and the discussion of findings from the 2013

fieldwork will take into account the work of Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1959;1967) and Collins (2004) in their respective works on interaction rituals.

I note that while Kastenbaum's (2001) functions (Disposal of the Dead, Social Consolidation, Making Sense of Death and Killing Norms) are used as a basic framework to consider the research question and possibly the function of a dark site as a social phenomenon, neither Kastenbaum (2001) nor those who followed his work explored or explained these four functions of the death system in any detail. As the result of the rather brief treatment and explanation of these functions in the literature, I have proposed an approach to each that hopefully will provide a basis for a more complete understanding of these functions in general and be helpful in considering the research question and objectives in particular. I believe that the foundation I will offer for a more fulsome understanding of the functions is well grounded. Nevertheless, I acknowledge that by choosing to use these four functions of the death system as a central part of the work, I have had to venture into new (for me at least) territory in attempting to explain or consider the functions at work in the visitor experience in much more detail than I have found in the existing death studies literature.

As noted earlier, in order to gain a deeper insight and further analyze the relevance of the frameworks considered for the thesis and my proposed model, fieldwork that was undertaken in 2013 in New York City at The National September 11th Memorial and Museum ("9/11 Memorial") was utilized. This fieldwork was undertaken on a qualitative based research strategy that, rather than utilizing a single social research method, used a number of different methodologies which were employed and investigated using a multiple methods design. Therefore, the research was conducted using qualitative interviews, covert participant observation, and through diarizing events. Though being mindful that this research strategy is known for taking a fresh approach to being able to discover new themes and explanations when describing complex situations or cultures (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; 16), I am aware of the fact that I feel somewhat attached to the events of September 11th, 2001. I am reminded that others have had the same issue with their attachments and recall that

Edensor (1998) wished to ensure that he would not "objectify and spectacularize" what he found in his work.

1.4   Choice of Research Setting

In order to further analyze visitor experiences at dark tourism sites, both theoretical and empirical evidence will be used to support this thesis. The dark tourism site to be examined through observation of visitor experiences will be at the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum. Because of this, a brief overview of the site will be introduced below in order to relate more clearly and gain a better understanding of the specific site.

1.4.1 *The Site: National 9/11 Memorial and Museum*

The site where two planes crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City on September 11, 2001 is considered one of the most dark sites in contemporary America (Stone, 2010) and certainly, one of the most well known and talked about terrorist events in the world. Kellner (2014; 2) adds that "the 9/11 terror spectacle was the most extravagant strike on U.S. targets in its history and the first foreign attack on the continental U.S. since the war of 1812." Having been one of the first serious assaults on the North American continent by enemy forces, there is no doubt that the U.S. has experienced deep trauma, emotion and horror. One of the most popular terms used to describe the site where the events of September 11, 2001 occurred is "ground zero". This term encompasses the images and destruction that was used to describe the devastation after the collapse of the World Trade Center's Twin Towers. The term "ground zero" was used to describe the site of Hiroshima and Nagasaki after the atomic bomb to represent the hypocenter of a nuclear explosion in atomic testing or the epicentre of an earthquake (Hohenhaus, 2014). At approximately 11:55 a.m. on the day of the attacks, a Fox News reporter was said to be the first to use the term "ground zero" and from then on, the expression caught on all over the world and is still used to this day, even though the debris has long since been cleared away (Hajela, 2012). Although this term is still used by a significant number of people, on the tenth

anniversary of 9/11, the former Mayor of New York City asked that the site be referred to as the World Trade Center because so much progress had been made over time to this space (Hajela, 2012).

It is through this, that the 9/11 site acts as a stimulus to further develop the scope of social investigation and why a brief explanation to the background and construction of the site should be recognized. On the tenth anniversary of the attacks - September 11th, 2011 - an official National Memorial was erected; and a few years later - May 2014 - a dedicated Museum to complement the site was finally opened after much controversy (Cohen, 2012). Together, "The National September 11 Memorial and Museum" make up the principal memorial and museum representing the September 11th attacks of 2001 and the World Trade Center Bombing of 1993, which killed a total of 2,982 men, women and children (National September 11 Memorial and Museum, 2014).

Meanwhile, many other memorial sites have been alongside and/or complementing the principal site during construction. Since one of the first dedications of memorials to terrorist victims which was that of the 1988 bombing of Pan American Airlines Flight 103, commemorative sites have continued to engrave the American landscape more often than not (Britton, 2007). In fact, the memorial to the victims of the 1993 World Trade Center bombing was destroyed by the collapse of the towers in 2001 and now this site marks both terrorist attacks in the same place (Britton, 2007). The total cost of constructing the memorial (also known as The World Trade Center Site) to those lost from the 1993 and 2001 terrorist attacks has totalled $700 million, subsidized by $390 million in tax funded grants (Blais & Rasic, 2011). Furthermore and despite the high cost of construction, many refer to this site as an extraordinary combination of private, government and public use of space (Britton, 2007). The memorial includes an individual roll call of the lost ensuring names would be listed alongside their loved ones. The names are inscribed into bronze parapets surrounding the actual footprints of the twin towers which are now memorial pools (Blais & Rasic, 2011). Finally, this site clearly demonstrates how the remembrance and commemoration of terrorist

victims reflects an "American narrative that has lead to and defined terrorism as the primary public focus in the early twenty-first century" (Britton, 2007; 34).

1.5   Thesis Structure

In this introduction chapter I have outlined the development of my interest in death and travel and how it has significantly shaped who I am and my understanding of the role of social bonds and social order in the face of death. In particular, it has allowed me to consider whether some dark tourism sites (such as the 9/11 Memorial site) provide an opportunity for some visitors to share an experience of involvement through the performance of death rituals and emotional interactions, or mourning rites. In order to explore this more thoroughly I have introduced the theoretical framework on which the study is based (Superimposing Kastenbaum's (2001) Death System over Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) Interaction Ritual Chains). That is, through looking at how these two frameworks come together to create a matrix of analysis in which Kastenbaum (2001) allows one to identify the components and functions of a Death System in operation at a dark site, while Durkheim (1995) and Collin's (2004) Interaction Ritual Chain lets one watch the death system in action. I have then provided background information about my choice of research setting which is the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum site located in New York City, United States of America. Finally, by stating the research questions and identifying objectives above, I have indicated what I set out to achieve in this study, and how.

The remaining chapters are organized as follows; Chapter 2 provides a background to, and understanding of, the phenomenon of dark tourism and a number of approaches that have begun to elevate the literature beyond the simple study of the role of death and terror in tourism whilst demonstrating how the study has evolved to attract a multidisciplinary approach (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). More specifically, the purpose of Chapter 2 is to briefly describe the existing dark tourism literature and some of its key issues, but more importantly to consider whether a framework of inquiry may exist in the existing literature about this phenomenon that might be relevant to the research question and objectives from the

sociological perspective. It will become apparent that the existing dark tourism literature has begun to develop frameworks of inquiry that have a basis in thanatological and sociological theories, especially as they position the dark tourist site and visitors experience within the site as part of a mediating institution designed to filter death anxiety and to restore what Giddens (1991) described as ontological security. In addition, the chapter will examine the challenges and limitations in the existing literature relating to the definition and academic foundations of the study of dark tourism, notably that the literature has almost exclusively considered the research question from a tourism management or business studies perspective designed to explore consumer motivations, interpretations and experiences. The review of the existing literature will also confirm that there are few theoretical and empirical studies that consider emotion or the role of emotion or ritual in the dark tourism visitor experience. The chapter will conclude by identifying relevant gaps in the dark tourism knowledge that it is hoped will be filled in part through the frameworks and model proposed in this thesis. It will be submitted, that some of these gaps in the dark tourism knowledge and in the study of this phenomenon exist because the literature has yet to offer a model based upon a dynamic ritual theory of emotions and interaction to consider shared experiences of visitors at the sites.

Chapter 3 takes the phenomenon of dark tourism and contextualizes it within the sociology of death, ritual interactions, and emotions literature. This chapter will propose theoretical frameworks for the study of the dark tourism visitor experience based in ritual theories of emotion and interaction. This chapter will also propose a model to consider the ritual performance of dark tourism; a model that is largely generated from the themes of the empirical research I had undertaken at the 9/11 Memorial. The theoretical frameworks and model were unknown to me at the time of the fieldwork, except for some familiarity with the "death system" concept used within my graduate work in travel and hospitality. The theoretical frameworks and the model, it is hoped, may assist the researcher to cast light on the motivations, interpretation and encounters with death associated with visits to some of these sites by some visitors, as well as the impact of the visitors' experience at these sites

on the social order. For it is the dark tourist site, with its visiting social actors, that presents an opportunity for the study of the interaction among visitors with the components and functions of the death system at these sites. Yet, sociology has not embraced the study of the dark tourism phenomenon. By adopting the frameworks provided by Kastenbaum's (2001) death system, and ritual theories of interaction and emotion based upon the work of Durkheim (1995) and Collin's (2004), I suggest the components, functions and experience of visitors at a dark site may come alive for observation and analysis from a sociological perspective. The chapter proposes that ritual interactions and emotions among visitors at some dark tourist sites, restore communion or unity or meaning for the individual self and the collective self in the face of the site's death event as proposed by Durkheim (1995) in his presentation of piacular or mourning rites. More specifically, it is proposed that the interaction rituals based on the shared experience of involvement or emotion among visitors at these sites creates a form of what Durkheim (1995) describes as collective effervescence and then produces feelings of solidarity or emotional energy which transform the sites into sacred places, promote social consolidation or solidarity for visitors, offer a narrative or meaning that makes sense of the death event for these visitors, and provides visitors with moral guidance or comfort in the context of the death event. It is the creation of collective effervescence and then emotional energy through interaction rituals at the site that visitors may experience a "new (emotional) reality" that mediates the death event and may leave visitors feeling calm, confident and strong in the face of the death event.

Chapter 4 outlines the methodological approaches to the data in which this research generated. Both the practical methods and strategic decision-making employed in this project will be explained. It provides the rationale for my selection of methods, and what these offered compared to other potential alternatives, all whilst attempting to draw out the greater meaning that lies within the study. This has been achieved by way of semi structured interviews, participant observation, and diarizing.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 will analyze the empirical research undertaken at the site of the 9/11 Memorial in light of the theoretical frameworks and ritual performance model

presented in Chapter 3. Chapter 5 will analyze the observations of visitor respondent's about whether the site is a "dark tourist site". But it will then proceed to consider the prior links or experiences of involvement brought to the site by visitors. This is the start of the ritual performance model and is designed to elicit a description and understanding of prior links in the interaction ritual chain that represent or influence the emotion – the prior experience of involvement – that visitors may have brought to the site. This is proposed as a relevant function in understanding the type of emotion brought to the site that may set a relevant background for the visitor experience or assist with an appreciation of the motivation to visit, or looking to the interactions once inside the site, the interpretation of the site, or the encounter with the death event represented at the site, and finally the outcome(s) of the experience.

Chapter 6 will then start the consideration of the interactions and emotional experience of visitors once they enter the site. It will offer insights from visitors and observations about the manner in which visitors perform ritual interactions with death system components through a series of selected components from the site. Chapter 7 will continue the review of ritual interactions by visitors as they are organized around or involve four of the critical functions of the death system – the disposition of the death as it is represented at the site; the opportunity for and interactions involving social consolidation; the narrative and interactions that contribute to making sense of the death event and finally, the moral or social guidance visitors might have taken from the site. Then Chapter 8 will conclude the analysis of the findings by canvassing the empirical research to determine whether the ritual outcomes predicted by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) are supported by the visitor experience- feelings of solidarity and emotional energy – and if so, how these outcomes are presented or translated by visitors. These chapters will look at whether the fieldwork undertaken in 2013, including interviews and participant observation, presents sufficient evidence to support the ritual performance model and to suggest possibilities, where warranted of further research to evaluate both the model and the suggested potential outcomes for some visitors at some dark tourism sites.

In the final chapter, I argue that by considering both the theoretical and empirical research, the ritual performance of dark tourism comes alive for analysis. I do so by identifying how the thesis has made a significant contribution to knowledge. Firstly, by re-stating a definition of dark tourism to consider sites where visitors have, or will have, a "shared experience of involvement" with the death event. Secondly, by considering the manner in which the role of Kastenbaum's (2001) death system as a "mediator" between death and society may be supported and complemented by the work of Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1967) and Collins (2004) so that one might inquire into what may be described as a model for "the ritual performance of dark tourism". Thirdly, the thesis, proposes an approach to analyzing the visitor experience from four observation points that permit an inquiry into the process of mediation and of a dark tourism site experiences and to consider whether the experience produces outcomes suggested by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (1967). Finally, I will then discuss how this thesis provides an answer to the research question and the research objectives.

1.6   Conclusion

This chapter has been written with hindsight to provide an understanding about my particular learning journey and how the central ideas for this thesis arose. It described that my interest in the social phenomenon known as dark tourism (to travel to, or gather at sites related to death events) has its origins in my experience in death care and my interest in travel. In particular, I am intrigued by the ritual performances I witness at funerals, with their collective gatherings, rituals and emotions. I wondered, with respect to both funerals and dark tourism, why individuals are motivated to gather or visit, how they interpret their experiences and what the outcomes of these experiences might be. The dark tourism phenomenon from my perspective encompasses not only the commodified memorial or tourism sites that represent a death event, but also sites of gatherings that may be more informal or even spontaneous – where visitors take action to gather, mourn and engage in or create collective

representations related to the death event. From my previous work for my Masters in Hospitality and Tourism Management, I was familiar with the death system framework of inquiry proposed by Kastenbaum (2001). I was attracted by the notion that dark tourism may somehow relate to the components and functions of the death system, and that the death system framework may provide answers to basic questions I raised about visitor motivation, interpretation and outcomes. I was keen to consider this framework together with frameworks available from death studies literature on grief and bereavement. My initial approach was altered by the concern that my work lacked an appropriate sociological focus. As the chapter notes, in the course of an effort to reconsider my approach to the study of the phenomenon, I came to understand that my research interests lie mainly with individual death rituals, practices and beliefs. Understanding this interest defined the horizon for my search for relevant theoretical frameworks with which to consider the dark tourism visitor experience. It yielded a remarkable "discovery" for me - that grief and mourning have a strong, albeit somewhat dated, sociological foundation in Durkheim's (1995) work on the piacular rites that might be applied with the benefit of Collin's (2004) more evolved theory of interaction ritual chains.

The chapter suggested that each of these frameworks, to some extent, might be used to "answer" the research question and related objectives. This allowed me to refine my proposed inquiry so that I could examine the visitor experience and view it as an opportunity for some visitors at some sites to deal with their emotional experiences of involvement with a particular death event through ritual interactions involving components and functions of the death system that may produce outcomes proposed by Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1959;1967) and Collins (2004).

Indeed, as related in the chapter, I realized that using these frameworks would also contribute to the literature about the manner in which the dark tourism experience may serve to "mediate" with respect to the death event. The chapter identifies the site of the empirical works and provides a description of the structure of the thesis. Notably, that this thesis proceeds from the perspective that death practices influence society and that emotions –

grief and mourning among them – through the performance of interaction rituals, may impact visitors and thereby influence or impact the social order. Specifically, the thesis proposes theoretical frameworks and a model to analyze the ritual performance of dark tourism and to consider the research question and objectives. The thesis then will use the data from the 2013 fieldwork undertaken at the site of the 9/11 Memorial to gauge whether there is support for the application of the frameworks and the model in the way in which I propose.

2 FRAMEWORKS OF INQUIRY OFFERED BY THE EXISTING DARK TOURISM LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

As social beings, we are fascinated by death. It is a certainty for all of us. Yet we struggle both to accept the inevitability of death and to understand death on an individual and collective level. We seem to be attracted to the why and the how death and disaster comes to others. So much so, that visits to sites, events and memorials that pertain to the deaths of others reportedly constitute the largest sub-category of touristic activity in the global tourism economy. And arguably these types of visits are made by the vast majority of us on one or more occasions, whether we perceive the visit to be a touristic activity or not. A phenomenon worthy of inquiry and analysis.

"The term dark tourism (sometimes referred to as grief tourism or thanatourism) refers to the intriguing phenomenon by which sites of death and disaster are transformed into sites of popular tourist attraction" (Dermody and Brennan, 2014; 128). These spaces of death, and the events that have taken place or are re-created in these spaces, usually also engage or trigger within their visitors some issue of social conscience, or - as will be suggested below - some shared emotion or an experience of involvement, with the death event. The academic study into the phenomenon of dark tourism began as an inquiry or rubric within tourism studies – which has its origins in business management, vocational training and general social sciences. The study has evolved to attract a multidisciplinary approach. Slowly, more refined social scientific approaches are emerging as central to an understanding of the phenomenon of dark tourism and these approaches have begun to elevate the literature beyond the simple study of the role of death and terror in tourism (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). Some argue that dark tourism is a convenient sub category of tourism studies with which to analyze the motivation of visitors to consume death or death related events, or to analyze the supply or production of dark tourism sites. Other more recent contributions propose that dark tourism may provide a lens through which life and

death may be glimpsed, thus revealing relationships and consequences of the processes involved within this social phenomenon that may mediate death between the individual and the collective self (Stone, 2012). As Tony Walter (2009) observed, dark tourist sites do not present death per se, but represent certain kinds of death so that these sites may be said to function as a contemporary mediating institution between the living and the dead.

The purpose of this chapter is to briefly describe dark tourism and some of its key issues - or in some cases to identify the limitations of the existing literature – in order to differentiate the manner in which the existing literature may propose answers to the research question and to identify gaps in the literature that may be addressed by this work. It is important to have an understanding of the existing dark tourism literature as much of it has attempted to answer the research question from a tourism studies perspective, that is, why tourists (social actors) may be motivated to travel to, interpret, and experience or encounter death at dark tourism sites. Sections 2.2 and 2.3 will examine the challenges and limitations in the existing literature relating to the definition and academic foundations of dark tourism. Section 2.4 will propose that the existing dark tourism literature has almost exclusively considered the research question from a tourism management or business studies perspective that is designed to explore "consumer motivations", "consumer interpretations" and "consumer experiences" at these sites, rather than from the sociological perspective to be proposed in Chapter 3. In Section 2.5, the review will identify that the existing literature has begun to develop frameworks of inquiry with a basis in thanatological and sociological theories to position dark tourism as a mediating institution, but does so from a perspective of thanatopsis (the motivation of visitors to encounter / contemplate death) and from the thanatological condition of society that presents a paradox of absent / present death, so that dark tourism is proposed as a mediating institution in secularized death sequestered societies that permits visitors to encounter / contemplate the death of others in a way that serves to "filter" or "bracket" death anxiety and restore ontological security in visitors. This thesis proposes that some dark tourism visitor experiences serve to mediate death events in respect of which visitors share an experience of involvement but from a perspective that

considers the emotions, interaction rituals and death system functions that are part of the visitor experience. Finally, the review of the existing literature in Section 2.6 will confirm that while the existing literature acknowledges that much work remains to be done in exploring the role of emotions within the dark tourism experience, there are few theoretical and empirical frameworks proposed in the existing literature with which to consider the role of emotion in visitor motivations, interpretations and experiences or encounters with the death event at dark tourism sites. This work will propose such frameworks in the next chapter. This review of the existing literature will conclude by identifying relevant gaps in the dark tourism knowledge and in the study of this phenomenon in respect of which this thesis will propose sociological frameworks of inquiry with which to consider the research question and objectives. Specifically, to address some of the gaps identified by this review of the existing literature, Chapter 3 of the literature review will propose the study of dark tourism visitor experience through a death systems framework of inquiry with respect to the mediation of the death event and based on dynamic theories of emotion and ritual interaction that offer a theoretical basis with which to consider some visitor motivations, interpretations and encounters with death at these sites and in turn the manner in which some visitor experiences may be said to mediate the death event and restore, support or change the social order.

2.2   The Definitional and Conceptual Challenge: Dark Tourism and the Public Face of Death

Dark sites that attract a gathering of social actors in the aftermath of a death event provide death with a public face – although at first blush this may seem to be ironic, or as Stone and Sharpley (2008) observe, to be a paradox, given what some may argue is the general trend, at least in, Western societies to deny or sequester death. The existing dark tourism literature addresses these gatherings largely from a tourism studies perspective. The manner in which, these gatherings at sites of death and disaster offer actual or symbolic encounters with death and dying that arguably respond to a range of personal and social interests that

may serve to motivate tourists to visit these sites, influence how visitors interpret them and experience a connection or involvement with the death event at the sites. As such, some of the literature has considered how these sites may confront visitors in a public forum with the inevitability of the death of self, or with the death of persons with whom visitors may identify in some way, or with a death event that "matters" to visitors on an individual and or collective level. The literature, expressly or as will be proposed in Section 2.6 below - by implication - recognizes that emotion is a factor in some of the visitor experiences associated with these deaths or death events. Yet the study of the phenomenon in which social actors gather at sites in the aftermath of a death event is still in its infancy.

The study of dark tourism as a phenomenon is relatively new. In 1996, tourism studies researchers, John Lennon and Malcolm Foley, first introduced the term "dark tourism" into the tourism studies literature (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). They defined it as a: "phenomenon which encompasses the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites" (Foley & Lennon, 1996; 198). A few years later, in an effort to capture the scope of the term, Stone (2005; 1) proposed that "dark tourism is the act of travel and visitation to sites, attractions and exhibitions which has real or recreated death, suffering or the seemingly macabre as a main theme." The definition of dark tourism has since been extended to include sites that are not only scenes of death and disaster, but also exhibitions that commemorate tragedy in which death and suffering are recreated (through artifacts, films and simulations) as their core theme. Indeed, Stone, in an interview about post-fire gatherings at the site of the Grenfell Towers disaster proposes that the dark tourism phenomenon extends to such spontaneous or post-disaster gatherings, and is not restricted to conventional or commodified sites, or leisure acts generally associated with tourism (Townsend, 2017). The inclusion of spontaneous memorialisation or gatherings within the definition of the phenomenon arguably has some merit as it involves questions related to the motivation, interpretation and encounters or outcomes from visitor experiences at the site of a death event. Regrettably, as Milosevic (2017; 45) observes "not much is known regarding the process of spontaneous or unprompted memorialisation that precede

"official" memory works such as: establishment of remembrance days, creation of a memorial or a monument."

Part of the challenge in defining "dark tourism", is that on the one hand, the boundaries or parameters that have been used in most of the literature to broadly define the phenomenon of visiting sites associated with death and disaster have had a "tourism" label or tourism related language attached to some, if not most, definitions of the phenomenon, and, on the other hand, these boundaries or parameters now seem to include gatherings that may not be perceived as "touristic" in nature, such as spontaneous memorialization in gatherings. "Most striking about the term dark tourism is the apparent incongruence between tourism (typically regarded as a leisure pursuit associated with pleasure and enjoyment) and sites that were once host to grisly events involving pain, suffering, violence, and death" (Dermody & Brennan, 2014; 128). This incongruence is further amplified, and made uncomfortable for some, by the fact that some of these sites have become ventures, whether for profit or not, in which death itself has been turned into a commodity. The commodification of death for the purpose of tourist experiences has been criticized (Osbaldiston & Petray, 2011). For some, sites that have been commodified for tourist consumption are considered lacking in social value, meaning, and authenticity (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011). Heidelberg (2015; 76) observes that "dark tourism is criticized as the dirty little secret of the tourism industry, where commodification of death and suffering could lead to trivialization of the dark event itself, a "Disneyfication" of tragedy, but this does not deter the public at large". Nor should it deter sociologists.

Despite this incongruence and resulting discomfort, the dark tourism experience, if it is thought about more broadly as a phenomenon in which social actors visit sites related to death or disaster, may have the potential to transform for scholars as it does for visitors, what may otherwise have been the terrifying, or the incomprehensible, or even the forgotten or the meaningless death event, into a meaningful inquiry that may reveal an important ritual and emotional experience for some visitors that assists both the collective and individual self in confronting and mediating mortality and permit opportunities for meaning making and

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social consolidation that may influence or change the social order. While the dark tourism experience may be one that is presented as a more recently studied phenomenon, it arguably has historical roots going back centuries. This complicates both the definitional challenge and the theoretical foundation for the existing literature (as will be noted in Section 2.4 and Section 2.5 below). Lennon and Foley (2000) claim that dark tourism is a contemporary tourism studies issue that has come into focus for tourism academics due to its roles in the visitor economy, issues of societal anxieties, consumer behaviour, increased technology, mass communication and globalization. Yet Seaton (1996) proposes that travel related to death has had a long history through what he refers to as the "thanatoptic tradition" (the contemplation of death). Even before "The Crucifixion of Christ" (from the standpoint that travel, death, and pilgrimage throughout the ages have been intertwined), all the way up until today (Baillargeon, 2016; 19), many embark on journeys – sometimes as a form of religious pilgrimage – for spiritual or emotional reasons. These destinations include prominent places of death, sites with shrines containing skeletal remains, death shrouds and bodily fluids (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011), but also sites where death was observed and consumed by raucous onlookers, such as at the Roman gladiatorial games (Stone, 2006). Other scholars seem to explain the transition to a contemporary tourism approach by suggesting that because religion has been negated for so many, the sacred canopy that once encompassed the Western world has become fragmented and as a result, it is more common to turn to the Internet and dark tourism for answers, rather than to a priest, when tragedy strikes (Baillargeon, 2016). It is because of this that, increasingly, dark tourism academics propose that the definition should look to the experience rather than the act of visiting a dark site as "modern secular dark tourism takes on an unprecedented meaning-making role and that is why the modern visitor experience is so crucial to understand" (Baillargeon, 2016; 19).

It is also proposed by some that contemporary dark tourism should be defined as a "purposeful quest" almost in the form of a pilgrimage to heritage sites (Light, 2017; 294). The terms "pilgrimage" or "heritage" tourism often were used to categorize sites dealing with

death and violence. Indeed, some still tend to identify the term dark tourism as part of the greater heritage tourism industry due to its connection with history (Gentry, 2007). Skinner (2012) believes that dark tourism is a kind of secular pilgrimage for modern society and that by taking a pilgrimage to dark sites the tourist can both understand and relate to death, disaster, and atrocity. While some may consider heritage and dark tourism as complementary, others believe that describing historical sites in the same sense as dark tourism sites entangles the two. In part, this is due to the fact that some may perceive dark tourism as a form of economic exchange that is profane (Potts, 2012), while others recognize that "tourists as participatory agents in place-making or tourism is often essential in the direct or indirect economic support of heritage sites, enabling their very existence in time, space and memory" (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011; 78).

The expression "black spots" was also offered as a label by Chris Rojek (1993; 136) to refer to "the commercial developments of grave sites and sites in which celebrities or large numbers of people have met with sudden and violent death." In a contribution that pre dates that of Lennon and Foley's (1996) definition of dark tourism, Rojek (1993) argues that dark tourism is a new way of escape through travel that ultimately allows the tourist to break from the repetitious cycle and mundane activities of everyday life. The growing popularity of sites that Rojek (1993) labelled as "sensation sights" also comprised sites of death or disaster or other tragic atrocities that have been commodified for tourist consumption and are founded upon contemporary desires and demands for new kinds of escape. Some of these sites were described by tourism studies scholars as "milking the macabre" (Dann & Potter, 2001), or representing examples of "grief tourism" (Trotta, 2013), "fright tourism" (Bristow & Newman, 2004), or "morbid tourism" (Blom, 2000). For example, Blom (2000; 32) explains that morbid tourism is a term used that encompasses both: "sudden violent death and which quickly attracts large numbers of people ... as an attraction-focused artificial morbidity-related tourism." Examples of these are best described as museums of torture and waxworks, such as the Jack the Ripper Museum in London, England or Body Worlds exhibitions on display around the world.

The conversion of sites to attract tourist type visitors has also complicated the definition of dark tourism as it focuses on the language of "tourism consumption", "consumer behaviour" and "commodification of death". Yuill (2003) observes that some cemeteries, once viewed as private, sacred and dignified places, became places attracting large numbers of visitors so that these sites were effectively transformed into sites for mass tourism. Pere LaChaise Cemetery in Paris, Forest Lawn Memorial Park in Hollywood, Highgate Cemetery in London, not to mention numerous cemeteries or places associated with war or human tragedies, such as Flanders Fields, Ypres, the Anne Frank House and Auschwitz-Birkenau are examples of these. Then, there are sites such as the 9/11 Memorial in New York City. It is perhaps the quintessential dark tourism destination, with an increasing number of annual visitors (Walter, 2009). Potts (2012; 233) highlights the conspicuous commodity culture around the 9/11 site and explains that this is the result of what some have labelled a: "visibly commodified national mourning".

Visitors to these sites would rarely consider themselves as "dark tourists", nor classify their visits as an act of "dark tourism". Nevertheless, there are an increasing number of tourists whose preference for travel revolves around attractions, visitor sites, memorials and events that pertain to death. Henderson (2000; 270) supports this by revealing that "despite the horrors of death and destruction (and also because of them), the memorabilia of warfare and allied products probably constitutes the largest single category of tourist attractions in the world." Yet the visitor experience is a richer one than may be suggested by this language as visitors who are undertaking the act of visiting these sites, through the visitor experience and outcomes are participating agents in the social production, consumption, performance and construction of death events (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011).

Light (2017; 293) observes that "for all the achievements of two decades of research, dark tourism in particular has proved to be a contested and divisive concept with little consensus over the definitional challenge or indeed agreement about what forms the subject matter, places and experiences that constitute dark tourism." A leading academic in the study of the phenomenon now acknowledges that dark tourism represents "a branded

scholarly typology of heritage sites, exhibitions, and visitor attractions that all have (has) a single common denominator…an interpretation of death…" (Stone, 2016; 23). The definitional challenge has implications for the study of dark tourism from a multi-disciplinary approach. For the purposes of the research question, the definitional challenge may be answered or at least lessened by three considerations. Firstly, as will be more fully explored in the next chapter, the research question looks to only those sites with respect to which visitors have some shared emotion or an experience of involvement with the death event represented at the site. Secondly, as the next chapter will make clear, sociology may assist in addressing part of the theoretical gap that lies behind the definitional and conceptual challenges – notably, in the contribution sociology may bring to the study of the phenomenon through visitor experiences as they involve representations or expressions of ritual interactions that may mediate the death event. Thirdly, and perhaps happily, the empirical research is being carried on at the 9/11 Memorial site which is a site that arguably meets the approaches contemplated by the thanoptic tradition and by the study of dark sites global visitor economy, although it will be proposed that this is because sociological theories in the next chapter provide the thanatology and tourism studies with a lens that may serve each.

Whether it be the study of dark tourism in the thanoptic tradition (where death or a death event may be privately contemplated in public spaces) or as heritage tourism (where a purposeful quest to visit public or heritage sites where death is most often featured) or as a part of the contemporary global visitor economy (where death or a death event is commodified for public presentation), or a "branded scholarly approach" to the phenomenon, the definitional and conceptual challenges persist. These challenges, of course, represent significant "gaps" in the dark tourism literature. The next chapter provides some theoretical support from sociology to fill part of this gap. To explain some of the other reasons for the continuing definitional challenge and to position the research question and proposed approach to it in this thesis, the next section will consider the limitations of the existing literature arising as the result of the current academic and conceptual foundations for the study of dark tourism as a phenomenon.

2.3   Academic and Conceptual Foundations for the Study of Dark Tourism

While dark tourism as a phenomenon may date to the Middle Ages, as observed above, the study of dark tourism is relatively new. Arguably its academic and conceptual boundaries are still being established and are open for exploration by a number of disciplines. Stone (2013) has suggested that dark tourism as an academic construct and research area essentially emerged from a collision of death education and tourism studies. Death education, with its origins in thanatology, and tourism studies, with its origins in business management, vocational training, and related social sciences, have provided basic foundations for much of the study of dark tourism, but there are opportunities to move past the collision and consider areas of concurrence should the study become truly multi-disciplinary.

To state the obvious, the dark tourism literature does not offer a theoretical or conceptual foundation(s) to assist with the resolution of the definitional challenge. Not surprisingly, much of the literature has proceeded on a descriptive journey investigating specific sites or attempting to categorize consumer/tourist behaviours and site characteristics. There are problematic issues with the typological and proposed theoretical foundations for the research in the study of dark tourism (Stone, 2013). Indeed, as Light (2017; 294) observed, more than two decades after Foley and Lennon (1996) termed the phrase "dark tourism", not only is there still much debate over the concept, but there has been "limited concern to develop or apply theory" and its theoretical foundations are fragile, so much so that dark tourism research "is often held in low regard by scholars in other disciplines". The literature still features a continuing debate on such basic questions as: "What is dark about dark tourism?", "What makes this approach different from older or competing conceptualizations, such as those grounded in thanotology?" and, finally, "What might these different terms have in common?" (Hartman, 2014).

2.3.1 *Foundations based on Tourism Consumption, Thanatology and Unexplored Emotional Connections*

Some of these issues (or limitations) arise because the early foundation for the study of dark tourism was largely from the "consumption" and "supply side" perspectives relevant to tourism management studies - that is, the academic inquiry into the phenomenon was focused on conceptual theories about the reasons visitors were motivated to visit (or consume) these sites or to suggest frameworks to categorize the supply of the existing sites. These perspectives were generally used (at least in the early literature) to analyze the motivations or drivers behind site visits, the interpretation of the sites by visitors and the intensity of the visitors' experience or encounter with death at these sites. Johnston (2013; 201) proposes that the dark tourism research generally explores three models, namely:

- Conceptual models that theorize the phenomenon through production or consumption approaches – or both.

- Empirical supply side research which explores site characteristics.

- Tourist experience research focused on motivations or actual encounters with death.

This is an accurate observation about the research models (and limitations) used in the dark tourism literature. However, it does not fully reflect all of the theoretical or conceptual offerings – or potential frameworks - that touch upon the research question dealing with the visitors' motivation, interpretation and experiences at these sites. It is proposed that the literature may be conveniently considered and organized by reference to the following framework that will be considered in the sections below:

- Section 2.4 Consumption and supply (tourism management theories) theories about visitors interest in site themes or characteristics, including such elements as the shades or degrees of darkness of the sites, or site typologies

based on interpretations offered at the sites (Stone, 2013; Johnston, 2013; Strange & Kempa, 2003; Stone, 2006).

- Section 2.5 Thanatological theories about the contemplation or confrontation with death or a death event at a dark tourism site (Seaton 1996; Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Stone, 2012); or

- Section 2.6 Conceptual proposals about the emotional connection to, or the emotional experience of visitors with the dead or death event at the site (Lennon & Foley, 2000; Best, 2007; Stone & Sharpley, 2008; Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998).

The organization of the existing theoretical approaches according to these frameworks or connecting factors may be depicted as set out in Figure 2.1. These approaches are briefly considered below:

Figure 2.1: Existing Theoretical Approaches in Dark Tourism Literature
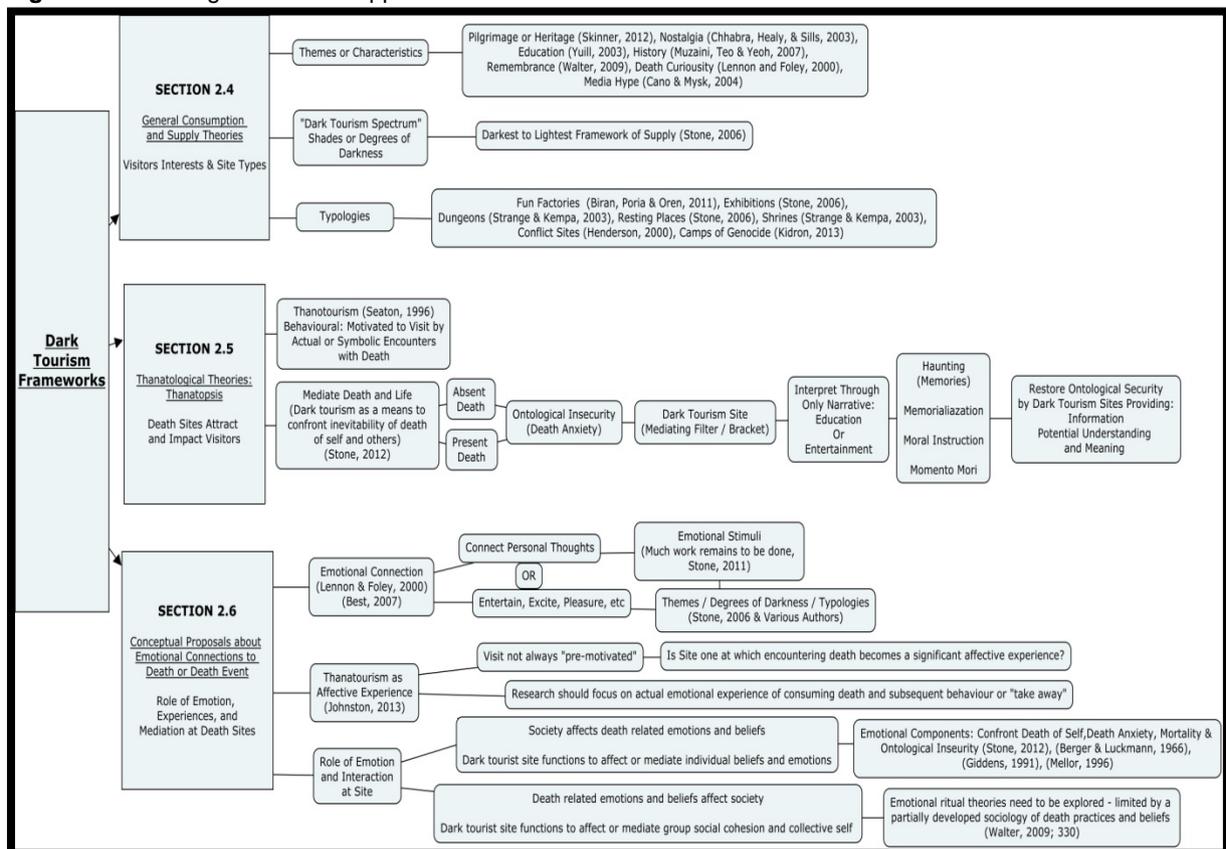
2.4 Consumption and Supply of Dark Tourism: Visitor Interests, Degrees of Darkness, or Site Typologies

The research question, in part, asks why visitors as social actors, may be motivated to visit some dark tourism sites, at least in cases where visitors have an emotional connection or experience of involvement with the site. Indeed, much of the dark tourism literature, including the debates over the definition of dark tourism and studies offered to define visitor interests, site themes or characteristics, or provide typologies, came about as a result of the effort to provide answers to why visitors are motivated to visit these sites. This section will review the existing literature as it sets forth theoretical concepts related to motivation from the perspective of tourism studies. Of course, this thesis does not address the issue of motivation from a tourism studies perspective but rather a sociological one. Nevertheless, in order to position the existing literature on motivation and to identify the manner in which the sociological perspectives offered in this thesis may complement the existing tourism studies approach, it is instructive to review existing state of the motivation literature.

2.4.1 *Motivation of Dark Tourists to Visit Sites*

The existing tourism management literature has largely accepted that visitors are subject to certain "push and pull" factors. Visitors are said to be "pushed" by socio-psychological factors or interests to leave home to visit sites, and / or visitors are said to be "pulled" by certain aspects or features associated with potential destinations (Robinson, 2015). Understanding the motives for traveling to sites associated with death contributes to defining and differentiating tourism subgroups but most importantly, it explains why the nature of those frameworks in the existing literature consider the motivation of visitors to sites related to death involve a broad range of visitor "interests" from a "demand" and "supply" perspective that attempts to explore what interests may "push" consumers or which sites (or types of deaths) may "pull" consumers. For example, when Timothy and Teye (2004) looked at tourist interests and experiences at Elmina Castle in Ghana, they were able to distinguish that White American tourists predominantly visited the site for educational purposes whereas

African American tourists had a profound emotional experience that centred upon "coming home" to the site. A wide range of "influences" are most often advanced to explain what draws tourists to dark tourism sites. The diversity of perspectives on interests to death that create a draw to sites that may be summarized as follows:

Nostalgia and Death: Many travel to dark tourism sites because they are "nostalgic about the past" (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003) Dann and Potter (2001; 73) suggest that this may be because of "the need for novelty," "the search for near-death adventure experiences," or "the ability to simulate deathlike phenomena." Regardless of the reason, many people in their travels to dark tourism sites have been noted as just plain old "nostalgic about the past!" (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003)

Death Education: Dark tourism sites often design an experience to be an "educational" experience or knowledge journey for the tourist (Yuill, 2003). Seaton (1996; 237) suggests that education can offer the tourist a form of catharsis so that "by experiencing the pity and terror of representations of death, a person could be inoculated against, or purged of its terrors in real life."

History: Dark tourists are often attracted by facets of history. Muzaini, Teo & Yeoh (2007) explain that dark tourists are motivated by things like death and war but they are also deeply interested in the actual affects of each. This allows for the tourism experience to offer both a physical and a psychological impact (Muzaini, Teo & Yeoh, 2007).

Remembrance: A number of dark tourism sites may be said to attract tourists for the purpose of remembrance. As Walter (2009; 46) states, "if there is no formal way to care for the dead, all there is left is to remember." As Walter (2009; 48) explains, remembering is also a way of "relating to the dead and / or of contemplating their deaths."

Curiosity about death and the dead: Whether tourists like to admit it or not, curiosity for the morbid is a widely shared interest (Rojek, 1993). Yuill (2003; 71) explains that "people's curiosity about atrocity is insatiable; they are motivated by empathy, excitement and other psychological stimuli of varying moral worth." Lennon and Foley (2000; 58) add that the combination between a tourist's curiosity and sites of suffering, horror and death

have "become established commodities, on sale to tourists who have an enduring appetite for the darkest elements of human history."

Media Hype about Death: Tourists visiting these dark sites may not be motivated to visit because of a "highly symbolic encounter with death", but rather due to hyped media attention (Cano & Mysyk, 2004; 892), including news media, guidebooks, internet sites and blogs, as well as discussion forums. Most tourists visiting dark sites because of media hype are considered to be in the "secondary tourism" category proposed by Lennon and Foley, but those who visit may have or develop a deeper connection (Cano & Mysyk, 2004). An example of this type of cultural influence includes those who visit the Princess Diana memorial museum that now attracts thousands from all over the world (Merrin, 1999).

While the dark tourism literature has been largely devoted to developing a comprehensive conceptual approach surrounding the motives for traveling to sites associated with death, empirical work that considers meaningful, experiences of involvement attached to sites of death by the tourist is still very limited (Wight, 2006). In fact, Biran, Poria and Oren (2011) suggest that by looking at literature that revolves around visiting heritage sites may permit for a more meaningful understanding of tourist experiences of involvement at dark sites. This is in part due to the fact that the literature on heritage sites recognizes and adopts the multifunctional nature of sites not only for the sole purpose of being interested in death but by also presenting death, rising from the various symbolic meanings of the death on display (Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011). For example, death sites such as Gettysburg may present some of the bloodiest battles during the American Civil War but at the same time they can also be symbolically transformed and used by visitors to "negotiate, define, and strengthen social values of patriotism and national unity through the death of others" (Stone, 2012; 1567). The dark tourism literature has for the most part overlooked in any great detail these other very important functions and as a result, predominantly focused on a descriptive approach to literature that relies mainly on discrete touristic interests about death itself or the death event at a site.

2.4.2 *Degrees of Darkness*

In an effort to propose frameworks that may consider both consumer motivation and site characteristics, researchers have categorized dark tourism sites into different intensities or degrees of dark tourism – also known in the literature as shades of dark tourism (Strange & Kempa, 2003). Stone (2006) presents a "dark tourism spectrum": Lightest – Lighter – Light – Dark – Darker – Darkest. These shades of darkness are comparisons between, and move within a scale from the lightest to the darkest depending upon the destination's purpose (ie. level of commodification), infrastructure, location, authenticity and entertainment orientation (Sharpley & Stone, 2009). These shades help to organize the diverse range of sites and tourist experiences as many attempts have been made to distinguish between different levels or degrees of dark tourism based on a site's proximity to death and dying. Some have argued that sites on which death and dying occurred may be distinguished in their intensity from sites that are simply memorials to death and disaster but in which death and disaster did not take place (Stone, 2012). For example, some argue that the "placeness" (and the findings of deep emotional significance and attachment conjured by it) associated with a site such as Ground Zero – where thousands of lives were lost – is a place much darker, and of greater emotional intensity, than a museum or memorials to death and disaster located in a space far removed from the actual site where death occurred (such as the collection of artifacts recovered following 9/11 that were temporarily displayed in the Smithsonian Museum of American History in Washington D.C. to mark the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks) (Skinner, 2012). Others, however, have rejected this distinction (Miles, 2002), with some suggesting that in almost every case there will be an intention by the tourist to celebrate, commemorate or mourn – no matter the shade of dark (Keil, 2005). Again, keeping in line with the descriptive understanding of dark tourism, the shades that Stone (2006) explains range from lightest to darkest have led to a diverse array of research exploring the presence of visitor's in spaces associated with death at a number of death-related sites. However, these perspectives ignore the range of the individual's inner emotional experience that could be had on site and thus, lead to a simplified understanding

of dark tourism, which without proper empirical research could possibly merge theory surrounding unrelated visitor experiences into the literature (Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011). While this can be seen to be a limitation, many note that the adaptation of a descriptive approach to literature is a common characteristic of research into new tourism niches such as that of dark tourism (Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011).

2.4.3 *Site Typologies*

In order to further categorize dark tourism sites, Stone (2006) amongst others, attempts to present a comprehensive typology of seven dark types that may be classified by the "popularity" or "theme" or "site function" or "interpretation" of the site. These range from dark fun factories as the "lightest" to dark camps of genocide as the "darkest" and may be said to complement the degrees, shades or spectrums of darkness discussed above.

Dark Fun Factories: call attention to sites that present real or fictional death and macabre events that predominantly have an entertainment focus and marketable ethic to them (Stone, 2006). Often these attractions are referred to as less authentic as they fall into the "lighter" side of the dark tourism spectrum airing on the side of fun and consisting of a high tourism infrastructure (Stone, 2006). Sites associated with death, such as Dracula tourism in Romania is a good example of a Dark Fun Factory (Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011).

Dark Exhibitions: unlike Dark Fun Factories that offer a more entertaining product, Dark Exhibitions are more geared to learning and educational opportunities thus typified more toward the darker spectrum (Stone, 2006). These exhibitions encourage conversation around them and often, through construction of these exhibits can be known to drain the emotion out of those visiting (Stone, 2006). An example looks to the Smithsonian Museum whom displayed just forty five objects displaying images of the September 11th, 2001 terrorist attacks and as a result, instilled a sense of history and veneration for the victims (Stone, 2006).

Dark Dungeons: refer to sites and institutions such as San Francisco's Alcatraz and South Africa's Robben Island Prison (former prison of Nelson Mandela) that attract

thousands of visitors a year because of their history, architecture and infamy (Strange & Kempa, 2003). Many former prisons (including Karosta Prison in Latvia) now permit tourists to sample the experience of being a prisoner by spending several hours or even a full night behind bars in a simulated experience of prison life. In Strange and Kempa's (2003) analysis of the "shades of dark tourism" these dark dungeons host the center ground of dark tourism sites. Some dungeons weighing in as more authentic than others. Stone (2006; 154) notes "with a shorter time period to the actual "event", in other words the recent incarceration of political prisoners, Robben Island possesses a higher degree of conservationism and commemoration in its product design, and is perhaps perceived as more authentic.

Dark Resting Places: focuses upon the more gothic side of tourism that surfaced in the early nineteenth century, including sites such as Pere Lachaise Cemetery in Paris (last resting place of former *The Doors* singer Jim Morrison); Arlington National Cemetery, and La Recoleta cemetery in Buenos Aires, Argentina (burial site of Eva Peron, Argentina's first-lady from 1946 until her death in 1952). The cemetery or grave markers are considered to be the focus of the dark tourism experience where the living are being charmed by the dead and which further act as mechanisms to promote visitation to an area thus may be considered as comprising of both light and dark elements on the dark tourism spectrum (Stone, 2006).

Dark Shrines: consist of sites which essentially "'trade' on the act of remembrance and respect for the recently deceased" (Stone, 2006; 155). Often, a mass floral tribute will signify the Dark Shrine where the death event has occurred providing a marker for the gathering of other "mourners", which very often have no direct relationship with the victim. Dark Shrines remain on the "dark" spectrum even though media often reports these events, and perhaps emotionally invigilates visitors to react in a certain manner (Stone, 2006). Furthermore, a semi permanent and tangible focal point for the bereaved can also arise out of Dark Shrines (Stone, 2006). These are sites constructed very close to the site of death within a very short period of time - either formally or informally - that memorialize "famous individuals" (e.g. Elvis, Princess Diana), "extraordinary disasters" (e.g. 9/11 Terrorist

Attacks), and "everyday crime scenes and traffic accidents" are declared as being dark tourist attractions (Strange & Kempa, 2003: 387).

Dark Conflict Sites: include visits to areas where significant battles were fought, including Gettysburg, Pearl Harbor and Normandy (sites of battles involving the mass fatalities of World Wars I and II). These conflicts are associated with war and battlefields and their commodification constitute the largest single category of tourist attractions in the world (Henderson, 2000). Much debate revolves around the discord between commemoration and memorial at Dark Conflict Sites and the interpretation of the harsh realities and political ideologies that are formed at these sites all of which remain extremely dark issues (Stone, 2006).

Dark Camps of Genocide: represents travel to sites linked to the Holocaust, such as Nazi death camps in Eastern Europe (especially Auschwitz, which has its own visitor center); to Anne Frank's house in Amsterdam; or to Holocaust museums around the world (such as the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.) (Kidron, 2013).These are places associated to genocide, atrocity, and catastrophe and therefore are associated to some of the darker forms on the dark tourism spectrum (Stone, 2006). Quite often this is also referred to by the media as "Holocaust Tourism" when referring to the broader dark tourism concept and this often accompanies a supercilious and disrespectful label (Stone, 2006).

While many may argue the frameworks based on site classifications above present a narrow set of popular dark tourism sites to contextualize the discussion about the typology of the seven dark suppliers (Yankholmes & McKercher, 2015), there is still good evidence to suggest they act as a useful resource in understanding the range of sites offered within dark tourism (Stone, 2006). It should also be noted that to date, there is no universal typology of dark tourism, or for that matter, a universally accepted definition so regardless of whether it is referred to as dark tourism, dissonant heritage, thanatourism or any other term we still have to identify its parameters and as a result, interrogate both its conception and practice (Stone, 2012). However, the fact remains, there is an increasing trend in the literature that

uses dark tourism as an academic lens in which to study and "scrutinise broader socio-cultural considerations, managerial and political consequences, or ethical dilemmas" (Stone, 2012; 1569). Having observed this, it is clear the categorization or typology of various dark tourism sites has not yet been completed and continues to evolve in the literature, just as the nature and supply of these sites evolve.

2.4.4 *Limitations of Tourism Studies for Research Question*

The consumption and supply perspective limits a meaningful inquiry into the research question as it only considers the tourism management approach to the motivations and experiences of visitors who travel to, interpret and experience death at the sites. Whilst tourism scholars have identified and expanded upon the scope of the inquiry into various dark tourist sites according to their shades, spectrums and typologies, the function and role of the phenomenon and these sites invite further inquiry. This invitation is especially enticing as many dark sites are, for the most part, visual, experiential, and reactionary, and the investigation of their function and role requires new conceptual frameworks for exploring dark tourism as a whole (Skinner, 2012). To better understand the phenomenon of dark tourism, these frameworks must reach beyond the different "shades" of dark tourism experiences and reach into the individual and collective meanings actually experienced by visitors during site visits on many different levels. Further, these frameworks must support or remedy those areas that are acknowledged to be theoretically fragile and poorly conceptualized. In fact, Biran and Hyde (2013) suggest the need for examining the nature of the demand side of dark tourism within a broader social scientific context within which dark tourism may be located, as these have received limited attention in the literature especially in relation to the notion of the wider socio-cultural context.

Indeed, Stone (2016) and Light (2017) have come to some rather remarkable conclusions about the existing frameworks that focus on motivation, demand and consumption of dark tourism.

First, it would seem that the notion of a "dark tourist" may be in question. Stone (2016; 24) observes that "dark tourists by implication of so called dark tourism do not exist – only people interested in the social reality of their own life worlds." So it would seem that rather than being motivated or fascinated with death, research into the motivations of visitors suggest that, from a tourism studies perspective many visitors are engaged in "purposeful quests (in some cases, pilgrimages) for learning, understanding, connection empathy and remembrance" (Light, 2017; 294). Indeed, as Light (2017; 294) observes, if "there are tourists with a specific fascination with death they appear to be a rare phenomenon."

It is clear that the existing literature on the "consumption" and / or "supply" of dark tourism and its approach to visitor motivation, interpretation and experiences should not be used to answer the research question and consider the objectives in this thesis. So, while identifying visitor interests, themes, characteristics or typologies is an important area of inquiry for many in tourism studies, what is more important to this thesis is whether some aspects of visitor motivation, interpretation and experience at some sites may involve and be subject to analysis through ritual and emotional interaction and the mediation of the death event from a sociological perspective. And given the state of the existing dark tourism literature, it is hoped that the present inquiry will not only be useful from a sociological perspective, but also may contribute to a multi disciplinary effort in such a way that some theoretical stability may be offered to the study of the phenomenon in a way that those in the tourism studies field may embrace some of the proposed sociological approach for their own purposes in further study and thereby fill part of the theoretical "gap" in the existing literature.

2.5 Thanatological Perspectives: Encounters with Death through Dark Tourism

Thanatology has influenced at least two approaches in the dark tourism literature to explain the motivation to travel to these sites and the experience with death encountered at these sites by visitors. One of these approaches was offered early in the development of the dark tourism literature by Seaton (1996) and it is based in what is known as Thanatopsis (or Thanatoursim). The other is offered by Stone and Sharpley (2008) who draw upon a

thanatological condition of society from the sociology of death and Giddens (1991) notion of ontological security to look at the dark tourism experience from the perspective of the death anxiety and ontological insecurity that may be shared by visitors. This approach has been enhanced most recently by Stone (2012) who argues that dark tourism sites may serve as a mediating institution to filter death anxiety and restore ontological security in visitors. As these sites educate or entertain through the use of memories, memorialisation, moral instruction, and *momento mori* ("remember that you will die").

The thanatological perspectives differ from theories of consumer motivation, demand and supply in two respects. Firstly, they come from time honoured tradition that looks to the study of death and dying from an academic perspective. It is founded upon academic insights including some from the sociology of death that propose that individuals and their society react to death in definable and ultimately understandable terms. Secondly, the thanatological tradition has not been pre occupied with the search for theoretical or empirical struggles to understand consumers who consume dark tourism within the visitor economy.

The thanatological perspectives are being presented here, as was the case in the section concerning tourist consumption, to distinguish the approach taken in this thesis from that found in the existing dark tourism literature. Notably, this thesis does not proceed on the basis that individual or collective desires for encounters with death motivate visitors, or set the context for their interpretations of sites or contribute to some form of a mediated encounter that results in the acceptance of death per se over one's life course. Nor does it proceed from an analysis of the thanatological condition of society which may create the desire to address the anxiety / insecurity that arguably may be relevant to the visitors experience at a site, or which may require filtering or bracketing of the death event.

2.5.1 *Thanatopsis: Desire for Touristic Encounters with Death*

Seaton (1996; 234) proposed that dark tourism is: "travel to a location wholly, or partially, motivated by the desire for actual or symbolic encounters with death". Seaton (1999) argues that "thanatourism" is a behavioural phenomenon and the travel dimension of thanatopsis,

the desire to view or contemplate death. Seaton (1996) proposes five forms or categories of thanatourism:

1) Viewing and experiencing enactments of public death or tragedy (ie. Gladiator battles and airplane crashes),

2) Visiting sites where individual death, mass death, disaster or tragedy have occurred (ie. Death camps, camps of genocide and places of celebrity death)

3) Visits to memorials and interment sites of the deceased (ie. Cemeteries and war memorials),

4) Viewing relics, material evidence of, or symbolic representations of deaths at locations other than the original sites (ie. Museums and memorial elements), and

5) Experiencing re-enactments or simulations of events that in some way involve death (ie. Battle re-enactments)

While Seaton (1999) recognizes the descriptive understanding of dark tourism and accepts that death may not be the only motivation for dark travel, he still maintains the demand oriented approach which pursues the hidden assumption that such travel must be considered a form of thanatouristic motives belonging to the social science sub discipline of thanatology. Seaton prefers the word "thanatourism" to "dark tourism" because it includes the tourists' view on death and dying and it is also the term for thanatopsis, "a wider but more accurate delimitation" (Skinner, 2012; 4). Further, Seaton explains that dark tourism is the travel dimension of thanatopsis and that motives are primarily driven by desires for encounters with death, albeit with the presence of tourists at death related sites reflecting some degree of intensity or realistic representation of death (Sharpley & Stone, 2009). Although Seaton (1999) argues all tourists who visit battlefields or sites of genocide are

considered dark or thana tourists, others criticize this approach for overlooking the fact that various reasons for visiting sites of death may have nothing to do with interest in death itself (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011). This is illustrated by studies such as Slade's (2003) who suggest a profound heritage experience, and not an experience with death is responsible for travel to Gallipoli by Australians and New Zealanders. Likewise, visiting the Killing Fields of Cambodia are also noted as being a place that is described by people as a "must see" site serving the purpose of accepting death as well as dismissing the dead to the inevitable circle of life that describes the human experience, submitting how and why they died as irrelevant (Biran, Poria, & Oren, 2011). Others suggest that thanatopsis, "true to its origins as a philosophical, religious and literary concept, is not solely about individual desires for encounters with death and the dead, literally or symbolically" (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011; 72). Rather, thanatopsis is about accepting death over one's life course through various encounters with, or by reflecting on, death through the material and performative culture of death and dying (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011). Sather-Wagstaff (2011) suggests that it is irrelevant about how and why death occurred at a site, but rather research should concentrate more on whether the purpose of the trip is to accept death and at the same time dispatch the dead to the cycle of human experience. Moreover, when looking at war and genocide such as that of Gallipoli, death would be considered unavoidable, not feared, and definitely not something that may entirely be prevented for any rational reason in the near future. Of course, this approach is generally quite contrary to the traditional purposes set out at sites in that these sites often present death with various symbolic meanings of the death event in the narrative or on display, especially where the sites are commemorative ones that emphasize preservation of memory through visitation (Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011). However, not all those visiting dark sites will bring home the message to "never forget" or "never allow this to happen again", or "to ever learn anything from the consequences of human violence" (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011). It is for this reason that some believe Seaton's idea of "thanatourism" describing tourism to sites of or that represent tragedy is flawed, and "thanatopsis" as reflecting death and dying is not always the result of people visiting such

sites (Sather-Wagstaff, 2011). Sites may also present death that is known as places for: "remembrance, mourning, a space for a spiritual experience, demonstration of national identity, educational experiences, or simply a random stop" (Biran, Poria & Oren, 2011; 823). Often, these meanings are ignored by dark tourism literature, as the generally acquired descriptive approach to this subject assumes those visiting these sites are interested only in death, following Seaton's approach that reflects only thanatouristic motives (Biran, Poria, & Oren, 2011; 824).

2.5.2 *Thanatological Perspective: Dark Tourism as Narrative and a Mediator of Death*

While consumption of death appears to be in inverse ratio to our declining direct experience of death itself, dark tourism, when considered within a thanatological framework, may represent a contemporary institution with which to address mortality and permit its contemplation. Ultimately, as some propose, dark tourism allows visitors to reconceptualize death and mortality into forms that stimulate something other than primordial terror and dread. The work of Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Stone (2012) has introduced the dark tourism literature to the role of a dark tourism site as mediating institution. They propose that the increasingly socially acceptable tourist gaze upon death and the reconceptualization of death by visitors through dark tourism may be brought about by narrative at the site that involves entertainment, education or memorialization, which serves to offer the individual self ("the self") a practical contemplative mechanism to help filter or neutralize the impact of mortality (Stone, 2012). In turn, dark tourism may engender personal meaningfulness and may help minimize the intrinsic threat or dread that the inevitability of death brings (Stone & Sharpley, 2008). A filtering of anxiety and insecurity brought about by a death event is facilitated and sustained by dark touristic exposures to death, where the process of continued sensitization—or bracketing—of dying ultimately results in a sanitization of the subject matter. This may create a perceived immunity from death for the Self, in addition to accepting Death. Thus, contemplating death through a dark tourism lens allows tourists to view their own death as distant, unrelated to the dark tourism product that they consume,

and with a hope that their own death will be a good death and that their lives will be meaningful and ontologically secure. Arguably, therefore, dark tourism further individualizes and fragments the meaning of death. In doing so, dark tourism adds to the multiplicity of reflexive cultural devices that the Self may draw upon to contemplate mortality. Furthermore, dark tourism experiences expose tourists to the causes of death and suffering of individual people, in individual circumstances, thus perhaps encouraging the view of death as avoidable and contingent. As Sharpley and Stone (2009; 34) points out, these kind of deaths are "therefore reassuring rather than threatening, since they orient people towards strategies of survival rather than making them aware of the futility of all [life] strategies in the face of mortality". Importantly, these touristically packaged deaths take on significance for the Self, particularly in terms of mediating contemporary mortality and the death of others with who the Self identifies ("Other death"). Stone (2012) proposes (and invites further research on) the possibility that the motivation to travel to dark sites arises from what he describes as a "revival of death within the public domain", and, among other things, the desire of tourists to purchase ontological security – a filter or bracket so to speak – against the "dread" death inevitability brings. This notion of the "purchasing of ontological security" is based on Giddens (1991; 156) argument that individuals have a sense of security or stable mental state when, emotionally and cognitively, they see meaningfulness in day to day actions. A perception of order and continuity with respect to individual experiences gives this meaning to the lives of individuals; however meaningfulness is threatened by disorder, chaos, and especially death (Giddens, 1991; 36). Sharpley and Stone (2009; 28) has observed that states of disorder, chaos, that may be caused by death "signals the irreality of everyday conventions, since a person's sense of what is real is intimately associated with their sense of what is meaningful." Furthermore, Sharpley and Stone (2009) through the work of Giddens (1991; 37) explain that individuals in contemporary society will attempt to deal with this by "bracketing out of everyday life those questions which might be raised about the social frameworks which contain human existence". In advancing a model of the manner in which dark tourism may mediate mortality, Stone and Sharpley (2008) and then Stone

(2012) propose a theoretical concept involving dark tourism as a mediating institution as set out in Figure 2.2 below.

The theory looks to the thanatological condition of society by drawing on the concept of "thanatopsis" and the sociology of death insofar as they may apply to visiting places associated with death and suffering. It proposes that the sequestration of death in society serves to "isolate" visitors from death. It notes that institutions, at least organized religion, have declined in providing a framework through which individuals and society understand or accept death. When a death event occurs that may be said to challenge the ontological security of individuals it threatens their sense of self and as such, feelings of anxiety and vulnerability or insecurity arise. Paradoxically, even though death is sequestered by society, popular culture puts death on display in many ways, so that "popular" culture makes death "present" (not absent or sequestered) and these "displays" in popular culture are the ways in which visitors (and the society in general) confront, learn, understand and come to terms, if not accept, death events.

Dark tourism and dark tourism sites represent "death" and allow visitors to negotiate or mediate their anxiety and insecurity insofar as dark tourism and dark tourism sites presenting "a safe socially sanctioned space" at which visitors may "gaze" upon the death of "Significant Others" (Stone, 2012; 1578). In the approach proposed by Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Stone (2012), the dark tourism visitor experience, rather than the specific interest or motivation to visit the site, is the focus or context within which the mediation takes place as the visitor experience connects the living (visitors) with the ("significant other") dead at the site. Stone (2012) proposes that narratives about the dead are communicated at dark tourism sites through formal interpretation as a "first step" in the process of mediating death. "Interpretation at these sites may permit visitors to encounter the dead for educational purposes or for the purposes of entertainment" (Stone 2012; 1578). The mediation by connection of the living and the dead is achieved through narrative which provides the parameters for "consumption" by the visitors. The narrative may be by way of "remembering" the haunting memory of the death event and / or the memorialization of the death event in

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the "collective" memory of the visitors and society; as a form of "*momento mori*" (a reminder to visitors that they will die); or a form of moral instruction (or guidance) about issues of morality, ethical or social behaviour, or even new moral frameworks. To illustrate the manner in which he proposes dark tourism as a new mediating institution of mortality within secularized death sequestered societies, Stone (2012: 1583) provides the following summative model:

Figure 2.2: Model of Dark Tourism Consumption within a Thanatological Framework
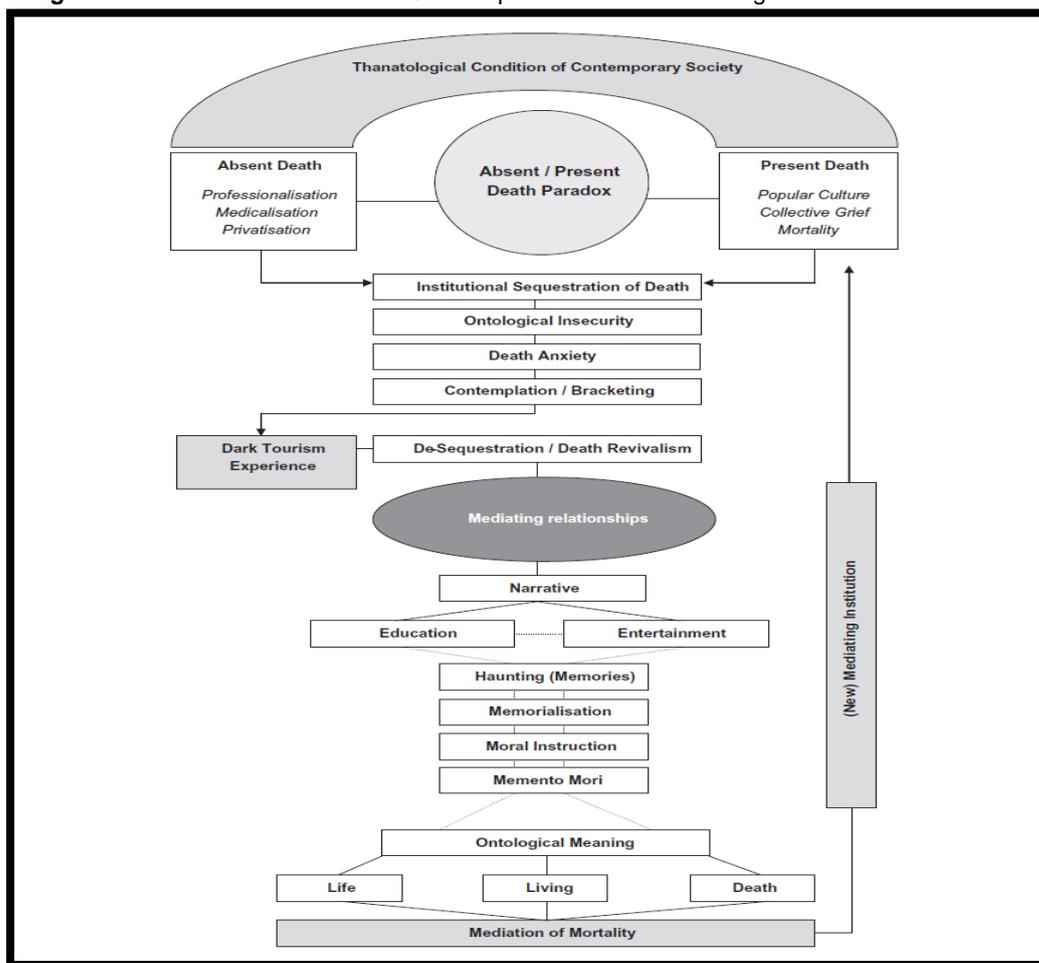
Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Stone (2012) therefore propose what is described as a model of dark tourism consumption within a thanatological framework and suggest that through this consumption the dark tourism visitor experience and dark tourism is a modern mediating institution that allows the Self to "construct contemporary ontological meanings of mortality" (Stone, 2012; 1582). In this way, dark tourism is one of a family of mediating institutions found in broader popular culture that mediate mortality. The dark tourism visitor

experience may "engender a degree of thanatopsis and meanings of ontology, where visitors may reflect on dark tourism and contemplate both life and death through a mortality lens" (Stone, 2012; 1582). The motivation to consume dark tourism is not to "experience *death per se*, but, rather, potential consequences of dark tourism experiences revolve around mortality narratives and education, entertainment, memorialization, and moral instruction, as well as *momento mori*" (Stone, 2012; 1582).

In considering the mediating mortality model advanced by Stone (2012); Light (2017) among others acknowledges the important contribution that has been made to advancing the study of dark tourism from a multi disciplinary approach in general and dark tourism as a mediating institution in particular. It stands as an important initiative against a background of what others have described as fragile or problematic theoretical foundations. Nevertheless, there are limitations to the mediating mortality model. As Light (2017) has described, the model is largely based on visitor experiences at dark tourism sites in the West and its application to a range of dark tourism sites is yet to be determined. To this, one might add that the model proceeds from the thanatological condition of society a secularized death sequestered society (and in particular the thanatological condition of western society) which arguably gives rise to the absent death / present death paradox. In this regard, it is to be noted that this thesis and the model proposed in Chapter 3, proceeds, not from the thanatological condition of any society, but rather from an analysis of the individual and collective rites, rituals, practices and emotions that may be relevant to the visitor experience and that may affect the social order.

It is also the case that the mortality mediation model requires much more in terms of theoretical and empirical research. From an empirical perspective, there have only been limited studies that have considered the model (see Light, 2017; 289 for a review). And as Light (2017; 289) describes, the research methods and theories for eliciting and analyzing the visitor experience in the mortality mediation model present challenges: notably whether visitors contemplate death at all at the dark tourism site and if so in what fashion or manner.

From the perspective of the theoretical foundations that are employed in the mortality mediation model while the explanation of the thanatological condition of society, absent/present death paradox, ontological insecurity and death anxiety concepts have strong sociological support, the rest of the model is somewhat lacking. The role of narrative (or interpretation) through education and entertainment, as well as the functions of haunting memories, memorialization, moral instruction and momentomori are - with the exception of Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Stone (2012) - without a strong theoretical foundation. And regrettably the motivation for visits and the role of emotion in the visitor experience go largely unnoticed except for reference to the visitors desire to purchase ontological security as an underlying principal behind the model.

From the review of the mortality mediation model in this section, the following "gaps" in the literature may be identified for consideration and it is hoped that some part of these gaps will be addressed by the sociological perspective and model suggested in Chapter #3.

1. Does the thanatological condition of society set the parameters for mediation of death by the dark tourism experience and, if so, does mediation only occur in secularized death sequestered societies – as found in the west?

2. Is there a theoretical foundation for the mediation process within the dark tourism visitor experience and, if so, what are the processual steps or stages of the "connection with death" by which the "construction of mortality meanings" and mediation occur?

3. Is the mediation model limited to the outcomes proposed by Stone (2012)?

4. What, if any, is the role of emotion in the mortality mediation model either in visitors' interactions with narrative at the site or in terms of the death anxiety or ontological insecurity visitors may bring to the site?

2.6   Emotional Connection or Experience with the Dead or the Death Event at the Site

At a variety of points in the existing dark tourism literature, the role of emotion in motivating visits or in the visitor experience at a site is at least implied, if not expressed, to be a relevant factor. From a relatively early point in its development, the literature expressly accepted that emotion may have a role to play in understanding the motivation of visitors. Lennon and Foley (2000) proposed two broad categories to attempt to capture the motivations of those who travel to dark tourism sites. One dealt with those who travel to dark sites "for the purpose of entertainment, excitement and pleasure, with no obvious connection to the site or event other than value adding to their overall tourism experience" (Best, 2007; 31). The other category dealt with those who travel to sites of death, disaster and tragedy: "for the purpose of connecting personal thoughts, experiences, grief, and memories, and are in some way emotionally, physically or spiritually connected to a site or event" (Best, 2007; 31). Furthering this, Stone (2007; 50) suggested that: "people travel to these sites to pay respects to a loved one who died; to connect to an event that touched them through media coverage or family stories; to learn more about what happened; or simply out of curiosity." For example, these people might consist of family and friends of the deceased, people embarking on a pilgrimage, or those looking to remember or to pay respect to others who fought in battles for their nation, or who may have been victims of terrorist attacks or other disasters. It is noteworthy that this category as first proposed by Lennon and Foley (2000) contemplated a connection or (what will be proposed in Chapter 3) as an experience of involvement between visitor and the death event at the site. Indeed, the proposal advanced by Lennon and Foley (2000) was that in order for there to be a dark tourism experience, the experience must go beyond the memory of the tourist and must engage emotion or elicit an emotional response for the dark tourist. However, this proposal has not been examined by further detailed research.

This does not mean that efforts have not been made in the existing literature to identify specific emotions at play in the visitor experience. Light (2017; 287) notes that in

carrying out empirical research into the visitor experience at a site, most researchers have focused on the words that visitors use that may describe particular emotions; words such as sorrow, sadness, horror, grief, disgust, repulsion, shock, fear, anger and disappointment to use some of the more negative emotion-words found in studies, or pride, hope, from the positive side. This descriptive type of research is limited and rarely inquires into the intensity of the emotional experience or its potential consequences for visitors (Walters, 2009). Given this, some dark tourism scholars have proposed a way forward to the study of emotions in dark tourism. For example, Darlington (2014) in a three page reflection recounted how a visit to Flanders war cemetery triggered an emotional reaction for her involving the loss of a dear friend and unexpectedly allowed her to grieve, raising the possibility that a visitor experience may be analyzed with reference to theories of bereavement, mourning and grief. In another effort, Johnston (2013) (who studied the travels of the American author Mark Twain to thanatourism sites) proposed that: (a) Twain's encounters (and visitor experiences), although not always pre-motivated or purposefully supplied, were most often emotionally charged and deeply affective experiences, which had the potential to provoke ontological insecurity; (b) the geography of death has the potential to stimulate emotional reactions and configure individual and societal interactions with death; and (c) there is a need for new methodological approaches to understanding what Johnston (2013) refers to as the thanatourism experience that are empathetically sensitive to the potentially powerful impact of the thanatourism experience itself. Others, such as Podoshen (2013; 2015) track data from visitors emotions, feelings and motivations involved in dark tourism activities related to black metal subculture and dystopian dark tourism; however, most of this work deals with theories based on psychological, cognitive and behavioural conditions of visitors. Light (2017; 295) expressly invites researchers to "examine the on-site experience in its broader content … to include what comes before the visit (anticipation and expectation) and after (including practices of remembering and reflecting)." He observes that the longer term impacts on visitors will require more nuanced models.

In addition to the express acknowledgment in the existing literature that emotion may have an important – if not fundamental – role to play in the dark tourism experience, a review of many of the theories and concepts advanced about visitor motivation and site characteristics seem to suggest an implied acknowledgement that emotion is an important factor. Even a cursory review of the influences proposed in the existing literature to explain visitor motivation (see pages 10-12 above), present concepts or at least words or phrases that are associated with emotion: for example, "nostalgia"; "pity and terror...of death"; "remembrance"; "curiosity...motivated by empathy", "excitement and other psychological stimuli"; "various symbolic meanings of the death on display"; "patriotism and national unity through the death of others". Similarly, even a cursory review of the intensity or degrees of darkness framework, or the typologies advanced by the literature (see pages 12-18 above) suggests that emotion has an underlying if not fundamental role to play in the architecture of these frameworks or typologies. As noted in Section 2.4.2 above, some argue that the intensity or shades of darkness simply reflects the depth of the emotional significance and visitor attachment associated with a particular site. For example, a site such as Ground Zero is a place much darker because of its greater emotional intensity for visitors, than a museum or memorial to death and disaster located in a space far removed from the actual site where the death event occurred. Some, even reject this distinction based on placeness (Miles, 2002), suggesting that in almost every case there will be an intention by the visitor to celebrate, commemorate or mourn to some extent no matter the shade of dark (Keil, 2005).

The implied role of emotion is not just apparent from a review of the existing literature on motivation and interpretation. Indeed, implicit in the concept of thanatopsis and underlying a portion of the work of Seaton (1999), Stone and Sharpley (2008), and Stone (2012), is emotion. Seaton (1999) proposes that visitors are primarily motivated by a desire to encounter death as a means to negotiate or mediate the visitor's relationship with death. Stone and Sharpley (2008) proceed on the basis that the thanatological condition of society – the absent/present paradox – results in death anxiety and ontological insecurity that the dark tourism experience may mediate. The fear, the anxiety, the ontological insecurity- *the*

terror- brought about by death requires the social order to provide or "shield" or "filter" and to that end dark tourism is said to function as a mediating institution.

The "in site" visitor experience has also been recognized in the existing literature as being one that is likely to result in a profoundly emotional experience with a range of emotions and an emotional engagement with the death event (Light, 2017; 288). In some of the literature, research suggests that the interpretation offered of the death event at some sites can "drain the emotion" out of those visiting (Stone, 2006). Cameron (2003; 18) maintains that dark sites: "can potentially be powerful places for the engagement of emotions and opinions around contentious topics." Kang, Scott, Lee & Ballantyne (2012) add to this by explaining that meaning associated with a place or the authenticity of a site is regarded as an important element of the dark tourism experience as it creates visitors empathy or sympathy. Austin (2002; 448) observes that tourists may go into sites looking for an educational and entertaining experience, but find that the presentation and interpretation is much more powerful than anticipated and the sites often are "liberators of strong emotion". Sites might serve as places that resolve and heal people on a personal level. In fact, one visitor to the National Museum of American History stated his visit: "did more than all the counselling sessions at the Pentagon ... this was very healing for me" (Cameron, 2003; 22).

Sites associated to death and dying, in particular those that have to do with war or political conflicts, usually offer a selective interpretation of these events that create multiple constructions of the past (Kang, Scott, Lee & Ballantyne, 2012). Winter (2009; 607) terms this construction of "social memory" as: "a reconstruction of the past in the light of the present" and explains it was traditionally used primarily at memorials, battlefields, and cemeteries as a tool to articulate the social memories of war and to: "provide for personal mourning and bereavement and to remember the dead." These interpretations lead to a strong affective and emotional impact on visitors (Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998). Today, a number of sites have incorporated this practice into the visitor experience to: "assist people grieve for, honour and remember the dead" (Winter, 2009; 607). The human or social component is considered paramount in remembrance, interpretation and storytelling at dark

tourism sites (Ryan & Kohli, 2006). This of course raises a long standing debate within the existing dark tourism literature about what some describe as "hot interpretations" which are designed to engage visitors emotionally, rather than cognitively (Light, 2017; 291). Kang, Scott, Lee and Ballantyne (2012) observe that by: "co-creating an experience, consumers can adopt a "hot interpretation" approach where a subjective interpretation of the past affords a significant dark tourism experience while offering insight and healing to dark site visitors." Uzzell and Ballantyne (1998) were one of the first to propose interpretation that adds an affective element into the visitor experience that should be considered "hot interpretation". More specifically, they identify that hot interpretation is susceptible to a full range of emotional responses, as it is typically acknowledged, anticipated or encouraged through interpretation (Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998). These emotional responses light up visitor memories and experiences which in turn cause selective attention to information processed on site that is combined with past experiences and decisions which highly influence visitor actions or re-actions (Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998). In sum, the principle behind hot interpretation is that visitor emotion may be affected and possibly manipulated through the narrative presented on site. Yet to identify and analyze this "hot interpretation", a theoretical framework is required to consider what emotions visitors have brought to the site (in terms of their past experiences of involvement) and to gauge how visitors may be affected by what is displayed on site, how other visitors experience the site as well as how site management or presenters (including guides) portray information or present narrative to elicit emotions from, or convey a message to, the visitor.

To date, the existing literature has identified and debated the issue and role of emotion – but a theoretical framework has not been proposed to further its study. And this is understandable given that an explanation for the study of the phenomenon itself is still relatively new and, as is the case with the study of emotion within most, if not all, of the social sciences, there is an understandable struggle for scholars to embrace a theory of emotion (Franks, 2006) and, consequently, to move forward with the definition, nature, role and function of emotion in the study of the phenomenon.

Among others, Stone (2010; 2016) has explicitly called for research agendas to encourage and explore the role and extent of emotion in visitor motivations and experiences at dark tourism sites. In a recent interview with Baillargeon (2016; 13), when asked about unexplored areas in the field of dark tourism, Stone re-iterated this call for study into the "emergent motivations and consequences of the tourist experience at dark tourism sites. For instance, how does the visitor feel and perform at particular dark tourism sites?" The dark tourism literature has yet to draw upon the sociology of emotions or interaction ritual theories to consider this question, although Chapter 3 will attempt to do so.

2.7   Conclusion

This section has surveyed some of the fundamental literature and approaches to the study of dark tourism. As noted, given that the study of dark tourism is still in its infancy, it is not surprising that the dark tourism literature has reflected its tourism studies origins to propose sets of classifications and frameworks based on the "consumption" of dark tourism and the "supply" of sites to try and address critical questions in tourism management. The initial efforts were classification of sites largely based on perceived tourist motivations to visit sites and the interest of visitors in the death event. Then, the focus became a classification by "themes," presumably because it was assumed that tourists wish to visit certain of these sites because of the "type of death event". Then, further research presented the possibility that dark tourism should look at "shades or intensities of the death event." Then, even more detailed analysis of these sites yielded a comprehensive typology by Stone (2007) and then a mortality mediation model by Sharpley and Stone (2008) and Stone (2012). These recent perspectives, as acknowledged by Walter (2009) and Stone (2009; 2012), have resulted from a call for wider engagement with the relationship between the living, the dead and the spaces they co-inhabit. And this call for a wider engagement has not gone unanswered. Most particularly, Stone has responded and proposed a thanatological and sociological perspective to be taken to the study of the dark tourism phenomenon, with a mortality

mediation model under which dark tourism may be evaluated as a new mediating institution (Stone 2012).

Some has been written about the site of the 9/11 death event using these approaches in the existing dark tourism literature. Among other things, using the tourism studies approach, the site may be described as being on the darkest of the dark tourism spectrum and the memorial as offering a place for death education, remembrance, and a dark shrine. The mediation mortality model would suggest that visitors may have any death anxiety and / or ontological insecurity brought about by the terrorist attacks "filtered" or "bracketed" through the mediation effected by the site narrative that would connect the living with the dead through (haunting) memories, memorialization, moral guidance and *momento mori*. While these approaches certainly are instructive and have been offered as a means to inquire into the dark tourism phenomenon in general, and at the 9/11 site in particular, given the gaps and / or limitations of the existing literature described in this chapter, they do not provide sufficient analytical tools for a meaningful inquiry into the research question and objectives proposed in this thesis. So it is necessary to look elsewhere for other perspectives that may assist in the inquiry represented by the research question and that also may address some of the "gaps" in the existing literature as discussed in this chapter and as summarized in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: GAP(s) in the Study of Dark Tourism

GAP(s) in the Study of Dark Tourism	Sec.
<u>Definitional Challenge</u> Lack of agreement over definition of the phenomenon, including what forms the subject matter, places, and experiences that constitute dark tourism (Light, 2017; 293 : Stone, 2013)	Sec 2.2
<u>Conflicting Perspectives over a Common Denominator and Theoretical Foundation</u> Whether dark tourism may be best considered from a perspective of: (a) a contemporary tourism studies issue for the purposes of tourism academics and practitioners alike (Lennon and Foley, 2000); or (b) a thanoptic tradition that desires to encounter and contemplate death (Seaton, 1999: Stone and Sharpley, 2008); or	Sec 2.2

GAP(s) in the Study of Dark Tourism	Sec.
(c) a "purposeful quest" (in some cases a type of pilgrimage) to learn, connect emotionally or remember a public or a heritage type death event that "perturbed the collective consciousness" (Stone 2016:23; Light, 2017; 294); or (d) a branded scholarly approach to visitor experiences at sites featuring a common denominator, being the interpretation and mediation of death, given the interest of visitors in the social reality of their own world (Stone, 2013: Stone, 2016:24; Light, 2017)	Sec 2.2
<u>Academic Foundations are Theoretically Fragile</u> <u>Consumer Motivations, Demand and Consumption based on an Interest in Death</u> Existing dark tourism frameworks that largely focus on consumer motivations, demand and consumption of dark tourism are theoretically fragile and predicated on an assumption that visitors had a clearly defined interest in death (Stone, 2013; 2016: Light, 2017: Skinner, 2012: Biran and Hyde, 2013)	Sec 2.4
<u>Thanatopsis: Desire for Actual or Symbolic Encounter with Death - At Site vs. Life Course</u> The thanatological perspective has been put into question as there is little research to suggest that visitors are motivated by thanatopsis (desire for actual or symbolic encounter with death) (Seaton, 1999), or that visitors may wish to gaze upon the death of significant Others (Stone and Sharpley, 2008). But there is theoretical support for the proposition that dark tourism experiences may permit one to accept death over one's life course through remembrance, mourning and emotional or educational experiences (Sather-Wagstaff, 2013: Biran, Poria and Oren, 2011).	Sec 2.5
<u>Visitor Experience permits Mortality Mediation of Death Anxiety and Ontological Insecurity</u> The dark tourism visitor experience may allow for a process of mediating death as proposed by Stone (2012) but there is little evidence that the thanatological condition of society motivates visits, or influences interpretation of the sites or sets the parameters for mediation (Light, 2017; 289). Stone's (2012) mortality mediation model is largely based on visitor experiences in secularized death sequestered western societies (Light, 2017; 289). Stone's (2012) mortality mediation model does not offer a theoretical foundation from a sociological perspective with respect to the process by or within which mediation takes place, specifically the processual steps or stages involved with the "connection with the dead" and the "construction of mortality meanings". The outcome of Stone's (2012) mortality mediation model being a filtering, bracketing or purchase of ontological security may understate the potential for the mediation of death and through an analysis of on-site experience mediation may be extended to other outcomes.	Sec 2.5
<u>Visitor Emotions</u> Emotion is expressed or implied as a factor underlying most of the Dark Tourism literature No definition or theory of emotion has been proposed in the dark tourism literature. Emergent motivations and consequences of the visitor experience at dark tourism sites including what the visitor feels emotionally and how the visitor performs at particular sites – requires theoretical approaches (Stone, 2016; Light, 2017).	Sec 2.6
The role of emotion in the mortality mediation model needs clarity.	Sec 2.5

Stone and Sharpley (2008; 589) in proposing the use of a model based on the thanatological condition of society suggested that

> "linking the concept of dark tourism with the sociology of death ... has not only developed a model that provides a conceptual basis for the further empirical study of its consumption, but has also contributed to wider social scientific understanding of mechanisms for confronting death in contemporary societies."

This thesis proposes to use a more focused sociological lens on the phenomenon of dark tourism at the 9/11 Memorial site without reference to the consumption and production of sites, or the thanatological condition of society, but rather with reference to ritual theories of emotion and interaction that may help develop a better understanding of the motivation of some visitors to visit some dark sites, the interpretation of the site by these visitors and the affects the site has on these visitors, including the role of these sites to mediate death and possibly impact the social order from an individual and collective perspective. Indeed, this thesis considers whether the 9/11 Memorial site itself may be a mediating structure- albeit, from a different perspective than offered by Stone (2012). Focusing upon shared emotions, death rituals and performances that arguably may be observed within some dark tourism sites, in the next chapter the proposed frameworks of inquiry will be presented from a theoretical perspective and then a model will be proposed which will be "tested" in Chapter 5 through 8 by examining visitor experiences contained in fieldwork conducted at the 9/11 Memorial site in New York City. Specifically, the next chapter will canvass the significance of ritual theories of emotion and interaction proposed by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) for the study of dark tourism and propose the use of these theories together with the framework of inquiry that is suggested by Robert Kastenbaum (2001) in his work concerning society's death system.

3 EXAMINING MOTIVATIONS, INTERPRETATIONS AND EXPERIENCES AT DARK TOURISM SITES FROM A SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter will consider the theoretical frameworks that may be relevant to a consideration of the research question and objectives from a sociological perspective and that may also contribute to filling some part of the gaps from the existing dark tourism literature that were identified at the end of the last chapter. From these frameworks, the objective of the chapter will be to propose and support a model for analyzing the dark tourism visitor experience from a death system and interaction ritual perspective. This model reflects the experience of some visitors at some sites as a form of a Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism. It is the model that is proposed in this thesis to be used to consider and answer the research question and the objectives. I propose that this model will contribute to the dark tourism literature and further the work of the scholars that have proposed other perspectives, especially the work of Stone and Sharpley (2008) and Stone (2010, 2012) who have drawn upon thanatology and the sociology of death to propose a mortality mediation model based on the paradox of absent death - present death as described in Section 2.5.2 in the last chapter. It is to be noted that the mortality mediation model was offered to respond to the suggestion of Stone and Sharpley (2008; 589) that:

> "linking the concept of dark tourism with the sociology of death ... has not only developed a model that provides a conceptual basis for the further empirical study of its consumption, but has also contributed to wider social scientific understanding of mechanisms for confronting death in contemporary societies."

Of course, the contribution of Stone and Sharpley (2008) and then Stone (2012) has been significant insofar as the dark tourism experience is proposed as a means by which visitors may confront the inevitability of death of self and others. As observed in the previous chapter examining the existing dark tourism literature, this linking of the concept of dark tourism with the sociology of death by Stone and Sharpley (2008) provides a thanatological perspective under which death anxiety and ontological insecurity are filtered by the dark tourism experience through the use of narrative, thereby providing understanding and meaning that

restores ontological security. The ritual performance frameworks and the model proposed in this thesis do not proceed from the thanatological condition of a death sequestered society but rather look to dark tourism as part of a society's "Death System" and consider the ritual performance of dark tourism as part of the visitor experience in those cases when visitors have an emotional experience of involvement with the death event represented at the site. These frameworks and the model also feature mediation, but the mediation is of the visitors' emotions that occurs through interaction rituals which, when successfully performed create new realities and outcomes for visitors and support or influence the social order.

It should also be noted that the model proposed in this chapter emanates from the empirical research data and themes generated by an analysis of my fieldwork undertaken at the site of the 9/11 Memorial in the Fall of 2013. The fieldwork and themes identified in the data preceded the search for theoretical frameworks and the ritual performance model proposed in this thesis. Other than some familiarity with the death system concept gained during my graduate work in travel and hospitality, the theoretical frameworks (and the resulting model) were unknown to me.

In the sections of this chapter which follow, consideration will be given to the work of Kastenbaum (2001) (Death Systems), Durkheim (1995) (Piacular or Mourning Rites), and Collins (2004) (Interactional Ritual Chains who draws upon Durkheim's (1912) model of ritual and Goffman's (1959; 1967) concept of "the situation", among other things). Areas of concurrence between the death system and interaction ritual approaches will be noted. Then, consideration will be given to emotion – the common denominator running expressly through the interaction ritual work of Durkheim (1912) and Collins (2004), and implicitly through the mediation of death inherent in the death system framework proposed by Kastenbaum (2001). Specifically, a definition and a theoretical foundation for emotion will be considered for use with the theoretical frameworks and the model. Finally, the ritual performance model will be presented as it is founded upon the death system and interaction rituals. But before proceeding further, an introductory overview of ritual performance and the model may be of assistance.

3.1.1 *Introduction to the Proposed Model of the Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism*

The ritual performance model proposed in this thesis links the dark tourism experience with the sociology of death by using a death system perspective to complement theories of interaction ritual and emotion to consider new possibilities for the motivation of visitors to visit some of these sites, the interpretation of these sites and the experience of the visitors that may allow for the mediation of the death event for visitors. The model, then, will be used in the consideration of the empirical research and it is hoped, will provide an answer to the research question and objectives from a sociological perspective. While the model being proposed is an original contribution to the literature, as will be seen, it is largely founded upon three recognized theoretical approaches - Kastenbaum's (2001) death system framework, Durkheim's (1912) interaction ritual framework (as it was evolved by Collin's (2004) Interaction Ritual Chains Framework) and Barbalet's (2002) definition of emotion.

Kastenbaum (2001) provides a framework of inquiry within which one can consider the death system in each society. The death system framework serves as a guide to identifying system components and functions, as well as the resulting mediation of death (or the death event) that may take place. The framework does not describe the mediation process per se - just the components and functions that may be at play as part of a framework of inquiry into how death is mediated within a society. The value of considering this framework is that, if dark tourism may be positioned as part of a society's death system and as such the dark tourism experience may be a mediating institution, the death system framework may allow us to examine the components or functions at work in the dark tourism experience and begin to understand whether and how the visitor experience involves death system components and the operation of death system functions. Observing the death system in operation in the dark tourism visitor experience may allow us to draw conclusions, if not about the motivation of visitors per se, at least about the manner in which visitors interpret the experience and encounter the death event through at least four of the critical functions of the death system. Given the limitations of Kastenbaum's (2001) framework of inquiry and its theoretical foundations, it is necessary to look elsewhere to gain a greater

appreciation of the actual process of mediation, visitor experience outcomes and the role of emotion that is implied but not always expressed within the death system perspective.

Turning to other theoretical foundations in order to complement the shortcomings of the death system framework and in order to answer the research question and objectives, the interaction ritual theories proposed by Durkheim (1995) in *Forms* and Collins (2004) in *Interaction Ritual Chains* are explored in greater detail. The chapter will describe a particular class of rite proposed by Durkheim (1995) known as piacular or mourning rites to consider the extent to which the research question may be answered. The model proposed by Durkheim (1995) has been further enhanced by Collin's (2004) work on interaction ritual chains. Collins (2004), who adopts Durkheim's (1995) approach to interaction rituals - albeit without specific reference to or consideration of piacular or mourning rites to clarify the processual ingredients and the outcomes of interaction rituals. His work starts with "the situation" as the critical reference point in examining individual interactions, a concept among others that Collins (2004) draws from the work of Erving Goffman (1959; 1967). But beyond refining the processual ingredients and outcomes of interaction rituals in situations, Collin's (2004) also offers the chains or links of interaction situations that are relevant to understanding interactions and their connections from the visitors past, present and future. Collins (2004) also is the basis upon which the model proposed in this thesis considers observation points that may be useful to future consideration of the visitor experience as visitors move through the links of situations seeking what Collins (2004) describes as emotional energy (and what Durkheim (1912) described as solidarity).

Of course, throughout all of the theoretical approaches being considered, and as was the case in much of the existing dark tourism literature as described in Chapter 2, emotion has a consistent and constant presence. Emotion runs throughout the framework of the death system (although not always expressly recognized, it is at least an undercurrent of the manner in which the death system mediates mortality); emotion is at the centre of Durkheim's (1995) piacular or mourning rites, including but not limited to his description of collective effervescence; emotion is also at the expressed core and outcomes of the

interaction ritual process according to Collins (2004) as it determines the existence and the outcome of the interaction ritual and arguably the interaction chain. Yet emotion, at least in the frameworks offered by Kastenbaum (2001), Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) remains an undefined term that presents challenges in analyzing the visitor experience. And so for this reason, this chapter will then turn to the sociology of emotions in an effort to provide some context, if not a definition of emotion. From this body of work, the definition proposed by Barbalet (2002) is offered for the purposes of understanding the model, as well as the answers to the research question that may be provided by the sociological perspectives. The definition of emotion as "an experience of involvement" is proposed to bring a better understanding of what motivates some visitors to some dark tourism sites, the manner in which these visitors interpret the experience and the outcomes of their encounters with the death event. This definition also enhances the understanding of what occurs in each interaction in a situation, and what is brought by some visitors from past experiences to the present dark tourism visitor experience and then into future experiences on both an individual and collective level. The definition of emotion explains the "feelings" that some visitors experience and that lay behind their motivation to visit, their interpretation of the site experience, their encounter with the death event and their outcomes from their visits. The feelings of these visitors are what might be described as the marker of the interaction in the situation (past, present and future) that "registers in the physical and dispositional" being of the visitor (Barbalet, 2011; 38).

3.1.2 *Introduction to the Mediation Process and its Outcomes within the Proposed Model*

It is proposed that ritual interactions and emotions among visitors at some dark tourist sites, restore communion or unity or meaning for the individual self and the collective self in the face of the site's death event. This is the mediation of death. It is a mediation of the visitors' emotions – their experience(s) of involvement with the death event. More specifically, where the ritual interactions at the site involve the components and functions of the death system, it

66

is proposed that the shared experience of involvement among visitors at these sites creates a momentarily shared new reality through a form of collective effervescence and then, from this collective emotional experience, visitors experience another outcome in the form of feelings of solidarity (Durkheim, 1995) or emotional energy (Collins, 2004). This outcome – these feelings - transform the death event into a sacred event, promotes social consolidation or solidarity for visitors, provide visitors with confidence and renewed strength in the context of the death event.

3.2   Dark Tourism as Part of Society's Death System

Some dark tourism sites may be said to have been created by and function as a product of what has come to be known as "the death system". The death system framework may be applied as an analytical tool to identify and consider the manner in which visitor's interaction with the components present at a dark tourism site serve to transform the site into a mediating institution by allowing visitors the opportunity to be involved with at least four of the critical functions of the death system that may be seen to be in action, namely, the site as a place of disposal for the dead (actual or symbolic), a place for facilitating social consolidation, a source of narrative that makes sense of the death/death event and an experience from which visitors may receive moral guidance related to the death event.

3.2.1   *What is the Death System?*

Kastenbaum's (2001) concept of the death system provides a robust and a generally accepted framework of inquiry that may be applied to explore part of the visitor experience in the face of a death event represented at a site. Given that the death system reflects human interaction with death, dying and bereavement, its relevance for application in other areas of sociology dealing with death has been acknowledged (Seale, 1998).

The death system features components and functions (ingredients and outcomes) that are not difficult to recognize within the dark tourism site and the visitor experience. And it is the possibility that dark tourism experiences may be analyzed as part of and as a

product of the death system that invites its application as a convenient framework within which to consider whether the dark tourism visitor experience involves an interactive process of mediation with respect to the death event that may have consequences for the social order.

Kastenbaum (2001; 66) proposed that the concept of the death system be employed to consider: "the interpersonal, socio-cultural, and symbolic network through which an individual's relationship to mortality is mediated". All cultures, past and present, have had death systems, according to Kastenbaum (2007). Kastenbaum presents death as something to be understood in a larger context, where it may be seen to fulfill manifest and latent functions and to maintain – or change if necessary – the social order. Through one sphere of action influencing the other, a subtle network of relationships and meanings within a death system starts to attract our attention to these various interconnections (Kastenbaum, 2007). We face death as part of a society whose expectations, rules, motives, and symbols influence our individual encounters and, it would seem that our individual encounters influence society (Kastenbaum, 2007). Indeed, the death system described by Kastenbaum has a great attraction as it serves as a framework of inquiry for the analysis of the impact of death on the individual self and the collective self. Essentially, the way in which we interpret and respond to situations associated with death determines and establishes a set of patterns and outcomes surrounding the death (Thompson, 2017). To highlight this, Thompson (2017; 244) explains that the death system "has become a well established concept in the thanatological literature, but what is not always appreciated is that what it describes is, in effect, a culture – a set of beliefs, practices and "unwritten rules" about death and associated matters."

3.2.2 *Why Apply The Death System to Dark Tourism?*

To be clear, none of the existing literature applies or argues for the application of the death system framework to dark tourism. Nevertheless, the existing literature on the death system suggests a number of reasons that its use in the consideration and analysis of the research

question with respect to a dark tourism site would be appropriate and advance an understanding of these sites. To begin with, the death system framework allows for the organization of death related social phenomenon, notably the manner in which interactions within and around these phenomenon influence the individual and collective selves. The death system, with its components and functions, is easily recognizable when looking at a death related social phenomenon and provides a focused lens for analysis. While it is important to underline that the death system may vary significantly from one society to another, each societal death system features the components and functions set out in the framework (Kastenbaum, 2007). The lens provided by the framework may then be applied regardless of the society or the particular death related phenomenon – the components and functions of the framework are a constant. To be clear, the society being examined and its death system constantly evolve to accommodate change; but the framework of inquiry, precisely because it is just a framework of inquiry does not change and as such may be used over time. This will become clear when examining piacular rites which were based on Durkheim's (1995) observations and theoretical conclusions involving Australian primitives. Importantly, Kastenbaum's concept of the death system helps us to view its components and functions from a societal and an individual point of view (Corr, 2015); although the framework does not provide a process or mechanism to examine the interactions and the actual mediation per se.

The death system looks at the interactions by which the individual and collective self mediate and express their "relationship to mortality". Insofar as the interactions are interposed between death on the one hand, and the individual and collective self on the other, the death system interprets and mediates death (Kastenbaum, 2007). As part of the role of the death system to mediate and express relationships to death, it is proposed that in the case of the dark tourism visitor experience, mediation is brought about in large measure from the visitors interactions with components of the death system and the interplay among four of the main functions of the death system, namely the actual or symbolic disposal of the dead, the promotion of social consolidation after death, the making sense of death, and the

setting of rules about moral guidance or reaction as a result of the death or death event. As noted above, some dark tourist sites themselves may be said to be a product of the death system insofar as they are places in which visitors interact with the dead or a death event at sites containing relevant objects and symbols. Further, some dark tourism sites are more than just a product of the death system, but indeed function as a form of microcosm within which the above noted four functions may be viewed at work. Finally, the death system framework may be adopted to identify and consider the role and function of emotion in the mediation of death for visitors from both an individual and societal point of view within the context of a dark tourism experience; although as noted below the death system framework of inquiry does not provide any definitional or conceptual guidance about emotion within the mediation process. Nor, does the framework provide any guidance as to the dynamic nature of the interaction process involving components and functions.

3.2.3 *Death System Components and Functions*

The death system in a society has five components and seven functions. The components are individuals, places, times, objects, and symbols/language – all of which have particular death related meanings. The death system serves a number of critical functions: warning of and predicting life threatening events or death; preventing death; caring for the dying; disposing of the dead; achieving social consolation after death; making sense of death; and setting rules about killing (Kastenbaum, 2007).

3.2.4 *Death System Components and Dark Tourism*

No literary or poetic license is required to observe and record the presence of the five components of the death system - individuals, places, times, objects, and symbols/language - at a dark tourism site dealing with disaster and death. First, at such a dark tourism site, *individuals* have direct encounters with the public face of death and with other visitors, including site guides. The experiences of involvement with the dead or the death event at these sites may involve self through a direct loss or indirect (vicarious) loss, or the fear or

death anxiety prompted by the inevitability of one's own death or the death of others as proposed by Stone (2012), or may involve the individual or collective self through those who are motivated to attend the site for some of the reasons set out in the existing dark tourism literature or because of a sense of obligation or emotional need. Individuals directly and indirectly help create or support the networks, interactions and meanings around death at these sites. The second component of the death system is *places* that remember the dead and these certainly include dark tourism sites. Places are transformed when associated with mass death - they become almost sacred in the sense that they actually or symbolically house the dead and are deserving of veneration, reverence or respect. The site of the 9/11 attack is an example of a transformation from a major business epicentre to a place associated with death (Kastenbaum, 2007). The third component of the death system is *time* including occasions and dates to remember the dead or disasters. Through individual or collective rituals, dark tourism sites often honour and create occasions associated with the deaths and the dead at the site. These occasions often have a ritual performed at a time set aside to mark, honour, remember or mourn those who have died in past years. These occasions are times where death takes precedence over other thoughts, feelings and emotions. Kastenbaum (2007; 78) remarks "just as we might grant death its own space in return for death not invading ours, so we might set aside special times for death, hoping that death will not steal the time of our lives." The fourth component comprises the *objects and things* including monuments or salvaged items. What is so interesting about objects is that unlike people, places and time, this component can be "recruited" into the death system in that objects will always remain the same, but the meanings attached to them are transformed in a death system (Kastenbaum, 2001). Most dark tourism sites feature these types of objects and things. The fifth component of the death system is generally the *language or symbols or images* that signal, warn or convey death (Kastenbaum, 2001). The symbols, language or words that are used - or not used for that matter - in various settings also speak to the nature of a culture's death system. Kastenbaum (2007; 79) suggests that there is still a tendency to mitigate death with ambiguous language, indirect phrases,

narrative or symbols that are thought to be more re-assuring to those affected by death. As Stone (2012) has noted, dark tourism sites fulfill their role as a mediating filter or bracket by offering interpretations through narratives focused on education or entertainment. Indeed, Stone (2012) proposes that this interpretation is served by symbols, language or words in the form of haunting memories, memorialization, moral instruction and *momento mori* as a means to restore ontological security. This thesis proposes that Stone's (2012) analysis and model is at least compatible with, and may be theoretically enriched by, the use of and reference to the death system components described above, as well as the death system functions described below.

3.2.5   *Death System Functions and Dark Tourism*

Even a casual observation of the presentation of death at any given dark tourism site may reveal the following death system functions at play for purposes of the visitor experience at the site and an inquiry into that experience, namely, (a) a place for actual or symbolic disposal of the dead; (b) a place at which social consolidation occurs; (c) a place at which visitors are able to make sense of death in so far as the site or narrative provided there allows visitors to engage in meaning making to mediate or filter or legitimate death, their fear of death or the death event represented by the site and; (d) a place to seek or receive guidance or support for moral or social action in the face of the death event (Kastenbaum (2001) uses the term "killing rules" rather than moral or social guidance).

3.2.5.1 *Disposing of the dead*

The disposal of the physical remains of the dead is a task that every society must perform (Doka, 2003). Where circumstances do not permit individual acts of disposal, then some death systems will encourage public acts or memorials in lieu of disposal – for example, in the case of mass casualties at the sites of airplane crashes or terrorist attacks. Many sites operate in this way, as they present the public with places to gather together for post-event memorials in lieu of actual disposal, for example sites at places such as Lockerbie, Scotland

and the 9/11 Memorial. To this end, many dark tourism sites feature memorialization of the dead by way of providing for a place of the actual or symbolic disposition of the dead. This would seem to allow for what Stone (2012) has referred to as connecting the living with the dead. Much information may be gathered from observing the memorialization processes attached to the actual or symbolic disposal of the dead (Kastenbaum, 2007). The interaction of visitors with shared emotions or experiences of involvement with the dead or the death event transform these sites of actual or symbolic disposal from ordinary places to sacred places.

3.2.5.2 *Social Consolidation after Death*

People have to adjust and consolidate after a death (Kastenbaum, 2001; Doka, 2003). In many societies, funeral rituals, memorialization (spontaneous and planned), public or private mourning and grief support are ways through which society adjusts. As Corr (2015; 20) has observed about this function of Kastenbaum's (2001) death system:

> "A bereaved society and its members need help to work toward social consolidation after a death. They need assistance in making real the implications of death and in finding ways to achieve new modes of individual, familial, social, and spiritual integration that promote healthy ongoing living. Contributing to this are rituals that draw people together to offer support to each other even as they mourn the loss, celebrate the life that has now ended, and memorialize the person who died."

Social consolidation may occur at dark sites when visitors are brought together by a death event that affects the individual and collective self, and are offered interaction rituals that may allow for a (re) construction of the death event and the opportunity to mediate or reconcile the visitors' relationship to death. The object of social consolidation at many sites is to bring a community or society together into a whole, and to strengthen it. As visitors interact with each other at the dark site, their shared experience, attitudes and feelings become energized.

3.2.5.3 *Making Sense of Death*

Society must develop ways to explain, understand and make sense of death (Doka, 2010). Kastenbaum (2007; 85) explains that: "making sense of death becomes an especially high-priority activity for us when a death undermines the basic way in which we interpret the world." Unexpected death might confuse our ideas about life. It is within the society's death system that explanations are made available. Dark sites may operate in this way, insofar as some may permit for a repositioning or a reconstruction to take place with respect to the interpretation of the death event. Stone (2012) proposes that providing an interpretation through narrative, understanding and meaning at a dark site restores the visitor's ontological security - the way they interpret the world in the face of an unexpected death event - by providing a mediating filter or bracket. The challenge lies in examining these explanations and more importantly to understand their origins within the society (Doka, 2010). Certainly, dark sites that offer an explanation or interpretation may "allow for a death to be interpreted within a given faith or philosophical or societal viewpoint" (Doka, 2010; 1). But even those sites that do not offer a particular viewpoint per se, offer a "story" or narrative that serves as part of the ritual and emotional interaction between visitors and the death event at the site. These sites permit opportunities for emotional meaning-making.

3.2.5.4 *Killing Rules or Moral Guidance*

The death system in a society has: "norms that indicate when, how, and for what reasons individuals or other living creatures can be killed" (Doka, 2010; 1). For example, a society may construct norms that justify – or not – the killing of others, including civilians, within the context of confrontations or terrorist attacks. Certainly many dark tourism sites may have this effect as they may highlight the injustice inherent in the death event or provide support for a construction of a norm that justifies killing in response to the death event. While Kastenbaum (2001) may certainly have intended this function to be limited to a consideration of killing rules or norms, it is to be suggested that this function is representative of a broader consequence of the confrontation with the death event on an individual or collective level

where the narrative at the site may suggest a nobler purpose may be derived from the death event. That is, the moral guidance or direction that may be taken from the dead or the interpretation of the death event. Stone (2012) acknowledges the role of moral instruction at dark tourism sites in this broader function. He describes embodied and emotionally engaged visitors at the site that "potentially offers the Self an emancipatory place for reassessment and self-reflexivity that allows for a reconfiguration of outlooks and interpretative strategies" (Stone, 2012; 1580). Stone (2012; 1580) proposes that visitors may "construct relative meanings of morality through The Significant Other Dead".

The qualification of many dark sites as being components of or serving the functions of the death system seems to be apparent. Nevertheless, none of the literature involving the death system has embraced dark tourism or a dark tourist site. Perhaps, one of the reasons for this is that there are some limitations with the academic foundations of the death system framework which will be discussed below.

3.2.6 *Limitations of Academic Foundations for Death System Framework*

The difficulty is that while Kastenbaum's (2001) death system is widely acknowledged as a viable framework for analysis, it has lacked the benefit of rigorous academic explanation or detail when it comes to a fulsome understanding of the components and functions of the death system. There is a dearth of theoretical and empirical research involving the death system. However, it is what might be described as a "generally accepted framework" in the sociology of death starting in 1977, when Robert Kastenbaum wrote and published the very first textbook on the subject of *Death, Society and Human Experience.* With at least eleven editions in print, it is widely used in undergraduate programs, academic journal articles and books and is supported by his other work on death and dying (Kastenbaum, 2011; Coulombe, 2013; Corr, 2015; Thompson, 2017). The concepts (notably the components and functions) of the death system are straightforward enough and do permit for the identification of the networks or interactions within the system. However, there has not been sufficient work done to allow for a firm academic understanding of how these networks and

interactions may in fact operate in a dynamic way. There is need for a process or model to allow for a careful observation of the interaction or interplay among components and each of the functions of the system. Notably, there is a real need to understand the process of mediation and in particular the role of emotions in this process. Therefore, to support the use of Kastenbaum's (2001) framework and to offer new theoretical insights into its relevance, at least at some dark tourism sites, the thesis proposes to consider the death system together with the benefit of interaction ritual theories in the sections below.

While four of Kastenbaum's (2001) functions (Disposal of the Dead, Social Consolidation, Making Sense of Death and Killing Norms) may easily be used as a basic framework to consider the research question and possibly the dark site as a social phenomenon, neither Kastenbaum (2001) nor those who followed his work explored or explained these four functions of the death system in any detail. Nor did Kastenbaum (2001) offer insights about the process or "mechanics" involved in the operation of the death system and its functions. As a result of the rather brief treatment and explanation of these functions in the literature, it is proposed that an approach grounded in the work of Durkheim (1995) and others may provide a basis for a more complete understanding of these functions in general and be helpful in considering the research question and objectives in particular.

3.3 Dark Tourism and Theories of Ritual Interaction and Emotion

In pursuit of a theoretical vision to complement Kastenbaum's (2001) death system framework, an examination of the body of work that focuses on the ritual character of social interaction and the role of emotions in these interactions as originally conceptualized by Emile Durkheim (1995), and enhanced by Randall Collins (2004) is proposed. To begin with, consideration will be given to the relationship between dark tourism, on the one hand, and the piacular or mourning rites proposed by Durkheim (1995) in *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life* on the other. Durkheim, according to Collins (2004; 8);

> "provided sociologists with a mechanism for situational interaction that is still the most useful we have. He set this model up in the case of religious ritual in a way that

enables us to see what social ingredients come together in a situation and make a ritual succeed or fail."

Collins (2004) maintains that Durkheim has given sociologists a mechanism to analyze any situational interaction that is still to this day the most useful he has come across. He further explains that Durkheim placed this model within the context of religious ritual in order to see what social ingredients come together in a situation to make a ritual succeed or fail (Collins, 2004). Then, consideration will be given to interaction ritual theory as proposed through the work of Collins (2004) *Interaction Ritual Chains,* which is inspired by the work of Durkheim (1995) and Goffman (1959; 1967), especially as it uses "the situation" as a starting point for the analysis of an interaction ritual. Collins (2004) proposes a Durkheim - Goffman model of situation causality to examine how social actors interact in social situations that may be applied to interactions within the dark tourism visitor experience. In a sense, "Durkheim, Goffman and Collins comprise a single theoretical family: Goffman acknowledged Durkheim and Collins acknowledges both Durkheim and Goffman as intellectual forebears" (Kemper, 2011; 1). Each view and understand social life as a form of ritual: "the thought was first expressed by Durkheim, exponentiated by Goffman and brought to a culmination by Collins" (Kemper, 2011; x).

3.3.1 *Piacular or Mourning Rites: Dark Tourism as an Elementary Form of Religious Life*

As Walter (2008; 317) observed about the origins of the sociology of death:

"Durkheim's *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* is famous for arguing that religion enables groups to gather together and symbolise their collective identity. What is often forgotten is that many of the aboriginal rites discussed by Durkheim were funeral rites. Durkheim therefore provides the basis for a sociology of death: 'When someone dies, the group to which he belongs feels itself lessened and, to react against this loss, it assembles. Collective sentiments are renewed which then lead men to seek one another and to assemble together' (Durkheim 1915,339). A graphic example of this is the immediate response to 9/11, in which newspapers depicted suburban front lawns flying the stars and stripes. Several thousand are dead, but America lives on, and will not be defeated. It is precisely when groups – from families to nations – are depleted by death that they reconstitute themselves, symbolically and practically."

The "funeral rites" Walter (2008) refers to are described by Durkheim (1995; 392) as piacular or mourning rites whose purpose are to "meet a calamity or to remember or mourn one". Durkheim (1995; 392) characterizes and explains these distinctive rites in Book III Chapter 5 of *Forms* as they reveal a distinct and "new aspect of religious life". Sadly, it seems that piacular rites have received little serious attention in theoretical or empirical research despite the passage of more than one hundred years since they were identified. Simply stated, there is a dearth of research on piacular rites, at least insofar as they might be considered as a framework of inquiry for public funerals, mourning or memorial events, or gatherings in the face of "public" death events or disasters, whether the gatherings be spontaneous or more organized at dark tourism sites.

While it is beyond the scope of this work to consider the reasons for what might be described as a gap in the literature, it seems that Durkheim's (1995) treatment of piacular rites have been subject to criticism in two respects. First, and as part of the body of criticism of Durkheim's work in *Forms*, piacular rites are seen to be based on Durkheim's (second hand) observation and analysis of Australian primitive rites for the "genesis" of the rites and as such "it is the shakiness of its foundations that makes the whole intellectual construction so fragile" (vanGennep, 2017; 578). Secondly, and largely based on an interpretation of the meaning and purpose of a "piaculum", it is often suggested that in proposing a piaculum and the practice of piacular rites, Durkheim (1995) was proceeding on the assumption that a god / God (society) requires forms of expiation (propitiation, or appeasement, or atonement, or placation) at the time of collective uncertainties, anxiety or misfortune, including the mourning that follows death (Flanagan, 2017). With respect to the first line of general criticism, it is acknowledged that Durkheim's (1995) work must be read subject to a whole body of criticism that presents limitations for consideration by the researcher; but that does not diminish the relevance of these rites for the purposes of the present work, particularly because the teaching of Durkheim about piacular rites will be considered against the data from the 2013 fieldwork at the 9/11 site. And with respect to the second criticism, it is clear from plain reading of the *Forms* that Durkheim (1995; 392) acknowledges that piaculum may

suggest the notion of expiation, but Durkheim expressly states that it "has a much broader meaning".

The principal objective of this section on piacular rites is to explain them and identify their relevance to the dark tourism visitors' experience, as well as to suggest how they might be applied to the empirical research data from the 9/11 Memorial or to future empirical research. But first, it may be helpful to position these rites and explain generally what Durkheim (1995) proposed.

Rituals according to Durkheim (1995; 38) are the "rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself" in the presence of sacred things, that is, the sacred interests, beliefs, values and symbols of the group of which the individual is a member. Piacular or mourning rites are an example of rituals that serve to permit scholars to inquire into situational interactions when individuals, on both an individual and collective level, are confronted with a death event that may be said to be related to the "sacred interests" and values or beliefs of the group in which the individual is a member; sacred interests with which these individuals have an experience of involvement. It is proposed that in some cases, the dark tourism visitor experience may be considered as piacular as it may be a means by which the individual and collective self of some visitors may be reconstituted in the face of death events that profoundly matter to them. More particularly, it is proposed that in some cases for some visitors, the dark tourism experience may be an occasion upon which visitors may become involved in a form of piaculum. Durkheim's (1995) explanation of piacular rites are especially relevant to a dark tourism site and the manner in which it promotes social consolidation and cohesion and permits meaning making. To proceed by way of analogy to the result of Durkheim's work in *The Forms,* it is proposed that the social origin and role of some dark tourism sites (notably those sites in respect of which visitors have a "shared or collective experience of involvement" related to the deaths or death event) is to shape "collective life in shared symbols that in turn guide ritual practices that sustain and renew the group" (Datta & Milbrandt, 2014; 481).

3.3.1.1 *Piacular Rites of Mourning*

Piacular rites are positive rites that organize and regulate religious (social) conduct and order. Durkheim's analysis of positive rites demonstrates how ritual life and social life are one and the same. And above all, his analysis "dramatizes the importance of collective renewal through collective and periodic assembly which is a necessary condition for the perpetuity of a group" (Datta & Milbrandt 2014; 493). As Durkheim (1995; 351) states, "Let the idea of society be extinguished in individual minds, let the beliefs, traditions, and aspirations of the collectivity be felt and shared by individuals no longer, and the society will die".

Having established the general importance of the positive rites, Durkheim (1995) examines mimetic (imitative), representative (commemorative), and piacular rites. Only representative (commemorative) and piacular rites arguably appear to be relevant to the notion of social consolidation and the mediation of the death event for the individual and collective self at a dark tourism site. The social consolidation promoted through the piacular rites - and for that matter the commemoration of the death event -may be said to preserve (and perhaps exalt) traditional beliefs and attitudes, bolster the resistance to any fear or terror they may present and reinforce the status of the social order or institutions (Lebel, 2012; 38). These rites may represent "assets that support the public's confrontation with trauma and loss, provide the glue of social consolidation and produce or enhance a unique national [group] identity" (Lebel, 2012; 38). Some dark tourism sites therefore, may be seen as a site or place or forum in which the performance of commemorative and/or piacular rites takes place in order to promote social consolidation.

If it may be proposed that some visitors interact in a form of piacular rites at these sites, the inquiry at the site level should observe whether the rites produce a form of collective effervescence and collective consciousness that plays a role in cementing social solidarity. If visitors experience a feeling or a special energy that seems to infect them – that feeling may be the collective effervescence referred to by Durkheim (1915). For Durkheim (1915), collective consciousness through the actions and interactions with groups of tourists

create a social consciousness that exerts an almost coercive force. This effervescence, sometimes observed as a form of group contagion, may be found directly or indirectly, by express or implied communication, or by shared experience of involvement. It may be observed that there is a correlation among shared traits or sentiments within the group or bonding as it were – for example "what it is to be American". This network path not only consolidates visitors and society on the basis of certain shared sentiments, but also as individual members of the group. The effervescence through shared sentiments, actions, attitudes and opinions will spread to others at home or at work such that it may be said there is a social impact outside of the dark tourism site.

So this process of social consolidation, by which an individual observes a threat to the solidarity of the group, by death or fear of death or terrorism, transforms, and strengthens the group into a more coherent and cohesive entity. This process makes the memory for an event enduring; that is the process continues for some time after the event for the members of the group experienced it but others but also impacts others outside of the group (Collins, 2004). Rituals that draw members together may be said to promote a return to everyday life and support group cohesion on both the individual and institutional level.

Piacular rites are especially important to the ritual function of some dark tourism sites or at post tragedy gatherings. When a society is going through circumstances in which it is confronted by the death(s) of a member(s), or other fear or sorrow, Durkheim (1995; 415) observed that the society exercises pressure over its individual members to gather together and "to give witness to their sadness, distress or anger" through interaction. In the primitive tribes he observed, this pressure and gathering included the duty of weeping, groaning or consoling and then supporting themselves and others. In *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*, Durkheim (1995) offered mourning as an example of "piacular rites". In this regard he wrote "every misfortune, everything of evil omen, everything that inspires sentiments of sorrow or fear necessitate a *piaculum* and is therefore called a *piacular*" (Durkheim 1995; 393). It is important to note that Durkheim is not referring to mourning as a "spontaneous expression of individual emotions" (Durkheim 1995; 400). But rather he describes mourning

as a ritual attitude adopted independent of an affective emotional state – "the basis of mourning being the impression of enfeeblement that is felt by the group when it loses a member" (Durkheim, 1995; 405).Something that is an obligation. Something over which society exercises a "moral pressure" over its members" (Durkheim, 1995; 399). The death event (an "enfeeblement") has "the effect of bringing individuals close to one another, putting them into closer touch, and inducing in them the same state of soul" (Durkheim, 1995; 445). When death menaces the group, the group communes in its sadness, distress, or anger as in the case of mourning. Collective representations and moral communion over these common or shared sentiments results in their intensification. Each reflects the active state of consciousness in which the individuals and group happen to be. The communion of individual consciousness restores the group to the energy which the circumstances of the death or disaster took or threatened to take away from the group and thus they enable it to become settled. After the mourning is over the group is calmed by the mourning itself; it regains confidence; "the painful pressure which members of the group felt exercised over them is relieved; they feel more at their ease. So it seems to them as though the spirit of the dead or fear of the disaster had laid aside any hostile sentiments and become a benevolent protector" (Durkheim, 1995; 415-416).

3.3.1.2 *Outcomes of Successful Piacular Rites*

Despite the passage of time since Durkheim's (1915) introduction of piacular rites, these rites may be seen at work today when the individual and collective self is confronted with a death event in respect of which there is a shared emotion or experience of involvement. Witness for example recent gatherings following terrorist attacks in New York, Paris, Manchester and London. As Durkheim (1995; 403) has observed:

> "Shared misfortune has the same effect as the approach of a happy event. It enlivens collective feelings, which lead individuals to seek one another out and come together. In fact, we have seen this need affirm itself sometimes with special energy – people kissing and putting their arms around one another, pressing as close together as possible. But the emotional state in which the group finds itself reflects the circumstances it is then going through. Not only do the kin most immediately affected bring their personal sorrow to the gathering, but the society exerts moral pressure on

its members, and they bring their feelings into harmony with the situation."

Once gathered together with shared emotions or feelings, Durkheim (1995; 404) observes that "like joy, sadness is heightened and amplified by its reverberation from one consciousness to the next." This reverberation from one individual consciousness to the next is "collective effervescence" which creates of itself a change in the emotional state of those gathered that, "gradually neutralize the very causes that give them birth" (Durkheim, 1995; 405).

There is an important distinction to be made about the process that takes place within the interaction rituals that comprise the piaculum. That is, that the collective effervescence that "neutralizes" the cause of the mourning then gives rise to something else – social vitality or feelings of solidarity that gives strength and hope to the members of the group. And within this process by which emotions change not only to neutralize the cause of the mourning, but also to "strengthen" the group and its members lies the answers to the following:

- Why then are those that assembled in places like New York, Paris, Manchester and London somehow calmed by the gathering?

- Why, to paraphrase Tony Walter (2008), are several thousand dead, but America lives on and will not be defeated?

- Why are visitors to a dark tourism site sometimes recorded as leaving the experience of the site having been somehow satiated, having had their feelings of anxiety or anger or sadness over a profound death event calmed and even been empowered to move forward with life anew?

It is because they have engaged in a sacred rite by which communion is re-established among them - they have engaged in a piaculum. They have participated in rites of mourning and their emotional state has been changed as the result. As Durkheim (1995; 405) states:

"The rites of mourning both result from and conclude it. They gradually neutralize the very causes that give them birth. The basis of mourning is the impression of

enfeeblement that is felt by the group when it loses a member. But this very impression has the effect of bringing individuals close to one another, putting them into closer touch, and inducing in them the same state of soul. And from all this comes a sensation of renewed strength, which counteracts the original enfeeblement. People cried together because they continue to be precious to one another and because, regardless of the blow that was fallen upon it, the collectivity is not breached. To be sure, in that case they only share sad emotions in common; but to commune sadness is still to commune, and every communion of consciousness increases social vitality, in whatever form it is done."

This social vitality is seen by Durkheim (1995; 405) as evidence that, even at the time of this mourning rite:

"society is more alive and active than ever. In fact, when social feelings suffers a painful shock, it reacts with greater force than usual. One never holds so tightly to ones family as when it has just been tested…the group feels its strength gradually coming back to it; it begins again to hope and to live. One comes out of mourning, and one comes out of it thanks to mourning itself."

This excess of energy felt by the group may explain the courage, the confidence and the strength observed in the wake of public gatherings or visits to some dark tourism sites.

However, it is important to note that Durkheim (1995; 405) acknowledges that the change in emotional state of those gathered serves to neutralize the sadness, distress or anger "can only be temporary". In fact, engaging in one instance of a mourning or piacular rite may not bring about the change in emotional state or neutralizing result observed by Durkheim (1995). Indeed, the gathering at the particular dark event, or other ritual expression in which the group is participating may be ineffectual, or simply require repetition because the emotional state and excess of energy is only temporary. To this point, Durkheim (1995), in a footnote, suggests that repeated ceremonies or rites are necessary to bring about the relief that follows mourning. Among other things, Durkheim (1995; 405) observes that "death is a profound change, with wide and lasting repercussions for the group. It takes time for those effects to be neutralized." This is an important observation. It suggests that related ritual events may be in order or, as Collins (2004) might later argue, chains of ritual interactions may be observed to be necessary. For this reason, attendance at a public gathering (or at ritual events at a dark tourism site) may not be sufficient to achieve the effects suggested by Durkheim (1995). Therefore, attending a repeated set of rituals at relevant gatherings, including at dark sites, may be necessary to bring about the desired

effect – even if the gathering takes place many years after the death event, but at a time when individual members of the group are still mourning. Finally, Durkheim, in his chapter on "Piacular Rites and the Ambiguity of the Sacred" makes the case that with the neutralization of the event and return of social energy, the "evil power" of the death event is transformed into a sacred event (Durkheim, 1995; 416).

3.3.1.3 *Identifying Piacular Rites at Dark Sites*

Among other things in evaluating empirical site research, the following might be used to consider whether piacular rites serve to guide an inquiry into/or explain a part of the dark tourism experience relevant to the research question:

- Whether there is evidence that visitors are in mourning – the basis of mourning being the impression of enfeeblement that is felt by the group when it loses a member (Durkheim, 1995; 405).

- Whether there is evidence from respondents that they gather to give witness to their feelings of sadness, distress, or anger – something that is an obligation (Durkheim, 1995; 399).

- Whether the shared misfortune enlivens collective feeling, which leads individuals to seek one another out and come together, sometimes with special energy (Durkheim, 1995; 403).

- Whether some visitors may bring personal sorrow but all bring collective feeling and, in turn, whether these feelings are brought into harmony with the situation – or shared experience at the gathering (Durkheim, 1995; 403).

- Whether, once gathered, the emotions of visitors is heightened and amplified from one consciousness to the other – a collective effervescence (Durkheim, 1995; 404).

- Whether collective effervescence created a change in the emotional state of those gathered and whether this change in emotional state begins to neutralize the sadness, distress, or anger brought by visitors (Durkheim, 1995; 405).

- Whether, from a change in emotional state among visitors, comes social vitality and a sensation of renewed strength (excess energy) which counteracts the "enfeeblement" (Durkheim, 199; 405).

- Whether the change in emotional state may only be temporary, or whether for some visitors repeated occasions of piacular rites have been or may have to be undertaken before the relief that follows mourning is achieved in its entirety. (As Durkheim (1995; 405) observed "death is a profound change, with wide and lasting repercussions for the group. It takes time for those effects to be neutralized").

- Whether, through the performance of the piacular rites within the dark tourism experience it may be said that the "evil" power of the death event has in some fashion started to be transformed to a "sacred-event".

3.3.1.4 *Note on Future Research Involving Commemorative Rites*

For the purposes of this thesis, consideration has been given only to Durkheim's description of piacular rites as they relate to mourning and grief processes. (Indeed, it is the case that more work should be done to consider the dark tourism visitor experience including spontaneous memorials or gatherings, as contemporary examples of piacular rites). It is clear however that what Durkheim described as representative or commemorative rites may also have an important role to play in understanding the interaction and emotion involved with the visitor experience at dark tourism sites when mourning is not present. The review of

commemorative or representative rites is only intended to be summary in nature, although further work on their relevance may be warranted in another forum.

In his discussion of representative (i.e. commemorative) rites, Durkheim (1995; 379) emphasizes how the group regenerates a historical sense of itself, integrating members in time, especially by rendering its "mythical past present". A mythology, Durkheim explains, consists of a moral system, a cosmology, and a history. In a most general sense, commemorative ceremonies revitalize both conscience and (group) consciousness (Datta & Milbrandt, 2014; 494). They also render visible the aesthetic - indeed sometimes the recreational - dimensions of social life. This may be seen in some of the functional, design and architectural attributes of some dark tourism sites which may also provide facilities to host public gatherings or may contain extra-ordinary artistic expressions representative of, or connected to the shared or collective experience of involvement of the group with the deaths or death event. This is particularly so where the site may host festivals in the form of commemorative events or ceremonies which brings into view the primacy of collective assembly within ritual practices. In his discussion of festival, Durkheim highlights the emotional resonances of collective life that are important elements of group revitalization (Datta & Milbrandt, 2014; 494). Durkheim highlights the emotionally powerful, deeply social, creatively effervescent, and morally revitalizing dimensions of these rites as they "engender consciousness of the group, and in so doing reaffirm the moral unity necessary for group survival" (Datta & Milbrandt, 2014; 495). Dark tourism sites at which Commemorative rites are plainly in evidence at least include war memorials and cemeteries ("Normandy"; "Dieppe"), historic scenes of disaster ("Lockerbie"; "Hillsborough") or atrocities ("Auschwitz"), especially on anniversary dates. Arguably, this may also be said to be true at the 9/11 Memorial site for those visitors who no longer are "mourning", having moved to a point where the individual and the group feels "strength gradually coming back to it; it begins again to hope and to live" (Durkheim, 1995; 405). Yet, commemorative rites are offered at the 9/11 Memorial, especially on the anniversary date of the death event, in order to render the mythical past present and revitalize individual and group consciousness.

3.3.2 *Interaction Ritual Chains: The Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism*

While it is proposed that Durkheim's piacular rites provide a fascinating model of ritual that permit an analysis of situational interactions, our understanding of interaction rituals has evolved most recently mainly through the work of Collins (2004) who proposes a Durkheim - Goffman model of situational causality that is based on an interaction ritual theory to examine the conditions under which social actors interact in social situations. This theory may be said to show "the conditions under which one kind of thing happens in social situations, rather than another and (how and why) situations often repeat, but they also vary and change" (Collins, 2004; 9). Durkheim's (1995; 56) views of the role of rites ("rites being the rules of conduct which prescribe how a man should comport himself in the presence of sacred objects") is, according to Collins (2004) broadened by Goffman (1967; 57) who showed that ritual ("the way in which the individual must guard and design the symbolic implications of his acts while in the immediate presence of an object that has special value for him") may be found in some respect throughout the presentation of self in everyday life.

Certainly, insofar as a dark tourism site may be said to be staged, with its visiting actors, guides and designed space as part of the representation of "death event", one might consider the visitor experience from the perspective of a dramaturgical metaphor. Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical approach in *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* is a perspective that uses the metaphor of the theatre to examine emotional expression, performances, and tactical displays. The central premise of Goffman's (1959) approach lies within various individuals interacting and then looking at how each desires to manage the impressions the others receive of him or her. Using this metaphor of the theoretical performance, Goffman (1959) argues that when an individual appears before others, he or she will be motivated to try and control the impressions they receive of the situation. As a result, each puts on a "show" for the others. Individuals, either in "teams" or by themselves, give "performances" during which they enact "parts" or "routines" (Goffman, 1959). Furthermore, Goffman (1959) explains that social actors can be said to make use of "settings" and "props", as well as

move back and forth between the "front region" of the "scenes" and the "backstage" (hidden from the audience).

Both ritual and performance may be placed into context for the purposes of an inquiry into or within a dark tourism site. Collin's (2004; 7) explains that both Durkheim and Goffman use the term "ritual" as a "mechanism of mutually focused emotion and attention producing a momentarily shared reality, which thereby generates solidarity and symbols of group membership". This momentary shared reality or "situation" as some may describe it is not just the result of the individual who comes into it, nor even a grouping of individuals (although it can be that, too), but rather situations that have laws or processes of their own (Collins, 2004). Goffman (1967; 3) refers to it as "Not then, men and their moments. Rather, moments and their men" as he illustrates the focus on specific kinds of "moments" that consist of a number of different interactions (that could potentially look at visitors at dark tourism sites) to explain how people act in particular interactional moments or situations. Furthermore, it is here where Goffman can be said to be applied to broaden the application of ritual in order to demonstrate how it is found in one way or another throughout everyday life; "in the secular realm as in the sacred and official worlds, ritual plays a key role in shaping both individual character and stratified group boundaries" (Collins, 2004; 8).

3.3.2.1 *Processual Ingredients for Interaction Rituals*

Collins (2004) founding his work upon that of Durkheim (1915) and Goffman (1959; 1967), proposed a set of "processual ingredients" for interaction rituals. These ingredients make interaction rituals succeed or fail in different degrees thereby producing different strengths of relationships, emotions, and respect for symbols. Indeed, Collins (2004) proposed that the success of a ritual depends upon the following ingredients:

1) Co-presence of Participants – Bodily, or Otherwise in the case of an internal interaction ritual which may involve "I", "Me", or "Generalized Other".

2) Group with Boundaries or Barriers Excluding Outsiders.

3) Mutual Focus of Emotion and Attention (Usually People, Objects, or Symbols).

4) A Shared Emotional Mood.

These ingredients and the process of the ritual interaction are relevant to the dark tourism visitor experience. Those visitors gathered at the site represent a distinct group with boundaries. A situation becomes a ritual at a dark site when visitors focus their attention and emotions on specific site components such as other people, objects, or symbols within the context of the four functions of the death system present at the site. Collins (2010) suggests that the rituals are often external and also proposes that internal interaction rituals occur involving what he describes as "I", "Me", or "Generalized Other". This interaction generates or amplifies for a visitor shared emotional mood; however visitors may have come to the site with varying emotions: some sad, some angry and some afraid in the case of a dark tourism experience where there is a connection or experience of involvement with the death event. Collins (2004) approach to interaction rituals emphasizes that the success or failure of a ritual is determined by the extent to which participants experience strong collective emotion, or what Durkheim (1995) called "collective effervescence". For visitors this collective emotion – a shared experience of involvement while at the site – and Durkheim's (1995) collective effervescence will be described by visitors as a feeling of being transitioned or transformed from their individual emotional self to something larger, a collective and more powerful emotion each will report. Collins (2010) makes it clear that the sharing of emotion (ingredient 4 above) is crucial for making one ritual experience qualitatively different from another. And so the emotional experiences of involvement of the visitors with the death event will begin, continue through and be transformed in the visitor experience.

3.3.2.2 *Outcomes of Successful Interaction Rituals*

At the conclusion of the visitor experience, it should be the case that visitors report one or more feelings or emotion laden words that are associated with "emotional energy". Where rituals are successful, they are said to produce outcomes that are in the form of shared feelings among participants and that are represented by sacred objects or emblems. Individual participants have these feelings of what Collins (2004) calls "EE" or emotional energy. Collins (2004; 39) describes positive emotional energy as a socially derived "feeling of confidence, courage to take action, boldness in taking initiative and it is a morally suffused energy; it makes the individual feel not only good, but exalted, with the sense of doing what is most important and most valuable." Collins (2004) distinguishes the collective effervescence of the situation itself from the emotional energy that individuals feel in the aftermath of the situation. The former is a collective emotion, the excitement and energetic coordination of participants in their interaction; the latter is an individual emotion, felt by the individual as they are physically away from the social situation. The two emotions are related; as Durkheim (1995) said, the individual acquires a portion of the energy of the group, which can be carried for a time away from the group.

3.3.2.3 *Motivation to Participate in Interaction Rituals at Dark Sites*

The interaction ritual chain theory offers a unique approach to the question of motivation that may have relevance to dark tourism. While Collins (2004) has staked a large part of his theoretical foundation upon Durkheim's work, and the similarities become readily apparent upon a reading of their respective works, there is a possible distinction to be made in the view that each holds with respect to the motivation or the obligation of the individual to participate in certain types of interaction rituals, especially when one considers Durkheim's explanation for the performance of mourning rites. Durkheim (1995; 405) makes it clear that, in the face of death or extreme threats to the group, it is an "obligation" by which individuals are brought "close to one another…putting them in closer touch, and inducing in them the same state of soul." Whereas Collins (2004) seems to approach the motivation issue from a

different perspective. In *Interaction Ritual Chains,* Collins (2004) sets out his "central formula" for interaction rituals and underlines the critical importance of emotional energy. He writes "human beings are above all emotional energy seekers, thereby linked to those interactions and their derivative symbols that give the greatest emotional energy in the opportunities presented by each person's social networks. If not emotional energy seekers, what else could human beings be?" (Collins, 2004; 373). But perhaps, in the final analysis the difference may not be that great given that in his explanation of piacular rites Durkheim (1995) is specifically addressing death and related misfortune, whereas Collins (2004) presents in a more general vein and does not apply his central formula to death or mourning related events.

It is also to be noted that some take issue with Collins (2004) position that human beings are above all "emotional energy seekers". In his work entitled *Status, Power and Interaction Ritual*, Kemper (2011) takes issue with this notion and argues that rather than emotional energy seekers, human beings are motivated by power and status. In his most recent work, Kemper (2011) proposes that interactions involve strategies, behaviours, cognitive assessments and emotional responses arranged according to two primary relational dimensions of status and power. Status deals with a person's recognition, honour, and privilege in interactions with others. Power relates to a person's ability to compel or obtain benefits in the face of resistance or inaction. Kemper's view (2011) is that human beings are above all motivated by their status and power in their interactions with their reference group. Kemper (2011) criticizes the use of an interaction ritual chain approach and argues that the success of these interactions should be viewed with some suspicion. Indeed, the fundamental criticism of interaction ritual put forth by Kemper (2011) is that this approach fails to specify what is successful and what is a failure insofar as interaction rituals are concerned. To this, Collins (2004) might say simply that where interaction rituals are successful they produce outcomes that are in the form of shared feelings among participants and that these shared feelings are represented by objects or emblems that have become sacred to the participants. That is, that a successful ritual is one in which there is a

mechanism of mutually focused emotion and attention which produces a momentary shared reality for participants which itself generates solidarity and symbols of group membership that are represented by sacred objects or emblems (Collins, 2010).

Nevertheless, it is the case that for an understanding of the interactions at dark tourism sites, an approach based on power and status does not appear to be warranted. It is suggested that indeed emotion, collective effervescence and emotional energy when viewing interactions at dark tourism sites are useful frames of reference and that indeed these should be observed as present in interactions at the site. Alternatively, it is the case that the scope of what constitutes emotional energy may be extended by using Collins (2004) own definition. Collin's (2004) approach to the concept of emotional energy most certainly seems to include "power and status" along with variations in human drive, desire, initiative, the quest for excitement, as well as the wish to be recognized as famous and dominant in social interaction.

3.3.2.4 *Observation Points for Interaction Ritual at Dark Sites*

If one is to entertain the notion of the ritual performance of dark tourism, based on the literature and Collin's body of work, it would appear to require focus on four discrete points of observation in an interaction ritual. Firstly, because the interaction ritual is part of a chain, it may be necessary to consider what the participants to the new interaction ritual bring with them as far as emotional energy, or experiences of involvement, from any relevant prior interactions. Undertaking an analysis at this point may reveal important information about the types of emotions that participants are bringing to the ritual and the sense that the participants have for what matters to them or motivates them to participate in the next ritual. This may be important because, as Collins notes (2004), interaction rituals are part of a chain of such rituals that facilitate the exchange of cultural capital and emotional energy. The exchange of emotional energy is the vital building block of social bonds, group solidarity, culture, networks and ultimately, macro structures (Boyns & Luery, 2015). The history of interaction chains is carried along to the site of the interaction by way of previously held

emotions and emotion-laden cognitions that become the ingredients for an upcoming emotional encounter. The history or experience with emotional energy from previous interaction rituals is also important to understand. The expectations of individuals who interact within various situations surrounding emotional energy is also extremely crucial to Collins (2004) theory. This is mostly due to what he refers to as emotional energy payoffs that are bound by the dynamics of social exchange in that individuals frequently enter situations with expectations that have to do with emotional energy outcomes (Boyns & Luery, 2015). Indeed, if these expectations are met, their initial emotional energy levels will likely be maintained. "However, experiences that positively transcend an individual's expectations will be more likely to produce increases in emotional energy, while situations that underwhelm or contrast an individual's expectations are more likely to result in decreases" (Boyns & Luery, 2015; 151).

The second point of observation is within the site of interaction itself. Remember that Collin's (2004) not only proposes that a co-presence of participants is necessary, he makes it clear that those participants must be a group with boundaries or within a site with actual or symbolic barriers that exclude outsiders. This sets the scene for "the situation" – the shared experience of involvement among participants – and the exchange of what Collins (2004) describes as cultural capital and emotional energy among the members of the group. It is also the point at which the shared mood or mutual focus of emotion and attention must be carefully observed in order that an accurate analysis be undertaken of the interaction ritual. This includes careful attention to the people, objects or symbols which the mutual focus of emotion and attention is applied.

The third observation point is necessary to identify and describe what is produced by the participants from the mutually focused emotion and attention. That observation point is, according to Collins (2004) process, the moment at which a momentary shared reality will be produced which generates "solidarity and symbols of group membership". In this momentarily shared reality is another, new "shared experience of involvement" with what matters to the participants. And that is the source of the emotional energy. According to

Collins, the development of emotional energy signifies the presence of a stable social bond amid participants within the interaction (Boyns & Luery, 2015).

The fourth and final point of observation in this interactional ritual is really where the participants and their supply of emotional energy go from the site or the interaction - presumably to another interactional ritual. When the conditions of successful interaction rituals are present, and high levels of emotional energy occur, Collins (2004) theorizes that individuals seek to preserve the memory of this emotional memory through the use of symbols (or sacred objects) (also noted as another one of Collins ritual outcomes). The emotional charge carried by symbols, however, has a natural half life and will tend to dissipate over time unless they are "revitalized" through subsequent interaction rituals. This is the point at which, if necessary, participants seek to engage in further ceremonies or rituals because they realize the supply of emotional energy will be time limited (as Durkheim acknowledged about the piacular rites) or because the interaction itself has not been sufficient alone to satisfy the needs of participants (for example, as Durkheim (1995) observed with respect to death because death is a profound change, with wide and lasting repercussions for the group so it may take time for those effects to be neutralized). Or, as Collins (2004) might suggest because in the flow of daily life, emotional energy outcomes are important because they influence the overall disposition of individuals in their routines they will gravitate towards encounters that provide higher emotional energy payoffs through interaction rituals that may be both "culturally familiar and emotionally rewarding" (Boyn & Luery, 2015; 151).

3.3.2.5 *Identifying Interaction Rituals at Dark Sites*

Among other things, in evaluating site research the following may also assist in considering whether the components and outcomes used in interaction rituals may explain a part of the dark tourism experience:

- Whether the act of bodies being together in the same place create what Collins (2004; 34) suggests is a "physical attunement: currents of feeling, a

sense of wariness or interest, a palpable change in the atmosphere". (The bodily inter-orientation of participants should be the starting point for the long term outcomes for those visiting the site (Collins, 2004)).

- Whether, in the absence of bodily co-presence, an internal interaction ritual creates the same, especially in a site inviting reflection (Collins; 2010).

- Whether participants share a common mood to begin the interaction. According to Collins (2004), it does not matter what precise emotions the mood is based upon- some may be sad, some angry, some afraid – but the mood must be something that "matters" to participants. More specifically, whether this shared emotional mood at the site when combined with Kastenbaum's (2001) components and functions, produces collective effervescence and then longer term outcomes when visitors leave the site, which Collins (2004) says is "emotional energy".

- Whether the presence of those being together at the site creates a process that intensifies emotions into the shared experience or excitement that Durkheim (1915) called "collective effervescence", and from there, whether the interaction ritual takes place (Collins, 2004).

- Whether the ritual is intensified and transformed through components and functions set out by Collins (2004), (that are analogous to those proposed by Kastenbaum's (2001) death system framework) and consequently, whether the ritual allows for those attending at an event or gathering (or visiting a dark site that matters to them) to come out of the site having the "enfeeblement" mediated and having been charged with emotional energy.

- Whether it is the case that participants experience emotion as both a vital ingredient in, and an outcome of interaction rituals at the site (Collins, 2004).

- Given that the sociology of ritual may also be described as a sociology of gatherings (which comprise of crowds, assemblies, congregations and audiences), whether visitors may be observed in several interactions and creating a number of different emotions as outcomes at the gathering (Collins, 2004).

- Whether the interaction rituals may result in positive or negative emotional energy. "Positive emotional energy is to be understood as emotional energy proper in Collins theory and generally reflects an individual's favourably charged emotional disposition toward membership in a group or a social encounter" (Boyns & Luery, 2015; 154).

- Whether there is an outcome of the interaction ritual(s) at all. Positive emotional energy is defined as being a socially derived "feeling of confidence, courage to take action, boldness in taking initiative and it is a morally suffused energy; it makes the individual feel not only good, but exalted, with the sense of doing what is most important and most valuable" (Collins, 2004; 39). The emotional energy of "affinity" may also be described within this. While feelings of sadness and depression are a result of low levels of positive emotional energy which create outcomes such as social experiences of boredom, alienation and isolation (Boyn & Luery, 2015).

3.3.2.6 *Note on Erving Goffman and Tourism Studies*

While this thesis does not explore it in great detail, Goffman's (1959) analysis of the relationship between performance and life offers useful insights into the study of tourism, including dark tourism as it proposes that visitors and site representatives play roles in

dramatic "front stage" social contexts as social actors giving a series of performances. Modern day travel by tourists has been described as a performance for quite some time. While Erving Goffman did not write or research on tourism per se - perhaps due to the fact that his sociology was concerned primarily with relatively localized interactions – his metaphors and sociological sensibility have been successfully applied both implicitly and explicitly in tourism studies (Haldrup & Larsen, 2010). MacCannell (1999) in his book on *The Tourist* - places Goffman's (1967) metaphors of theatre and ritual with significant emphasis on the front and back stage at the core for understanding the staging of authenticity in tourism. In a Goffmanian inspired fashion, MacCannell (1999) encourages both the socially ordered rituals and manipulative presentations that are witnessed occurring at tourism sites. Furthermore, MacCannell (1999) suggests tourism is an emblematic modern search for authenticity and therefore, the nostalgia it generates can be understood as mourning for an authentic past (Larsen, 2010). MacCannell (1999; 42) believes that sightseeing is a modern ritual; "a twofold process of "sight sacralisation" that is met with a corresponding ritual attitude on the part of tourists". MacCannell (1999; 42) draws on Goffmans words to define sightseeing as a modern ritual that possesses its own "moral structure, a collective sense that certain sights must be seen." Similarly, he does this for modern guided tours as well and defines them as "extensive ceremonial agendas involving long strings of obligatory rites" (MacCannell, 1999; 46).

While most of the tourism literature has neglected issues of sociality and co-presence at tourism sites, Urry (2007) and Bowman & Pezzulo (2009) have recognized through the help of Goffman that the value of performing face to face interactions and (re) producing social relations is an important contribution to the field. For Goffman (1967), the defining feature of face to face interactions and meetings is embodied co-presence in a physical setting. The second of two major sociological scholars of tourism (and travel and mobility more broadly) - John Urry (2007) who wrote *Mobilities* - explains that it is necessary to analyze proximity, obligations and what he illustrates as "meetingness" in respect to tourism mobility (Larsen, 2010). Larsen (2010; 317) explains that Urry (2007) posits that "as a result

of travel, people come to be bodily in the same physical space as various others, including work-mates or business colleagues, or friends, or partners or family…this proximity is obligatory, appropriate or desirable".

Bowman and Pezzullo (2009) draw on Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical theory to highlight how performance can be a productive approach to studying the intersections of death and tourism, including questions of ritual, play, identity, everyday life, and embodiment. They suggest that "when tourists travel, in other words, what they witness isn't merely *like* a performance, it *is* a performance insofar as the site is often composed of live bodies engaged in acts that are put on display for tourists" (Bowman & Pezzulo, 2009; 193). Much of Goffman's (1959) language on tourism and performance is also imported by Edensor (1998) who speaks of tourists as improvising performers, actors, cast members, sites as stages, guides as directors, stage management and so on. In his ethnographic study of guides, Edensor (1998) demonstrates the tourist's spatial movement through and their interpretation of places by using the significance and influence of the guide and its associated choreography undertaken at the site.

Finally, in speaking about the hospitality industry, sociologist Melinda Milligan (1998) uses Goffman's (1959) framework to discuss how meaning is bestowed on physical sites of interaction (or stages for social interaction) by using a food service provider she refers to as the "coffee house" that moved from one physical location to another as her case study. She shows how the services industry is typified by face to face performances by demonstrating how the concept of place attachment and the significance of the built environment make for meaningful stages.

Through a dramaturgical metaphor - physical sites (such as that of a dark tourism site) – according to the way in which they are designed can be said to become the stages or settings for attachments or social interactions. Further, these stages can be seen as both physically and socially constructed with the two processes deemed both linked and distinct from one another (Milligan, 1998). Milligan (1998; 2) looks at the permanent or semi-permanent physical attributes to a site that is constructed by individuals who can be

regarded as the set designers of the stages for social interaction: "the architects, facility managers, property owners, and others who make decisions regarding the physical form of a site, often long before a given performance occurs." It is only after all the work completed by the set designers that the physical construction of the built environment is placed under the control of the actors (ie. visitors or site representatives) (Milligan, 1998). At this time, the actors are placed in a position of power and are given the resources to manipulate the physical attributes of the site to the degree that they can decide the locations of their interactions (Milligan, 1998). Furthermore, Milligan (1998; 2) states "the social construction of the built environment, however, is much more under the control of actors in the sense that the meanings of specific objects, including the site itself, emerge in the ongoing processes of interaction." The physical construction of the site is also partially responsible for controlling social constructions in that the interactions that emerge at the site are influenced, shaped and constrained by physical details (Milligan, 1998). In the same vein, it is also said that the various processes involved in social constructions can be influenced by the decisions made in the processes and developments associated with physical construction (Milligan, 1998). "Thus, while the two processes are distinct enough that we may discuss them separately, they are also inherently interconnected" (Milligan, 1998; 2). Performances are set apart in that they vary from site to site, in space and time, as well as the geographic setting.

MacCannell's (1999) seminal work in tourism studies has been integral to tourist research providing metaphors of performance, drama, and theatre, albeit from a general tourism studies perspective. Similarly, Edensor (1998) explored the production of tourism, as a series of staged events and spaces, and as an array of performative techniques and dispositions in his study of *Tourists at the Taj*. The dramaturgical framework has been used by MacCannell (1999), Edensor (1998) and Bowman & Pezzullo (2010) in tourism research that proposes tourists as performers to understand interactions observed on a tourist site. They explore why individuals carry out particular habits and practices and, consequently, reproduce, and challenge the social world. For it is "the conventions and shared norms that govern tourists' self-presentation in order both to manage others' impressions of them and to

achieve certain instrumental goals" (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010; 193). The importance of the power that lies within tourists' social performances helps to explore some facets of the habitual, normative or scripted character of tourist behaviour (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2010). The robustness of the individuals who travel and assume their regular "roles" or "styles" when visiting sites conjures images of the tourist from another perspective. This is because MacCannell (1999) suggests the current postmodern model that explains individuals who travel to escape the artificiality of everyday life in many cases, find the authentic is not really there and they fall even more into the abyss of the simulated, the staged, and the fake. Edensor (1998) adds to this by illustrating the many ways in which tourism is staged and performed as he demonstrates the prospects and limitations that shape tourist space (or as he refers to it as "stages") and performance that are reproduced, challenged, transformed and bypassed at tourist sites. This further proves to be an important area of study as surprisingly, few investigations into tourism as a set of performances that affect emotion have been carried out.

3.4 Death System Framework and Interaction: Observations on Congruence (or at least Concurrence) among certain aspects of Death System Framework and Interaction Ritual Theories

To proceed by way of analogy to the result of Durkheim's work in *The Forms,* the social origin and role of dark tourism sites (again, notably those sites in respect of which visitors have a "shared or collective experience of involvement" related to the deaths or death event) is to shape collective life in shared symbols that in turn guide ritual practices that create collective effervescence that serve to sustain and renew the group (Durkheim 1995; 9).

The c-map - in Figure 3.1 below- describes some of the academic foundations for the "ritual performance of dark tourism". It sets out the schematic as to how this area of inquiry may be said to progress in a general, but in a comparative way from Durkheim (1912) to Goffman (1959; 1967) to Collins (2004) and then to Kastenbaum (2001), whose Death System provides a framework within which to consider the research question and objectives

as they relate to the mediation of death. The schematic illustrates that each contemplates within its respective framework very similar i) ingredients or components; ii) the presence of shared emotion and iii) functions or outcomes of the ritual performance or interaction that may be said to "neutralize" or mediate the impact of the death event by producing "sacred" symbols, social solidarity, meanings and interpretations, and moral guidance, as well as emotional (or excess) energy.

To put the matter a different way, Summers-Effler (2006) a former student of Randall Collins, explains so succinctly how ritual approaches to emotion place interaction rituals and their emotional consequences at the centre of social life. She explains:

> "Durkheim laid the framework for understanding the role of ritual in making the emotional and cultural foundations of society. Goffman applied Durkheim's perspective to the level of face to face interaction in day to day life and illustrated how the same ritual forces create the interaction order. Collin's built on Goffman by specifying the mechanisms that create rituals and the emotional and cognitive products of rituals. This enabled him to detail how interaction rituals form chains over time, a process that creates networks and more macro patterns of social life over time" (Summers-Effler, 2006; 152).

To that, and in the face of a death event, Kastenbaum (2001) contributes the individual and collective perspectives on death and its mediation by the Death System. A framework that may be used to identify the (1) system itself (2) its components and (3) its functions in any society. The addition of Durkheim, Goffman and Collins show the Death System in a dynamic, inter active and consequential mode of operation in the visitor experience.

Just as Kastenbaum (2001) provided that the death system had discernable functions, Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) propose that interaction rituals have discernable outcomes. Remarkably, they are very similar if not identical in many respects – they complement one another. Therefore, it is proposed that the functional outcome of both the death system framework and the interaction ritual framework(s) is, to mediate the "enfeeblement" resulting or arising from the death event for visitors and ultimately contribute to strength or confidence for the individual and collective self, as well as a cohesive, integrated and strong society (Collins, 2004; Durkheim, 1995) or social order (Kastenbaum,

2001). And further it is proposed that this mediation is effected by, through and because of the emotional experiences of visitors.

Figure 3.1: Academic Foundations for the Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism
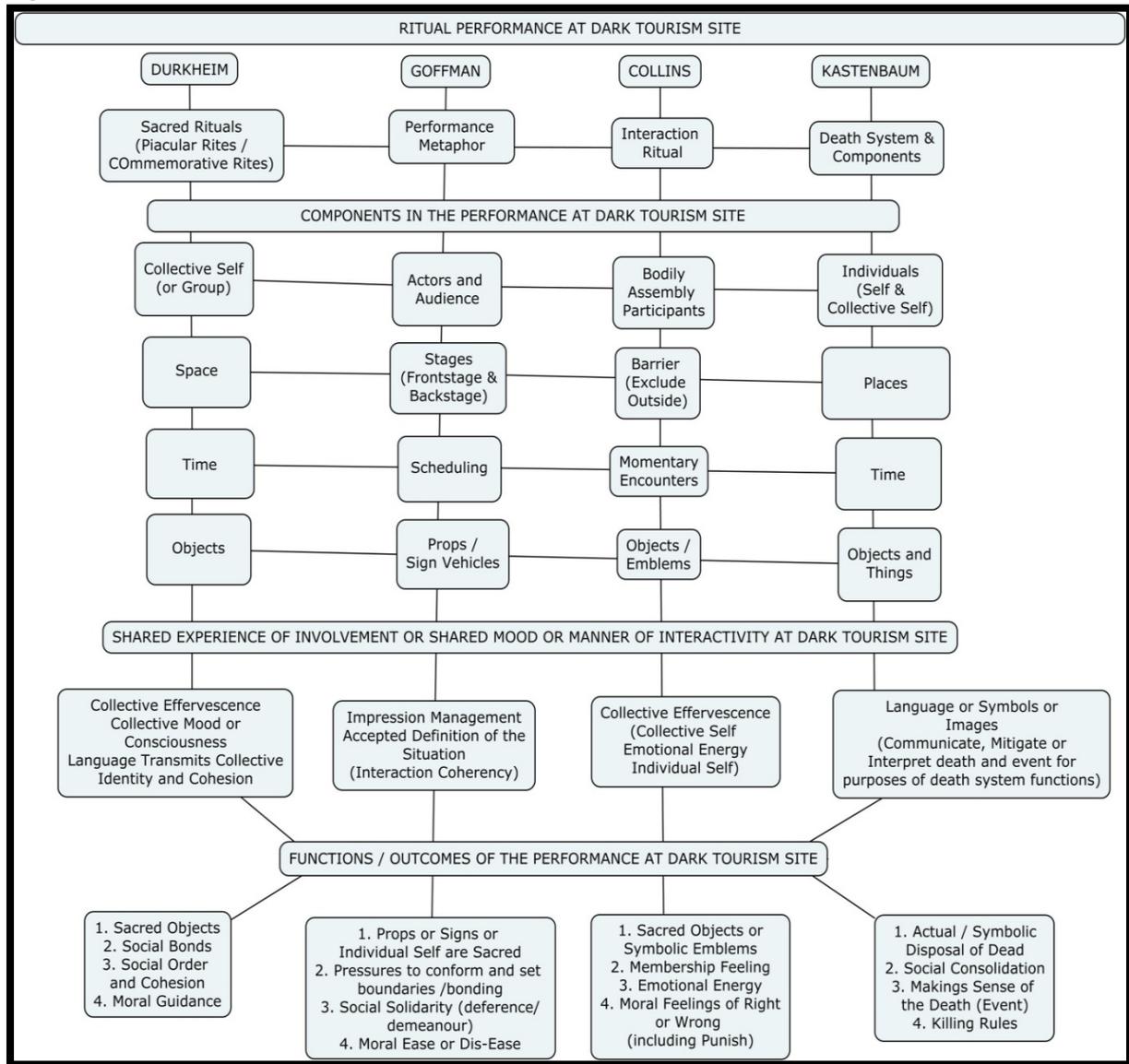
3.5   Emotion in the Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism: Experience of Involvement with what Matters

This section will provide a statement of the definition and concept of emotion that is proposed for the study of the dark tourism experience, the ritual performance model and for the research question. To do so, this section will first briefly address the problem with emotion, its definition and its sociological heritage. This is important for two reasons firstly, because much of the theoretical literature in sociology skirts around the definitional and

conceptual problem. Kastenbaum (2001) certainly did this in presenting the death system. Durkheim (1912) and Collins (2004) may be said to have done the same although will be addressed below, both recognize and at least set out the concept of emotion in their respective work. The second reason is that much remains to be done within a sociology of emotion to consider how individual emotions become collective and how collective emotions are to be understood at the level of an interaction ritual in any given situation, and then how these collective emotions become individual again after individuals leave collective encounters. This section does not propose any detailed review or suggested approaches to future initiatives. It will leave to other work the challenges of understanding the individual / collective problem and the manner in which the elicitation and / or transmission of emotions, individual or collective, may be said to be undertaken within the death system framework or within interaction rituals.

This section will then present the sociological perspective on the emotions associated with grief and mourning including mourning as a ritual attitude that may be brought to and/or become part of the visitor experience at a dark site. The section will conclude with a restatement of the definition of the dark tourism experience and propose how this definition may be employed to gain a greater appreciation of the role of emotion within the dark tourism phenomenon.

3.5.1 *What Matters within the Death System Framework and Interaction Rituals?* <u>*Emotion*</u>

Throughout this thesis, and in the literature, reference has been and will be made to the following terms: "emotion"; "feelings"; "mood"; "moral sentiment"; "collective effervescence", "emotional energy" and "experiences of involvement". All of these terms deal with the concept of emotion. As such, it would be helpful to define emotion and to consider its role in the study of the dark tourism experience or other social phenomenon. For, arguably no action can occur in an individual or a society (or for that matter in any aspect of our social lives) without the involvement of emotion. We are – as human beings – always emotional

(Bloch, 2002), and it is for this reason that human emotions are an essential part of identity, motivation, interpretation, social bonds, order and structure and should be central to sociology (Shilling, 2002). Emotion exists within the individual self, but also in the collective self as it is found within all social relationships. For that reason, as Barbalet (2002; 4) observes, what is felt or "experienced in my body as subjective feeling is part of a transaction between myself and another". Kemper emphasizes that "the most important premise of any sociological theory of emotions must be that an extremely large class of human emotions results from real, anticipated, imagined, or recollected outcomes of social relationships" (Kemper, 1978; 32).

3.5.2 *Sociology's Problem with Emotion and the Psychology of Death*

Much of the problem pertaining to identifying the meaning and concept of emotion in its own right within a sociology of death stems from the fact that work on death and dying found in the multidisciplinary and professional literature is often of a psychological nature that has a major focus on the individual, with little reference to sociological factors (Thompson, Allan, Carverhill, Cox, Davies, Doka, Granek, Harris, Ho, Klass, Small, & Wittkowski, 2016). The intention of incorporating a sociological perspective is not to omit the psychology of death but rather to complement this approach because not considering the wider social context provides an incomplete and distorted understanding of the human experience of loss (Thompson, et. al., 2016). This especially rings true because death and dying are emotionally charged phenomena, and so it is understandable that a psychological approach to understanding these experiences has proven to be an attractive one (Thompson, et. al., 2016). With that said, it is very important to recognize, as Thompson et. al. (2016), arguably one of the foremost authorities on the social aspects of death and dying has observed, emotions are sociological phenomena as well, in the sense that how emotions are conceptualized, experienced, and responded to will depend in large part on social processes and structures. For example, Walter (1994) notes the considerable pressure from arguments against the medicalization and rationalization of death that have attempted to re-

humanize the experience of death and dying by promoting an emotion-focused acceptance, most notably for the bereaved, the dying and health-care practitioners. Brennan (2003) adds to this by illustrating the work of a number of psychology of death professionals such as Elizabeth Kübler-Ross (1969) whose past work *On Death and Dying* has made a point to place a specific emphasis on the social aspects of grief, particularly as they become more and more evident within public and/or in inter-personal settings. Brennan (2003) presents a review dating back to the second half of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries to discuss scholars who provide a premise for research such as social anthropologist Robert Hertz (1907) and his mentor, sociologist Emile Durkheim (1895) each of who offer epistemological foundations for recent efforts which have explored the social context of death and dying. Their studies revolve around the funerary practices and customs surrounding death ritual in "primitive" societies (Brennan, 2003). While some might say Durkheim (1897, 1912) is too "mechanistic" in his approach to social behaviour as he engages with death, he had a tendency to do so not as a source of meaning in its own right but (in the case of his study of suicide) as a result of either over or under socialization or, in passing, by a reflection of the social mourning rituals and elementary forms of religious life within "primitive" societies. Nonetheless, taking into account the prevailing conditions surrounding the topic of death in the later part of the nineteenth century and early part of the twentieth, it is perhaps not surprising that sociology should be concerned with life rather than death (Mellor, 1993).

As noted by Thompson et.al. (2016), sociology is at the integrative core of death studies and there are clearly sociological considerations that we need to take into account in seeking to develop an adequate understanding of the emotional aspects of death and dying, as well as cognitive, behavioural, and spiritual aspects. It is for this reason that such shifts in orientation towards topics surrounding death once considered off limits, of, say, emotions and the self that were once deemed the "sociological private", are themselves reflective of changes occurring elsewhere within society at large and becoming more and more significant in the self construction of sociology (Bailey, 2000; 381). The "private" (which at

one time is where the emotional distress caused by bereavement was dealt with) is now becoming a popular area of concern for sociology as the discipline's anxiety over the significance of the public realm heightens (Bailey, 2000). Thus, a set of powerful discourses are emerging as the mutuality of both the private and the public are becoming an object of attention. Bailey (2000; 382) writes on the familiarity of the relevance of the public/private distinction coming into sociological service as there is a "mission to connect the personal troubles of the milieu with the public issues of the social structure." As a result of the shifts in orientation taking place in contemporary sociology, it is suggested that the field has failed to break through some bodies of work comprising studies pertaining to death (such as dark tourism).

3.5.3 *Public Mourning / Spontaneous Memorialization as Emotional Experiences*

The renewal of academic attention to death has coincided with a re-birth of interest in it among the general population at large, at least in the western world. Researchers (Walter, Littlewood & Pickering, 1995; Brennan, 2003; Stone, 2010) have thus indicated the recent resurgence of "public mourning" rituals, that is to say, "public commemorative practices following the deaths of public figures and/or disasters, which, since the Victorian period had become attenuated within most Western societies" (Brennan, 2003; 32). Walter (1999) supports this by suggesting that back in 1997, there was a revival in public mourning for Princess Diana in Great Britain. This has been the case ever since the unbearably tragic sense of loss following the end of World War One when mourning had fallen out of use within British society (Berridge, 2001). Coincidentally or not, this renewed popularity in death and public mourning can be likened to Stone's (2010) commentary on dark tourism which also perhaps is witnessed from the revival of interest in things formerly considered disgusting or macabre. From the embalmed bodies displayed at Von Hagen's (2002) exhibition *Körperwelten* (Body Worlds) to the more serious tours to concentration camps of Auschwitz, death it seems, is back. Nevertheless, Brennan (2003; 32) explains "the plethora of self-help manuals which aim to give instruction on the social etiquette surrounding death:

on *how* to condole, and which serve to help people come to terms with the emotional distress caused by bereavement, continue to grow unabated". In many respects, Gorer's (1965) earlier view that we have "forgotten" how to grieve and are having to re-learn the practice of public mourning would appear to be true. Gorer (1965; 110) expresses that without being able to get proper guidance on how to treat death and bereavement, those are left without the "social help in living through and coming to terms with grief and mourning which are the inevitable responses in human beings to the death of someone whom they have loved". This is especially the case considering the relative absence of rituals derived from organized religion nowadays; new forms of addressing private grief in public are needed. Accordingly, from a more sociological perspective, the sort of spontaneous memorialization or gathering witnessed in the aftermath of 9/11, can certainly be seen to illustrate a new form of addressing private grief in public. Brennan (2003; 28) refers to these as public responses "to the unanticipated, violent deaths of people who do not fit into the categories of those we expect to die, who may be engaging in activities in which there is a reasonable expectation of safety, and with whom the participants in the ritual share some common identification". To this one might only add that these public responses and ritual may be seen as part of the dark tourism phenomenon and, in particular, as forms of piacular described by Durkheim (1995). They may be characterized as a piacular rite and the experience analyzed as interaction rituals undertaken to address public grief or mourning.

3.5.4 *Challenges for a Sociology of Emotions*

The sociology of emotions should offer theoretical approaches to studying the emotional nature of social phenomenon such as public mourning, spontaneous memorialization, and the dark tourism experience based upon the role that emotions play in sociology. Yet, while emotion occupies a crucial position in classical theory, it is one that is "more implied than expressed" (Collins, 2004; 102). Despite continuing efforts, all of the social sciences are still trying to make emotion a more precise and empirically grounded concept. At this point, it is important to note that distinction must be made between two questions which are often

interchanged one for the other; that is, "what is emotion?" on the one hand and "what role or function does emotion play?" on the other. The answer to the first question would appear to most observers to be straightforward in as much as it might be proposed that everyone knows what an emotion is (or feelings, or mood, or moral sentiment, or experiences of involvement) from first-hand experience with them. But definitional problems abound. Much of the work in social sciences defaults to an attempt to create typologies, categories, degrees or intensities, and the like. Franks (2006; 60) explains "regrettably, no satisfactory common thread or theory exists to resolve the definitional challenges. As such, typically the social sciences learn and advance by setting aside the definitional problem and proceeding with investigations on specific emotions or attempting to categorize emotions." (The situation is analogous to that found in the dark tourism literature). The other question, that is, the role or function of emotion, is most often what the literature addresses. For example, of the major theoretical approaches offered within the sociology of emotions, "ritual theories" such as that of Collins (2004) focus on social interaction where individuals share the same values, share a focus of attention and share an emotional experience that may permit a consideration of how visitors may experience and express group and collective emotions that contribute to identifiable social outcomes or functions. Nevertheless, if theoretical and empirical advancement is to be made in analyzing the emotions involved in a social phenomenon such as that which may be observed at a dark tourism site, and if emotions in interactions are affected by or are a part of a chain of what are arguably emotional experiences as Collins (2004) argues, it is important to have some appreciation for that simple question: "what is emotion?".

For the purposes of this thesis, it is proposed that the answer to that question is one provided by Barbalet (2002) that appears to be most appropriate.

3.5.5 *Emotion as an "Experience of Involvement" with the Dark Tourism Experience*

Emotion in its simplest terms is an "experience of involvement" with something that matters argues Barbalet (2002). This "experience of involvement" is critical to an understanding of

why visitors (social actors) travel to, interpret and encounter death or the death event at some dark tourism sites.

Barbalet (2002) describes an "experience of involvement" in terms of "what matters" – in this case, what visitors care about, those things that register in their physical and dispositional beings. As he describes it:

> "A person may be negatively or positively involved with something, profoundly involved or only slightly involved, but however or to what degree they are involved with an event, condition, or person it necessarily matters to them, proportionately. That it matters, that a person cares about something, <u>registers in their physical and dispositional being</u>. It is this experience that is emotion, not the subject's thoughts about the experience, or the language of self-explanation arising from the experience, but that immediate contact with the world the self has through involvement."

To be clear, as Franks (2006; 39) has observed "words are the one things that emotions are not." Emotion may be seen as "the language of the body in contrast to the linguistic language of the mind" (Franks, 2006; 39). (And this, of course, creates limitations in interpreting what visitors may say about their experience).

Emotion – an experience of involvement - is a critical factor in the analysis of the visitor experience and the proposed approach in this thesis. It is necessary to underline that only <u>some</u> visitors and <u>some</u> sites will be observed as participating in ritual performance and experiencing the types of outcomes suggested by this thesis. The types of sites one would expect the application of the approach to be applied in this thesis include those that meet the following criteria:

- A site of death and/or disaster in respect of which visitors share an experience of involvement with respect to the death or the death event.

- The death or death event at the site may include single or mass casualties and may include actual death or a fear of death in the future.

- The death(s), the fear of death or the event(s) associated with the dark site will involve an *interaction* with or by visitors at the site with components typically associated with the Death System.

It is proposed that an approach to defining and analysing dark tourism may be undertaken using Barbalet's (2002) description of emotion. Thus, the re-stated definition of dark tourism is set out above and will be employed for the purposes of this thesis.

3.5.6 *What is it that "Matters" to Visitors at a Dark Site?*

It is proposed that what matters to visitors to a dark site may often be observed at the site and categorized in one of the following areas:

(i)   Social Bonds relevant to the visitors "individual or collective" selves through values, attachments or beliefs

(ii)   Imagined or vicarious losses or fears these bonds related to, including those arising from a change in ontological security,

(iii)   Death itself (or a fear of death or death anxiety)

(iv)   Sites, symbols and rituals that are sacred of and by themselves

Each of these categories relate to what Collin's (2004) has described as a value, or belief, or cognition that is infused with emotion or something in our physical or dispositional being, or a chain of emotional experiences that "matter" to visitors. Each of these categories have a common denominator about what matters, and that is Social Bonds - the only source of "moral warmth" and "moral forces" as Durkheim (1975; 154) described them - are "the most crucial human motive" that keep our individual and collective selves alive. These bonds are at the core of what matters and of the experience of involvement. A disruption or even a threat to these social bonds may produce a variety of emotions.

3.5.7 *A Note on Grief and Mourning in Interaction Rituals*

In the case of death or a death event, the emotions associated with grief and mourning are classic examples of where the disruption or even a threat to social bonds may produce a variety of emotions on an individual and collective basis because the death or the death event represents an experience of involvement that matters. These emotions may have the element of "personal loss" created by the death of one or more people with whom there were direct social bonds. But, increasingly the view that sociologists are adopting is that while grief is an emotion that may be personal (and mourning is the outward expression of grief), the grief experience and mourning are social constructions meriting sociological scrutiny (Charmaz & Milligan, 2006; 517). As Durkheim (1995) observed, mourning where the loss of the social bond has a more collective or indirect quality to it is not the "spontaneous expression of individual emotions", but rather this mourning is a ritual attitude adopted independent of what Durkheim (1995; 400) described as "an affective emotional state." Of course, as Davies (2000; 97) observes, Durkheim was "interested in what the emotions mean to people within a social world and not what the emotions mean within the private domain of an individual self." Emotions for the purposes of this work are interpreted sociologically in terms of interactions and collective representations and are not interpreted psychologically.

Durkheim (1995; 405) proposed that the "basis of mourning is the impression of enfeeblement that is felt by the group when it loses a member." This "impression" is the collective emotion felt by the group – the experience of involvement – when the death event occurs that involves the loss of social bond. It matters to the group and its individual members. That is precisely the reason that Durkheim (1995) suggests not only do individuals take the action of bringing themselves together physically, but they are also put into closer touch emotionally at which point they have induced in them the same state of soul – all

emotional – which then creates the collective effervescence – another emotion – being a sensation of renewed strength which counteracts the original emotion of enfeeblement. Thus Durkheim (1995; 405) proposes that "they only share sad emotions in common; but to commune sadness is still to commune, and every communion of consciousness increases social vitality, in whatever form it is done."

While Collins (2004; 48) does not specifically address grief or mourning in any of his work (at least in a detailed fashion) he seems to echo Durkheim (1995) when he observes that "participants … at a funeral become more sorrowful than before they began." Collins explanation for this is analogous to that offered by Durkheim (1995); Collins (2004; 48) says that the mutual focus of attention at the funeral and the common mood (presumably of sorrow or sadness) reinforce each other and participants, by becoming "more aware of each other's awareness, they experience their shared emotion more intensely as it comes to dominate their awareness." This in turn, according to Collins (2004), produces the four outcomes: group solidarity through a feeling of membership; emotional energy through a feeling of confidence, strength, and so on; symbols that participants associate with themselves collectively that they feel are sacred objects; and feelings of morality in the sense of rightness in adhering to the group, respecting its symbols and so on. So, just like Durkheim (1995), Collins (2004) sees the interaction rituals begin with emotion, have it made collective and effervescent, with outcomes that create new emotional feelings (or realities). In both cases, Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) are describing how emotions begin, elicit, transmit, transform and ultimately mediate mourning.

3.6   Proposed Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism Model

The model proposed in this thesis for use in considering or analyzing the dark tourism visitor experience proceeds from the death system, interaction ritual and emotion frameworks described above. This model is set out in a summative fashion in Figure 3.2 below. It is the model that is proposed to be used to provide answers to the research question and objectives from a theoretical perspective and will be the model used when considering the

findings of the empirical research. The description of the model in this section will first position the model and qualify the types of visitor experiences to which the model might be applied. Then, using the four observation points proposed within the course of the review of interaction rituals in Section 3.3.2.4 above, the description will then set out the relevant parts of the model from the respective observation points as the visitor experience proceeds from site-entry to site exit. After presenting the model, this section will provide a summary of the distinctions between the ritual performance model and the mortality mediation model proposed by Stone (2012) that was described in Section 2.5.2 in the last chapter. Finally, this section will provide a summary of the manner in which the ritual performance model may answer the research question and objectives, as well as contribute to part of the gaps identified in the existing dark tourism literature.

Figure 3.2: Proposed Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism Model
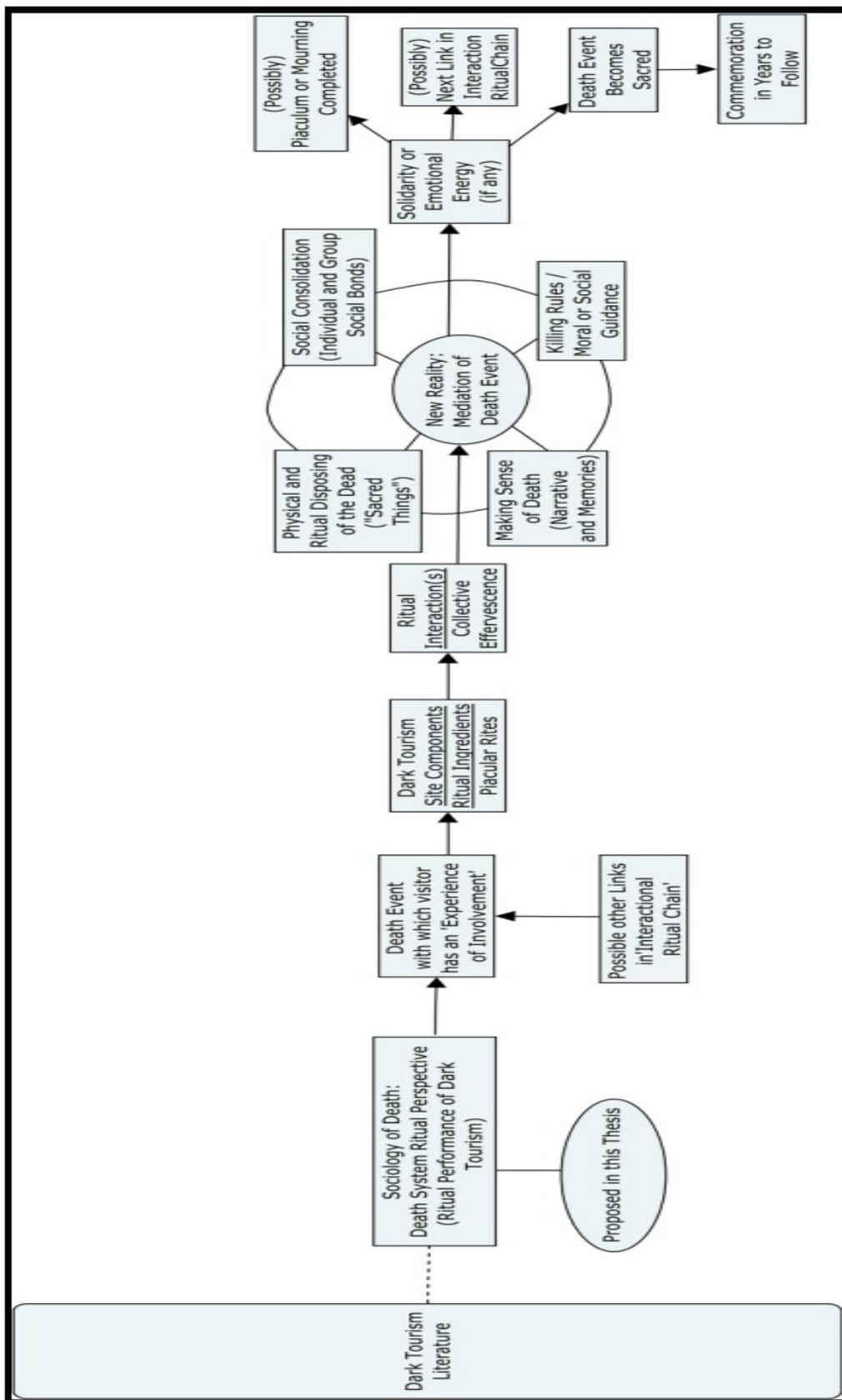
3.6.1 *Qualification of the Visitor Experiences*

The model focuses on the ritual character of visitor interaction and the role of emotions in these interactions which make up the visitor experience of <u>some</u> visitors at <u>some</u> dark sites. It draws upon death system and interaction ritual frameworks to explore the visitor experience and outcomes at dark sites that (re)present a death event in respect of which:

(a) Visitors have had (or will have at the site) an experience of involvement with respect to the death event. These "experiences of involvement" are those contemplated by the definition of emotion proposed by Barbalet (2002). In many cases they may also include situations in which visitors may have had their individual or collective consciousness "perturbed" by the death event (Stone, 2012; 1582), or may have a fear of death or death anxiety (Stone, 2012), or visitors may be said to have a "relevant interest" in the death event as part of a social reality of the visitors own worlds (Stone, 2016; 24) that provide these and register in the visitors physical and dispositional beings and are triggered or related to the death event. Certainly, they include the emotion that Durkheim (1912) observed gave rise to piacular or mourning rites.

Site attributes may sometimes be considered in qualifying the visitor experience insofar as they may influence part of the visitor experience and ritual interactions, arguably depending upon the sophistication or commodification of the site. But the critical factor remains that set out in (a) above, the experience of involvement with the death event. Accordingly, even a simple spontaneous gathering at a site in the aftermath of a death event may be considered for the purposes of the model. The site attributes to be considered include:

(b) Whether, visitors at the site will have opportunities to interact with and focus their attention upon one or more death system site components (individuals, spaces, times or schedules, objects and symbols / language) that have (or are capable of) death event related meanings.

(c) Whether, visitors at the site will be able to interact with one or more of the following death system functions represented or provided at the site: the actual or symbolic disposal of the dead; social consolidation through interactions with others on an individual and/or collective level; making sense of the death event through narrative and site interpretation; and the occasions to seek or receive moral or social guidance from the death event through the site representations, interpretations and interactions.

The model proposes that four observation points be used from which to analyze and consider the dark tourism visitor experience from a death system and interaction ritual perspective. Using the proposed observation points as a type of guide, the sections below describe what the model proposes as the visitor experience progresses from site entry to site exit.

3.6.2 *Prior Experiences of Involvement*

From *Observation Point #1* the model considers possible prior links in the interaction ritual chain and specifically, whether the visitor has a prior experience of involvement that has motivated the visit and / or will be material to the interpretation of the site and visitor experience:

(a) The model proposes that in the face of a public death event, rather than sequester or isolate themselves, some visitors will care about the death event - it will matter to them in some way – so that it registers in their physical and dispositional being to such an extent that these visitors may be said to have an "experience of involvement" with the death event such that they are 'motivated' to visit and interact at the site.

(b) In particular, some visitors may feel an obligation to gather together as suggested by Durkheim (1912) or be motivated to gather because they are "emotional energy" seekers as suggested by Collins (2004).

(c) Visitors bring individual and / or collective emotions related to the death event that may be represented in a range of emotions, including sadness, distress, anger, fear, and so on.

(d) It may be that visitors do <u>not</u> bring a prior experience of involvement with the death event to the site. Arguably, some may visit a site, perhaps as part of a program of activity or perhaps by happenstance. (If the visitors do not bring a prior experience of involvement with the death event to the site, it may be possible that while visiting the site the death event becomes something "that matters" such that the experience of involvement with the death event occurs at the site). In this case, the researcher would observe from observation point #2 if / when the experience of involvement occurs. But the research would still bring into account the visitor's prior interaction chain that may contain experiences that are material or relevant to site interpretation and mediation.

3.6.3 *Mediation of the Death Event: Interactions with Death System Components and Functions*

From *Observation Point #2* the model observes the visitor interpretation and interaction experience at the site and proposes as follows:

(a) The gatherings at these sites permit visitors – individually and collectively – to engage in ritual interactions at the site. The interaction may be internal (I, Me, or Generalized Other) or external. These interactions are the "situation(s)" contemplated by Collins (2004) (relying upon Goffman). The ritual performance begins and interactions generally follow a processual course proposed by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004). Visitors, including those individuals who guide visitors at the site or may have been directly impacted by the death event, may be witnessed to present themselves in ways that may be observed or gleaned from interviews by the researcher.

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(b) The (death system) components and functions at the site become the mutual focus of attention and produce a shared emotional mood among these visitors. These interactions with site components typically involve or relate to at least one or more of the four critical functions of the death system with respect to the death event represented at the site: the (actual or symbolic) disposition of the dead; social consolidation (on an individual and/or collective level); make sense of the death event (through narrative interpretation); and seek (or receive) moral or social guidance from the death event.

(c) The internal and external ritual interactions create, for a time at least, new realities for some visitors when visitors experience a shared emotional mood or collective effervescence. This is a collective emotion (rather than an individual one) from the visitor's perspective. This process involving a piacular rite or interaction ritual creates a new or altered reality about the death event – a feeling of being brought out of oneself into something larger and more powerful.

(d) This aspect of the dark tourism visitor experience – or the cumulative interactions or situations – with its ritual interactions and emotions, together with the operation of critical death system functions at the site is the focus at which the mediation takes place.

(e) The mediation of the death event is achieved not by narrative alone, but by the communion of individual visitor consciousness and emotions through interaction rituals involving death system components and organized around death system functions.

(f) The ritual and emotional interactions, involving the components of the death system, and one or more of the four critical functions of the death system are the means by which mediation of the death event is achieved at the site – and these functions are

similar to, but broader and more comprehensive than the modalities of narrative proposed by Stone (ie. Haunting Memories, Memorialization, Moral Instruction, and Momento Mori).

3.6.4 *Outcomes from the Interaction Rituals: Solidarity and Emotional Energy*

From *Observation Point #3* one looks to determine the outcomes from the mediation that has taken place through interaction rituals and in particular whether these outcomes result in feelings of solidarity (Durkheim, 1912) and / or emotional energy (Collins, 2004):

(a) The outcome of the visitor experience, if the interaction rituals have been successful and the mediation of the death event has taken place, should be emotions associated with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy. These "emotions" are individual emotions (not collective emotions), that are carried away from the situation, and result in a "sensation of renewed strength" or "a feeling of confidence, strength, and initiative in taking action". Among other things, it is proposed that the outcome of the visitors experience to the site may include:

- The possible completion of the piaculum or state of mourning for visitor(s) – although further rites may need to be completed in order to restore the strength of the individual and the group.

- The death event becomes (even more) sacred – with the possibility that commemorative rites may be practiced in the future with respect to the death event.

- Visitors are charged with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy to initiate action, so visitors possibly proceed to the next "link" or interaction in the interaction ritual chain outside the site.

3.6.5 *Future Interaction based on Outcomes of Solidarity and Emotional Energy*

Observation Point #4 requires visitors to be followed after the site visit to determine the consequences or action taken given their feelings of solidarity and emotional energy (if any). Collins (2004) proposes that these feelings are individual emotions that will initiate further actions – that visitors will be emotional energy seekers and proceed to the next link or interaction to confirm or generate more emotional energy. This type of empirical work was not undertaken for this thesis. Nevertheless, the model proposes that visitors charged with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy as a result of their visitor experience are motivated to seek new links or situations in an interaction ritual chain. Or that, from a Durkheimian perspective, these feelings of solidarity and renewed strength from the piaculum will be the source of the "obligation" to gather in the next piacular or commemorative or positive rite performed by visitors. These future interactions might range from finding and participating in other piacular rites (for one comes out of mourning by virtue of the mourning itself), repeated visits to the site, or other actions prompted by a sense of obligation or motivated by seeking more emotional energy that may be as simple as relating their visitor experience over coffee or tea to other members of the group the next day. The point being, that the range of future interactions is very broad but that future research may reveal surprising results after following the visitor experience past the site itself.

3.6.6 *Comparison between Ritual Performance Mediation Model and Mortality Mediation Model*

As Stone (2012) and Walter (2008) have observed the dark tourism visitor experience may be one of a family of mediating institutions that mediate mortality. For some visitors, the model proposes that consequences of the dark tourism experience may be increased solidarity and a form of emotional energy that impacts or influences the social order. Outcomes that are broader than those suggested by Stone (2012; 1582), who proposes outcomes that "engender a degree of thanatopsis and meanings of ontology", and to "construct contemporary ontological meanings of mortality". The two models set out in table

3.1 below are not mutually exclusive, nor do they suggest that one or the other must be selected in analyzing the visitor experience. Indeed, it is proposed that the fundamental differences between them rest with (a) the theoretical framework from which they each proceed and (b) the emotional experience of involvement that visitors have with the death event represented at the site, rather than the narrative about death offered at the site. In order to compare (and contrast) the two models, the following summative table describes each according to their respective (a) theoretical frameworks of inquiry (b) relevance of visitors' prior experiences with death or the death event; (c) the mediation process; (d) outcomes of the visitor experience and (e) possible future actions of visitors.

Table 3.1: *Comparison between Mortality Mediation Model and Ritual Performance Mediation Model*

Mortality Mediation Model (Stone, 2012; Sharpley and Stone, 2009)	Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism Model (Dermody)
Theoretical Framework of Inquiry (Sociological Perspectives) The model looks to the thanatological condition of society by drawing on the concept of "thanatopsis" and the thanatological condition of society insofar as it may apply to visiting places associated with death and suffering. It is used to explore the interpretation and mediation of death given the interest of visitors in their relationship with death.	**Theoretical Framework of Inquiry (Sociological Perspectives)** The model focuses on the ritual character of visitor interaction and the role of emotions in these interactions which make up the visitor experience of some visitors at some dark sites that (re)present a death event in respect of which visitors have had (or will have at the site) an experience of involvement with respect to the death event. These "experiences of involvement" are those contemplated by Barbalet (2002). This may include situations in which visitors may have death anxiety (Stone, 2012) provided the anxiety registers in the visitors physical and dispositional being and is related to the death event
Prior Experiences of Involvement with Death The Mediating Mortality proposes that: (a) The sequestration of death in society serves to "isolate" visitors from death institutions at least organized religion, have declined in providing a framework through which individuals and society understand or accept death (b) Possibly, some visitors may be motivated to travel given a revival of death in the public domain and desire to look upon death of Others to purchase "ontological security". (c) Visitors sense of self is such that feelings of anxiety and vulnerability or insecurity about death arise	**Prior Experiences of Involvement with the Death Event** The ritual performance model proposes that: (a) In the face of a public death event, some visitors will have an experience of involvement related to the death event - it will matter to them in some way – so that it registers in their physical and dispositional being. (b) In particular, some visitors may feel an obligation to gather together as suggested by Durkheim (1995) or be motivated to gather because they are "emotional energy" seekers as suggested by Collins (2004). (c) Visitors bring individual and / or collective emotions related to the death event that may be represented in a range of emotions, including sadness, distress, anger, fear, etc.

Mortality Mediation Model (Stone, 2012; Sharpley and Stone, 2009)	Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism Model (Dermody)
(d) Paradoxically, popular culture puts death on display in many ways, so that "popular" culture makes death "present" (not absent or sequestered) and these dark "displays" in popular culture are the ways in which visitors (and the society in general) confront, learn, understand and come to terms with, if not accept, death. Dark tourism is one of society's mediating institutions.	(d) The model brings into account the visitor's prior interaction chain that may contain emotional experiences that are material or relevant to site interpretation and mediation of the death event – thus it seeks to consider "what matters" to visitors.
Mediation of Death Anxiety and Ontological Insecurity The model proposes visitors engage in mediation as follows: (a) Dark tourism and dark tourism sites represent "death" and allow visitors to negotiate or mediate their anxiety and insecurity insofar as dark tourism and dark tourism sites presenting "a safe socially sanctioned space" (Stone, 2012; 1578). For visitors to "gaze" upon the death of "Significant Others".	**Mediation of the Death Event** The model proposes the process by which the mediation occurs: (a) The gatherings at these sites permit visitors – individually and collectively – to engage in ritual interactions at the site. The interaction may be internal (I, Me, or Generalized Other) or external. These interactions are the 'situation(s)' contemplated by Collins (2004) (relying upon Goffman). The ritual performance begins and interactions generally follow a processual course proposed by Durkheim (1912) and Collins (2004).
(b) The dark tourism visitor experience, rather than the specific interest or motivation to visit the site, is the focus or context within which the mediation takes place as it connects the living (visitors) with the ("significant other") dead at the site.	(b) The (death system) components and functions at the site become the mutual focus of attention and produce a shared emotional mood among these visitors. These interactions with site components typically involve or relate to at least one or more of the four critical functions of the death system with respect to the death event represented at the site: the (actual or symbolic) disposition of the dead; social consolidation (on an individual and/or collective level); make sense of the death event (through narrative interpretation); and seek (or receive) moral or social guidance from the death event.
(c) The mediation by connection of the living and the dead is achieved through narrative which provides the parameters for "consumption" by the visitors. This narrative may be provided by an educational or entertainment type experience on site.	(c) The internal and external ritual interactions create, for a time at least, new realities for some visitors in the form of a shared emotional mood or collective effervescence – a feeling of being brought out of oneself into something larger and more powerful. This is a collective emotion (rather than an individual one). The new realities are the focus at which the mediation takes place as set out in the summative model.
(d) The narrative may be by way of "remembering" the haunting memory and the role of the death event in the "collective" memory of the visitors and society; as a form of "momentomori" (a reminder that the visitors will die); or a form of moral instruction (or guidance) about issues of morality, ethical or social behaviour, or even new moral frameworks.	(d) The mediation of the death event is achieved not by narrative alone, but by the communion of individual visitor consciousness and emotions through interaction rituals involving death system components organized around or facilitated by death system functions. These functions are similar to, but broader and more comprehensive than the modalities of narrative proposed by Stone (ie. Haunting

Mortality Mediation Model (Stone, 2012; Sharpley and Stone, 2009)	Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism Model (Dermody)
	Memories, Memorialization, Moral Instruction, and Momento Mori).
Outcomes (a) The dark tourism visitor experience may "engender a degree of thanatopsis and meanings of ontology, where visitors may reflect on dark tourism and contemplate both life and death through a mortality lens" (Stone, 2012; 1582). The motivation to consume dark tourism is not to "experience *death per se*" (Stone, 2012; 1582). Rather (the) potential consequences of dark tourism experiences, revolve around the consumption of narrative so that dark tourism provides a physical and cognitive space for the visitor to "construct contemporary ontological meanings of mortality" (Stone, 2012; 1582). These constructions by the visitor serve to filter or bracket death anxiety for the visitor and as such "purchase" ontological security against the dread that death inevitably brings (Stone, 2012).	**Outcomes** (a) The outcome of the visitor experience, if the interaction rituals have been successful and the mediation of the death event has taken place, should be emotions associated with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy. These "emotions" are individual emotions (not collective emotions), that are carried away from the situation, and result in a "sensation of renewed strength" or "a feeling of confidence, strength, and initiative in taking action". Among other things, it is proposed that the outcome of the visitor experience at the site may include: • The possible completion of the piaculum or state of mourning for visitor(s) – although further rites may need to be completed in order to restore the strength of the individual and the group. • The death event becomes (even more) sacred – with the possibility that commemorative rites may be practiced in the future with respect to the death event. • Visitors are charged with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy to initiate action, so visitors possibly proceed to the next "link" or interaction in the interaction ritual chain outside the site.
Future Action based on Outcomes The model proposes that other mediating institutions and dark tourism experiences may provide opportunities for visitors to negotiate or mediate future onsets of death anxiety or ontological insecurity related to their relationship with death.	***Future Interaction based on Outcomes*** Collins (2004) proposes that emotional energy and feelings of solidarity are one and the same. Both feelings will initiate further actions – that visitors will be emotional energy seekers and proceed to the next link or interaction to confirm or generate more emotional energy. The model proposes that visitors charged with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy as a result of their visitor experience are possibly motivated to take action. Or that, from a Durkheimian perspective, these feelings of solidarity and renewed strength from the piaculum will be the source of the "obligation" to gather in the next piacular or commemorative or positive rite to be performed by visitors.

3.7   Conclusion

In this chapter, this thesis has proposed that the visitor experience at some sites may be

analyzed by reference to a death system framework of inquiry and interaction ritual theory

and that this approach will address the research question and part of the gap in dark tourism knowledge and in the study of this phenomenon by sociology. It has proposed the manner in which these frameworks are relevant to the study of the dark tourism phenomenon and proposed a ritual performance model with which to view the visitor experience at some sites. The literature considered and the arguments or proposals made in this chapter support the following conclusions:

A. Dark tourism may be said to be both a product of, and feature the five components and four of the critical functions, of a society's death system (as this framework is proposed by Kastenbaum, 2001). The death system framework of inquiry may be used to identify and begin to analyze the components and functions of any given society's death system and arguably may be used to do the same for a dark tourism site in that society. The death system provides an insight into the mediation of death; but it is not a dynamic framework. Hence the need to look to dynamic theories of ritual and emotion to observe and to analyze the experience visitors have with death system components and functions at a site at which the visitors have an "experience of involvement" with the death event.

B. Dark tourism, for <u>some</u> visitors, may involve the performance of a piacular (or mourning) rite as described by Durkheim (1995) in the *Forms*. This thesis proposes that the dark tourism visitor experience involves the performance of piacular rites based on the arguments summarized below, with references to *The Forms* and to the relevant sections of this thesis noted in parentheses:

(a) Where visitors have an experience of involvement with the death event they may be in mourning – the basis of mourning being the impression of loss or enfeeblement that is felt by the group when it loses a member (Durkheim, 1995; 405). Visitors may be motivated by a sense of obligation to visit the site to give witness to their feelings of sadness, distress, or anger (Durkheim, 1995; 399)

(Section 3.3.1.1).

(b) This obligation to gather or to visit the site comes from the shared misfortune represented by the death event. This shared misfortune enlivens collective feeling, which leads individuals to seek one another out and come together at a site, sometimes with special energy (Durkheim, 1995; 403) (Section 3.3.1.1).

(c) Some visitors may bring personal sorrow to the site but all who are mourning bring collective feeling related to the death event. In turn, these feelings are brought into harmony with the situation at the site (Durkheim, 1995; 403) (Section (3.3.1.1).

(d) Once gathered, through interactions with death system components that relate to four death system functions, the emotions of visitors may be heightened and amplified from one interaction to another and from one consciousness to the other – this creates for visitors a collective effervescence that brings with it a sense of being connected and being part of something larger, possibly even spiritual (Durkheim, 1995; 404) (Section 3.3.1.1).

(e) This collective effervescence creates a change in the emotional state of visitors. This change in emotional state is a new (emotional) reality for visitors that begins to neutralize the sadness, distress, or anger brought or experienced by visitors in the face of the death event (Durkheim, 1995; 405) (Section 3.3.1.1).

(f) From this change in emotional state among visitors, comes social vitality and a sensation of renewed strength (excess energy) which counteracts the "enfeeblement" – an increase in solidarity (Durkheim, 199; 405) (Section 3.3.1.2).

(g) The change in emotional state (in the form of the new reality or the solidarity) may only be temporary. Some visitors may have to repeat occasions of piacular rites

before the relief that follows mourning is achieved in its entirety. (As Durkheim (1995; 405) observed "death is a profound change, with wide and lasting repercussions for the group. It takes time for those effects to be neutralized") (Section 3.3.1.2)

(h) Through the successful performance of piacular rites and a piaculum within the dark tourism experience it may be said by visitors that the "evil" power or nature of the death event has in some fashion been transformed to a "sacred-event", especially where the sense of renewed strength and solidarity is strong from the visitor experience (Section 3.3.1.2).

(i) As argued in the Chapter, the successful completion of a piaculum through the performance of one or more piacular rites seems to provide an explanation for the observation By Walter (2009) and others about the aftermath of 9/11: "several thousand are dead but America lives on and will not be defeated." The visitor performing piacular rites at a dark tourism site alone may not complete the piaculum – but the site visit represents only one occasion or place at which piacular rites related to the death event may be performed by the visitor (Section 3.3.1.2).

For the purposes of the research question and objectives, piacular rites provide a framework of inquiry into the visitor experience that offers the following insights or direction for future research:

- The motivation to visit some sites in respect of which there is an experience of involvement with the death event may be the sense of "obligation" described in (a) and (b) above.

- The interpretation of the experience will be dependent upon the emotions brought to the site and then the emotions or feelings experienced at the site

as described in (c) – (f).

- The emotions or feelings at the site arise from ritual <u>interactions</u> with the components and relate or are connected to one or more functions of the rites. These components and functions are concurrent with those identified by Kastenbaum (2001).

- The <u>outcomes</u> of successful interactions in the experience are not just new (emotional) realities that bring about the neutralization or calming of the impact of the death event on the visitor and the group, but also include feelings of solidarity which brings with it excess energy or a renewal of the strength of the group. These new emotions are the product of the mediation by ritual performances.

- Piacular rites involve social consolidation (solidarity and social cohesion), making sense of the death (new meanings) and social / moral guidance for the individual or group, as well as symbols that involve the sacred disposition of the dead and the (new) sacred death event. If these feelings of solidarity, these new social meanings and symbols of the new "sacred" death event are significant, visitors may have "come out of the mourning because of the mourning" (Durkheim, 1995), completed a piaculum and in the future engage in commemorative rites to keep alive the memory of the "sacred" death event and the outcome(s) of the piaculum alive for themselves and future generations.

C. By observing the visitor experience at the site, one or more in a series of interactions (what Goffman (1959) would call a situation or situations) may occur during which visitors may focus their attention and focus their emotion on site components and functions to engage in ritual interactions as part of an interaction ritual chain (Collins,

2004). Thus, this thesis argues that the dark tourism visitor experience involves the performances of interaction rituals as part of an interaction ritual chain as follows:

(a) Where visitors have emotional energy from previous interactions related to the death event they seek other emotional energy experiences including gatherings or visits to dark sites (Section 3.3.2.3).

(b) The act of the bodies of visitors being together in the same place creates what Collins (2004; 34) suggests is a "physical attunement: currents of feeling, a sense of wariness or interest, a palpable change in the atmosphere". While the bodily inter-orientation of participants is the usual starting point for the long term outcomes for those visiting the site (Collins, 2004), in the absence of bodily co-presence, an internal interaction ritual involving "I", "Me" or "Generalized Other" creates the same environment, especially in a site inviting reflection (Collins; 2010) (Section 3.3.2.1).

(c) Visitors share a common mood to begin the interaction. According to Collins (2004), it does not matter what precise emotions the mood is based upon- some may be sad, some angry, some afraid as far as individual emotions are concerned – but the mood must be because something at the site "matters" to visitors (Section 3.3.2.1).

(d) Visitors being together and involved in either (or both) external or internal interactions with site components and functions creates a process that intensifies emotions into the shared experience or excitement that Durkheim (1995) called "collective effervescence", and from there, whether the interaction ritual takes place (Collins, 2004) (Section 3.3.2.3).

(e) The ritual performance by visitors is intensified and transformed through interaction components and functions set out by Collins (2004), (that are analogous to those proposed by Kastenbaum's (2001) death system framework) and consequently, the ritual allows for those visiting a dark site that matters to them to come out of the site having the "enfeeblement" mediated and having been charged with emotional energy.

(f) Visitors experience emotion as both a vital ingredient in, and an outcome of interaction rituals at the site (Collins, 2004).

(g) The interaction rituals performed by visitors may result in positive or negative emotional energy. Positive emotional energy is defined as being a socially derived "feeling of confidence, courage to take action, boldness in taking initiative and it is a morally suffused energy; it makes the individual feel not only good, but exalted, with the sense of doing what is most important and most valuable" (Collins, 2004; 39). The emotional energy of "affinity" may also be described within this. While feelings of sadness and depression are a result of low levels of positive emotional energy which create outcomes such as social experiences of boredom, alienation and isolation (Boyn & Luery, 2015) (Section 3.3.2.4).

For the purposes of the research question and objectives, the ritual performance of dark tourism framework suggests:

- The motivation to visit dark sites may be because visitors are emotional energy seekers and the visitor experience is anticipated by them to produce emotional energy as described in (a).

- The interpretation at the site will depend on prior links or prior visitor interactions in the chain of interaction rituals as these bring prior experiences of involvement and expectations for the site visit into the site itself. Further,

this interaction experience based interpretation will affect or influence the "common mood" referred to in (c) and (d). Of course the interpretation is added to and possibly strengthened by each ritual interaction experienced by the site visitor during the site visit.

- The <u>interaction</u> of visitors with site components and functions follows a processual course as outlined by Collins (2010). A situation becomes a ritual when visitors focus their attention and emotion on specific components of the death system. This interaction amplifies a shared emotional mood or what Durkheim (1995) called "collective effervescence", so that visitors are transitioned from the emotions brought into the site into something larger, collective and more powerful.

- The <u>outcomes</u> of successful visitor ritual performances are positive emotional energy which makes the visitor feel confidence, courage to take action and a sense of doing what is most important or valuable.

- Emotional Energy is synonymous with Durkheim's concept of Solidarity according to Collins (2004). It allows visitors to have a sense of social consolidation or social cohesion; permits visitors to not simply make sense of the deaths, but ascribe and promote new meanings and symbols, as well as to communicate these in new links in their ritual chain.

D. These interactions (both Durkheim's (1995) model as represented in piacular rites and Collin's (2004), Durkheim - Goffman model) produce a momentarily shared new (emotional) reality which may then generate feelings (or new emotions) of solidarity and positive emotional energy as an outcome of the visitor experience.

E. The visitor interaction with site components and within site functions create momentarily shared realities and the feelings generated from them are the critical markers or focus of the mediation process as illustrated in Figure 3.1. The death event and all it represents to the visitors is mediated, not by a filter or a bracket, but by, through and because of emotion within the context of interaction rituals. First, visitors experience a collective emotion in the form of collective effervescence (including a sense of being connected and a part of something larger) that begins to neutralize the emotion or experience of involvement with the death event that was brought to the site by the visitors. Secondly it then produces individual emotion in the form of feelings of solidarity (including positive feeling about group membership, sacred objects, and sense of renewed strength) and positive emotional energy (including a sense of calm, confidence and courage).

F. The mediation and its outcomes may also transform the death event for visitors and their group from something impure or evil into something that is sacred that restores or re-establishes or strengthens the social order – despite the tragedy or disaster that created the death event. (This Durkheim (1995) refers to as the "Ambiguity of the Sacred).

G. Beyond the outcomes contemplated by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004), from the interactions at the site, it may be possible to predict future interactions insofar as the mourning that is at the heart of piacular rites has not been yet completed and/or the emotional energy from the mediation has not completed the mediation process and so visitors look for new experiences or situations as part of a chain. Alternatively, visitors may engage in future interaction rituals such as the Commemorative rites proposed by Durkheim (1995; 379) to regenerate an historical sense of the group and / or, where the death event and its symbols are considered "sacred", to render its "mythical past present".

H. The comparative analysis undertaken of the interaction and mediation process contemplated by each of Durkheim (1995), Collins (2004) and Kastenbaum (2001) strongly suggests that each approach, if not congruent with the other, is at least concurrent in terms of ingredients, focus on the ingredients, shared emotion during focus on ingredients, the transmission of collective effervescence and the outcomes predicted by each. (This concurrence is illustrated in Figure 3.1 and discussed in the accompanying section).

I. Some of the gaps identified in the review of the dark tourism literature in Chapter 2 have been addressed. The definitional and conceptual challenges of the existing dark tourism literature may be lessened somewhat by the proposed re-statement of the dark tourism visitor experience that contemplates the "qualification" of the types of visitors and sites the ritual performance frameworks and proposed model might apply – that is, sites where <u>some</u> visitors have had or will have an "experience of involvement" with the death event represented at the site. Then, with this qualification in mind, the frameworks and the ritual performance model may be said to provide an answer to the research at <u>some</u> sites: that is what motivates visitors, how do they impact the site and experience outcomes in the face of the death event.

Finally, with respect to the areas of concurrence observed with respect to the proposed frameworks, and to provide an analytical tool that results from these conclusions, the thesis has specifically described a ritual performance model that proposes that where visitors have an "experience of involvement" (as that concept is described by Barbalet) with the death event represented at the site, these visitors may engage in ritual interactions or performances involving focused attention and emotion with site components and functions, thereby producing a momentarily shared reality which may generate feelings of "solidarity" and "positive emotional energy" as an outcome of the visitor experience. A summative figure

of the model is at Figure 3.1. It proposes four observation points that may be used in an analysis involving the model based on Collins (2004) ritual chain approach.

The model, which will be considered given the empirical work undertaken at the 9/11 site, suggests that the role of dark tourism as a mediating institution between the living and the death event may sometimes extend beyond the mediation of death anxiety and the purchase of ontological security as proposed by Stone (2012) and others. That is, that through the ritual performance of dark tourism, including the performance of piacular or mourning rites, death is not merely filtered or bracketed or legitimated or denied for visitors; but rather the emotion and interaction rituals in the visitor experience may actually increase personal and social vitality to the extent that the death event may be transformed into a new (emotional) reality: one in which the individual and collective self of visitors is calmed, and visitors may emerge with a new sense of confidence and emotional energy that benefits the group and its social order. The mediation and its outcomes are effected by, through and because of emotion within the ritual performances at the site, rather than by narrative. The comparative summative analysis undertaken between Stone's (2012) Mortality Mediation Model and the proposed Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism Model proposes that the two models may complement one another in some respects, but that the outcomes proposed by the latter are broader than those in the former. Further, the analysis suggests that the theoretical frameworks offered by Durkheim (Piacular Rites) and Collins (Interaction Ritual Chain) provide the basis for a detailed understanding of the process by which mediation may take place; which opens great possibilities for further research. (This analysis is found in Table 3.1).

But there is more to the mediation: the thesis and the model proposes that this new reality for visitors may also be said to transform the death event itself from something impure or evil into something that is sacred; from something that brought chaos or danger into something that restores or (re) establishes social order.

Dark tourism academics recognize the complexity of dark tourism and acknowledge that a multidisciplinary approach is required. An inquiry into the visitor experience at dark

sites founded in the sociology of death and sociology of emotions has been suggested to allow for a more focused consideration of the manner in which, and the process by which, the visitor experience at some of these sites may mediate the death event, create emotional experiences for visitors and produce outcomes that may influence the social order.

This Chapter has considered theoretical frameworks that may be relevant to a consideration of the research question and objectives from a sociological perspective and that may also contribute to filling some part of the gaps from the existing dark tourism literature that were identified at the end of the last chapter. We now turn to the next chapter that will describe the methodology that was used in the 2013 fieldwork and to link the research problem, the method and the findings to understand why visitors are motivated to travel to the 9/11 Memorial, the interpretations they have and their experiences with the death event.

4   METHODOLOGY

4.1   Introduction

In an effort to understand why visitors are motivated to travel to the 9/11 Memorial, the interpretations they have and their experiences with the death event, my study has followed a methodology that links the research problem, the method and the findings. An attempt was made to broaden the scope of my study and make the research as rigorous as possible. This has been achieved by way of semi structured interviews, participant observation, and diarizing. An explanation of the focus of the research, research approach, the design of the research, case study selection, sample/participants, qualitative research strategy, research methods, semi-structured interviews, participant observations, research analysis, research limitations and finally, research ethics is outlined below. Thus, I chose a methodology that I will discuss, evaluate and justify as the methods employed to collect and analyze the primary data that will be used to consider the research question and objectives;

Research Question	Why are some social actors motivated to travel to, interpret, and encounter death at dark tourism sites, in particular the 9/11 Memorial?
Research Objectives	To evaluate this, empirical research will explore whether it is in part of or the need for: • Social Consolidation (maintain social order and constructs) • Making Sense of (or to make meanings that mediate or reconcile) the Death Event • Fulfilling Social / Emotional Factors that require Death to be "Mediated"

4.2   Research Focus

From what has been proposed in previous chapters, my analysis of the current approaches to the study of the visitor experience at a dark tourism site is that sociology may provide

important theoretical frameworks – as of yet to be explored by the existing dark tourism literature – that will contribute to an understanding about the dark tourism visitor experience and in particular will provide answers to some basic questions about the phenomenon, namely, why are some social actors motivated to engage in the dark tourism experience, how do they interpret that experience and whether the experience may produce for some visitors outcomes that are relevant to the individual and collective emotional relationships these visitors have with respect to the death event and the social order. These questions of motivation, interpretation and outcomes from the visitors experience were informed by the view that this visitor experience operates within the context of a death system framework that needed to be analyzed in a more dynamic fashion. Earlier work, especially by that of Sharpley and Stone (2009) and Stone (2012) presented a mortality mediation model that proposed that the visitor experience serves as an opportunity for some visitors at some sites to mediate some aspects of death – that is, mediate the anxiety and insecurity that may come from the thanatological condition of society involving the death of others. This mediation and in particular the restoration of ontological security and the bracketing or filtering of death is proposed as an outcome of the visitor experience under this model.

I took a different approach to examining the visitor experience for the purposes of answering these basic questions from a sociological perspective. My analysis of the literature in Chapter 3 was informed by phenomenologically grounded concepts that relate to individual and collective consciousness and emotional experiences with respect to death events that affect or threaten the group, rather than the death anxiety and ontological insecurity that the death of others may bring in a death sequestered western society. To begin with, it was largely premised on the framework of inquiry offered through Kastenbaum's (2001) death system; but when it became clear that this framework of inquiry alone could not be used to understand the dynamic by which social actors may be motivated to visit, or to experience a site, or to experience outcomes, I had to turn elsewhere, to the sociology of interaction rituals and emotions. There are five concepts that are key to the interpretive and phenemological paradigms that relate to the basic questions of why some

visitors are motivated to undertake the visitor experience, how they interpret the experience, and what the outcomes of the experience may be. These concepts are that the visitor experience of some visitors involves:

- *Death System Components and Functions*: the manner in which visitors interact with the five components and four of the functions of the death system represented at a site related to a death event may be identified and analyzed within or as part of a dark tourism visitor experience.

- *Social Consolidation*: the manner in which the visitor experience may feature interactions by visitors with these components and functions that may provide visitors with opportunities to experience a form of an emotional adjustment or change, and to experience social consolidation or social cohesion on an individual and collective basis in the face of the death event.

- *Meaning Making*: the manner in which the visitor experience may permit visitors to interpret and make sense of the death event by way of new meanings, emotions, rituals and symbols that contribute to some form of mediation, reconciliation or renewal involving new (emotional) realities and outcomes in the face of the death event.

- *Social Facts:* the manner in which visitors are motivated to act (and interact), think and feel so that they gather, interact, perform rituals, and experience new (emotional) realities and outcomes in the face of the death event.

- *Emotion*: the manner in which emotions may serve to motivate some visitors, play a role in their interaction and interpretation of the visitor experience, and the manner in which emotion, through ritual interactions, may produce new (emotional) realities and outcomes that contribute to social consolidation, or meaning making or mediation or reconciliation, in the face of the death event.

4.3   Research Approach

The gathering of empirical research is dependent upon the methods employed in the data collection process. The research approach used in my data collection is qualitative, using a single study at the 9/11 Memorial site employed by an interpretative paradigm. This approach gathers information in the form of written material, observation and verbal discussion, and as a result, presents a social reality (guiding ontology) that consists of an authentic research environment. Interpretivism makes the assumption that a number of realities exist within society or in other words, many explanations can be had to explain an event or phenomenon opposed to one overarching all-embracing theory (Robinson, 2015).

4.3.1   *Ontological Position*

Within the research duo that consists of both ontological and epistemological positions, both are relevant to and influence the methodology. "To put it crudely, one's ontological position affects, but far from determines, one's epistemological position" (Marsh & Furlong, 2002; 18). In this section and the following, I will briefly describe my orientation to the current study and reflect on how each of the ontological and epistemological positions has shaped the nature of the social phenomena being explored.

Questions of ontology have to do with assumptions about how the world is made up and the very nature of being (Phiri, 2013). So much so, that the Greek translation for the word ontology means "being" or "existence" (Ontology, 2013). As Marsh & Furlong (2002; 18) describe, the key question that revolves around ontology is "whether there is a real world out there that is independent of our knowledge of it." Therefore, constructivism is ontologically relativist and for this reason assumes that "reality constantly changes and can be known only indirectly, through the interpretations of people; they accept the possibility that there are multiple versions of reality" and therefore deemed naturalistic (Stone, 2010; 169). That is to say that reality depends on the person being interviewed; this could be different for each individual, a reality dependent upon the individual and their opinions and

experience. This is another reason why this position is most suitable for the research in this thesis.

The experience of the death of others and the anticipation of our own death are perhaps the greatest disruptors to the individual and collective sense of order or structure on any level. Death – including the fear of death – has long been considered by philosophers as a subject worthy of study and action. The great stoic philosopher Epictetus suggested contemplation of the fear of death itself in these words "why, do you not reflect, then, that the source of all human evils, and of mean- spiritedness and cowardice, is not death, but rather, the fear of death?" (Roberts, 2010; 165) In a more sociological vein, Berger & Luckmann (1967; 100) wrote that death "posits the most terrifying threat to the taken for granted realities of everyday life." Ontological security, described by Giddens (1991) as the sense of security or stable mental state individuals enjoy when they see meaningfulness in everyday life, is shattered by death which, as Mellor (1993; 13) observed, causes people to question the meaningfulness of life and reality of social frameworks. Death, the fear of death, threats to the "realities of everyday life" or insecurity about the "meaningfulness of life and the reality of social frameworks" all arouse emotion. Indeed, as Hertz (1960; 27) wrote in *Annee Sociologique* in 1907:

> We all believe we know what death is because it is a familiar event and one that arouses intense emotion. It seems both ridiculous and sacreligious to question the value of this intimate knowledge and to wish to apply reason to a subject where only the heart is competent. Yet questions arise in connection with death which cannot be answered by the heart because the heart is unaware of them. Even for the biologist death is not a simple and obvious fact: it is a problem to be scientifically investigated but where a human being is concerned the physiological phenomena are not the whole of death. To the organic event is added a complex mass of beliefs, emotions and activities which give it its distinctive character … Thus death has a specific meaning for the social consciousness; it is the object of a collective representation. This representation is neither simple nor unchangeable: it calls for an analysis of its elements as well as a search for its origin.

Durkheim focused upon these "collective representations" - the patterns of ideas, values, beliefs and behavioural expectations when death impacts the individual and collective self (Davies, 2000). "Because collective representations could not be reduced to any single emotion of individuals they could not be appropriately studied by psychology, only sociology"

(Davies, 2000; 97). Emotions, and rituals involving emotions, arising as the result of a death event are most relevant for the purposes of this thesis, but are considered from the perspective of what they mean to people in the social world and not so much within the private sphere of the individual self. Thus, emotions are referred to in the sociological sense with respect to collective representations when one considers the rites proposed by Durkheim (1995) - and the interaction rituals proposed by Collins (2004) - rituals that this thesis proposes are performed in the dark tourism experience. Durkheim, among others, proposes the importance of rituals as a means of mediating death and the fear of death so that the individual and the group might go on living in society after the death of others. Of course, as argued in Chapter 3 this mediation of death actually goes beyond "filtering" or "bracketing" of death and allows a certain freedom or appreciation to occur on both the individual and collective level of the possibilities of life – because as Durkheim's student Hertz (1960; 78) observed "the last word must remain with life".

4.3.2 *Epistemological Position*

An epistemological position reflects our beliefs about how one might discover knowledge about the world – in short, it is a theory of knowledge (Phiri, 2013). For the purpose of this study, an interpretive constructionist epistemology is adopted. Interpretive constructionism explains that the "core of understanding is learning what people make of the world around them, how people interpret what they encounter, and how they assign meanings and values to events or objects" (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; 19). It is from the knowledge that is generated from this philosophy that my research is perceived through socially constructed and subjective interpretations. Indeed, as Marsh & Furlong (2002; 21) explain "a researcher from within the interpretivist tradition is concerned with understanding, not explanation, focuses on the meaning that actions have for agents, tends to use qualitative evidence and offers their results as one interpretation of the relationship between the social phenomena studied." This is also very relevant to my research in that individual

realities associated with visiting a particular site will be different for each individual and this primarily is the nature of the research

Interpretive constructionist's highly subjectivist view of reality as a projection of individual imagination challenges objective and positivist epistemologies in that researchers from this tradition rarely accept that human beings concretize their relationship to their world and refuse to believe that the world exists independently of our knowledge of it (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Consequently, as Stone (2010; 168) writes, "knowing is not passive and humans do not simply reflect or mirror what occurs around them: they filter what occurs through their collective understandings of the world and the practices that are a consequence of this understanding." As a result, interpretive constructionists believe that "the world is socially or discursively constructed" (Marsh & Furlong, 2002; 26) and for this reason challenges any form of "objective" knowledge.

As noted above, positivist epistemologies are the obvious "other" of interpretivism. The positivist approach to the social sciences puts emphasis on the "explanation of human behaviour" whereas hermeneutics – another term concerned with interpretation – looks more to "understanding human behaviour" (Bryman, 2008; 15). Because this research is mostly associated with visitors traveling to dark sites and their emotions pre, during, and post visit, it would seem that a positivist approach would not explain issues associated with motivations, interpretations and feelings associated with visitors and their actions. These perspectives adopted by this study assert that we need to understand the meanings people attach to social behaviour and to grasp a more empathetic understanding or approach to the social sciences. The contrasts discussed above are not considered new to this area, in fact these approaches are said to predate the emergence of modern social sciences (Bryman, 2008). Further, it is my aim and the interpretivist constructionist tradition to establish independent constructions out of other peoples constructions of what they perceive and other members of the public perceive are up to (Marsh & Furlong, 2002). As Marsh & Furlong (2002; 27) explain, "they develop a narrative about the past based upon the meaning which the actions had for social actors. Then, on the basis of this "thick description", they offer an interpretation

of what this tells us about society." Although this research adopts an interpretive constructionist stance, it does not by any means just simply analyze how people interpret the world around them. The interpretations collected will most certainly be extracted and analyzed and subsequently placed into a social scientific frame. As Bryman (2008) discusses; there is not only the "double interpretation" - interpretation of others' interpretation - the researcher needs to provide, but in fact a third level of interpretation that involves the researchers' interpretations further interpreted in terms of concepts, theories and literature of a discipline.

4.3.3 *Phenomenological Position*

As Bryman (2008; 4) explains, methods of social research "are not simply neutral tools: they are linked with the ways in which social scientists envision the connection between different viewpoints about the nature of social reality and how it should be examined." It is through this vision that a number of social phenomena are analyzed through methods that capture social reflection. Thus, making it my aim to explore the way in which a phenomenon such as dark tourism and the visitor experience at the 9/11 Memorial in New York City might be examined, explained and placed within the greater context and scheme of the sociology of death and a ritual theory of emotions and interactions.

The research philosophy used to underpin the current study will be an inductive phenomenological research philosophy (also known by some as an interpretivism perspective). The main goal or my interests in the study is to interpret elements of the visitor experience and examine why social actors are motivated to travel to, interpret, and encounter death at dark tourism sites, in particular at the 9/11 Memorial. For this reason, phenomenology was chosen because it focuses on experiences, events and occurrences that pertain more to people and their social behaviour, unlike the scientific approach that positivist philosophy advocates for the application of methods used by the natural sciences to study social reality and beyond" (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). Phenomenologist's concentrate on and explore meanings, and through this, try to understand what is happening

and why (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008).Keeping in line with the traditions discussed above, phenomenology involves identifying and locating how individuals have experienced, are experiencing or are making sense of the world around them (Bryman, 2008). The approach is useful in drawing out experience and perceptions held by those from their own viewpoints and can therefore contest other assumptions that may have been previously held. Palmer (1971) explains phenomenology as something used in order to describe things opposed to always having to fully explain a phenomenon. While these two words - describe and explain - are often used as synonyms, there is also a distinctive difference to highlight. The word "describe" is used as a means to talk about the things we see, feel and hear (which is of particular importance to the notion of interaction ritual) whereas the word "explain" looks more to talking about how something happened or why it happened. Although both words are important to this research, the difference between the two is useful to understand when looking at the relationship between the researcher and the interviewee or phenomena under investigation. Phenomenology involves a "less formal, less structured, and a more flexible" approach to data collection and is quite often, but not always, associated with both an inductive approach and qualitative research methods" (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008; 71).

Bernard (2011; 7) suggests that induction is centred upon "the search for pattern from observation and the development of explanations - theories - for those patterns through a series of hypotheses." As research commenced at the 9/11 Memorial, it was felt that inductive reasoning would allow for a more open-ended and exploratory feel as my observations were being made along with inductive reasoning to develop theories from these observations. This was most appropriate for study at the 9/11 Memorial site as Sant (2012) describes that making observations is the best way to acquire new knowledge through generalizing from particular events or objects and further recognizing how that observation fits into a pattern or story.

Although the majority of this study is driven inductively, or in other words, aims to generate meanings from the data set collected in order to identify patterns and relationships to build a theory, most social research projects at some point or another involve both

inductive and deductive reasoning processes. Bryman (2008; 11) elaborates and explains that "just as deduction entails an element of induction, the inductive process is likely to entail a modicum of deduction." This was re-assuring to me while formulating my research questions and objectives as knowing that by using the inductive approach did not mean that I had to completely disregard existing theory to formulate the research question and objectives to be explored. Unlike the inductive research approach that stems from a philosophical world view that promotes social constructionism, perceptions, meaning and subjectivity as important in understanding and knowledge (often referred to as phenomenology or interpretivism), deductive research is a lot more narrowly defined and concerned with testing or confirming hypotheses (Trochim, 2006). Hence why ultimately, inductive reasoning best suited my needs as the application of the inductive approach would have me making detailed observations of the world, which moves towards more abstract generalizations and ideas.

4.4   Research Design

The methodology and design of the research, like all knowledge forming endeavours, has been shaped by a host of influences. After reviewing the above philosophical assumptions concerning the nature of the world (ontology), the investigation into the discovery of knowledge (epistemology) and exploring the way in which the research emerged (methodology) – a single case study research design was decided upon as I believe it is an essential component of the overall social research process. Yin (1984; 23) explains that the case study research method is "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used". The research design made certain that the evidence gathered would allow me to answer the initial research question and objectives as explicitly as possible. In a sense, it acted as a logical blueprint or work plan for me to ensure completeness in everything from posing the research question through to finally summarizing, analyzing and reporting data (DeVaus,

2001). The research design acted as a crucial element to the advancement of my project as designing it helped my knowledge about the shape and nature surrounding dark tourism sites. This project represents a single case study research design, whereby the implication is a better social understanding of dark tourism within a dynamic ritual theory of emotions and interaction at the particular case site which is the 9/11 Memorial. In other words, I chose this because case studies not only focus on and provide insight into one particular question with a case selected (ie. why social actors are motivated to travel to, interpret, and encounter death at dark tourism sites), but rather, they also focus on other issues within the individual case selected to understand the entire issue, for example, at a dark tourism site (Cresswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales, 2007). One of the primary functions of a case study is to gain in-depth understanding of a situation (Stone, 2010). It allows for "an examination of a specific phenomenon, such as a program, an event, a process, an institution, or a social group" (Laws &Mcleod, 2004; 4). Indeed, the nature of the qualitative case study is an approach to research that facilitates exploration of a specific phenomenon within its context by using a number of various data sources. It is for this reason that the issue at hand is not explored through one lens, but rather various lenses which permit multiple facets of the phenomenon to be disclosed and understood (Baxter & Jack, 2008). Much of the criteria that governed the selection of this study's research design was clearly associated with, or reflected prime examples of qualitative research methods. For example, the study adopted an "interpretive approach to data", studied "things" within their context and considered the "subjective meanings that people brought to their situation" (DeVaus, 2001;10).

While the approach to using case study research is useful for this particular study as I used it in order to acquire rich data (as referenced in Section 4.7), common criticisms of this research looks to restricted external validity or lack of generalizability (Bryman, 2008). However, those that use case study research argue that it is not the purpose of the research design to generalize or speculate to other populations or cases beyond the scope of the case at hand. Moreover, the main issue or concern that has been reported to be the most fundamental in the eyes of the case study researcher is the quality of the theoretical

reasoning (Bryman, 2008). Indeed, case study researchers argue strenuously that it is not "whether the findings can be generalized to a wider universe but how well the researcher generates theory out of the findings" (Bryman, 2008; 57). For this reason, it should be noted that in consideration of the above concerns, a guiding principle to the study's research design will be the ability to discern only the distinguishing features out of the case study and to allow this to act as a springboard for theoretical reflections in regards to findings. In conclusion, though there are undoubtedly many questions and concerns revolving around the use of case study research design, some of the best known studies in sociology are based on this design (Bryman, 2008).

4.5   Case Study Selection

In many qualitative research approaches – and in particular the case study - the research and writing happen concurrently and iteratively which in turn allow for greater flexibility and control (Ponterotto & Grieger, 2007). I had the ability to make changes to the research design depending on whether the need arises to take advantage of changing opportunities and to amend practical or theoretical issues as they occur. The single case study was selected for this study over other research designs in part because of a difference that Laws & Mcleod (2004; 6) refer to as "interpretation in context." Laws & Mcleod (2004) state that by concentrating on a single phenomenon or entity (the case), the researcher has the ability to reveal the interplay between significant factors characteristic of the phenomenon at hand. Holistic description and explanation are also some major factors attributed to the determination of the case study design and therefore can be said to be particularly suited to circumstances in which it is impossible to separate a phenomenon's variables from its context (Laws & Mcleod, 2004).

Based on Creswell, Hanson, Plano, & Morales, (2007), three important factors were considered in the very early stages of selecting the research design.

- Firstly, the familiarity of an audience at particular sites to one research approach versus another. The notion to critically evaluate the audience at particular sites stemmed back to prior research I conducted through multiple case studies that initially had me handing out survey style questionnaires. While this was doable in previous research endeavours - mostly because of the controlled number of people visiting the site and the intimate setting, it would not be possible at such a large site such as the 9/11 Memorial.

- This also supports the second factor that had me rely on past training and experiences with different types of qualitative designs. The experience gleaned from previous research allowed me to be able to select a more appropriate design suited to the specific site as there were a few problems with the survey design in the past.

- Finally, the ability to recognize and consider my current bias or prejudices to various approaches allowed me to select the case study with confidence. It is with these preliminary factors in mind that the research design allowed for insight into gaining experience of forms of methods that were new to me as they provide a basis most suited to the research question, data collection strategies, procedures of data analysis, literary style and final product (Creswell et al., 2007).

Based on these initial considerations and analysis, a criteria was established to select the case study for this research. To begin, in order to gain a further understanding of the different shades of dark tourism, the researcher made reference to Philip Stone's (2006; 151) "Dark Tourism Spectrum" (please see Figure 4.1 below and Section 2.4.2 above).

Figure 4.1: Dark Tourism Spectrum

Higher Political Influence and Ideology					Lower Political Influence and Ideology
'Sites Of Death and Suffering'					'Sites Associated with Death and Suffering'
Darkest	**Darker**	**Dark**	**Light**	**Lighter**	**Lightest**
Education Orientation					Entertainment Orientation
History Centric (Conservation/ Commermorative)					Heritage Centric (Commercial/ Romanticism)
Perceived Authentic Product Interpretation					Perceived Inauthentic Product Interpretation
Location Authenticity					Non-Location Authenticity
Shorter Time Scale to the Event					Longer Time Scale from the Event
Suppley (Non Purposefulness)					Supply (Purposefulness)
Lower Tourism Infrastucture					Higher Tourism Infrastrukture

This was done in order to ensure that the case in question – The 9/11 Memorial in New York City, USA – was considered to be a "darker" shaded tourist site according to the suggested typological model. Stone (2010) confirms that Ground Zero is referred to as a site that represents the darker periphery of The Dark Tourism Spectrum. Of course, other practical constraints were certainly factors in the selection process – travel funding and time playing a major role in the selection criteria. But for the most part, the guiding principle behind choosing the case site was outlined according to the parameters set out in Stones Dark Tourism Spectrum (2006). It should also be noted that originally - and as outlined earlier in this thesis - a multiple case study approach was considered for this study. However, due to financial limitations, and issues of researcher access, a single case study was decided upon. This also ensured that focusing exclusively on one case study, with complete focus and attention paid to a very specific research question, would benefit the research immensely as it is also more likely to produce richer data.

Although this study's criteria relied on Stone's (2006) Dark Tourism Spectrum, the site was also chosen for its representation of death and dying. Not only how it was portrayed in the literature and media but also in relation to the specific dimensions of "death and dying". For example, it was my intention to study a case that had a *direct* relationship to death and dying as opposed to a site that was just *associated* with death and dying. Other case sites that were considered for this research included the "Black Cab Tours" in Belfast, Ireland, "Killing Fields" in Cambodia, and "Robben Island" in South Africa. However, due to distance, familiarity involved in traveling to the site, financial costs, and because the sites did not completely satisfy the criterion set out for what I had in mind for the criteria of the study, the 9/11 Memorial and Site was chosen over the others.

Finally, it should also be noted that not only did a specific criterion of qualitative research methods govern this study's research design but other factors that pertained to external aspects informed this design as well. Most notably, gaining access to the actual research site proved to cause some restrictions on certain methods of data collection that had planned to be used**.** The research site for this project -the 9/11 Memorial and Museum- is situated on a very large piece of land approximately half of the 16 acre site that used to occupy the former World Trade Center complex. When construction is complete, the main idea for the use of space will be a park-like venue with a very open air concept. However, at the time of my research, the site still had controlled entrances and exits due to ongoing construction and security concerns. While research was set to take place entirely within the confines of the 9/11 Memorial grounds, securing access to this case-study site proved to be more challenging than first anticipated. After initial email contact and a subsequent in person interview with Margaret (pseudonym), the Curator of the 9/11 Tribute Center, permission was granted for provisional access to the site and an opportunity to meet some of the guides and volunteers who worked on site. Though verbal consent was given by Margaret to access the site while in the presence of a site volunteer or representative, the ability to interview directly on site for a consecutive number of hours was limited as per the terms on which site access was granted. The concerns were predominantly based on the fact that allowing me

access to interview and interact on site was one of few exceptions made for student access and therefore, specified hours visiting the site were agreed upon beforehand. Also, it was suggested that staying on site for eight hour increments may be perceived by others as a security threat. It should be noted that the site does not have public washrooms for this very reason as this would encourage many to linger. In order to adhere to Margaret's request that direct access to site be made in the morning or afternoon, an adjustment to my project design was made that would allow me to keep to my eight hour day but instead of staying on site all day, I would venture to various spots around the site that many who visited would also go to. Most notable spots included the exit to the 9/11 Memorial site, Starbucks coffee shop located across the street, and the cemetery located between St. Pauls Chapel and Trinity Church, both of which were considered safe havens for those taking refuge from flying debris on September 11, 2001. While it was not recognized immediately, having restrictions put on gaining site access altered the initial data collection methods I had intended to use for the project. It was my intention to use a mix of semi structured interviews, participant observations, diarizing and a visual methodology, however once I became immersed in the fieldwork, I found it very difficult to set up an accessible spot to have people "draw out their emotions" as part of a visual methodology. After attempting to carry out this data collection method, it was determined that due to the layout of the site and somewhat restricted access times, I would forego the visual methodology as part of my data collection method. However, if a participant was willing to complete a drawing exercise that could be highlighted and discussed through an interview, this would be added to the data collection.

4.6   Sample

In order to realize the aim of this research, an interpretive approach was used to collect primary data. This was selected given the nature of the approach, this is, because of the in-depth look it permits on society and the meaning given to the social world, especially with respect to their motivations, interpretations and experiences at a dark tourism site. The data collection process lasted approximately two months with fieldwork lasting two weeks per visit

totalling two separate visits. As previously mentioned, prior to travelling to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum the first time, a representative from the Memorial was contacted and informed of the visit. Upon arrival to the site each morning, I approached the Memorial as if I was visiting and experiencing it for myself. After spending most of the morning at the site to generate data, I would then re-locate to the various spots mentioned above that were located outside of the Memorial for a different perspective and opportunity to interview one or more visitors.

Based on the research question and objectives of my study, a purposive sample – that is a non-probability sample – was selected because of the characteristics of those who visit the 9/11 Memorial. The people who visit this site were selected for purposive sampling. This sampling is commonly used to analyze events or experiences like those at the 9/11 Memorial site. More specifically, I selected a group of participants for study who had just visited the 9/11 Memorial. The group was selected against a larger group - the general population of people including those in lower Manhattan, visiting in the City of New York. This sample was purposive because the knowledge of the experience of those who had just visited the 9/11 Memorial site was needed in order to interview participants who would represent that population and express their motivation, interpretation and experiences I intended to study at a dark tourism site. Thus, efforts were put in place to seek a better understanding of the experience of the phenomenon in question and from the vantage point of those being interviewed. Because of this, the following criteria was considered when searching for potential research participants:

- The sample must be drawn from those who had *just* visited the 9/11 Memorial site and completed the visitor experience on site. Of those asked to be interviewed, about one out of every four participants accepted the request to speak to me. One issue that should be noted is that on a number of occasions I had more people willing to accept my interview request while sitting on a park bench at the cemetery or over a coffee at Starbucks located across the street from the site than directly "on site" at the 9/11 Memorial.

- The sample had to draw from a population of those that were eighteen years of age and older. It should be noted that initially the purpose of recording a demographics section on the interview guide was to be a part of my analysis. This was because research I conducted in the past suggested that men and woman over the age of 60 had a heightened response to grief at dark tourism sites. I intended to focus more on the difference between age groups, sex and education levels, but later on had to exclude these specifics due to a shift in focus and orientation of my research. The demographics are now merely recorded to provide context for the interview guide and for this reason, the information can be found in Appendix 1.

- The sample size should consist of at least thirty participants. In fact, thirty-two interviews were conducted over the course of 2 months with interviews lasting between 8 to 30 minutes in length. Thus, the sample size of 32 participants was considered appropriate according to Creswell (1998) who suggests anywhere between 20 to 30 participants for phenomenological studies. Producing an adequate sample size helped me to acquire data that would allow me to be able to illuminate the motivations, interpretations and experiences at the 9/11 Memorial. A larger sample size may have generated too much material and allow for generalizability. This is supported by Armour, Riveaux and Bell (2009; 106) who suggest "the focus is on in-depth study of information-rich cases and the extraction of essential characteristics of a phenomenon, rather than on a variation between research respondents."

The above enables many realities to develop that should be analyzed with the same level of importance and value. Attention to the body language, demeanour, tone of voice and reactions to questions of the interview subjects was relevant and all were observed and used to guide or probe for more information, as well as noted and recorded at the researchers earliest convenience (Mack, Woodsong, MacQueen, Guest, Namey, 2005). All interviews

were audio recorded with the permission of the interviewee. Although aware that this device could make the interviewee feel uncomfortable, the audio recorder was placed discreetly under the notepad of the researcher (Clifton & Handy, 2001). The data collection period was undertaken between the hours of 10am until 6pm allowing for time immediately following the interviews to make initial transcription notes and re-listen to the interviews taken that day. As noted above, demographic variables were measured in the semi-structured interview guides in order to depict the characteristics of the people being interviewed in the sample. These included measures such as age, nationality, gender and education. Due to the descriptive nature of the study, and the fact that dependent variables are studied in relation to all other variables that exist in the setting at and around the 9/11 Memorial site, there were no significant variables that emerged from the sample and thus, the instrument is reliable and valid.

4.7   Qualitative Research Strategy

The study involves those who have experienced or are experiencing a specific phenomenon through a dark tourist site - in this case, events and occurrences that surrounded the terrorist attacks of September 11th, 2001. In order to gain insights into the connections between the experience of dark tourism and the sociology of death and emotion, a qualitative research strategy was implemented. Part of the reasoning behind using this strategy is because qualitative research is known for evaluating richness (which is an integral part of the case study research design I am using), vividness and accuracy when describing complex situations or cultures such as the ones constructed at the 9/11 Memorial (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Furthermore, the fresh approach qualitative research presents allowed me the opportunity and ability to discover new themes and explanations on site (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). For example, if it were not for some of the generous parameters of qualitative research, I would not have been able to venture away from the 9/11 Memorial site and explore other venues that were not considered the actual site but had extremely close ties to the events of September 11th, 2001. The churches -Trinity and St. Paul's - across the street

from the 9/11 Memorial proved to have many links to the events of 9/11 which enabled me to make sense of and conduct research where I may not have if I would have just kept my approach to studying a particular set of techniques like quantative research tends to do. Qualitative research stands for an approach, and its appropriateness is therefore contingent on the nature of the phenomena studied at hand (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Rather than utilizing a single social research method, I will employ and investigate results from a number of different methodologies. In doing so, I am guided by the wisdom that "to restrict oneself to a single methodology or area of investigation is as sociologically limiting as wilfully ignoring a methodology or area" (Banks, 2007; 4). Thus, I will be conducting qualitative interviews, participant observation, and diarizing events. The multiple methods employed in this study have led me to reflect on different aspects of my research question and objectives whilst also staying focused on meaning at the same time. This explains why my research in part relies heavily upon interpretivism as a guiding philosophy in this thesis. On one hand because it looks for culturally derived interpretations of the social life-world in which access to reality (given or socially constructed) is only through social constructions such as language, consciousness, shared meanings and instruments (Dudovskiy, 2013). On the other, it is because Stone (2010; 165) explains, "emergent and dynamic understandings within tourism studies generally, and dark tourism in particular, are optimized through multi-method research strategies that take full advantage of innovative methods available, many of which remain under-utilized in tourism research."

All approaches to research strategies in the social sciences are one way or another linked directly to an interrelated set of assumptions regarding ontology -the nature of being- and epistemology- the nature of knowledge (Morgan & Smircich, 1980). Sociology is a core discipline within the field of social sciences and therefore, it is connected to many other areas of study concerning the human world. My goal was to learn from, develop and apply theoretical and methodological approaches in search of social descriptions and explanations as there is great need to explore the social dimensions of human interactions. More specifically, through analysis and research, the study of society being motivated to, interpret

and experience dark tourism sites has contributed to discussions and knowledge related to other disciplines such as the sociology of death and ritual theories of emotion. The social thought embraced by epistemology and ontology has raised a number of important research connections with regard to my study. Most notably, the ability to discover knowledge of the world through death or life through death remains an important notion to consider.

4.8   Research Methods

The research methods used as instruments and techniques for data collection had to be distinguished between that of the actual research design. This was necessary for me to do because these two terms became very confusing for me and also, the way in which data is collected is unrelated to the logic of the design. I was not aware of this and up until my research project got underway, I just assumed that things like cross-sectional surveys are often associated with semi structured interview guides and case studies linked to participant observation. However, this is not the case and it was later on determined through research that any data collection method can be collected with data for any design (DeVaus, 2001). Though I had already established my research methods and design, I became aware that a lack of distinction between that of design and method can lead to poor evaluations in research. DeVaus (2001; 9) furthers this by suggesting that "the designs are often evaluated against the strengths and weaknesses of the method rather than their ability to draw relatively unambiguous conclusions or to select between rival plausible hypotheses."

Due to the limited research exploring society's perceptions and reactions to death, dying and grief while visiting sites or observing events that are associated with death, tragedy or public memorials, the main mode of research employed in this study was through primary methods. The majority of field work involved gathering new data and was obtained through the use of qualitative semi-structured interviews. Although semi structured interview questions were the principal method of data collection in the study, to enhance the understanding of the research, some contextual details - based on ongoing participant

observations and diarizing - are inserted into the findings. These methods were used to complement the semi structured interviews.

4.9   Semi-Structured Interviews

Interviews are "seen as negotiated accomplishments of both interviewers and respondents that are shaped by the *contexts* and situations in which they take place" (Fontana & Frey, 2000; 663). Furthermore, they are integral to helping unravel and interpret the many complexities associated with travel behaviour that ultimately help us to find the sources of the problems and predict the impact of future trends (Clifton & Handy, 2001). This study used semi-structured interviews for the primary method of data collection. These complemented diary accounts and observations (including personal photographs) made at the site which were used in context to illuminate the need to understand, with the help of the death system and interaction ritual frameworks why some social actors are motivated to engage in a dark tourism experience, the manner in which they interpret that experience and the manner in which the experience may produce outcomes that are relevant to that social actors encounter or relationship to the death event that is represented at the site. Due to the emotional nature of the case study, the use of face to face semi structured interviews was most appropriate as it provided a more comfortable interaction for the discussion of personal, confidential and sensitive issues (Clifton & Handy, 2001). The semi-structured nature of the interview also allowed me to be flexible with the questions and themes that were set out in the interview guide (which can be found in Appendix 2), thus allowing for questions and answers to be expanded, elaborated, clarified and omitted depending on the responses given (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). In addition, the opportunity to perform face to face interviews allowed me to observe the use of body language, mannerisms, and dress style used by participants when communicating with me. This contributed to a very important aspect of the interviews I conducted in the field and added to the richness of my data. An example used to support this is noted during an interview when speaking to a woman who was wearing a shirt with a very large American flag. This example used when performing

face to face interviews, amongst others, added immensely to the interpretation of data when it came down to analyzing. While this interaction encouraged more small talk, politeness routines, joking, nonverbal communication, and asides in which people could more fully express their humanity, I was also aware of the feelings of pressure to conform to certain social expectations and thus, putting them at risk of under-reporting certain behaviours and thoughts (Oltmann, 2016).

4.9.1 *Piloted Interviews*

Even though I had prior experience in the field conducting research for my Masters level thesis, I wanted to test out my assumption that using my interview guide would produce useable and relevant data. Before entering the field and leaving for New York City, a series of three piloted interviews were conducted a month before departure. The pre-testing of my interview questions and subsequently identifying if they were feasible on a small scale seemed like the right approach. In past fieldwork, I failed to pilot my interview guide which resulted in my over complicating a research design that could have been made a lot simpler by going through a few extra tests (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). These mistakes would not be made again. Ensuring that my interview guide, even in a draft, was a useful version would not guarantee success in the main study but at least it would increase the likelihood of success (Teijlingen & Hundley, 2001). Most importantly, apart from the practical reasons why a pilot interview or study is useful, it added to the overall rigour of my research in which getting feedback and making changes would help to ensure the best possible interview guide and questions. In addition, this further ensured my trip to the site would not be a waste financially and mentally, as I truly believed that my interview guide contained a number of positive attributes before I left and this would help me to be more comfortable and excited about my work which, in turn, would allow for a more enthusiastic approach to fieldwork. Three separate interviews were all given over the telephone; a family member, a fellow graduate student and a grief counsellor. The only criteria set for participation in my pilot study was that a prior visit to the 9/11 Memorial site was made. After serious considerations

of suggested modifications and feedback regarding the interviews research instrument was undertaken, it was determined that a few of my questions were too similar and should be condensed into one making them more specific. This problem speaks to Teijlingen & Hundley's (2001; 3) findings that suggest "piloting provides the qualitative researcher with a clear definition of the focus of the study which in turn helps the researcher to concentrate data collection on a narrow spectrum of projected analytical topics."

It should also be mentioned that while pilot studies were carried out over the telephone and seemed to cover all aspects of my interview questions, it highlighted to me that I needed to account for some of the physically challenging factors that I would encounter at the site. Two major issues that were presented to me on site had to do with the facility and fluidity of questions. Firstly, I was conducting my interviews entirely outdoors and because of this, when it rained, I had very little shelter or protection to rely on. After being interrupted and having my interview guide completely soaked in a rain shower, I thought to buy an umbrella and laminate my interview guide for the next day. Thankfully, the first time this happened, the man being interviewed was from England and joked that "he was used to the rain" so agreed to complete the interview (Interview #10, 2013). This led to the second issue on site that had me fumbling my interview questions and recorder as there was usually nowhere to sit or place my personal items while conducting my interviews. The fluidity of my interview questions were slightly affected by this as sometimes I would deviate from the semi-structured interview guide if my papers were out of order or attempt to speed the interview up if I was interviewing an older person whom I sensed would start to get uncomfortable standing. While I was initially concerned during the interviews that the above issues would interfere with the outcomes in my findings, they did not have any effect on the data I was able to gather from those interviews. This is because even the shorter interviews produced thoughtful answers and my sample size was large enough to account for a few shorter interviews.

In sum, my pilot studies confirmed to me that a) after condensing a few repetitive questions, my interview guide was long enough to produce useful data, but not so long that it

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would prove too onerous; b) all three participants expressed the questions posed in the interview guide resonated back to their own experiences at the 9/11 Memorial and was very effective in that they were engaged and wanted to share their feelings and experiences with me; and finally c) although there were many questions pertaining to death and emotion that could potentially cause negative outcomes, the strategy of concluding my interview with the demographics section made for a positive ending as it opened up a few areas where lighter conversation could be made. One case in point looks to a rather silly error on my part when I included the question as to whether the participant was male or female. It was quite clear to the participant that I could determine the answer by the nature of the semi-structured face to face interview but still, found myself asking the question which gave many of the participants a chuckle. In sum, the pilot study proved to be a very useful exercise in that the data produced validated my choice to use semi-structured interviewing as one of my main methodological tools.

4.10 Participant Observations

Despite identifying some issues of involvement when it came to observations in the field, I found that for the most part, there is an advantage to using observations to enhance interview techniques. On a number of occasions I noted that some answers or information withheld or missed in interviews was presented at other points in the process such as when taking field notes, making observations or even just acting like just another visitor. Upon each visit to the 9/11 Memorial, I was able to make my way through the entire site as though I was a visitor. It was here that a number of first hand insights and observations were made when looking at visitor reactions, comments made by front line workers and when viewing the "guest comment books". A particular case in point looks to when I was able to roam around the site in a less formalized and official fashion. While conducting interviews I would always wear a name tag identifying myself with my interview guide and recorder would be in hand. This is opposed to when I would become an observer; I would blend in more with others. By doing this, I believe I became more relaxed about my settings and worried less

about what people thought of me doing research. (One of the most memorable observations occurred when a group of United Airlines employees approached me while I was casually walking around the 9/11 Memorial to chat - thinking I was a fellow flight attendant and visiting the site in that capacity). These observations were valuable to the research as often, visitor behaviours are very contradictory in the sense that their thoughts and actions are very different from their actual behaviour reported on site (Mack et al, 2005). Evidence of this was made clear in my observations by listening to visitor discussions such as the one I had with the flights attendants and in reading guest comment books situated on site. Employees and volunteers were also very important resources – especially when I took the tours with them - as they observe visitors on a daily basis and were very open to making comments and constructing reactions to various aspects of the site (Yuill, 2003). However, as touched upon in a previous section, based on some of the contextual details through ongoing observations, this method was not entirely without its weaknesses. I was aware that in addition to semi-structured interviews, observation was also very time consuming and it was very hard to take notes immediately or in that moment as everything was happening at once (Mack et al, 2005). Though there are some limitations to using participant observation, I felt that because semi-structured interviews were the primary source of data collection, the amount of observation undertaken would be included only as reinforcement or check against participants direct responses.

4.11   Research Analysis

After an analysis of the data obtained from the combination of observations and interviews, I was able to research and then confirm the relevance of the theory, frameworks and model reviewed in Chapter 3. A few different ways in which I could analyze the data emerged, but after reviewing my options I felt that a *thematic analysis* would be best suited to my research. This is because it stems from the interpretive-constructivist approach that I favour and is flexible enough to allow me to pre-define broad themes as categories within which to recognize, organize and reflect on, further sub themes (Braun & Clarke, 2017). More

specifically, I decided to approach the data in a *latent way* which had coding and theme development report on concepts and assumptions underpinning the data (Braun & Clarke, 2017). Thematic analysis was useful to me as it was already focused around performing six phases to create established, meaningful patterns and seemed to be an appropriate way to go in terms of research analysis. However, it should be noted that Braun and Clarke (2006) warn researchers who use this approach to the potential downfalls. That is, a) not being able to develop beyond identifying themes per se and b) not making clear bias in terms of interpreting the data produced. These warnings were kept in mind along with the fact that I had guarded against the first (a) of the noted concerns by already examining assumptions within the narratives and that, by pre-defining broad themes I had made sure that themes would emerge from the process already somewhat theorized. The way in which I address the second warning (b) from Braun and Clarke (2006) is that I would dispute that it is not possible to deny what Livesey (2015) refers to as the "researcher effect" which refers to the relationship between the researcher and the respondent that may bias responses. For example, different interpretations of the same material usually occurs while re-visiting transcripts at different times and from different theoretical perspectives (Livesey, 2015).

The interviews were conducted in a manner that allowed for a meaningful exchange of questions and answers, but also enabled me to analyze and interpret data in a logical, clear and routine fashion. Although I was constantly analyzing the data in my head during the interviews (as insights were emerging about the phenomenon being studied) and notes made immediately after the interviews, the transcribing and further research analysis did not take place until I returned home a few months later. Following the field work stage, the completed interviews, diary accounts of participant observations and material (ie. site brochures, books, personal photography, etc) taken from the site were then further analyzed.

Roulston (2010) suggests that interview transcription undertaken by a third party has the potential to make the finished script even more removed from the original dialogue by introducing the possibility of an extra layer of interpretation in the act of representing someone's voice. While I chose to have my interviews transcribed by a third party typist, I

did consider Roulston (2010) in that my familiarity with the setting and the participants' body language during the interviews would have reduced the potential for contextual cues to be lost in the process of transcription. However, I made sure that my interviews were transcribed by a very competent and experienced audio-typist with whom I had used in transcribing other work in the past. I could ensure that she would be capable and confidential when it came to producing the most reliable recording of events and handling the sensitive nature of my study.

After receiving the completed transcription of the recorded interviews into an electronic and paper format, I immediately started to analyze the data. As mentioned above, the analytic tool I used to analyze my work relied on a latent thematic analysis which is a relatively common qualitative data analysis method. This tool was adapted to my purposes and thus, the approach used to analyze the data relied on a simple method.

Firstly, I began the process of analysis by reading all thirty two transcripts three times. This allowed me to become familiar and remind myself of the narratives, immerse myself in the data and familiarlize myself with the content (Braun & Clarke, 2017). By the end of the second reading my transcripts, I became aware of and sensitized to possible emerging patterns.

Secondly, the process of coding the transcripts into themes began. The initial coding was undertaken by reference to the broad themes represented in the interview guide; notably the themes of visitor motivation, visitor interpretation and visitor experiences at the dark tourism site. Succinct labels were made to identify these important starting points and features of the data that were most relevant to my research question and objectives. I then proceeded to coding more themes that were drawn from the entire dataset as they came up, and then after that, collated all the codes and all relevant data extracts, together for later stages of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2017).

Thirdly, this first and second level of coding was then complemented by a further review, search for themes and then organization into sub themes relevant to the research question and objectives, as well as identification of data or responding material that

presented themes related to such things as death and society, emotions, grief, or unexpected variations thereupon. It was determined that a story was emerging from the data, and one that would provide answers to the research question. It should be noted that in this phase, a large number of themes emerged and because of this had to be refined to a more manageable number. I went about this by making the decision to either combine the themes that were similar or ultimately discard the themes that were not as relevant.

Finally, a detailed analysis of each theme was developed and particularly significant or major themes were identified, coded and several markings in margins of the transcribed interviews were highlighted if material was considered relevant to the research question or objectives. After working out the scope and focus of each particularly significant or major theme, the story of each was determined and an informative name for each theme was considered.

The coding process was done both manually (using a large white board to physically append material and organize themes and thoughts) and electronically in Microsoft Word. To this, were added participant observations relevant to the themes represented in the research questions and objectives. Following Braun and Clarkes (2017) latent themed analysis approach, I coded and themed developments and then reported concepts and assumptions that underpinned the data. A report was written summarizing the findings, analysis and discussion with quotations from the interviews and photographs taken from participant observation. These all inform the presentation in Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 that make up the findings of this study. Before moving on, I first recognize and address some of the methodological limitations and ethical discussion my approach may attract.

4.12 Research Limitations

As I have noted throughout this chapter, certain limitations exist which have the potential to affect this research. I have addressed some of those that relate to broader phenomenological issues in the previous chapters but, in terms of this study, I recognize the following limitations:

- The first limitation lies within the study of dark tourism. Due to the fact that this area is such a contemporary and emerging field, there is very limited theoretical much less empirical research that looks to the sociology of death, emotions and ritual. As a result, very few precedents exist to compare the current research and to serve as a stepping stone for future advancement in study.

- The decision to undertake qualitative research at a tourist site that attracts almost 9 million visitors a year from a wide range of different cultures and countries raises challenges and limitations. Firstly, the sample I used cannot be claimed as representative of all visitors that travel to the 9/11 Memorial. This is one of the reasons why the research states that it looks at "*some visitors to some dark tourism sites"*. Secondly and associated with this, I speak and read only one language - English - which posed some problems. On a couple of different occasions, visitors would reject the interview request simply because they could not communicate well enough in English or because I did not know their language. This limited a number of interviews from tourists who could have contributed a great deal to the research and broadened the range of cultures and social groups partaking in the study. Thirdly, it should also be noted, that in addition to the language barrier, there may be barriers or issues of culture or race that remain unknown to me. It was quite noticeable that there was a lack of visible minorities visiting the site.

- In relation to the above, I have to accept that I leave myself open to the accusation that I have chosen a purposive sample - that is - it is arguable that I chose this sample in order to reflect the findings I was looking for in the sense that, as I observed in Chapter 1, the events of 9/11 had impacted and changed me. I would address this by saying that in order to better understand and extend the currently small knowledge base of the phenomenon I was studying - that is dark tourism

experience at the 9/11 Memorial - the sample had to include people who have experience of that phenomenon and visited the site.

- Interviewing participants with a limited amount of time and the financial constraints of conducting the research proved to initially be a cause for concern as extra insights might have emerged if I had more time to spend at the site and interviewing the participants. With that said, rich data was produced in any event and the initial concerns were not as significant of a limitation in the end.

- It is recognized that the interview guide had the potential to be physically and emotionally demanding of the participants and at times, prevented me from fully exploring some of the potentially significant issues raised with some respondents. However, this turned out not to be a significant limitation as mentioned in Section 4.9.1,even the shorter interviews produced thoughtful answers and my sample size was large enough to account for a few shorter interviews

- Finally, despite efforts to interview participants from over seven different countries (America, Canada, England, Germany, Holland, Russia and Scotland) to allow for a range of different perspectives, findings obtained may still only reflect a western perspective, although the theoretical frameworks and model proposed are not limited to western society per se. Therefore, it must be noted that the study and observations undertaken at the 9/11 Memorial site came from a predominantly Western perspective and the findings may have to be interpreted in that light.

Despite the relatively small number of constraints and limitations reported above, I feel that the overall experience in the field was able to produce the data I was hoping it would and thus, made for a worthwhile and positive experience. The methods of research undertaken were appropriate and the amount of time given for site visits satisfactory.

4.13   Research Ethics

Prior to visiting the 9/11 Memorial, an *Ethics Form* was submitted and subsequently approved by Brunel University Ethics Committee (Appendix 3). Due to the nature of the topic surrounding death, emotion and grief, research ethics were very important to me. As discussed in Chapter 1, I am fortunate to have a background in funeral service and one that relates to caring for those who could be described as in vulnerable positions. Thus, I feel that because of this background, I possess the skill and sensitivity needed to put those at ease (if need be) in an interview situation, and be alert and responsive to any signs of distress or discomfort that might have arisen.

Researcher mindfulness and preparation is something Prior (2015) commented upon when the researcher is trying to negotiate sensitive topics such as this one – especially when exploring and making explicit values, theoretical, ontological and epistemological stances. While on site at the 9/11 Memorial as I was able to be fully aware of the sensitivity of the ethical issues. In fact, upon approaching each participant around the 9/11 Memorial, a *Letter of Explanation* was given to those participating to take home that explained the research being done in a little more detail (Appendix 4). In addition to this, and in an attempt to be as transparent as I can about how I position myself as a researcher in the social world in which I operate, a consent form was distributed that informed the participant of his or her right to withdraw from the interview at anytime, or to refuse to answer any question and finally, made them aware they were being recorded. This *Consent Form* (which can be found in Appendix 5) was initialled, dated and signed and given back to the researcher before any interviews commenced. This form emphasized and explained the importance of participant confidentiality.

Not only was participant confidentiality indicated on the consent form but it was demonstrated throughout the entire interview and was achieved as there was no indication or way names or identities could be traced back to the research. The researcher always tried to demonstrate the greatest of respect, dignity and honesty to every participant in the study by her demeanour and by taking an appropriate amount of time upon introduction to

acknowledge the respondents background and interests. This discussion was also continued at the end of the interview by including a demographics section that not only assisted with the interviews contextually, but also proved to be a good source of conversation to conclude the interviews.

I believe my role as researcher is a key component of the research ethics and more broadly, integral to the entire importance of my study. My methods have demonstrated that my research is ethically sound not only because of the way in which I went about my research but also because it is underpinned by the same ethical considerations I have always gone about in both my personal and professional life.

4.14   Conclusion

In sum, I have outlined in this chapter the methodologies used in the study to collect data in the field. Given the phenomenological focus, my intention to theorize the findings that emerge from the narratives of those I interviewed and observed were accomplished. Moreover, I believe the methodological design, tool and methods used in the study to be appropriate for purpose, and to have also proved academic rigour along the way. Finally, the limitations and constraints of the study were discussed and the ethics of the research design complied with by the researcher. I move now, in Chapter Five, to present and consider the rich findings that emerged.

5 VISITOR EXPERIENCE OF INVOLVEMENT: PRIOR LINKS IN THE INTERACTION RITUAL CHAIN

5.1 Introduction to the Findings Chapters

The previous chapters examine the various frameworks of inquiry present in the existing dark tourism literature and propose a ritual performance model based upon sociological foundations, positioning the inquiry into a dark tourism site as part of society's death system and analyzing the visitor experience by reference to theories of interaction ritual and emotion. This Chapter 5 together with Chapters 6, 7 and 8 will analyze the empirical research undertaken at the site of the 9/11 Memorial. Chapter 5 will analyze the observations of visitor respondent's about whether the site is a "dark tourist site". But it will then proceed to consider the prior links or experiences of involvement brought to the site by visitors. This is the start of the ritual performance model and is designed to elicit a description and understanding of prior links in the interaction ritual chain that represent or influence the emotion – the prior experience of involvement – that visitors may have brought to the site. This is proposed as a relevant function in understanding the type of emotion brought to the site that may set a relevant background for the visitor experience or assist with an appreciation of the motivation to visit, or looking to the interactions once inside the site, the interpretation of the site, or the encounter with the death event represented at the site, and finally the outcome(s) of the experience.

Chapter 6 will then start the consideration of the interactions and emotional experience of visitors once they enter the site. It will offer insights from visitors and observations about the manner in which visitors perform ritual interactions with death system components through a series of selected components. Chapter 7 will continue the review of ritual interactions by visitors as they are organized around or involve four of the critical functions of the death system – the disposition of the death as it is represented at the site; the opportunity for and interactions involving social consolidation; the narrative and interactions that contribute to making sense of the death event and finally, the moral or

social guidance visitors might have taken from the site. Then Chapter 8 will conclude the analysis of the findings by canvassing the empirical research to determine whether the ritual outcomes predicted by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) are supported by the visitor experience- feelings of solidarity and emotional energy – and if so, how these outcomes are presented or translated by visitors. These chapters will look at whether the fieldwork undertaken in 2013, including interviews and participant observation, presents sufficient evidence to support the ritual performance model and to suggest possibilities, where warranted of further research to evaluate both the model and the suggested potential outcomes for some visitors at some dark tourism sites.

5.1.1 Introduction

As described in the introduction, my fieldwork in 2013 was undertaken at the 9/11 Memorial based on my earlier research efforts that suggested that dark tourism sites may create opportunities for visitors to experience their feelings, emotions and grief, not solely in the context of a personal grief journey but also in a collective way. The realization that visitors had an experience of involvement both before and then when visiting these sites and that these experiences were in some measure what might be described as "emotional responses" led me to propose the framework of inquiry, as one more step in trying to understand what some members of western society may really experience when they visit a dark tourism site, in this case the 9/11 Memorial and Museum (Plate 1).

Plate 1: The 9/11 Memorial and Museum Visitor Site (Source: Blais and Rasic, 2011)

The findings below in this Chapter 5 will demonstrate that, while the site is clearly qualified as a dark tourism site according to the existing literature from a "consumption" or tourism management perspective, visitors largely rejected the label and resisted the notion that the visitor experience at the site was a dark tourism experience. It will also underline the emotional involvement or prior experiences that visitors brought to the site in some cases. Experiences that seem to be relevant to the motivation, interpretation and interaction at the site.

Observing the site through Kastenbaum's (2001) death system components was instructive in order to understand the full scope of how the components operate in and around the site. As suggested in the literature review, in order to make the analysis a dynamic one, and in an effort to further understand and complement Kastenbaum's (2001) components, the works of Durkheim (1915) and Collins (2004) are also important to consider as emotion and ritual interaction become the obvious hallmarks of the visitor experience at the site. Collins (2004) argues that in order to produce high emotional energy (that socially derived concept Collins adopted from Durkheim and which both sometimes describe as confidence and enthusiasm), successful interaction rituals need to be generated. These interaction rituals require all of the components of the death system: individuals / place / time

/ objects or symbols. But interaction rituals require emotion and especially the interaction caused when, in the case of the visitor experience, shared attention meets shared emotion. That is, when a strong shared mood engulfs individual consciousness (a communion of consciousness) produces collective effervescence (Durkheim, 1995). Or as Collins (2004; 39) would suggest, "a feeling of being brought out of oneself into something larger and more powerful…this collective feeling may be many different emotions – awe-struck, joyful, solemn, angry, laughing, fearful, sad." According to Collins (2004), the extent to which rituals are able to produce high levels of emotional energy depends on meeting four important conditions or ingredients: bodily assembly of participants, barriers excluding outsiders, mutual focus of attention, and a shared emotional mood, which culminate to produce four outcomes. All of these of course are proposed in this thesis as being present in the visitors' experience at the 9/11 site. And the findings below support this as the discussion proceeds from death system components, to death system functions, to the mediation of the death event through the operation of the functions of the death system when collective effervescence is created, and finally the ritual outcomes highlighted in the literature by the terms "Solidarity" (Durkheim, 1995) and "Emotional Energy" (Collins, 2004).

5.2   Observations by Visitors about Site as a "Dark Tourist Site"

It is at best an understatement to suggest that the 9/11 Memorial is a site of death and disaster that has been transformed into a site of popular tourist attraction (Dermody & Brennan, 2014; 128). The frameworks of inquiry available from the existing dark tourism literature may easily be employed to glean from visitors data to support or inquire into what, from a consumption or supply perspective, might influence the motivation of visitors to visit the site, to interpret the site and to confront the public face of death represented by the tragic events of September 11th, 2001. But the respondents interviewed in 2013 largely resisted being classified as "dark tourists" or having the site characteristic as a "dark site".

5.2.1 *Perception of Site: Visitors not Tourists; Sacred or Memorial Site not Tourist Site; Dark Site may be Bright Site*

Some observations or results of note included the manner in which respondents perceived themselves and the site from a tourism perspective. Though thirteen out of the thirty-two interviewees resided in New York City and were directly involved in the events of 9/11, or serve as a guide or volunteer on site, the majority - seventeen out of the remaining nineteen tourists did not directly label themselves as just a tourist. The most popular terms used to describe their actions were as a "visitor," "visitor to a tourist site" or on a "pilgrimage to a tourist site" (Interviews, 2013). Furthermore, both of the respondents who said they were just "tourists" came from another country. This is interesting as it correlates to a response from an interviewee who suggests, "a lot of the Americans are more visitors but then the Europeans are more tourists...I just commented on the number of languages I heard in there" (Interview #23, 2013).

Although the majority of tourists to the site consider themselves as visitors, when asked about the way in which they interpret the grounds of the 9/11 Memorial site and Museum, this question produced some slightly different results. Nearly half of the respondents claim that they ultimately feel this is a "tourist site" (Interviews, 2013). Interviewee #13 adds, "it sounds wrong (tourist site) but it would have to be." One respondent said: "I get that it's a tourist spot in the sense that it's a place to come and see. But some get very upset if they see people smiling or taking pictures" (Interview #7, 2013).

This "dilemma" for respondents is made more challenging because most visitors relate to having experienced some of the performative aspects of the site. The majority of respondents referred to their visit to the 9/11 Memorial site as an "Event", "Event in History" or even as "Showy" (Interviews, 2013). For example, many refer to their first impressions on site to other notorious areas in the United States where entertainment is the main attraction. While waiting in line to enter the site, it was not uncommon to hear some describe the "waiting game" as the same as being in line for a ride at Disneyworld (Participant Observation, 2013). An interviewee (#15; 2013) initially responded "when I went in, it was

almost like being in Disneyworld". Furthermore, one describes some volunteers at the 9/11 Memorial site as getting "very upset if they see people smiling or like doing self pictures - they feel like people are acting almost like its Disneyworld (Interview #5, 2013). Or another contrasted it to being "just like Las Vegas. And I think Americans tend to glorify and make things eventful" (Interview #19, 2013).

Of course, this brings to light the question raised in the dark tourism literature about a dark tourism site staged, with its rituals and designed space, as part of the commodification of death. Whether the intention at the site is to provide either a normative performance conforming to site objectives (commercial or otherwise) or to truly mediate death, there is no doubt that the tragic events of 9/11 have set the stage for a "performance" to attend as visitors may make it a mission to "study the history and to come to a place where such an important event took place" (Interview #10, 2013).

The second most popular suggestion was that it was a "memorial site" or a site provided to "pay respects" (Interviews, 2013). One notes, "it's a memorial – but ultimately people travel and it depends how you show up, right!?" (Interview #22, 2013). Finally, some were found explaining that at the moment it is a Memorial but eventually – maybe when the Museum opens – it will become a tourist attraction (Interviews, 2013). Lastly, a few made it clear that in no way it should be a part of the tourism industry:

> "I don't think it should be a part of tourism. I just don't get tourism on that. I think you should go if you want to pay your respects - to go there with your partner and ask her to take photographs with you in the background and stuff. That, to me, is just – that's not right. I'm surprised that they let you take cameras in. I was quite shocked at that" (Interview #20, 2013).

The idea that the 9/11 Memorial and Museum be considered a "dark tourism site" was also discussed. Due to some loose conceptualizations and various theoretical justifications surrounding the phrase "dark tourism", there has already been some initial debate in the literature about the use of this term (Stone &Sharpley, 2008; Biran & Poria, 2012). Mixed views about the use of this term were also shared when it came to the interpretation of the word "dark tourism". Many of the respondents didn't give it a second thought when asked about the term "dark tourism" and the interpretation of this term. Those who saw the site as

"dark" mostly based it on their interpretation of the Museum and rated it very high giving it an eight to ten out of ten. One says, "It's sad, so it would be rated high, not a place to come and have fun" (Interview #14, 2013). A couple more turn back to specific objects that support their interpretation of the term, "I just saw the '60 Minutes' news report on the Museum underground and so to me, that is darkness because it's incredible - like literally and figuratively" (Interview #23, 2013). Or, "the room with all the photos in it, that is horrible. It is so sad to face it. That is very, very dark" (Interview #31, 2013).

Others who provided their interpretations and their thoughts on the term "dark tourism" interestingly all expressed negative views towards this phrase. "Darkness? I think it's more like sadness. I don't know if I would use the word darkness, maybe sadness" (Interview #32, 2013). Interviewee # 17 (2013) explains:

> "Not too many disturbing things around. I don't think it's really dark. It's really solemn. I don't like this reference one bit. It's like vampire stuff and death and zombies and on TV. But I think that's one way our culture deals it with it - by making light of it and making it seem dark."

This notion of other dark tourism sites containing "disturbing things" to make it appear more dark was mentioned by at least one respondent who had visited another site well known for its death events:

> "Well we were just talking. We didn't actually find it as bad as the concentration camps. We recently came from Poland, so as serious as this is; I rated the darkness lower, because there are not crazy pictures around, just three or four. It's just kind of the natural, honesty of this site" (Interview #1, 2013).

Some even became slightly puzzled over the term:

> "Darkness? Interesting? Is that physical light or darkness as in sombre? I wouldn't really say that. Yeah. Maybe when the Museum is open and the building is actually open, it would be different. But right now, it's just .No, I didn't feel darkness. No, I don't like that" (Interview #21, 2013).

However, another one- third "did not think it was a dark site" (Interview #15, 2013) and actually rated the "dark" feel as quite low - at the 9/11 Memorial in particular. Many further interpreted this not as a dark site but as an inspirational site that they "don't think is just dark. It's more like hopeful, so maybe a two" (Interview #9, 2015). Or, "I don't think it's dark at all. I think they've done a lovely job of it. It's very peaceful" (Interview #19, 2013).

Interviewee #16 (2013) adds "I don't find it dark - the pools themselves, it almost kind of lifts you to show the stamina, I guess".

Lastly, trying to improve upon the definition one suggests:

> "I guess it's how you would interpret death and dying really, whether it's very dark or something that also goes into brightness, cosmic, spirituality. So I would say it has all of those things and so it is a one and a ten, both. It's a place of tremendous sorrow but it's also a place of spirituality which I think gives brightness to people in their lives. I've tried to reform that phrase about the term 'dark tourism'. I think tourists and pagans have always gone to sites of religious experience, with all the cathedrals and the saints' shrines all over the world that people visit. So I think the site could meet the needs of what people are looking for in a more respectful way than dark tourism, that's what I would say" (Interview #25, 2013).

At the centre of these observations - and possibly at the heart of what I observed as "resistance" to adopt the language of the existing frameworks offered by the dark tourism literature - was the emotional experience of involvement that most respondents had with a) the death event of 9/11 and then b) the interaction experience at the site. Given the depth of the experience of involvement that most respondents reported, perhaps it is only to be expected and it was understandable that they would not consider themselves to be "tourists" engaged in an act of "tourism".The respondents all reported that the motivation to visit the site was most definitely not inspired by a desire to employ their leisure time in pursuing their interests in history; nor was the motivation to visit based on an individual desire for encounters with death or confronting their anxiety about their own death. Rather, they were participants in an experience at the site that had a profound influence on them and their view of their group or social order in the sense that the experience provided what Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) would describe as solidarity and positive emotional energy. It is suggested that these visitors, after experiencing the site, did not consider it dark any longer because the experience in fact produced in them a new (emotional) reality leading to a sense of calm and confidence in the face of the death event, as will be touched upon later in the findings in Chapters 6, 7, and 8 when discussing site interactions, mediation and outcomes.

5.3 Experience of Involvement of Visitors with the Death Event: Prior Links in the Interaction Chain

Understanding the emotions that visitors bring to the site is the first task and proposed observation point (see Figure 5.1 below). All of the visitors who were interviewed in 2013 for this study came to the site already having had an experience of involvement with respect to the death event. Even those visitors who came from abroad or may have had no connection with American society reported that the 9/11 death event had an impact upon them and that they came to the site because something about the 9/11 death event mattered to them. The journey of these visitors to the 9/11 Memorial provides a context for understanding the nature of the emotion brought to the site and then, once inside, the interaction among visitor(s) and the site components. In this section, some of the visitor's prior interactions in the chain of experiences will be considered. It is to be noted that while this section supports a finding that prior interactions are relevant to an understanding of the visitor experience, a fuller understanding of these prior interactions in the ritual chain and the reasons visitors (social actors) travel to this site, interpret and interact with this site in the manner they do should be the subject of further research.

Figure 5.1: Snapshot of Observation Point #1
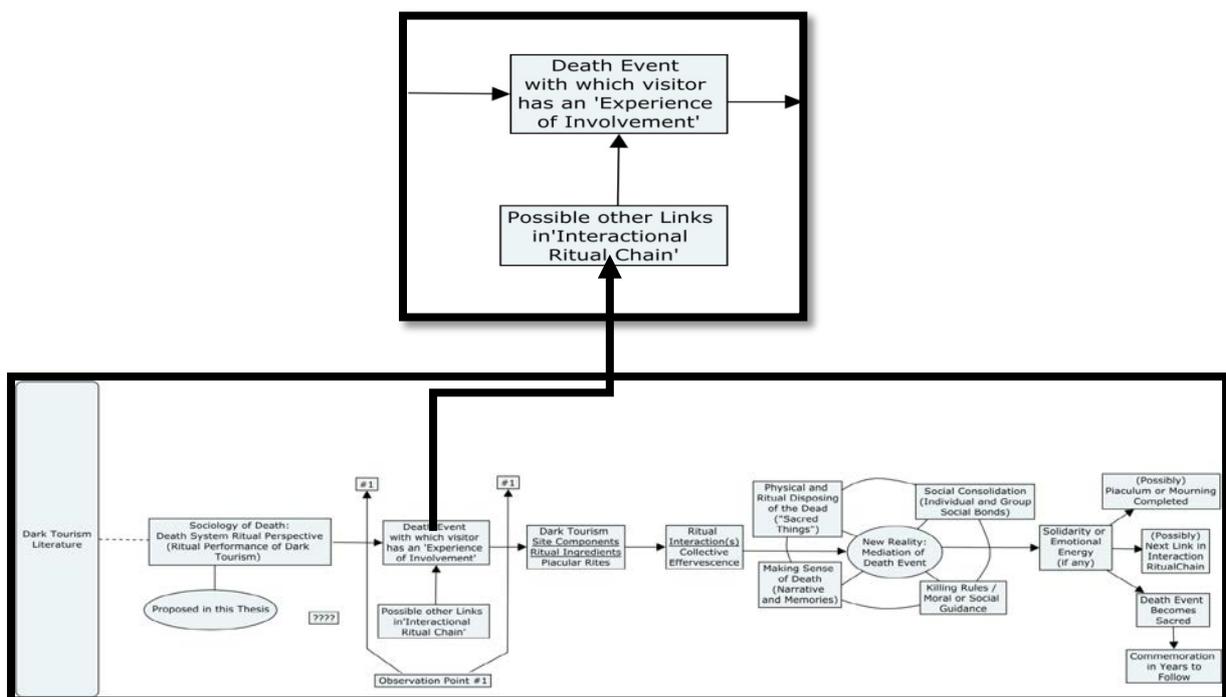
5.3.1 *Prior Interactions in the Ritual Chain*

Collins (2004) proposes that ritual interactions must be seen as occurring within the context of an interaction ritual chain – a series of emotional experiences that occur over time that nourish and provide a focus for the next experience of involvement with what matters to these visitors. From the respondents, it was clear that each had an experience of involvement with the 9/11 death event prior to their visits to the 9/11 Memorial site. That is to say, each respondent did not merely have knowledge of the event as a matter of history, but that the event had registered with their physical or dispositional beings in some manner so that it was something that became relevant or mattered to them, although the intensity or degree of that relevance varied from visitor to visitor. Interaction rituals always occur in an on-going chain, with prior interactions rituals creating a heritage of symbols that feed into and provide the focus of attention for the next interaction ritual chain. Thus, to paraphrase Collins (2010) there is an ongoing feedback loop between cultural ideas of situational realities and the emotional experiences arising from ritual practice, continually shaping each other.

5.3.2 *Prior Experiences in Interactions Motivate Gathering at 9/11 Site*

An overwhelming number of those at the 9/11 Memorial were very adamant about the very idea that their coming together on site was because of some sense of duty or obligation. In reviewing the extent of prior experiences of involvement or interaction rituals relevant to the death event, many visitors identified with being American. For these visitors it is proposed that this sense of duty may be patriotic in nature. When asked in the interviews about a connection to anyone or to the events at the 9/11 site, those who didn't have a direct connection often answered with something like "No- other than being American" (Interview #1, 2013). Others often naturally referred to "we", "city", "country", "they", "victims" in a collective sense that insinuated a strong tie to a bond between nation and those affected by the death event (Interviews, 2013). Furthering this notion, Interviewee #23 (2013) says "I

think this happening on American soil and killing so many lives, it's a part of the American psyche to have a place like this and to pay respect."

One explains the reason for visits to the site as follows: "I would say to pay respects to the victims as well as acknowledge their own grief and that I do see it as a pilgrimage site. It's something people have heard about and they're making a point to be a part of visiting the site" (Interviewee #25, 2013). More specifically, what mattered to many visitors in making the visit – what they cared about – was what might be described as almost a sense of duty or obligation to their country. This sense of duty or obligation is what motivated them to journey to the site. As discussed by some in the interviews, "I just always wanted to come, since it happened. I don't know, I'm American. It just feels like I needed to come see it" (Interview #17, 2013). Another proclaims "the last time I was here (9/11 site) was two years ago when it was unfinished and I think just because it's now a National Memorial, I always wanted to - I like to participate and to pay respects at our national Memorials" (Interview #23, 2013). Some add to this by suggesting "I think it brings the nation together and makes me feel that I'm closer to the people I live with" (Interview #31, 2013) or "I was inspired, you know, kind of like the way I look at it, I need to do this for me, my country and those lost, it's just one of those things" (Interview #28, 2013). Furthermore, some believe it's "not just an event, but it's an event in history - a very huge event for us in American history in that it led us into a war" (Interview #17, 2013).

It is also noted as not being:

> "any different than any of the other national treasures that we (Americans) have. I mean they go to Hawaii (Pearl Harbour), and the Arizona Memorial, and the Bunker Hill Memorial, Gettysburg Battlefield. All of them have a tragic air about them. It's a piece of our American history. It's a very unfortunate part but it's our life. If you don't respect it, you don't see it and you're not going to have it" (Interview #22, 2013).

Not only is this incredibly significant for the American people but some of those travelling internationally also feel this way about the site too. One such traveller says: "partly because we're close in Canada to September 11th so we thought the impact would be significant when you're in and around the same time period" (Interview #13, 2013). It is interesting to note that for some of those visiting from other countries that did not feel the cohesion others

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from the United States did, they still mentioned the fact that it would be for any American. One identifies herself as "a tourist from Germany so I see myself a tourist but I see this as a Memorial centre for everybody in the US and also for relatives" (Interview #24, 2013). Another visitor from the United Kingdom also believes that "for a lot of people - for anybody involved – even as far as the American people in general, I think this was such a massive happening for the country" (Interview #10, 2013).

But not all of the respondent visitors related to their sense of duty or obligation to visit the site as being part of a patriotic duty. For example, one respondent seems to reflect that this duty or obligation to visit the 9/11 Memorial should be felt by anyone who resides in or visits New York City as he observed "I think the 9/11 Memorial site is one of the sites of New York nowadays that you have to visit" (Interview #24, 2013). Interestingly, this observation came from a German National who was visiting New York City. This notion of duty to visit from those outside of America was echoed by visitors from Canada, the United Kingdom and other parts of the world. A Russian tourist explained his feeling about the support and obligation of those journeying to the site as he exclaims:

> "it is important for the people - the 3,000 people, you must be prepared. Again it can happen anywhere. So all people, everyone around the world need to be aware of this and see the strength. You must visit this (9/11 Memorial site) too... because in your country, this can happen the same" (Interview #30, 2013).

After visiting the "Tribute WTC Visitor Centre Museum" (right next to the 9/11 site) I read some of the poignant reflections written on visitor cards posted by people passing through (Plate 2). To date, the Centre has collected 200,000 cards written in 47 languages by people from 120 countries (Participant Observation, 2013). Keeping in line with the theme of social bonds through nationhood, many cards posted on the walls of the "Tribute WTC Visitor Centre Museum" (2013) alluded to just that:

Plate 2: Visitor Postcard from Tribute World Trade Centre Visitor Centre: "France Loves You"

> "We will never forget that day for the horror it caused and brother and sisterhood it created for us all. With love from Canada"

> "Not an American, not a New Yorker, not even from this continent, but the sadness that engulfed everyone's hearts resides in mine as I walked around ground zero, thinking how it was like on 9/11, empathizing with the victims all across the world, we share the same humanity and common understandings of Love. As much as Americans will never forget, so will I not forget my walk around what used to be the icon of New York – Singapore"

The history of interaction chains is carried along to the site of the interaction by way of previously held emotions and emotion-laden cognitions that become the ingredients for an upcoming emotional encounter is important to understand (Collins 2004). While future work will be able to examine the prior links in more detail, the observations and interviews conducted at the site did identify at least the following as illustrative of some of these interaction ritual chains ("IRC") or "what emotions visitors bring to the site" and will be described below:

- *Prior IRC produces Heritage of Symbols (as observed around the site) and Group Feelings of "We"*

- *Prior IRC produces Action: Military Service*

- *Prior IRC created by Media Interaction*

- *Prior IRC contributes to Site Narrative (The "Guides' Story")*

- *Prior IRC produces Site as a Symbol before and after the Death Event*

5.3.3 *Prior IRC produces Heritage of Symbols as observed around the site and Group Feelings of "We"*

The first indication that visitors were likely exposed to a series of other links in the chain of interaction rituals came not from conducting interviews in and around the 9/11 site, but from the observations made from the time I walked off the airplane at the airport. The heritage of symbols and the ongoing feedback loop from the chain of ritual practice was obvious. Some 12 years after the death event, the presence of American flags; ribbons and signs that all state something to the effect of "Support Our Troops," or "God Bless America" or "Never Forget" were prevalent all over the City (Participant Observation, 2013). Many in retail stores were also observed participating in this ritual by having staff wear paraphernalia associated with the death event of 9/11 or by storefronts having objects of remembrance placed in windows or even on their signs (Participant Observation, 2013) (Plate 3). Being exposed to (and arguably involved with) these types of interactions, I had a much better understanding about what the visitor respondents meant when asked in the interviews about whether the visitor had a connection to anyone that died or to the death event at the 9/11 site. For example, a visitor who did not have a direct connection to the dead or the death event answered "No- other than being American" (Interview #1, 2013). Others referred to the death event as involving"we", "city", "country", "they", "victims" in a collective sense that insinuated a strong tie to a bond between nation and people (Interviews, 2013). Furthering this notion, Interviewee #23 (2013) said "I think this happening on American soil and killing so many lives, it's a part of the American psyche to have a place like this and to pay respect."

Plate 3: Heritage of Symbols from Around New York City

5.3.4   *Prior IRC produces Action: Military Service*

The prior chain of ritual interactions was so strong that it had resulted in some of the

respondent visitors making life or career decisions in the face of the death event and the emotional energy generated by past interaction rituals. The information provided by some respondents about the actions taken as a result of the death event were varied but included the taking of action through joining military service by at least three of the respondents or members of their family. Interviewee #26 (2013) shared:

> "Some people have kids that join the military cause of 9/11 so that's a big thing in your life to see where it all started. I had one boy, it's a funny story, he graduated college, he was looking for a job, he got a job I don't know where - mid-west - and he was in charge of a supermarket and on 9/11 was the first day they opened. And they opened up and shortly after, this happened (9/11), everybody was watching TV and nobody was buying, nobody was filling the store even to shop. So even he was too emotionally distraught so he shut down the store and he was fired. And he said, 'You know, I don't care'. So fighting for his country meant more than a good job".

Another respondent only days after shared a similar experience of involvement:

> "I was in a construction job - I was actually working on building a road and I heard it through the grapevine - I heard it through the guys at work- almost 3,000 people, it's just so far reaching. It's nationwide and definitely reached worldwide and had a pretty profound effect. I joined two months after 9/11.So that was one of the major reasons I got in the Navy" (Interview #32, 2013)

Yet another interviewee (#22, 2013) increased his military service as a result of his experience of involvement with the death event of 9/11. He describes his tours of duty after 9/11 as follows:

> "Feelings that I've had - I've done in two tours of Iraq and four in Afghanistan. So it's strengthened my resolve and I was proud of the work that I've done. And it also has helps to file the memories and other things that I have from that day."

5.3.5 *Prior IRC created by Media Interaction*

Of course, in addition to the interactions reported above, media exposure to the death event and the interaction that occurred through this exposure are the predominant forms of prior interactions reported by visitors. Even the six respondents who were directly involved at the site on the day of the death event had experienced further ritual interactions after the event through the media. So the prior interactions involving media may be said to apply to all of the visitors who were interviewed. There is undoubtedly an opportunity for further research on the role of the media and interaction ritual chains that may yield more precise information about the relevance of media to the visitor experience. To this end, Collins (2004)

acknowledges the role of media as having an increasing prominence in the interaction ritual chain process and Collins (2010) also acknowledges that "internal interactions" with self involving media may create a form of collective effervescence, emotional energy and feelings of group membership. And in addition based on the description of respondent visitors more research is needed to consider how the "media" experience may differ from the onsite experience for visitors. From the information received from the respondents interviewed for this study it is clear there may be a difference between the two experiences of "offsite" and "onsite" outcomes. This very issue was raised by the respondents in at least three interviews. Interview #2 (2013) actually lived downtown New York City but worked in New Jersey. On the morning of 9/11 he'd actually taken the train from the World Trade Centre to his place of work in New Jersey. He recalls his initial thoughts of the event as follows:

> "I saw on TV the Tower burning and I thought it was a movie playing. I didn't think it was real. I said, it looked like the Trade Centre but I didn't think it was feasible that it could be occurring so I thought it was a movie. And then when the second plane hit, I was there and that's when I realized it was not a movie!"

Yet another respondent shared an experience of trying to match what she had seen from other media with what she was seeing during her site visit; reminiscing about a television series of events depicting the unfolding of 9/11, Interview #15 (2013) (along with her three girlfriends), became involved in an in depth discussion with me relating back to what was gathered on television versus what the real thing looked like on site. Book in hand with images of places where we could be seen standing that day, she went through a number of scenarios that occurred on site such as "this was a police car right on the corner too and I want to take a picture there too. When you think that you're right there where it all happened."

Finally, another states that the experience of involvement or emotion she received from watching the death event on television before her first visit to the site differed from that experience or emotion during her actual visit in these words: "I find myself more in tears

when I first saw images of what I was going to see, then when I'd (actually) seen it. I did not feel as bad as I thought (Interview #19, 2013).

5.3.6 *Prior IRC contributes to Site Narrative (The "Guides' Story")*

The visitors' prior chain of interaction rituals is certainly relevant to the manner in which these visitors may experience the site, and, as suggested above, warrants further research. It is also the case that the prior chain of interaction ritual and experience of involvement should also be explored as it may have a fundamental role in the narrative and interaction with other performers at the site. In particular, the prior interaction ritual experiences of guides or volunteers at the site may produce powerful stories or narrative that will intensify the emotional and ritual experience for visitors. An example of this may be seen in the information provided in Interview #6 (2013). This respondent, who acts as a guide at the site, may be said to be sharing his interaction ritual chain of emotional experiences with others who visit the site in a series of tours he gives when he provides the following narrative to visitors:

> "They (9/11 victims) were left with basically three options: either to burn to their death from being left behind – these were people who were above the impact line who had no staircase to go to. You see in these pictures in Gallery 2 of them standing on the ledge and leaning over and leaving things because there was nothing else for them to do. So they could either burn from behind or they could jump to their deaths. And I personally witnessed many people jumping to their deaths or they came down with the building. So when you think about it, you think about your life and what your life means."

Another guide, who was a first responder fire fighter shares his experience in these words:

> "Well, it took a while to come here. I didn't come here until 2007 because I had to go through therapy to get through it emotionally myself. And then it's something I re-live through every day in my own mind and instead of keeping it bottled up, this is a place of power and we're talking about it and there was a need to talk about it" (Interview #26; 2013).

5.3.7 *Prior IRC produces Site as a Symbol before and after the Death Event*

The heritage of symbols and feedback loop may even relate to pre-death event ritual interactions. Many expressed having social and emotional attachments to the site before the

death event and some added that the site provided them with a sense of place in the sense that the twin towers were a "symbol" prior to the attack (Plate 4).

Plate 4: Twin Towers – Symbol Pre and Post 9/11 (Source: Blais and Rasic, 2010)

> Interviewee #25 (2013) "had a very immediate and visceral response to what was there before because that was my most direct connection. This was part of my neighbourhood that disappeared that was destroyed. So that's what my connection was to - to the place that is no longer there and the vibrancy of that place, which obviously includes all the human beings in and around it."

Another said:

> "Well I worked on Wall Street since 1968. When I left, they were digging the foundation for the World Trade Centre. I moved to Florida. They were digging the foundation for the first one. Well that's why I walk through Trinity Church yard because I walked all down here. These streets were my stomping grounds for 15 years!" (Interview #14, 2013).

Finally, many recognize the fact that sense of place goes beyond just the symbol that the twin towers represented for New Yorkers or even American citizens. "The sheer size of it and plus, a lot of people were from abroad that weren't Americans as well. You just think of it as the two towers but it's not. It was just like a whole block was devastated" (Interview #19, 2013).A visitor from Russia explains:

> "it was the first place I wanted to visit when I was a child. So when it was destroyed, I said, "Wow! That sucks!" It was like a regular place. Even if I came here 12 years ago and visit those sites, just go to the observation deck, this is just a regular place but now there are no twin towers right now" (Interview #30).

These experiences of involvement, when considered as a chain or series that link together, go beyond the personal or "individual self". They become shared – a part of the collective self. And then when brought to the site by visitors, they are a part of the interaction with site components which in turn create new linked experiences of involvement at the site, which arguably produce the outcomes or functions contemplated by Kastenbaum (2001), Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1959; 1967) and Collins (2004).

5.4   Conclusion

This Chapter 5 has considered some of the observations by visitors about the site as a dark tourist site and has considered some of the prior links or experiences of involvement with the death event in the interaction chain of visitors. It is clear that respondent visitors did not perceive the site to be a commodified dark tourist site. Rather, visitors perceive the site and the experience within the site as involving an interactive performance, with some visitors acknowledging that the type of interactive performances may be analogous to those found in some other areas of tourism or entertainment. By and large, the visitors expected that the site and the interactions within it would represent both a place of tremendous sorrow at which mourning would take place, but at the same time a place that may give peace or hope or allow for remembrance or mourning to be carried out.

When considering the visitors prior experiences with the death event leading up to the site visit, all reported some form of emotional experience of involvement with the death event. Visitors were seen to bring to the site links in their prior chain of interactions and experiences. Some of these involved a) heritage or sacred symbols (symbols that might be relevant to or featured in the visitor experience in the site, such as flags, military or first responders emblem's, inside the site and included the "twin towers" site itself); b) group feelings that were described as "we" or "us"; c) some history of a sense of obligation to take action in the face of the death event (including military service, etc) and d) the need to mourn the loss or diminishment (enfeeblement) experienced as a result of the death event with a corresponding intention to pay respects to the dead.

For the purposes of the ritual performance model and the consideration of the research question and objectives, the following appear to be supported by the empirical research and discussion in this chapter:

A. The visitors who participated as respondents in the interview all had prior experiences of involvement with the death event – experiences that registered in their physical and dispositional beings. The death event was something that "mattered" to them, although possibly in different ways. For the purposes of the model and the restated definition of the dark tourism experience then, the visitor experiences have been "qualified" as proposed in Section 3.6.1 describing the "qualification of the visitor experience".

B. Most visitors identified that they had experienced a sense of loss or grief or diminishment in the face of the death event; or, if they did not directly express a sense of loss, visitors did say that they shared an expectation that the site would be a place to interact, mourn or to pay respects. This suggests that there was a sense of experience and expectation about the visitor that may arise out of the visitors' motivation. Indeed, as noted in D below, many visitors expressed that they felt motivated to visit because of an obligation or duty or purpose to gather as proposed in Section 3.6.2 (a) and (b).

C. Most visitors brought a sense of belonging or identified with a group impacted by the death event. Respondent visitors revealed a sense of group membership feelings with the use of words such as "we" or "us". In some instances the group feelings were expressly related to an identifiable group ("Americans" or "New Yorkers"), but in other cases the feelings of membership were associated with a broader group – many from other countries died in the attack, especially visitors with membership feelings on an international scale or those who may have had or perceive a risk of

having an experience of involvement with similar death events or be possible targets of terrorism, felt part of a larger group.

D. Many of the visitors clearly described that they felt an obligation or duty to visit or gather as suggested in Section 3.6.2 (b) and (c) with respect to the proposed model. Some expected to be engaged in rituals that would allow one to mourn or pay respect to; this may be an expectation that the visitor experience would produce emotional energy.

E. All visitors brought sadness; some also brought anger; others brought distress or fear with them to the site. There were a range of emotions related to the death event as proposed in Section 3.6.2 (c).

F. There was an expectation on the part of many visitors while standing in line that the visitor experience would include interactions and performances at the site since the site visit was perceived to involve them in an "event", or something 'showy' or 'like waiting in line at "Disneyworld". This is relevant to the proposed model (Sections 3.6.1 (b) and (c)) and because Collins (2004) proposes that the expectations of individuals for emotional energy may affect the success of the interaction rituals.

G. For the purposes of further research involving the proposed model, although the nature of the empirical research effort for this thesis did not contemplate it beyond asking visitors what motivated the visit or what they felt prior to the visit, the notion of a "first observation point", as proposed in Section 3.3.2.4 that is, the point of observing and interviewing visitors before or at the entry to the site, to explore prior links in their interaction chain and/or experiences of involvement with the death event, would be extremely helpful to gauge visitor emotions, expectations and frames of reference. This would serve to "qualify" the visitor experience for the purposes of the model and to permit the researcher to consider the role/impact of prior

experiences in analyzing actual site interactions and experiences for the purpose of

further research with the ritual performance model.

6 DEATH SYSTEM COMPONENTS AND RITUAL INGREDIENTS

6.1 Introduction

In Chapter 5, the observations by visitors about the 9/11 site as a "dark tourist" site and the prior emotional or experiences of involvement of visitors with the 9/11 death event were considered. Each visitor respondent brought a prior emotional experience of involvement to the site that is relevant to the visitor experience in the site.

This Chapter 6 (as will Chapter 7) will now move into the site to provide a second observation point for the visitor experience with interactional rituals and emotion involving site and death system components; namely, individuals on site (including other visitors, guides and volunteers); spaces and places on site (including features that represent the death event or distinctive newly built form that provoke or produce emotional responses) considerations; the role that time (scheduling and momentary encounters) plays on site; and especially the visitor experience represented by interactions with objects, things and symbols. Chapter 6 will consider the first part of what may be viewed from the second observation point, namely selected site components and some of the ritual ingredients that will be involved in ritual interactions, including piacular rites (see Figure 6.1 below). (The observation points are divided into two parts in Figures 6.1 and 7.1 and are set out like this to facilitate the presentation in Chapters 6 and 7).

Figure 6.1: Snapshot of Observation Point #2 (First Part)
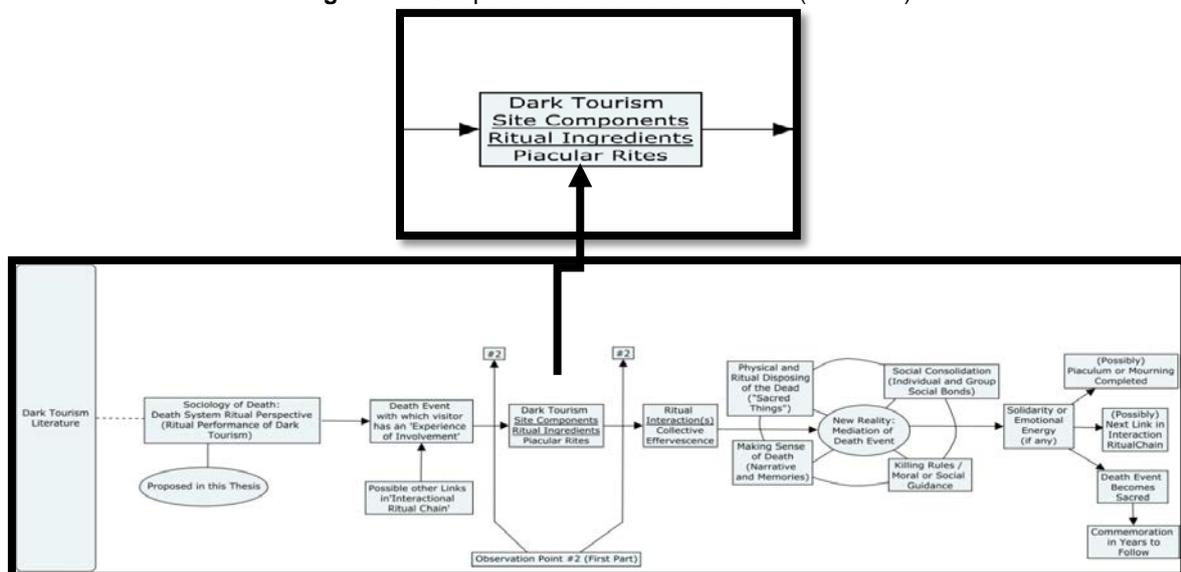
Again, for the purposes of the model, this second point of observation is within the site of interaction itself. For it is within the site that the visitor experience may be said to involve, most likely, a series of interactions with death system components and ritual ingredients. Remember that Collin's (2004) *ritual ingredients* not only requires that a co-presence of participants is necessary, he makes it clear that those participants must be a group with boundaries or within a site with actual or symbolic barriers that exclude outsiders. This sets the scene for each interaction or each "situation" – the shared experience of involvement among participants – the point at which the shared mood or mutual focus of emotion and attention must be carefully observed in order that an accurate analysis be undertaken of the interaction ritual. As proposed in this thesis, this includes careful attention to the components of the death system - the people, the places/spaces, timing and the objects or symbols among which the mutual focus of attention and shared emotion is applied by visitors. This section will consider selected components of the death system from the vantage of this second point of observation within the site. (It is to be noted that the operation, interplay and fulfillment of functions of the death system through interaction rituals will also be considered from this second point of observation in Chapter 7 which follows).

Among those selected components of the death system and the "situations" considered in this section are:

- People: The Guided Visitor Experience

- Place: Sacred Place, Space and Stage

- Time: Momentary Encounters and Scheduled Events

- Objects, Symbols and Language:

  ➢ Flowers and the Parapet

  ➢ Survivor Stairs

> ➢ Survivor Tree

> ➢ Bracelets

6.2   Death System Components

Through the on-site interviews and participant observation, the fieldwork suggests the 9/11 site has created a plethora of interaction ritual experiences using or incorporating components found in a death system (Individuals, Places, Time, Objects and Symbols).

6.2.1   *Individuals*

This section will consider how individuals, represented by guides at the site, may facilitate or impact interaction rituals within the visitor experience. This section will also suggest that researchers considering the ritual performance model or other analytical tools to explore the visitor experience may wish to consider following the guided visitor experience as one approach to their work. Individuals have long been acknowledged as a component of the death system. Kastenbaum (2007) states that many individuals have direct connections through their social roles with death. Those visiting and working at dark tourism sites are very relevant to site interactions through the roles they play. These individuals are involved in creating or supporting the networks and meanings around death at the site. For Goffman (1959), the front employed by individuals or actors to define the situation for those observing his or her various interactions is considered a main aspect in any performance. At the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, a number of interactions pertaining to both "appearance" and "manner" may be witnessed through the actions and narratives of both visitors and guides on site. Collin's (2004) notion of the bodily assembly of participants who mutually focus their attention and share emotions is facilitated by the situation at the site when visitors interact with guides. This may range from visitors who tour the entire site in a group led by a guide to visitors touring on their own who may ask a volunteer a question or listen in on a guides presentation or answer. The guides make it clear that the guided experience was selected

as a means to be able to follow visitors in an organized fashion. It allowed for the observation of a group that meets all of the processes set out by Collin's (2004) classic interaction ritual chains. Following the guided experience allows for the palpable and momentary encounters. The respondent visitors were not individually identified or followed in the guided groups that I observed. To set some perspective on the guided experience, out of a total of thirty-two respondents; five were guides, another four were noted as volunteers at the 9/11 Memorial, and twenty one were noted to be on guided tours or interacted with guides. The remaining two respondents did not disclose whether their experience included interaction with guides or volunteers.

6.2.1.1 *The Guided Visitor Experience*

An understanding of the manner in which a group of visitors may have their attention mutually focused and may share emotion is most apparent when observing and talking to those who volunteer to work as guides on site. Based on my observation a majority of visitors either participate directly in a guided experience at the site, or listened to some portion of a presentation by a guide or site volunteer in the course of their visitor experience. In these observations, I saw firsthand the "rapt attention" of visitors, the sharing of emotions, the manner in which the guide and other site components were employed in an interaction ritual that registered in the physical and dispositional being of visitors. The act of the visitors being together in the same place, especially during portions of the guided visitor experience, was observed to create what Collin's (2004; 34) suggests is a "physical attunement: currents of feeling, a sense of wariness or interest, a palpable change in the atmosphere." The guided experience is also useful to follow as it allows an opportunity to observe the cumulative feedback between the mutual focus of attention and the build-up of a shared emotional mood among the visitors, especially through the use of the narrative provided in the interaction by the guides. This interplay was observed to build up a strong collective emotion which Collin's (2010) observes makes or breaks a ritual. This build-up of the shared emotional experience pervades individual consciousness and allows visitors (and likely

guides) to experience what Durkheim calls "collective effervescence", a feeling of being brought out of oneself into some larger and more powerful new reality (Collins, 2010; Durkheim, 1995).

Guides most certainly fulfill the role of individuals involved in the death system who create and support the networks or meanings around death. Guides also serve as what Goffman (1959) describes as the "front" to define the "situation" for those observing the presentation by the guides. One guide refers to "her story" in quite a matter of fact style possibly appearing as though her role of being a guide is performed in a scripted and rehearsed manner. She states that:

> "After we tell some of the general story about how it happened, the airplane and stuff like that, and then we tell our personal story. The leader tells his parts of the story, he could either have been a survivor or he might have held somebody or they have some personal interest in. I tell them that my husband died nine months after my daughter (who was killed in 9/11) and since he was an artist too, I always say that I hope that the two of them have met and that they have painted the beautiful heavens together" (Interview #3, 2013).

Another guide describes her experiences with visitors on a tour as though she is the only person in the centre of the stage. Her words suggest that she intentionally exerts very strong influences over the particular performance she gives before these visitors:

> "It is like the most fabulous - it's like rapt attention. They just lean forward, they are just looking and hanging on to your every word. But you can tell that they are just so grateful when you're done, like just the gratitude. I think that's why they like to hug. And then really, once they start going through that kind of emotional turmoil, they're like, Oh my God, if that's what she feels, then that's where I think that connection gets built" (Interview #7, 2013).

Some guides even go so far as to enlist assistance with the presentation of their stories. One guide remarked "I worked with a story telling group that helped me and several other docents with their story telling to help make them have more of a punch because mine was very much - this happened and this happened and this happened"(Interview #2).

The guides' ability to focus attention and share emotion at the site is not limited to stories of the tragedy per se. A guide may also focus attention on built form and the design of the site to have visitors focus their attention and share emotion. While listening to a guide bring her tour group to an area that is soon to be resting above the actual site of the

9/11 Museum, she advised them that the site would need 400 more staff and volunteers when the Museum opened. She commented that the Museum lies almost all underground (mostly below the site of the Memorial) and the physical layout reminded her (the guide) of a World War II bunker (Participant Observation, 2013). I approached the guide to gather more details about this. She explained:

> "The Museum will be seven stories down to the bedrock and that's how far the Museum goes. Some of the rooms are seven stories high because they have a huge fire engine in one and they have part of the trident - the tridents that used to hold up the first floor of the World Trade Centre. Well it is the way some of the people remember and some of the iconic photos of that day. You'll see, I think there are three of them that are sort of like that with smoke all around it. That's kind of like an iconic picture. So they've kind of preserved more than one but that one in particular goes all the way down. When you go down, you see the base of it (the Museum) but the top of it comes all the way to ground level" (Interview #29, 2013).

The guide made it clear to her audience that when the Museum opens, it is sure to bring "everyone to tears" (Participant Observation, 2013).

Of course, it is not just the guide that provides the emotion; it is that the guides' emotion is then shared by the visitor group in a form of collective effervescence – a sharing of emotions. The narratives, interactions and performances of those volunteering as tour guides at the 9/11 Memorial site warrant further investigation through the use of the dramaturgical approach to emotion. Although it is beyond the scope of this work it would certainly appear that the use of a dramaturgical analysis would reveal much about the "presentation of self" and on the manner and which emotional performances in interactions may be scripted as set out in the work of Goffman (1959). This perspective would certainly allow for a more detailed consideration of how guides give performances to visitors during which they enact or present scripts or routines that make the use of a dark tourism site with its "setting", "props", moving between the "front stage" and the "back stage" and so on. The rituals created through tour groups are very effective in that they draw upon strong emotions brought on by focusing in on both the heroic and innocent dead as well as the audiences reaction to the actors' and constructions within the particular space (Goffman, 1959) (Plate 5). In addition, this experience with the death event through the dramaturgical perspective

may also be considered as it functions within the death system to allow for visitors to make sense of the death event.

Plate 5: The Guided Visitor Experience

By way of summary, observing the interactions among guides and visitors allows for an opportunity to study interaction rituals in action. The groups represent bodily "co-presence" and (to some extent) barriers. The guides serve to facilitate a mutual focus of emotion and attention and a shared emotional mood which interact to produce collective effervescence among the group, including the guide. In turn, the interaction creates a new reality for visitors.

6.2.2 *Sacred Space, Place and Stage*

Originally, the site was a 16-acre commercial complex built between 1966 and 1987 (Blais & Rasic, 2011). It contained seven buildings, a large plaza, and an underground shopping mall. It is America's largest city and the world's financial capital. The centerpiece of the space was most commonly referred to as the "twin towers". Over 1,360 feet tall, the twin towers were the tallest and arguably the most iconic buildings in New York City. Each tower

had 110 floors and together provided nearly 10 million square feet of office space for approximately 35,000 people and 430 companies. In addition, the space attracted on a typical weekday between 16,000 and 19,000 people arriving by 8:45am, along with thousands of other commuters and tourists daily (Blais & Rasic, 2011). This small community even had its own zip code: 10048 (Blais & Rasic, 2011). This space was not only in the heart of a robust business district in lower Manhattan but lay in one of the most popular cities in the world – New York. Therefore, it is no surprise that use of this space after the tragedy of 9/11 was subject to considerable debate and pressure when planning to rebuild after the complete and total devastation of the space and to what many called their "life" (Interviews, 2013). One resident interviewed shared that:

> "I have lived right down here near the World Trade Centre and I've lived here for 35 years. And I was in the World Trade Centre almost every day, as were my children, and it was very much a part of our life - our transportation life, our cultural life, our shopping life, our commercial life – all kinds of things" (Interview #25, 2013).

A visitor was affected by this death event given his connection to the place prior to 9/11 and his views that rebuilding should occur. "That is sad for me because they (twin towers) were very famous. This whole place. It's important they are rebuilding it" (Interview #30, 2013). The interactions that occurred on and off the site concerning this rebuilding warrant attention as they were commented upon by the visitors interviewed in 2013.

6.2.2.1 *Post 9/11 Tension: Sacred Memorial Space versus Re-build of Symbolic Emblem*

Not every interaction at the 9/11 site gives rise to positive emotional energy or a sense of solidarity. At the time that the field research was undertaken in 2013 the desire to re-create and transform the space into many distinctive and functional zones whilst reconfiguring old spaces in new productive ways was an enormous challenge. Kastenbaum's (2007) notion is that places that remember the dead are transformed when associated with mass death – they become almost sacred in the sense that they actually or symbolically house the dead and are deserving of veneration, reverence or respect. Durkheim (1915) adds to this by

observing that even in sacred spaces, ritual participation in its most elementary form opens up the space for community or for collective identity as well as link past rituals to the present in order to move forward in history; also known as "iterations of events" (Collins, 2010). This ritual participation can be said to form moral boundaries, remove strangers, deliver access to goods and privileges, and characterize a sacred citizenship that functions across social distinctions status (Collins, 2010).

The tension between the sacred and the profane seemed to be reflected in the debate over the use of the site. Some wished to keep the site as a sacred memorial space. Others wished to rebuild part of the site for commercial purposes so that, as one visitor observed "it would show strength to the terrorists" (Interview #, 2013). Both sides of the debate saw their point of view as protecting the sacred. One side saw it as protection of the beloved dead. The other side saw it as a protection of a sacred symbol, way of life, and protection of the well being (i.e. symbol of the group). Admittedly some of the debates were there for commercial gain and had no interest in the dead. Either side viewed their point of view as sacred because they had poured emotion into it. They had lost someone or lost the symbol of the twin towers. Both sides bring in their own chain of interaction ritual. The result of the tension between these proposed uses was that the redeveloped space at the World Trade Centre is set to include not only a sacred space to the victims of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum, but also include some aspects of the space that some would say cross moral boundaries, such as the addition of commercial office space, retail, and connections to public transit such as the World Trade Centre Transportation Hub viewed in Plate 6 below.

Plate 6: Sacred Memorial Space versus Re-Build of Symbolic World Trade Centre
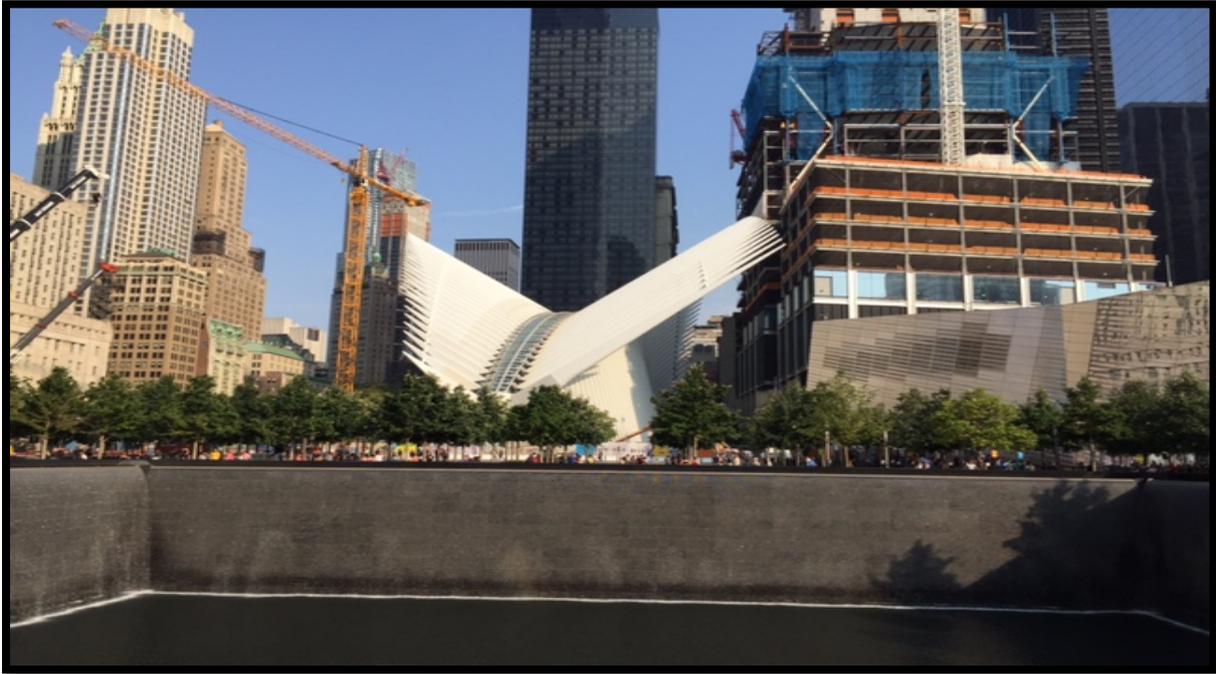
The tension that existed in 2013 is illustrated by one interviewee who voiced concern over the disagreements:

> "Oh, I won't even go there! No, I mean it is what it is, right? There has been so much change all over the past 12 years and there was a certain point before I started working here - so I started working in 2005 - I just didn't want to read another sentence about what was going on. There was so much in-fighting and shifting and you never really knew what was happening and what was not happening. Whatever was reported could easily change the next day. What I would say is that it's tough. It's in the middle of a city. There are a lot of financial interests attached to it. It's the site of the worst attack and death and horror that we've experienced in our lifetimes for sure. I think they've tried to acknowledge both of those aspects" (Interview #2, 2013).

A tourist from abroad shared a similar concern:

> "I was very much against them building an actual second tower, even though I'm English. Well I just feel when so many people died, no bodies were recovered, it's like building over somebody's grave, that's what I believe. It's 12 years down the pipe. It's always nice to think, when you have lost somebody, you can come and think well he's there somewhere" (Interview #19, 2013).

A survivor explains:

> "It took a very long time for them to settle upon a plan. You had people who were not as happy with the construction of the site – because I went to some of the public hearings after the disaster happened. It's amazing how people who would step up to the microphone and you had people who were just totally aggressive and totally fired up... You had family members who were very emotional about what they spoke about the way that they finally settled it where they basically built around the site and left the footprints as the Memorial" (Interview #6, 2013).

The disposal of the dead at the site had implications even within families. One respondent explained:

> "They told us that they found parts of my daughter but we hoped that her remains would stay here in the Memorial Museum. My son-in-law has certain ideas about what he wants to do with them but I hope that I can fight it that her remains would stay here" (Interview #3, 2013).

These tensions – among proponents for competing development plans and within some families – are illustrative of what Collin's (2004) describes as an outcome with negative emotional energy. Each group interacts with its respective members, mutually focuses and shares emotion creating collective effervescence and producing emotional energy in their respective interactions. However, Collins (2010) points out that where the expectations for the outcome are not met, negative (not positive emotional energy) may ensue, often leaving neither group happy.

6.2.2.2 *Built Form and Emotional Responses*

The visitor experience and interaction rituals at the site are not limited to interactions involving people per se. Visitors, whether part of a guided group or not, are also present together on the site and interact with the built form on the site. This interaction involves visitors focusing their attention on the built form and sharing emotional experiences of involvement internally and / or externally. In this regard, Collin's (2010) notes that not only can interaction rituals be deemed a collective phenomena, but it is also possible to carry out interactional rituals with oneself. Success in internal rituals, like collective ones, relies on a high level of focus on both the topic at hand and on the internal emotional dialogue, both of which are executed together almost with a built in rhythm. The intensity of the emotions created by this internal interaction turns into an internal version of collective effervescence (Collin's refers to this as self entrainment), self solidarity and emotional energy (Collins, 2010). As a respondent visitor described:

> "You're standing in line with all kinds of people. You don't see a thing. There's a blue wall there. Until you get in, you have no emotion, you're just standing in line. Then all of a sudden, you get in and you see it and it totally changes your emotions" (Interview #15, 2013).

Other visitor respondents also made it clear that entering upon the site often provoked emotion. One visitor reported an "immediate and visceral response to what was there before" in the case of Interview #25 (2013). At the same time, another reported a transformation through the "power" of the site (Interview #26, 2013). The interaction within the built environment of the 9/11 site contributes significantly to the way in which visitors create or construct their social reality of the death event. The way that visitors engage with the built form promotes feelings or emotions in them - a type of emotional energy. The visitors enter with their experience of involvement or prior chain interaction ritual chain. Collins (2004) says understanding the social actor's expectations for the next interaction in the ritual chain may often predict the likelihood of outcome of the positive emotional energy.

The space used for the built form is expanded over eight acres of land (a generous portion of the sixteen acre site) that will eventually have a series of spiralling new towers set around it (Plate 7). While undertaking many site visits to assess the use of space at the 9/11 Memorial Site and Museum, it was apparent that the space was open for visitors to walk around, explore and witness the repurposing of the grounds. Collins (2004) explains that individuals may often attempt to get closer to the center of a site in order to touch the sacred aura and share in the emotional energy.

Plate 7: The Built Form Around the 9/11 Memorial and Museum (Source: Blais and Rasic, 2011)

The built environment around the 9/11 Memorial and Museum has received an overwhelmingly positive response by those who come together to experience and interact at the site (Interviews, 2013). All interviewees were fully engaged with the built environment and as a result, described the site with high regard stating that the physical site "is very important" (Interviews, 2013). As one respondent shared "most of the people today are coming away from it with a feeling that they are touched by it because I think it's a very appropriate Memorial" (Interview, #2, 2013). Others credit "the designers" and deem it "a historical site," "Memorial grounds," or even a "show piece" (Interviews, 2013). The impression of many respondents pertaining to the physical environment of the site supports the work of Milligan (1998) in that the "set designers" - whether it be architects, facility managers or others involved in the construction of the site - have made the right decisions around the interactions based upon the physical form of the site.

While observing the physical site, it became clear to me that these spaces were constructed as a stage for social interaction by the designers in order to evoke or produce an emotional response. Many respondents agreed that "just being there, you do have an emotional change" (Interview #16, 2013). In fact, the thoughts of some respondents centered upon the view that time had allowed them to forget the past and the significance of the events of September 11, 2001. As such, they commented that they were surprised at the depth of their emotional reactions once they were introduced into the newly designed geographic setting at the 9/11 Memorial Site and Museum. "As time goes on, you forget the emotional part. You remember what happened but you forget the emotional part - the emotions that you felt at the time and I think visiting here brings that back (Interview #13, 2013).

The opening of the site featured the presentation of two- acre size square reflecting pools called "reflecting absence" and are said to be at the heart of the design of the memorial set in the footprints of the original twin towers. Thirty foot waterfalls symbolically meaning "continuous evolution of beings" descend into what looks like eternity but are finally pools which eventually go down further into a centre void (Plate 8).

Plate 8: Reflecting Absence

The 2,976 names of the victims involved in the 2001 attacks are inscribed in bronze, stencil-cut parapets lining the outer walls of the reflecting pools. The design has features that will permit those to view the beauty at any time they choose to pay their respects in that it allows visitors by day to view the waterfalls through the etching on the parapets and visitors by night to have the light shine through from the reflection on the waterfalls. The design also organizes the names according to direct relationships between spouses, relatives, colleagues, and friends as well as by affiliation or agency. One respondent describes these named connections on the parapets as bonds that will last for those to recognize over time:

> "there's something – in the planning of the names, there's something called meaningful adjacency, which is - you will notice, as you've been there - they are not in alphabetical order. The reason that this is, is that people - surviving family members wanted to make sure that the bond that was in life continued on in death" (Interview #7, 2013).

Furthermore, names of victims from World Trade Centre North, Flight 11, and February 26, 1993 line the north pool, while the south pool houses the names of victims from World Trade Centre South, first responders, flights 175, 177, and 93 and the Pentagon (Blais & Rasic, 2011).

In many respects, the design features at the 9/11 Memorial site offers visitors an educational experience that allows them to see the site through a knowledge based journey

over time. In addition, Seaton (1996; 237) adds to this by explaining that this educational experience offered by the site can also be a form of catharsis for the visitor as "by experiencing the pity and terror of representations of death, a person could be inoculated against, or purged of its terrors in real life." Many visitors to the 9/11 Memorial site commented on the design and layout while visiting and were noted releasing and thereby expressing relief from strong or repressed emotions that could be constructed on site. One explains how the site lifted her from a period of time in her life when she couldn't move on, "the beautiful thing about the space around the Memorial is like that's what helps you move forward" (Interview #5, 2013). Another expresses his time there as "a solemn place but I like going back there. I think the reflecting pools are very beautiful and a beautiful testament to the people who died" (Interview #2, 2013). A feeling of clarity also seems to arise after being in that emotional space as it's "just the way it's set up. It's a very peaceful experience with the trees and you can kind of reflect" (Interview #16, 2013). Finally, some even refer to the designers and the way that they've laid out the entire facility despite the terror that looms. "The reflecting pools in the footprints of the two buildings, it was very peaceful - it translates well for all ages and to everyone" (Interview, #22, 2013).

Another aspect of time lies within what Goffman (1959) refers to as the "scheduling" of displays at junctures in activities, such as the beginning or end, to avoid interfering with the activities themselves. One of the most important functions of the 9/11 Memorial site is its ability to be able to host and schedule events that pertain to the events of 9/11 and to honour other like events that are similar in nature. Hence, why it is so integral that there is a cleared space for gatherings and special ceremonies called the "memorial grove", and over 400 swamp white oak trees selected from nurseries within a 500 mile radius of the three attack sites including the "survivor tree", a pear tree nursed back to health following the attacks (Participant Observation, 2013) (Plate 9). In a sense, the time that is set aside for gatherings and special ceremonies at the memorial grove is shaped by social facts that the site constructs in order to keep strong interaction ritual between participants alive.

Plate 9: The Memorial Grove
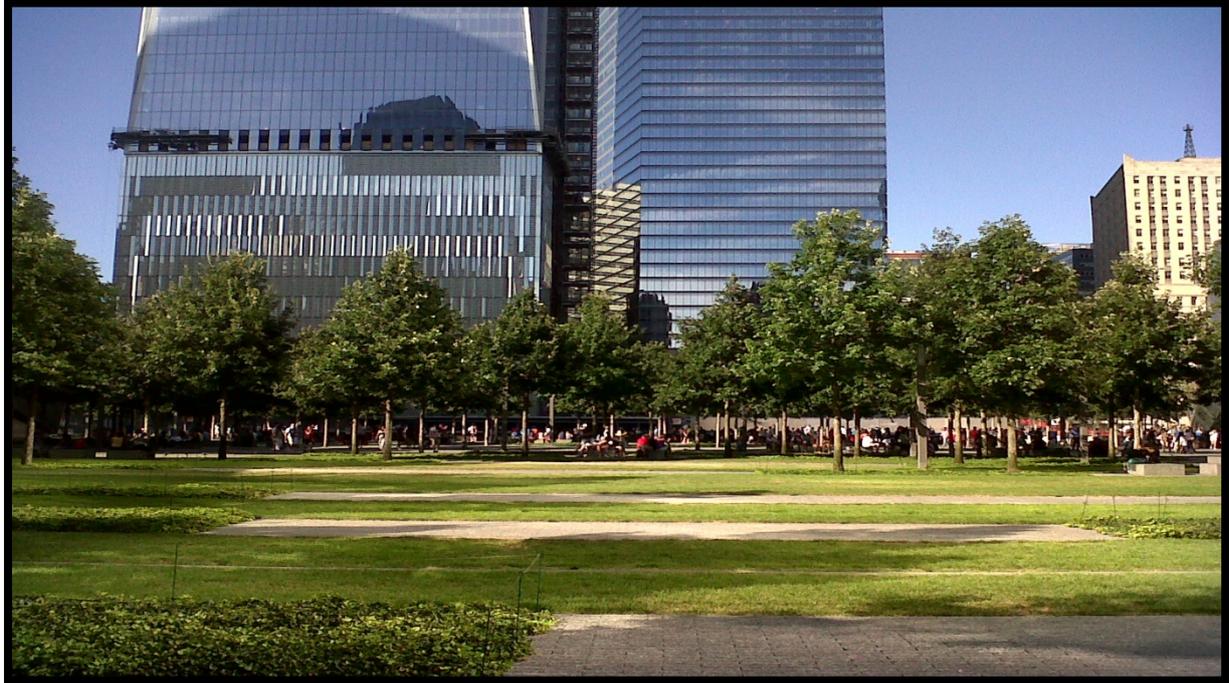
6.2.3   *Time / Momentary Encounters / Scheduling*

Significant occasions often have a ritual or time set aside to mark, honour, remember or mourn those who have died in the past (Kastenbaum, 2001). These occasions – such as that of the anniversary of 9/11 - marking death are special times or momentary encounters where death takes precedence over other thoughts, feelings and emotions. Ultimately, producing a very important condition or ingredient that allows for high levels of emotional energy and a mutual focus of attention for all involved in marking this occasion.

The official opening day or "rebirth" as some would say of the 9/11 Memorial site was on September 11th, 2011 - the tenth anniversary of the attacks. The scheduling of this occasion in part contributes to what Collins (2010) ascribes to the strengthening or affirming of society by hosting the event on a day where remembering the death and disaster at this site are more significant and top of mind. And, of course, time is a critical component in the "momentary encounters" that are part of the series of interaction rituals that are experienced by visitors at the site.

6.2.4   *Objects and Things and Symbols*

From my observations of the reactions of visitors and guides, there are a number of objects, things and symbols to consider in any inquiry into the interaction ritual experience of visitors at the 9/11 site. For present purposes, I have selected four which I will refer to as (a) the use of flowers; (b) the survivor stairs; (c) the survivor tree and (d) the offer of bracelets (in return for a donation).

Each of these objects of and by themselves are unremarkable. Kastenbaum (2007) suggests that while objects do not possess power or meaning in themselves, they can be tactically used to communicate a number of symbolic messages. It is when they are introduced as part of the ritual interaction, that visitors focus their attention and emotions upon these objects at the site that they take on meaning and serve almost as a conduit for collective effervescence (Durkheim, 1995) or a shared emotional mood among visitors and then provide emotional energy to the visitors on an individual basis (Collins, 2004).When the narrative or story is added, the palpable mood changes. Even if people knew what the objects were to symbolize originally, the intensity of the emotion works it up. "These objects, through ritual at the site become sacred – set apart from ordinary, profane life, - things which now have a value in themselves transcending the mundane and the practical nature that these objects possessed prior to the ritual" (Collins, 2010). Durkheim (1995) argued that objects have no intrinsic value or meaning, but are filled with sacred qualities given by society in such a way that permit them to operate as powerful symbols of the community they represent.

6.2.4.1 *Flowers*

Flowers are used at the site to serve as one of the most prominent objects contributing to the setting (or stage props) at the 9/11 Memorial site or what Goffman (1959) would refer to as adding most to the theatre of everyday life. The presentation of flowers to commemorate birthdays and to remember other anniversaries related to 9/11 is a powerful "prop" used on the names around the parapets that also adds to the decor and to the performance enacted

at the site (Plate 10). One comments, "I think that does act as some relief for them. Now they put flowers on their birthdays - when it's their birthday, they put flowers right on their names" (Interview #2, 2013). This is further supported by another interviewee commenting on the act of both everyday people and workers taking part in the ceremonial and ritual action of placing flowers in the parapets. "Even seeing the flowers at certain names, people place roses in the names of certain people, it just made you feel even more personal for somebody" (Interview #17, 2013). Many also agree with the notion of having tangible items displayed in and around site as to be "able to pay your final respects is important and to kind of have that ceremonial closure is really important" (Interview #18, 2013).

Plate 10: Ceremonial and Ritual Action of Placing Flowers on Birthday Anniversaries
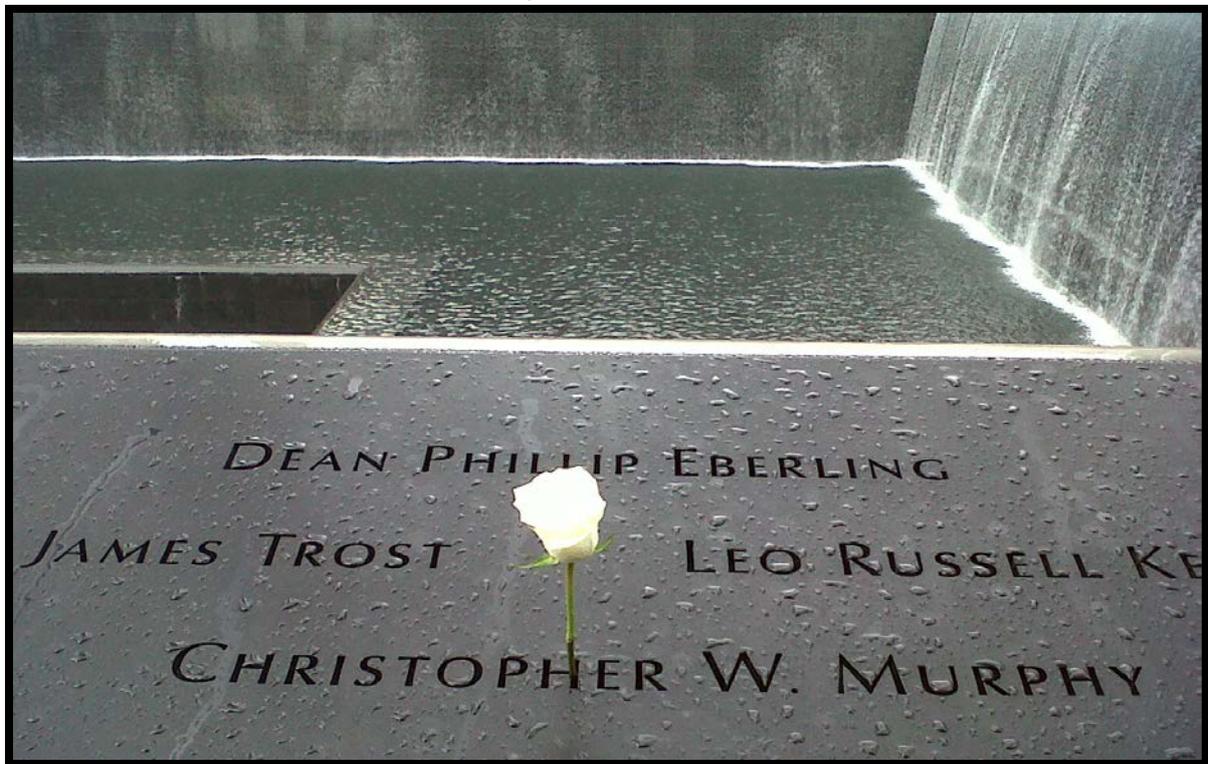
The flowers presented at the 9/11 Memorial site is a good example of how the significance of death also relates to the way in which objects function in the interaction rituals within the death system once these are incorporated into the ritual experience. Through meanings attached to the objects in a death system the objects may be transformed and interpreted in a number of different ways (Kastenbaum, 2001). The flowers placed on the 9/11 Memorial Parapets may be considered as an object that provides a changing language

of emotion as it affects our abilities to view things. However, as Milligan (1998) adds, it is also said that the various processes involved in social constructions can be influenced by the decisions made in the processes and developments associated with physical construction. This was established by many making comments directly relating these flowers to sparking emotion. Some remarked by referring to "the only thing I was quite touched by was the white roses......very lovely, on the names" (Interview #19; 2013). The volunteers behind placing these objects in the parapets can be referred to as social actor's contributing to a series of performances by embellishing the space with flowers to further decorate the scene of the site:

> "For volunteers, it's really a labour of love. We have paid staff and they're respectful and they really do a great job too but it's a bit more of a job for them but for the volunteers particularly, it's a bit more of a mission. It was one of our volunteers who came up with the idea of the white roses. One of the family members said, "thank you so much" because it makes them feel so much better that somebody else is remembering their child's birthday, or their husband's, or whoever. And they're beautiful photo ops because we notice everyone taking pictures of them. Yeah, one of our volunteers came up with that and it's just a great idea" (Interview #29, 2013).

The mutual focus of attention and of emotion on these objects that have been placed on the parapets becomes a symbol of the group. Collins (2004; 37) explains that the group focuses "its own shared emotion; but it has no way of representing this fleeting feeling, except by representing it as embodied in an object". This allows the experience to feel that much more genuine - thing-like - making it emblematic, having noun-like durability (Collins, 2004). Thus, giving rise to group emblems and markers of group identity through the experience of mutual awareness and emotional arousal (Collins, 2004).

6.2.4.2 *Survivor Stairs: Symbols as Interaction Ritual*

The symbols, language or images that signal, warn or convey death at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum provide an intricate death system that works in many ways on site (Kastenbaum, 2007). One of the most prominent and influential features on site were found to be the remnants of a set of stairs which have become the focus of an interaction involving what are now known as "Survivor Stairs". These remnant stairs now represent a symbol that

has became central to and a source of emotional energy of ritual participants through a language or narrative heavily supported by the media and guides pertaining to the stairs. Thus, in an effort to preserve history and acknowledge public symbols of survival and loss, the remnants of the "Survivors Stairs," a granite and concrete outdoor staircase that provided an escape route and represented the last few steps to safety for hundreds of people in the North Tower is a central symbol used in interpreting and illustrating some of the emotion through the events of 9/11. The Survivors' Staircase was the last visible remaining original structure above ground level at the World Trade Centre site and remains a symbol or silent witness to the events of 9/11 (Plate 11). In fact, even before the stairs were set to lay in the 9/11 Museum, the media had touted it as America's 11 Most Endangered Places by the National Trust for Historic Preservation (Blais & Rasic, 2011). Moreover, included in the ritual performance on site are the actual stairs at twenty-one feet high and sixty-four feet long, the Survivor Stairs are designed so that Museum visitors walk alongside as they descend to the exhibition's lowest levels – just as the 9/11 victims would have on that fateful day (Participant Observation, 2013). Museum Director Alice Greenwald supports and describes the stairs as an influential construction pertaining to the symbol of death and dying in contemporary society as one that should touch everyone in some way:

> "You're literally following the same pathway that hundreds followed on 9/11 to survival, to safety, in some respects, what we're saying to our visitors is, we all live in a world now that was defined by this event. And in that sense, we're all survivors of 9/11."
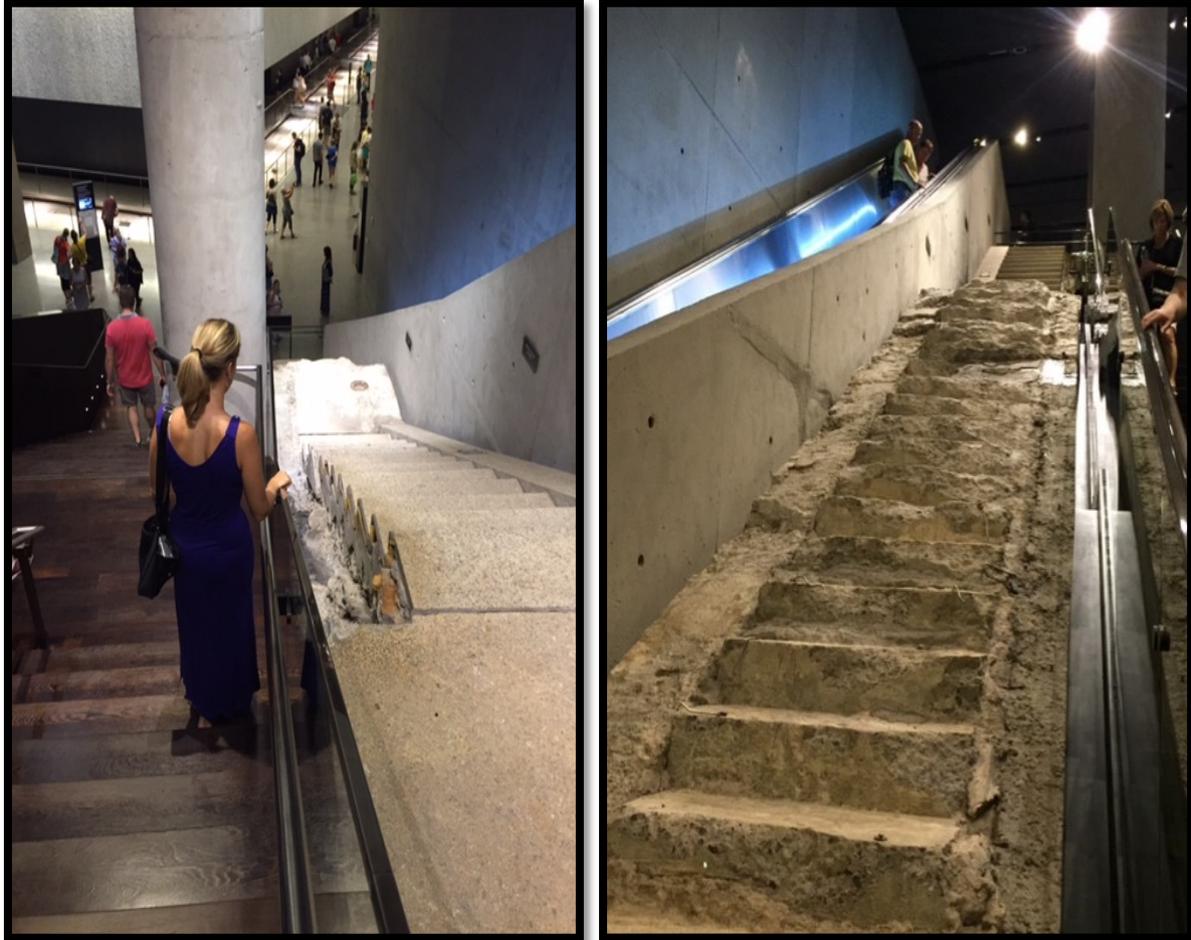
The stairway provides a powerful interaction on site that those acting as guides use to perhaps emotionally invigilate visitors to react in a certain manner (Stone, 2006). Often using narrative from the media to describe the period of recovery, sources say the stairs were mostly intact immediately after 9/11, however they were significantly damaged due to heavy vibrations caused by construction during the nine-month recovery period (Participant Observation, 2013). The symbol of the stairs presented through the media has in turn made the stairs as an object or symbol of the site familiar and meaningful to those visiting. The Survivor Stairs then are both part of some visitors prior interaction ritual chain and also part of the new interaction ritual experienced by all visitors at the site. Whether visitors were familiar with the Survivor Stairs prior to their visit to the site or encountered them for the first time on their visit they have become symbolic emblems related to the death event. This is expressed by one who suggests "the stairs are a wonderful metaphor. They survived, a little

worse for wear, inalterably changed, but they survived" (Participant Observation, 2013). During the period of cleanup at the World Trade Centre site, the narrative surrounding the stairs develop through various press sources which captured the public's imagination through various images of the stairs exclaiming they "stood out amongst construction vehicles as an inexplicable Mayan temple out of context in Lower Manhattan" (Participant Observation, 2013). Ever since the hype around the image of the stairs, this structure and story immediately captured the imagination of those at the site especially since it was the first remnant moved in July, 2008 to the site of the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. Significant, considering that this steel and glass Museum now houses more than 10,000 artifacts, 23,000 photographs, 1,900 oral histories and 500 hours of film and video (Participant Observation, 2013). Although the official opening of the 9/11 Museum was not scheduled until May 2014, anyone who gained access to the 9/11 Memorial site prior to the opening could see the stairs being housed in the Museum.

In terms of the visitor experience in 2013, I observed that the Survivor Stairs were an object that often became the subject of mutual attention by visitors and that these visitors often were observed to visibly be moved by the narrative attached to these stairs. I also observed that a number of guides incorporate these stairs into their daily narrative and ritual on site, providing firsthand accounts of their involvement with the stairs on 9/11 that lead to a great respect for group symbols (Collins, 2004). One guide, Interviewee #6 (2013), explains:

> "I know when we're on the tours, I try to describe it the best way I can so that they can kind of visualize what it was like to be on a floor where the building is shaking violently and you have no idea whether the stairs are going to collapse underneath you. And then when you come out, seeing and looking in the haze, and seeing people jumping and some of them holding hands. It's there for me and so I try not to hold back in terms of making people understand what it was like and to describe it for them".

Another discusses only being seconds away from death:

> "I was operating on the second floor, Stairway 'C' of the North tower and I was operating in the building until about thirty seconds before it came down... thirty seconds before then, I was still helping to evacuate people and then the people that were in the building, it seemed like we were the last ones that left and I was with two emergency service cops, a couple of the firemen and we made the decision that we should get out of the building at that time. I was picked up and blown from the stairs forty feet in the air and I was smacked into Six World Trade Centre and became

trapped in there for an hour. I was overwhelmed - I was from Rescue Five and there was twelve of us working there and I was the only one that lived out of the twelve of us" (Interview #26, 2013).

Lastly, some interpret the events on the stairs to suggest that there was no rhyme or reason as to why some were killed and others not:

"At one point, we were just at a dead stop. I was on the landing. The person ahead of me was on the last step of the stairs. She wound up being thrown across the street when Tower 2 went down. The woman behind me was killed by debris. It was just by chance that I was in the middle" (Participant Observation, 2013).

This narrative surrounding the Survivor Stairs also furthers dark tourism academics Lennon and Foley's (1999) idea that the re-creation of objects, use of interpretive techniques, and experimentation with identity is a topic of great interest and concern to many academics. Furthermore, what should also be identified is the danger that Lennon & Foley (1999) also suggest is posed for those involved in sites such as 9/11 in that interpretation has confused history and used narrative techniques to maintain interest, thereby removing the death event that much farther from the simulation. Of course theses concerns are most appropriate to future work, but are outside of the scope of this study.

6.2.4.3 *Survivor Tree*

The history of the "survivor tree" rests in an abstract concept created at the site (Plate 12). Workers discovered what is now known as "The Survivor Tree", a Callery pear tree with charred bark, snapped roots, and branches reduced to stumps, originally planted in the 1970's on the site of the World Trade Centre (Participant Observation, 2013). The battered tree, measuring around eight feet tall was rescued by the New York City Parks and Recreation Department staff and brought to a park in the Bronx. However, as time became anew after the events of September 11, 2001, through a sort of collective effervescence, special love and care from the Parks Department staff, the tree began to flourish sprouting new branches and growing to an almost thirty feet in height. Finally, in December 2010, the tree was ready to be returned "home". Several 9/11 survivors joined the Mayor of New York to mark the significant occasion of planting the tree back on the plaza of the 9/11 Memorial

site as the tree is a reminder of the thousands of survivors who persevered after the attacks. Not only are these momentary encounters thought to be measures taken to exert power over individuals' beliefs, forms of consciousness, and behaviour but they are a system of diverse rites, festivals and ceremonies which all have the characteristics that they reappear periodically (Collins, 2004). One guide remarked "workers initially worried for the pear tree's survival, but ultimately it always lives up to its name" (Participant Observation, 2013). Interviewee #15 (2013) notes "another interesting thing there is that they have the survivor tree. I don't know whether you read the story on that. That was inspirational." The Survivor Tree represents a symbol at the 9/11 Memorial that is thought of as an icon or symbol of salvation that visitors almost worship in ritual performances such as the ones noted at the site (Collins, 2004).

Plate 12: The Survivor Tree

6.2.4.4 *Bracelets*

The sheer number of tourists witnessed arriving each day (more than 19 million since opening September 2011) and the generosity of those contributing to the donation box upon entering the site strongly supports the finding the site of the death event has touched these visitors in some way (Participant Observation, 2013) (Plate 13). For it is Bloch (2002) that suggests as human beings we are always emotional and it is for this reason that human emotions are an essential part of identity, order and structure. The act of donating money to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum and the impressions people had towards this gesture while passing by the box was observed over a week for around an hour each day (Participant Observation, 2013). My observations suggest approximately thirty people per minute contributed money into the donation box. In fact, it was also noted that many of the denominations of money being placed in the box were higher than a five dollar bill.

Plate 13: Donations at 9/11 Memorial Entrance and United by Hope Bracelets (observed worn on NYC Subway)
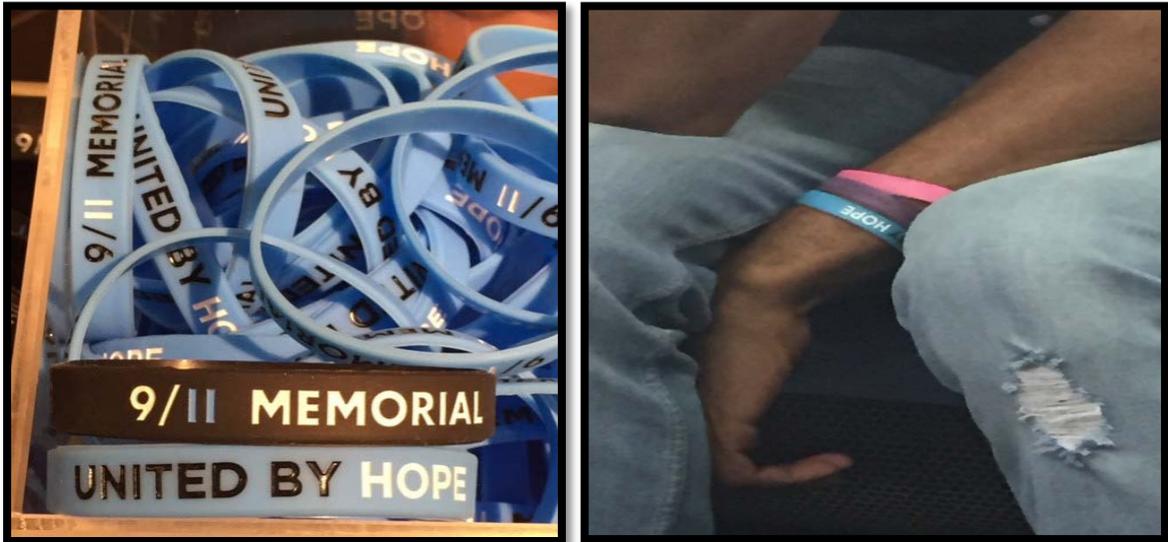
Indeed, if a donation was made of more than five dollars the recipient would receive a "9/11 Memorial" bracelet that said "United By Hope" from an employee standing by the box. These monetary gifts were supported and justified by the site posting signs around the site and reminding tourists that "all donations help sustain the Memorial and Museum for generations to come" (Participant Observations, 2013). These "9/11 Memorial" bracelets are not only regarded as a symbol of financial support provided by those donating to the site but can also be viewed as an object that goes hand in hand with the 9/11 site as an emotional product that marks or gauges a person's commitment to visit and the experience of involvement at the site. It was not uncommon to see a number of people wearing these bracelets. Both tourists and residents would often be seen wearing these symbols of monetary support. On a number of occasions, when I asked people about these objects; they would share or provide a story related to their experiences on the day of September 11, 2001, talk about someone they knew who died or was closely related to the event, or just wanted it to be known that they supported the cause (Interviews, 2013). Not only could these bracelets be seen in and around New York City but on a recent trip to Florida I also spotted the "9/11 Memorial" bracelet being worn on the rental car company's courtesy driver who was driving me back to my hotel. When I asked him about the bracelet he specifically mentioned a past teacher whose husband died in the attacks. He then proceeded to explain

to me that September 11, 2001 should never be forgotten and that he, along with a number of other Americans wear the bracelet or like paraphernalia to represent a united front that he believes is prevalent all over the United States and many other parts of the world (Interviews, 2014). Durkheim's (1995) ideas relating to the power of ritual and symbolism – with a strong emphasis on the power that sacred objects have in helping to connect communities – together with the social forces that put pressure on people to act in ways that are consistent with the prevailing values and beliefs of the wider community, are both key issues to understanding the power of objects such as the 9/11 Memorial bracelet. Durkheim (1995), argues that objects have no intrinsic value or meaning but are filled with sacred qualities given by society in such a way that permit them to operate as powerful symbols of the community or country they represent. These symbols people wear on their wrists work well and are very effective in that they secure what Durkheim (1995) calls "social solidarity". The bracelets are emblems of the "tribe" or "clan".

6.3   Conclusion

This Chapter 6 has considered selected situations or interactions involving death system components at the site that permit an examination of what Collins (2004) described as the processual ingredients of interaction rituals. In each case the selected component – whether it be individuals involved in the guided visitor experience; the sacred spaces created through built form; the timing or scheduling of events, or momentary encounters in the site; or the transformation of objects or things into sacred symbols with meanings related to the death event – had an integral role in the ritual interactions. In each interaction involving these separate components, the analysis reveals an interplay among the processual ingredients proposed by Collins (2004; 2010) as described in Section 3.3.2.1 above.

While the selected "situation(s)" or interactions may differ in the degree or intensity to which the visitor experience may have been impacted, each selected interaction type involved emotion during a momentary encounter during which visitors focused mutual attention and shared emotion upon a death system component. These ritual ingredients, and

most notably the interplay between mutual focus and shared emotion with respect to the component, were observed (and in most instances related by visitors) to produce a feeling of being brought out of oneself into a new reality, or what Durkheim (1995) described as collective effervescence. For the observations and the visitor interviews made it clear that (with respect to the selected interaction) whether it was the interactions between guide and visitors, the interaction between the visitors with the (sacred) space produced by the built form within the rubble of the site of the death event, or interaction with objects, the interaction permitted a mutual focus of attention and sharing of emotion that resulted in a new reality – a new experience of involvement. The symbolism, meaning and reality created with respect to otherwise inanimate objects such as the flowers, the survivor stairs, the survivor tree or the 9/11 bracelets resulted from the ritual interactions within the site that were a profound and ascertainable part of the visitors experience. (Chapter 7 will consider the manner in which these ritual interactions relate to the operation or fulfillment of the functions of the death system, as well as the manner in which the mediation of the death event occurs through the creation of this new reality for visitors through interaction rituals).

From the findings in this Chapter 6, and for the purposes of considering the proposed ritual performance model, as well as the research question, the following appear to be supported by the empirical research:

A. As proposed in Section 3.6.3, visitors, individually and collectively, engage in internal and external interaction rituals as part of their experience at the site.

B. The visitor experience comprises of a number of interaction rituals or "situations" involving site interactions with or among the components identified by Kastenbaum (2001), including individuals, spaces/places, time and objects.

C. External interaction rituals were observed or reported by visitors at the site and generally follow the processual course proposed by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004). In this Chapter 6 interactions by visitors with selected components were

explored to identify the processual course of these external interactions and, insofar as it is possible to do so from interviews and observations in the 2013 fieldwork in which visitors described their experiences and visit outcomes, internal interactions. This is relevant to those aspects of the proposed model as set out in Section 3.6.3 (a) to (d).

D. The proposed *Observation Point #2*, (which is described in Section 3.3.2.4 and used for the findings in both chapters 6 and 7), is a useful vantage point to consider the manner in which visitors interact with site components and, as will be suggested in Chapter 7, site functions.

E. In particular, the observation of the guided experience is convenient as it facilitates (sometimes impacts) the visitor interaction ritual experience and as it permits researchers to essentially follow the ritual performance model with respect to a group of visitors. Individuals are components of the death system and it may be said that guides most certainly fulfill the role Kastenbaum (2001) characterized for individuals in the death system: that is that they are involved in creating or supporting meanings around death. They also serve to present what Goffman (1959) proposed as the "front" in order to define the situation for the purposes of performance interactions. (The guided experience certainly is one that further research may consider for exploration with the assistance of the dramaturgical metaphor proposed by Goffman (1959). This relates to the aspects of the proposed model in Sections 3.6.3 (a) to (c).

F. Observing external interactions among guides, visitors and site components allows for an opportunity to study interaction rituals in action. The group, at least during a presentation and interaction with a site component, allows "bodily co-presence" and to some extent sets "barriers" with respect to interaction processes contemplated by Collins (2004). The guide's presentation may serve to facilitate within the group a

mutual focus of emotion and attention, and a shared emotional mood, which produces collective effervescence among the group.

G. Interactions for visitors are not limited to one interaction experience or to interactions with other individuals, whether guides or other visitors, on site.

H. The interactions among visitors with other components at the site mean that portions of the site and other objects or things about the site become considered sacred, and are no longer profane space. Visitors reported significant changes in their emotions given interactions with site components (and will be seen in Chapter 7, with site functions).

I. Spaces within the site (both the places associated with the actual death event and the newly built form for the re-opened site), as well as objects used at the site before and after the death event (including flowers, the survivor stairs, the survivor tree and the memorial bracelets, among others), become sacred and full of new emotional meanings as a result of visitor interactions.

J. The death space, the built form and each of the objects on the site are, of and by themselves, unremarkable. As Kastenbaum (2007) suggested they do not possess power or meaning in themselves. However, based on the interviews with respondent visitors and based on observation during the fieldwork, when these spaces and objects are introduced as part of the ritual interactions at the site, and when visitors focus their attention and emotions upon these spaces, built form and objects at the site, they take on meaning and serve, it would seem, almost as a conduit for collective effervescence (Durkheim, 1995) or a shared emotional mood among visitors (Collins 2004). As Collins (2004) observes about these inanimate objects: "these objects, through ritual at the site become sacred – set apart from ordinary, profane life, – things which now have a value in themselves transcending the

mundane and the practical nature that these objects possessed prior to the ritual (Collins, 2010). For visitors, the fieldwork reviewed in this Chapter 6 shows that this is the case for interactions involving the selected components.

K. The visitors' interaction with the site components produced collective effervescence, created a new emotional reality for visitors as will be noted below (and considered further in Chapter 7). Through the respondent interviews in this chapter (and these will be furthered by the interviews and observations in the next chapter) visitors stated that as the result of the interaction with these components they were "touched", or had "a change of emotion", or experienced a new depth of emotion. Others observed directly that objects that were "a bond in life continued in death"; or that the space and objects help them "move forward", or be "peaceful", or provided "ceremonial closure". These findings are consistent with visitors having shared emotions and experiencing new (emotional) realities as proposed in the model.

L. And the interactions with components seem to bring about these emotions in an intense and profound way with respect to the death event on an individual and collective level. Many visitors expressed sentiments to the effect that "we are all survivors" or that those objects that became symbols of survival, (i.e. the stairs or the tree) "lives up to its name". The spaces and objects become symbols of a new reality – a new experience of involvement at the site - which registered in the dispositional and physical being of these visitors.

Turning now from the consideration of interaction rituals involving selected components of the death system at the site, the next chapter will consider how interactions operate within or serve to fulfill four of the critical functions of the death system that are representative the site.

7   RITUAL INTERACTIONS AND FULFILLMENT OF THE FUNCTIONS OF THE

DEATH SYSTEM: MEDIATION OF THE DEATH EVENT

7.1   Introduction

The previous chapters considered the data from visitor interviews and participant observations about the manner in which:

- Visitors perceived the site as a dark site.

- Visitors' prior interaction ritual chains and experience of involvement with the 9/11 death event are brought and are relevant to the site experience.

- The site hosts components of Kastenbaum's (2001) death system and;

- Visitor's interaction with site components.

This Chapter will consider the data that supports visitors' interacting within and experiencing the operation of four of the functions of the death system. It will consider whether this data supports the proposition that the visitors' experience at the site serves as a mediating institution in the way interaction rituals and emotions fulfill or operate within one or more of the four functions of the death system relevant to a dark site, namely the disposal of the dead; the promotion of social consolidation; the provision of information that makes sense of the death event; and provides moral or social guidance (which Kastenbaum (2001) also calls killing rules). In particular, the Chapter will consider whether the data supports the identification of instances of "collective effervescence" (which Durkheim (1995) described as a feeling of being a part of something larger and more powerful), that produce a "new (emotional) reality" that is integral to the mediation process. The next chapter will consider whether the "new (emotional) reality" produces individual feelings described as "solidarity" or "emotional energy" being experienced by visitors (which Collins (2004) describes as a feeling of confidence and well-being).

7.2 Interaction Rituals and the Operation of the Four Functions of the Death System

The interviews with respondent visitors and participant observation support the view that through interaction rituals and the operation of the four critical functions of the death system that are proof of the visitor experience, a new reality emerges for visitors. Principally, this occurs through the energy - collective effervescence - that is created when visitors focus their attention on one or more of the components of the death system, AND share emotion through interaction as described in the previous chapter. The collective effervescence from a series of interaction rituals presents visitors with the opportunities to; (a) reflect upon the site as a sacred place for the actual and symbolic disposing of the dead (b) to participate in social consolidation, (c) to make sense of the death event, and finally, (d) to consider the moral or social guidance that may be taken from the visitor experience at the site. It is noted that this Chapter 7 continues to consider death system functions and visitor interactions from the second point of observation, namely within the site of interaction itself (see Figure 7.1 below).

Figure 7.1: Observation Point #2.1 (Second Part)
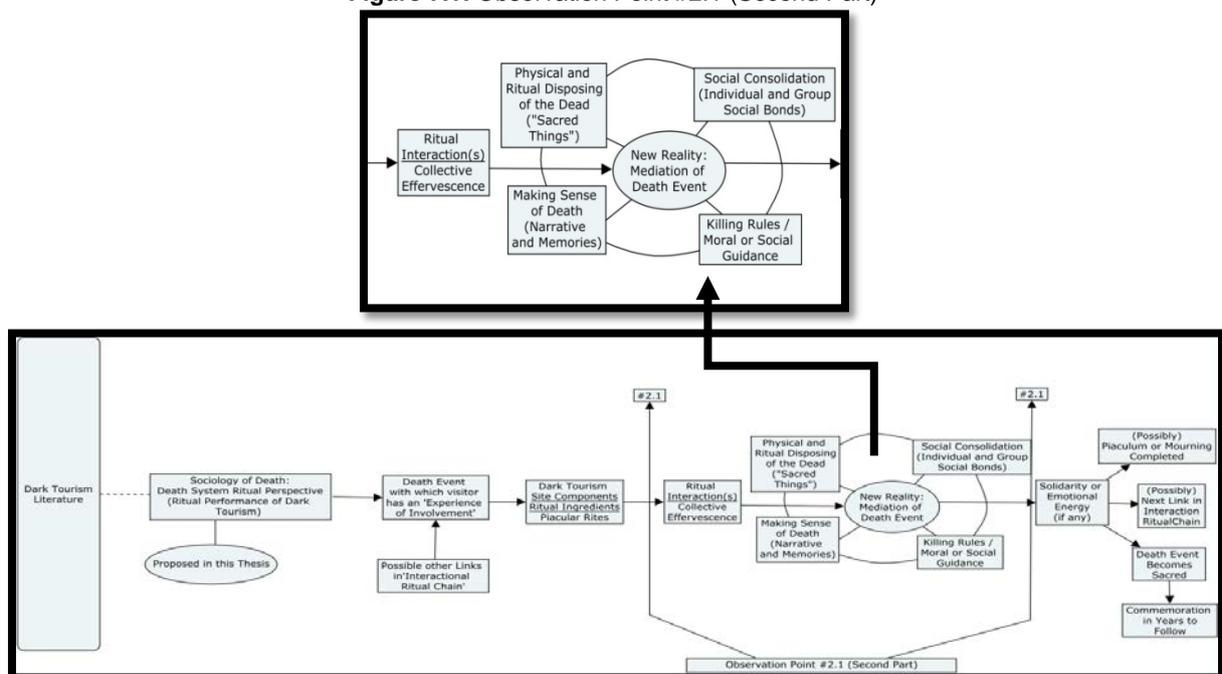
7.2.1 *Sacred Space for Symbolic Disposal of the Dead*

In the case of the 9/11 terrorist attacks at the site, circumstances did not permit individual acts of disposal of the remains of the victims. Only about one half of the remains of victims were recovered at the site. The 9/11 Memorial has addressed both the actual and symbolic disposal of the dead and in doing so serves to fulfill the function set out by Kastenbaum (2007), who acknowledged that in the case of mass deaths the disposal of the dead may not be easily achieved and may require memorials constructed in lieu of individual graves. The 9/11 Memorial was designed by architect Michael Arad and landscape architect Peter Walker whose design was selected through an international competition that received 5,201 entries from 63 countries (Blais & Rasic, 2011). Symbolically, all of the dead are disposed at the 9/11 Memorial site. This symbolic disposition of the 2,976 men, women, and children who died at the site is achieved by having the name of each inscribed into a monument with bronze parapets surrounding the twin memorial pools, located in the footprints of the twin towers. The majority of respondents made it very clear that the memorial did a very good job at disposing of the dead through honouring, remembering and memorializing the identity of the dead without remains. More specifically, there was an overwhelmingly high number of those interviewed who, without any hesitation, referred to the grounds at the 9/11 site as a cemetery or graveyard, further adding to the notion that the site is a sacred place, offering sacred things to honour the dead (Kastenbaum, 2001). One observed: "we go to places like Ground Zero, we pay our final respects because there was no real other place. Then what are cemeteries for, it's the same thing" (Interview #11, 2013). Others adding:

> "I think it's almost like coming to a cemetery - a sense of coming to a cemetery - so I think it does give a chance for us to pause about it, yes. I think by any Memorial like a cemetery where you can put flowers on a grave, or you can come here, that would be – that's how to have them remembered like at a church mass or that kind of thing" (Interview #2, 2013).

One says when discussing his thoughts on what the site means, "it's somewhere to go. It's personal. It's like a cemetery. I would go for the loss of my family but it would be for these victims" (Interview #20, 2013). Interviewee #3 (2013), a mother of a victim has no doubt that

"we do it because this is her cemetery and this is why I come here." Some, who did not suffer a direct loss, relate to the site through a death and dying perspective in that:

> "I think that grief that a lot of people have is not having the closure. So many people not being able to bury a loved one because of the manner in which they died. So it gives them a place like a cemetery in which they can go to and visit - and have something tangible that they can go to" (Interview #22, 2013).

This notion is also commented upon by Interviewee #6 (2013) who says "I put myself in the position of those families who lost somebody and if they consider those footprints and the Memorial as the burial grounds of their lost one, then I'm totally in agreement with that. I'm happy that they were acknowledged." The notion that a variety of places - not just the physical confines of a cemetery – can be identified as treating the actual or symbolic remains of the dead as a function in the death system and as contributing to the ritual performance at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum is an important finding. And it is noteworthy that this function was seen as being carried out even by those who did not have strong religious views about death. Interviewee #5 (2013) suggests "I'm a strong agnostic so I don't need a place - as far as I'm concerned, the 9/11 site, the Memorial is Daddy's graveyard/gravestone. That's what it is to me, in addition to being a Memorial."

Many touched upon this function of the dignified disposition of the dead and the purposes it serves in the following excerpts:

> "They should have this memorial. You know, you could go - if you had someone that died there, you could go and just think - you're talking, you know to the person who is there - you know that the soul or whatever really is there. Just for you to be saying something or paying your respects, I think that's a good thing." (Interview #12, 2013)

> "I think people who are coming want to physically be in the presence of the place where the attacks occurred. So many people saw the attacks on the media that they felt something emotional at that time, and they want to come here to actually touch the place where it happened" (Interview #25, 2013).

One is more specific and says:

> "Especially for the family members, when they can see their family member's name on the parapets up by the pools. I think that - some of them - they couldn't find the remains so that's all they have to hold. So I think that does act as some relief for them" (Interview #2, 2013).

Even for non-family members it was clear that there was a strong emotional interaction between visitors and the name found on the parapet (Plate 14). This connection – this

mutual focus of attention and sharing of emotion – was either heightened or brought about by some of the narrative provided at the site, including that of the guides. Interviewee #7 (2013) recalls that:

> "One of my tour guides, she points out the grotesque distinction of being the youngest victim. And she'll point her out and she'll say she's got a different last name then say her father. So that way, they did it so the family names would be together because they didn't want the family to be separated."

This was also commented upon by Interviewee #19 (2013) who points out a tour he went on that emphasizes the same child and story about "a lady and her child that was very touching. Poor thing".The names and stories the guide selects around the 9/11 Memorial site for tour groups to witness is meant to make the site interesting and provide a memorable experience. It is here where the described images have a direct influence on the visitors' perception and interaction ritual within the physical space.

Plate 14: Symbolic Disposal of the Dead: Bronze Parapets Depicting Mother and her Unborn Child

As was clear in the previous chapter, the 9/11 Memorial and Museum provided an array of built form objects that became central to and invested in the understanding and emotions of ritual participants. One group used an object found in a souvenir book as contributing to the collective effervescence or emotional energy experienced by them at the site:

"There's that statue of the survivor, the guy. Oh yeah. I'm not sure he's in this book. We bought three books. It was a sculpture of a guy reading or – there he is. Yeah. That's him. We want to find him. The survivor. I don't know, I guess I would do this out of respect because it's just in remembrance. I'm trying to learn about it" (Interview #15, 2013).

Others also include important landmarks as assisting them with their feelings and ensuring them a way to reflect or heal on their journey around the site stating:

"We wanted to come and see the site to pay respects and educate ourselves. People normally will go to other sites around it (9/11) too that are smaller, for example, we have been to the Chapel this morning - St. Paul's – to see the angels and we just arrived here" (Interview #19, 2013).

In response to discussing feelings around the landmarks at the site some highlight, "well I think people are going to take different things from it and if its grief, then that's fair. Yeah. Part of the role of this site is to bring it back" (Interview #13, 2013). Lastly, one quite simply explains the site supporting the idea that these are safe places to reflect, grieve and heal as "it is there to sort of study the history and to come to a place where such an important event took place. And I guess to pay respects in a way to everyone that died" (Interview #10, 2013).

Not only did the visitors at the memorial interact with the monuments honouring, remembering and memorializing the dead through the construction of identity without remains, but a powerful visual statement associated with the names of these victims was etched into the monument wall and was also seen to contribute significantly to the interaction ritual. With strong conviction one describes that "it's their souls – like these are all souls. You always connect to the souls when you see the names. Same as when you're driving by a big graveyard" (Interview #1, 2013). Interviewee #14 (2013) adds, "I think that probably when you come back here, it's very difficult... especially when you read the names...every time I come here, I've cried, that I know." Another adds, "It was very touching to see and think about all those names lined up all the way around" (Interview #15, 2013). Some thoughts even revolved around "I was just praying for the country, that we'd be saved. So that's what came out of me when I saw the names" (Interview #17, 2013).

As discussed when exploring the components in the performance at the 9/11 site above, notably the use of flowers on anniversary dates, the storing of feelings resulting from the interaction in sacred objects has a significant impact on the visitor experience (Plate 15). In addition to the flowers, other objects were placed on the names and these gestures placed on the names were also reported to be quite moving by interviewees: "the small mementoes that had been placed in the names around the monuments. It's very touching, really" (Interview #10, 2013). Flags were displayed next to some of the names on the parapets representing victims not only from the United States but around the world.

Plate 15: Interaction with Sacred Objects Impacting Visitor Experience

In order to involve visitors, in an even more tangible way, visitors could also create rubbings of the names located on the parapets - a ritual and performance believed to have originated in China in the second century, not long after the invention of paper (Participant Observation, 2013) (Plate 16). Interviewee #7 (2013) explains:

> "If you go to the special entrance, you can get an etching kit because the names are carved down so they'll give you a piece of parchment paper and pencil and you can just etch it. Before my tour will start, I'll go and visit just to say hi kind of like on my own. I like to just trace his name."

7.2.1.1 *Note on the Grief Journey at the 9/11 Site*

As I observed the manner in which the site experience serves to function as a sacred place for the disposition of the dead, I came to understand that the operation or fulfillment of the functions of the death system were not discrete and that all of the functions were interconnected in many ways. So when considering one function, one is drawn into the others- as one observes the sacred disposition of the dead, one is connected to opportunities for social consolidation, making sense of the death event and moral or social guidance. The interplay of functions- just like the interplay of components- occurs because of the dynamic of interaction rituals. And I was struck again about the many ways the site hosts or facilitates the performance of mourning rituals, and, as such, really serves as a sacred place for the grief journey of the living. As one reviews the excerpts from the interviews set out above (and below), especially those involving visitors or guides who had suffered the direct loss of a loved one, or those that were dealing in other ways with even vicarious losses, it struck me that, while a comprehensive consideration of "grief" is outside the scope of this work, the sociology of death still has much work to do to understand grief and mourning in a sociological context. Death, especially the public face of death in a tragedy such as 9/11, may precipitate vicarious grief as well as more complicated grief responses,

unresolved grief, disenfranchisement of grief and a displacement of the grief response from a private grief to a more social or public domain. An understanding of heightened responses to public tragedy and instances of shared or spontaneous memorialization, or mourning or commemorative rites has a distinct sociological component. Durkheim (1995; 405) seemed to recognize this when he observed in the context of presenting piacular rites or mourning rites:

> "The displays that necessarily and obligatorily express the shared sorrow is evidence that, even at this moment, society is more alive and active than ever. In fact, when social feeling suffers a painful shock, it reacts with greater force than usual. One never held so tightly to one's family when it has just been tested. This excess of energy all the more thoroughly erases the effects of the crippling that occurred to begin with, and in this way the sensation of cold that death everywhere brings with it is dissipated. The group feels its strength gradually coming back to it; it begins again to hope and to live. One comes out of mourning, and one comes out of it thanks to mourning itself."

Yet, much of the sociology of death resists seeing the interplay between individual and collective grief and mourning as "social constructions meriting sociological scrutiny" (Charmaz & Milligan, 2006; 517). These grief and mourning social constructions are important keys for further research especially as interaction rituals and emotion may serve to neutralize, mediate or calm the individual and collective responses to death events such as 9/11. Further understanding and research into these types of reactions to the social processes of death, dying and grieving may also suggest exciting new possibilities for research and the study of dark tourism. For it is here that sociologists might confront and challenge conventional views of "normal grief" being an emotion lying in the "personal domain" and validate various types of contemporary grief interaction rituals and responses as this allows for a renewed examination of loss and bereavement (Charmaz & Milligan, 2006). Not only will studying grief from a sociological perspective be useful for the study of the dark tourism phenomenon and the sociology of death, but it may also open up the possibility of fresh new insights into the study of social bonds (Charmaz & Milligan, 2006).

Respondents agreed that the site, as a sacred place of disposition for the dead acts as a safe harbour or place for gathering and ritual as one might carry out in a funeral or cemetery context. "Oh, sure. Oh sure. And contemplative too" (Interview #11, 2013) and

"yes, I think going to the site is therapeutic, like coming to the cemetery" (Interview #12, 2013). Lastly, "the day is very important to me. All my friends who have relatives whose names are on there. It's very therapeutic and that's all that's important to me" (Interview #27, 2013).

Interviewee #8 (2013) agrees, "I think yes, to stand here and remember the persons and situations" Another says "yes, I think very therapeutic, especially if you knew someone, or if it were just a traumatic day for you. Same as closure a little bit" (Interview #18, 2013). Similarly, "if I had lost somebody yeah - I think I would appreciate having a memorial and a massive event like this to help me" (Interview #17, 2013). Finally, one notes:

> "Yes, I would agree it's therapeutic. You know, although never having experienced anything like going to a site where somebody was killed or lost I have some level of empathy. I could see going through the process and what they sacrificed, that it would be a good place" (Interview #23, 2013).

Respondents recognise that the site experience provided both a new reality and the opportunity to complete a part of mourning for families and for the larger group, even if these mourning rites might have to be repeated on other occasions to complete their collective journey:

> "This site is a good way for people to remember. I didn't know until the tour that actually they close this site often to everyone except loved ones of 9/11 so that they can go in there and remember and mourn. I think that's a special thing to do for the families. I think the site is beautiful and impactful. I think they make such a dedication to the victims" (Interview #32, 2013).

> "Just also an overwhelming sense of loss how large it was. You could see that with some of the people around that were visiting it was moving. We were moved but for other people, they were just breaking up and in tears. It's branded as sudden and overwhelming...events such as this" (Interview #13, 2013).

One respondent interprets the loss caused by 9/11 and the memories at the site while on tour as one that could have possibly have been his own reality:

> "It invokes a lot of emotion. I'm also a first responder in Ohio, so paying my respects to those that perished doing the job that could very easily have been me and my friends. It was very moving and it did bring back a lot of memories" (Interview #22, 2013).

7.2.2 *Social Consolidation*

While the death system (through both its components and functions)allows social actors to symbolically dispose of the dead through public acts and the construction of various monuments around the site, it can also be noted that the interaction with various components (such as objects, things and symbols) can play a very important role in moving a bereaved society and its members toward social consolidation after these deaths. This section will consider the manner in which through interaction rituals at the site social consolidation may take place on both an individual and a collective level. Firstly, it will consider the comments about consolidation from individuals who have suffered a direct loss. It will then consider consolidation on a group or collective level. Contributing to this are rituals that draw people together to offer support to each other even as they mourn the loss, celebrate the life that has now ended, and memorialize the person who died.

Most of the respondents agreed that the site provided a form of therapeutic atmosphere for them. It is to be noted that the interviews with the respondent visitors involved the use of the word "therapeutic", but that in these interviews the context and nature of the dialogue made it clear that this term was not being used in a psychological sense, but rather in terms of a healing of shared emotions within their social world or context, and not their private world. For that reason, the respondents referred to shared experiences with people or to interactions with others or the site in a shared sense. In this regard, one respondent observed that "there are 400 of us and we all say same thing - that this site and people are the most beautiful, therapeutic sessions that we have had for the rest of our lives here" (Interview #3, 2013). Another respondent also refers to the social consolidation function when he suggests, "once I started doing site tours at Tribute (WTC Visitor Centre), I started feeling a lot of love and support from people and it helped me. I really like it here. Everyone is super, super sweet. And they take such good care of you" (Interview #5, 2013). Interviewee #6 (2013) explains that volunteering as a guide on site "gives me an opportunity to sort of heal and to talk about what went on in my own experience and to share and to talk to people. It's therapeutic and I definitely put it into context."

7.2.2.1 Direct Involvement with the Dead at the Site

For those who experienced the deaths of the victims at the site, whether vicariously or directly, the site is acknowledged to be a place that attracts visitors who need an experience of involvement that allows them to deal with their feelings, fractured social bonds or attachments or seek support or social consolation, or an understanding of the death event that permits them to move forward in their everyday lives and with an acceptance of moral purpose. Interview #22 (2013) summarizes the actions in individuals and society through the experience of involvement (emotion) quite well by suggesting "I think a lot of areas that become tourist attractions start out as a place where people take a pilgrimage to...it's more of a place that draws people that want to be involved and experience it or find closure of some sort. I think that grief that a lot of people have is not having the closure" (Interview #22, 2013).

Some respondents identify the involvement at site as very important to them because it was the place of death for their loved ones. The process of social consolidation is ongoing with interactions at the site as one respondent, who lost both a father and an uncle described her journey so far:

> "I've gone through his life itself but I haven't devoted too much time to just sitting there (at the site) and I feel like I need to see it, to look at it and to look how high it is and then physically look at how okay, the buildings fell down, what was he doing? I haven't gone through the logistics of his death yet. I know it would be nice to have the dog there when I do that because that's where they're buried. That's the last piece of the puzzle - obviously it's the hardest piece. I have not been able to do it yet" (Interview #5, 2013).

For others, the site interactions have already served to provide for social consolidation and a source of emotional energy in the aftermath of the loss of her younger daughter. Interviewee #3 (2013) explains:

> "It took me four years to get back to this place. I never thought that I ever wanted to see it again but they had asked my oldest daughter in New Jersey to come and do this (volunteer) but she had a full time job at that time and she couldn't do it. So she says, "Mom, why don't you do it. It would get you out of the house, you would meet people and you would feel better. Let me tell you, we all say the same thing...it feels so good and is rewarding because everybody is so compassionate, they just love to hear your stories and we only have to do it when we want to."

7.2.2.2 Loss to Group

As mentioned in Chapter 5 when reviewing visitors' prior experience of involvement an overwhelming number of those at the 9/11 Memorial were very adamant about the very idea that their coming together on site was because of some sense of duty or obligation. As noted earlier, in reviewing the extent of prior experiences of involvement or interaction rituals relevant to the death event, many visitors identified with being American and this sense of duty may be patriotic in nature. When asked in the interviews about a connection to anyone or to the events at the 9/11 site, many suggested being part of a collective, rather than individual loss when answering: "No- other than being American" (Interview #1, 2013), or visitors referred to "we", "city", "country", "they", "victims" in a collective sense that suggested a bond with those affected by the death event (Interviews, 2013), that required some activity, or as Interviewee #23 (2013) put it "I think this happening on American soil and killing so many lives, it's a part of the American psyche to have a place like this and to pay respect."

Visitors explained that the visit allowed them "to pay respects to the victims as well as acknowledge their own grief" or "I like to participate and to pay respects at our national Memorials" (Interview #23, 2013). This, for the individual and collective self is the function of social consolidation: "it brings the nation together and makes me feel that I'm closer to the people I live with" (Interview #32, 2013) or serves to function in the same way as:

> "...other national treasures that we (Americans) have. I mean they go to Hawaii (Pearl Harbour), and the Arizona Memorial, and the Bunker Hill Memorial, Gettysburg Battlefield. All of them have a tragic air about them. It's a piece of our American history. It's a very unfortunate part but it's our life. If you don't respect it, you don't see it and you're not going to have it" (Interview #22, 2013).

Not only is this social consolidation on site incredibly significant for the American people but some of those travelling internationally also feel this way about the site too. It is interesting to note that for some of those visiting from other countries see the opportunities for social consolidation. One identifies herself as "a tourist from Germany so I see myself a tourist but I see this as a Memorial centre for everybody in the US and also for relatives" (Interview #24, 2013). A Russian tourist explained his feeling about the support and opportunity for consolidation for those journeying to the site as he exclaims:

"it is important for the people - the 3,000 people, you must be prepared. Again it can happen anywhere. So all people, everyone around the world need to be aware of this and see the strength. You must visit this (9/11 Memorial site) too... because in your country, this can happen the same" (Interview #30, 2013).

Some of the poignant reflections written on visitor cards posted by visitors offer messages of support that extend beyond borders (Plate 17):

"We will never forget that day for the horror it caused and brother and sisterhood it created for us all. With love from Canada"

"Not an American, not a New Yorker, not even from this continent, but the sadness that engulfed everyone's hearts resides in mine as I walked around ground zero, thinking how it was like on 9/11, empathizing with the victims all across the world, we share the same humanity and common understandings of Love. As much as Americans will never forget, so will I not forget my walk around what used to be the icon of New York – Singapore"

Plate 17: Loss to Group: Opportunities from Around the World for Social Consolidation

At the 9/11 site, the narrative matters to visitors. It does not simply provide an explanation in a factual or historical sense, but rather provides a catalyst for an emotional response. More specifically, it encourages visitors to feel that the site is a safe place to come together, reflect, grieve and heal. Interviewee #1 (2013) adds to this by expressing:

"I think death is something that people do not know a lot about and they don't have clear answers - they don't have many answers to it - there is a fascination to it. It might not be something they want to talk a lot about a lot but I think it's something that affects people and that's why they come here."

Another demonstrates that:

"You get that connection to death because they died. That's how you start to mourn. So when you share that your personal connection died, people go, "What if my

personal connection died?" So it's almost like at the site - it's like going to the funeral if they learn the similar way" (Interview #5, 2013).

Respondents touch upon the experiences personally felt by opening up publically:

> "I don't think that anybody thinks it's something that we have to keep quiet about. It actually, therapeutically, if it comes out, it's so much nicer than keeping it inside of you. And we relate that to the other people here. People take it up differently. They realize that if that's the way you feel about it, we know how to react because if you feel it's something that you can talk about and come out here and talk about it to all the people, than we should feel the same way. This is what - it's so much better to bring it out than to keep quiet" (Interview #3, 2013).

> Interview #17 (2013) suggests "I think people feel more open to talk about things when this tragedy happened, when 9/11 happened, the world has become so much more open to - it just seems being kinder to each other in expressing and talking about things."

Whether it was to merely reflect and share with others, or take the emotion from the interaction to another level, the social consolidation provided by the journey to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum has given those a place to come together, feel welcome and consolidate their feelings through an adequate expression of social ritual. This is reflected in part by Interview #23 (2013) in that:

> "In our society...in the U.S. society...I think we have rituals and activities that we go through. Something like this was such a national tragedy that we continue to memorialize and talk about it. But I think in a lot of places, once it's over, it's over. So it's a little different - the scale of it made it more of a conversation that will continue. You know it's often in our personal lives and someone's died, it's makes people uncomfortable to keep talking about it. But here, because of the scale and the national tragedy part of it, people keep talking about it".

Social consolidation on both an individual and collective level is a function that looks to the adjustment that must be made in the aftermath of death. The 9/11 Memorial site certainly provides a site at which this function may be carried out; but more importantly provides the ritual interactions that visitors' experience that will provide support for necessary adjustments (Plate 18).

Plate 18: Social Consolidation of Feelings through Expression of Social Ritual (Source: Stone, 2012)

7.2.3   Making Sense of the Death Event

The use of narrative by both guides and visitors - both individually and collectively - to mediate the events and surroundings at the 9/11 Memorial (also discussed above as part of the components in the death system known as individuals) also functions to allow those to make sense of death. Kastenbaum (2007) states that many individuals have direct connections through their social roles with death. Those visiting and volunteering at dark tourism sites are very relevant to site interactions through the roles they play. These individuals are involved in creating or supporting the networks and meanings around death at the site.

The emotional narratives enacted by guides about the death event on 9/11 often help visitors to make sense of the death event and can sometimes bring closure. In this way, both guides and visitors are able to further mediate by making sense of the death event through ritual and narrative structure that created a form of collective energy and emotion. This is displayed through a number of guides and their interactions with visitors;

"I know when I talk to people, I tell them about my experiences and the fact that working in the tower, when I came out of the tower and saw the people were jumping, it left an impression back here that never left me. Because for me, these people came to work just like I came to work. They were no different than me. They didn't do anything wrong. They didn't hurt anybody. Yeah, I think tourists are sincere people and put it into context, my story does affect them" (Interview #6, 2013).

"I can't tell you how many people come up to me saying things like "the tour was very instructive as it was but when we heard the personal story - it really did something". We're bringing back home now something that is staying in us and we now realize how destructive that day was for a lot of people" (Interviewee #3, 2013).

Lastly, a guide shares that going through the events of 9/11 proved to be a strong catalyst for conversation and closure for some visitors. He explains "on this tour, I had a girl from Australia and she kind of studied 9/11. She knew everything about it and today when we talked it was kind of like closure. It was her first trip to New York" (Interview #26, 2013). Similarly, the guide shared that:

"I've had so many people on tours and I tell my story but you gather the people afterwards and they all want to tell you where they were. There was this girl I believe she was from Canada and this is when we were doing the perimeter, and she broke down crying at the last stop and I mean really, I went over and I hugged her and I said, "Are you okay?" And her mother came over and explained that all she wanted was to come here and through my tour, she got closure from the events of that day, and that it meant so much to her" (Interview #26, 2013).

The visitor respondents also made sense of the death event through ritual and narrative structure that created a form of collective energy and emotion. One suggests after her tour, "if you lose someone in such a public way, in kind of a senseless way. It shows that they're important and need to be remembered not just by you but by everyone" (Interview #18, 2013).

Interview #1 (2013) explains that:

"I think it's something that people do not know a lot about and they don't have clear answers - they don't have many answers to it - that there is a fascination to it and they want to talk about it....but there's hundreds of thousands of answers to this as far as clarity of what took place and this is what we're here for. It's like on every tour you go. They have things you can take with you to remember it, you know understand it".

Visitors were found to be both informed and provoked by various things while on site. Interviewee #31 (2013) he said that certain objects and pictures in the Museum made him think about how angry he was at the perpetrators. He goes on to say "in the Museum, I thought about the perpetrators. But once I got out into the Memorial itself, I didn't." When

asked about her thoughts on some of the artifacts in the gallery, Interview # 4 (2013) immediately starts to tear up and says "you're going to make me cry. It's really emotional". Another admits when viewing the temporary on site Museum, "there were a couple of times where I actually - it definitely brought tears to my eyes, especially where Flight 93 victims were recognized - so many names. Yeah, that's very emotional" (Interview #15, 2013).

At the time of the observation and interviews (2013) it had come to my attention that there was some controversy over the appropriateness of permitting visitors to see actual artifacts and personal items related to the tragedy and its victims (Plate 19). The suggestion was that allowing visitors to see these items would be too graphic, or even disrespectful to the memory of the victims and their families. The general consensus amongst those being interviewed suggests that the exposure to these items and site paraphernalia pertaining to this tragic event is a good thing (Interviews, 2013). In fact, despite the concerns that had been raised about the graphic nature of items to be placed on display, the majority of respondents made special reference to the "need to know what happened" that day (September 11, 2001) (Interviews, 2013). It should be noted that many in tourism management and tourism studies debate the appropriateness of using these items in an effort to make sense of the death event (Lennon and Foley,1999; 48).

Plate 19: Making Sense of Death: Artifacts

The choice made by visitors to face and expose themselves to such a tragic site laden with graphic items may seem hard to understand on one level, however it speaks to Kastenbaum's (2007) analysis of death systems in our society in that we must develop ways to explain, understand and make sense of death. Especially when death undermines the way in which we interpret the world as in the case of the tragic deaths related to the events of 9/11 which have the heightened potential to confuse ideas about life (Kastenbaum, 2007; Doka, 2010). Many, such as Interviewee #2 (2013) suggest:

> "Yeah, as far as some of the graphic parts of the Museum, whether that's going to be (too emotional)... personally, I think they should include that because it was part of what happened and it's a very unsettling aspect of it. But I think they should include that."

Another adds:

> "Yeah, I'm good with it (the graphic nature of the Museum) because they have to know what happened that day. When the Museum opens up, they'll basically have a better - a better understanding. I mean I'm pretty sure everyone knows what happened but coming here, you can see the things, like see the artifacts and the personal stories of the loved ones, their talking about their loved ones" (Interview #28, 2013).

Others believe the presentation of graphic or real event related items will "be the topping" (Interview #26, 2013). People will get the full experience of what happened that day" (Interview #26, 2013). Interview #30 (2013) explains:

> "I do like museums for sure as you can see all the things that are in the Museum, you can agree yeah, I saw here things in those twin towers that were falling. And some people will never understand how important that is."

Finally, one interviewee (#5, 2013) describes so powerfully why the graphic contents in the Museum allows her to understand but to also move forward. She tries "to remind people that - unless it's your death, death does not end life."

The narrative to "make sense of the death" provided at the 9/11 Memorial and Museum is very important as it helps visitors to make sense of the deaths. In Stone's (2012) mortality mediation model, narrative (which deals with close relationships and group membership) mediates the relationships with death (or the fear of more deaths) for both the individual self and the collective self. Stone (2012) sees narrative provided in the form of education or entertainment, as a first step in the mediation of death. The mediation is

completed when the narrative connects the living and the dead by one or more of (a) haunting memories, (b) memorialization (c) moral instruction and / or (d) *momento mori*. This mediation of death is accomplished by "filtering" or "bracketing" death. However, the findings from the empirical research for this thesis indicate that the "making sense of death function" is more than just a mediating filter or bracket - it operates and interacts with the above noted symbolic disposal of the dead and the social consolidation functions to do so much more – to create new emotional meanings and realities. The shared experience of involvement by those at the 9/11 site and the emotional energy produced by interaction proved to strengthen and empower in many ways. This is in part because the site afforded the ability to write or rewrite the history of people's lives through narrative using various interpretations of the death event that was 9/11 (Sharpley& Stone, 2009). Podoshen (2013) also adds to the importance of interpretation in that it is crucial to distinguish actual belief from opinion at sites (such as 9/11) and equally important to the actual interpretation taking place in the mind of those specifically relating to what is being displayed at the time. Interpretation is considered a very complex process which purpose is not only to inform but also to provoke those that are being informed by the interpretation (Podoshen, 2013).

7.2.4   *Moral Guidance (Killing Rules)*

7.2.4.1 *Killing Rules Per se*

Doka (2010; 1) acknowledges one of Kastenbaum's (2001) functions of the death system in society which are "norms that indicate when, how, and for what reasons individuals or other living creatures can be killed". For example, in the case of 9/11, norms were constructed around killing within the context of a military response – the war on terror – to the tragic death event. This response represents the "killing rules" imposed not simply by the United States but also by its allies that in effect established a cultural view or symbolic system that justified the war on 'terrorism'. Collins (2004) explains this by adding that when symbols are treated with disrespect or impiety, and ritual proprieties are broken, individuals feel moral

uneasiness and will react angrily to insults toward these symbols as they matter greatly to them.

Of course, these emotions and prior interactions are relevant to an understanding as to what visitors may have brought to the site when observed and interviewed in 2013. This is not surprising as what is felt by some visitors is a form of loss that describes circumstances in which visitors may experience grief from a death event such as 9/11 because it represents what is described as an "assumptive world violation", being the loss in what a person assumes or expects to be true about people, society, or the world. This type of loss may often give rise to anger towards the perpetrators or the essential fact that the death event took place. Many respondents expressed their anger, at least initially. As a result of his anger, one visitor voices his view over the debate over the rebuilding of the site by suggesting "you had to rebuild bigger and stronger and better to show strength to the terrorists" (Interview #6, 2013). But others acknowledge that their anger has been moderated or replaced. Interview #17 (2013) explains "I've stopped feeling angry. I've thought about it war and the Middle East but I didn't get angry about it here. I just want to protect our country so it won't happen again." While Interview #23 (2013) also expresses that her anger has subsided in that she feels "It helps to face the memories and other things that I have from that day. I'm done being angry years ago. Anger just begets more anger. So I would have to say you carry on". Others still claim to have some emotion towards the perpetrators but recognize the need to manage it. Interview #5 (2013) exclaims: "Why would they do this? Why me? Why my family? WHY? You know, you get angry! I'm starting to realize thou it's not healthy to be mad all the time and it's not that constructive!". Finally, one notes:

> "Imagine being in that position of making that decision. How am I going to die? I mean it's unfair. It's hurtful. It's why many people have anger against the terrorists and what they did. So I try to channel it and understand it but it's still with me and it still makes me angry and so I reflect on it" (Interview #6, 2013).

Moral guidance to those who wish to fight back, including bombing or other overt acts, was similarly noted. Interview #12 (2013) notes in conversation with a friend: "You heard about the Pentagon too?" And I'm like, "Oh, my God! This is war! This is war!" Another talks

about the site as "more of a place to contemplate control. To contemplate control over the people who did this (Interview #1, 2013). Whereas Interviewee #23 (2013) adds:

> "We did talk a little bit about why we would consider bombing Syria, which is to inflame people in the Middle East even more. But then we also talked about the United States is damned if you do and damned if you don't, right? You can't be a bystander but then damned if you do. So I'm more angry at the world situation that keeps getting perpetuated."

Finally, Interview #7 (2013) explains to me some of the methods currently being used in order to fight back:

> "You'll see them sometimes in real beefed up outfits and big guns. It's called a Hercules package. Oh yeah, they've got full on rifles. That's basically to show force and strength. They would go to sensitive locations, so they would go to churches, they would check mosques, they checked temples, subway stations, like we're here and we're watching you. Part of it is they want to look intimidating - well it's like if you think of the Boston Marathon, if they had dropped it off if they saw a guy looking like that (police in militarized uniform). So that's kind of their idea is just deterrence by force".

7.2.4.2 Moral Guidance about the Visitor Experience

This function of the death system indeed should include not just killing rules per se, but the moral guidance that is to be taken from the visitor experience, or even who should have the visitor experience at the site. In this sense, it is important to note that the use of the work "moral" really equates to "social" in a broader sense. So while the function may be said to include "right and wrong" or some notion of ethical conduct, it is not limited to that. As will be seen from the discussion below this notion of social guidance extends to a much broader area, including who should stay away from the site, whether the site might be seen as promoting a disaster for America, who should be provided with social status as a result of the death event, and of particular interest to the dark tourism literature inspired by the tourism management studies, whether such a site should permit commercial activities.

While the majority of respondents agreed with the therapeutic nature of the site, there were some who were uneasy as they discussed their apprehension, worry or fear over visits to the site by those who might not be able to adjust or were having difficult times with grief or mourning. This provided some social guidance about who should or should not be involved

with the site experience and interactions. When Interviewee #16 (2013) was asked about the site providing a therapeutic atmosphere, she replied "well probably not, just because of the emotions of it." This was furthered by one who suggests the need for more attention to emotions in that "I think they need another place for the ones who were deeply affected to go to. Like a little chapel or something. Why promote something that was devastating to America" (Interview #31, 2013). Some even state they are still unsure whether the mediated nature of emotions at the site are good for everybody:

> "Even for me, I was surprised about how people were standing by the pool and they were just smiling. I mean you must be respectful. Somehow you can smile you have an idea of what is going on but you smile. Sometimes it's a false smile, "How are you." Just comes out – you can stay and see them" (Interview #30, 2013).

> "I mean I will say that many people who were affected do feel some kind of therapeutic benefit to having a memorial there, having the name of their loved one there, having the recognition, although I don't think it's 100% therapeutic for anybody but I can't speak for everybody. Yeah, I think some family members go there to address grief. Some of them stay away because they don't want to address it at that place" (Interview #25, 2013).

> "I had clients that I worked with and I know they said that all of those people had died because they were all the way up there. And like I didn't even try to go back to go think about who they were because it was just a little bit too sad" (Interview #12, 2013)

Even some of the guides expressed their concerns about their role in explaining death to children or some who may be emotionally vulnerable:

> "I'm almost afraid of talking to the younger kids because I don't want to be the person who introduces the idea that Mom and Dad die. Because when I was twelve - it didn't happen - like they don't die, like they just don't. So I'm very afraid of having to do that. Actually I said to my therapist, how do I tell kids this and not make them hate me? Or telling them that their parents die! It's a problem, obviously. I didn't draw any attention to it but I thought I could give these high school students a try. I was not expecting that and that's why I put the jokes and things in there because I feel so awful to make people cry. But still. I know they're crying for empathy and stuff but still, I made you sad but it's still not cool with me" (Interview #5, 2013).

7.2.4.3 *Moral Guidance and Social Status*

Moral guidance may also be said to be behind the recognition of and status given to victims, their families, and first responders (Plate 20). This is demonstrated around the site in part by the ability to construct and strengthen objects at the 9/11 site through the heavy emphasis and status given to victims' families and the sacred objects that represent the NYPD (New

York Police Department) and the FDNY (Fire Department New York). This is supported by

one uniformed officer who said:

> "Honestly, I didn't have to pay to get in today. They gave me a visitor pass, I came right in, they stopped the line, the guys in uniform walk right in and walk out, VIP (Very Important Person) treatment" (Interview #31, 2013)."

Another who was related to an officer killed in the attacks suggests:

> "It really blows my mind because it really kind of is celebrity status. If you 'Google' me, I come up. Like it's really strange. That's why my 'Facebook' is not my full first and last name, because I realized that. But it's like it's kind of nice. I always wondered if I would ever make a mark on the world and in my own way, I have. Maybe not for a good reason" (Interview #5, 2013).

Similarly, a volunteer states:

> "This is me honouring the people that I knew that died that day for my company. So that is cause it could have been me - it's to honour everyone that died. It's good to volunteer too. I have a neighbour that I talk to on Facebook about it and he wanted information about volunteering because he worked in the building too. So we're actually ambassadors of getting the point across about volunteering" (Interview #28, 2013).

Visitors to the site even acknowledge the uniformed officers in that:

> "I feel like they're celebrities walking around those fire departments in town and on site. They are celebrities, you know it! Fire fighters yesterday had more people stop them and take pictures with them. It was so cute. The perception of these people has changed, definitely" (Interview #15, 2013).

It is noted that "there were a lot of guards to keep people moving around and feeling safe.

So secure.Yeah, well I guess they have to" (Interview #21, 2013). The appeal for those of

the many uniformed officers and the awe in which they are held was obvious through

participant observation as well as when conducting interviews with respondents. One such

scenario arose right in the middle of an interview when a member of the public interrupted

my discussion with a fire-fighter who was wearing part of his official gear:

> Someone: Are you a fire-fighter?
> Interviewee: Yeah, I was a fireman.
> Someone: Thank you for your service!

7.2.4.4 *Moral Guidance on Commercial Site Activities*

Moral guidance may also be said to be elastic and in some cases may permit on site actions that might otherwise be considered to be crude or inappropriate for a sacred place. In an earlier section, the use of bracelets that were provided in consideration of "a donation" was used to describe the manner in which focus on an object like a bracelet and the sharing of an emotion transformed the bracelet into a new symbol which housed group feelings. In order to further analyze this emotional / commercial phenomenon, a trip to the "9/11 Memorial Store" was taken to investigate how merchandise was sold. Everything in the store was considered "official merchandise" and labelled as such (Participant Observation, 2013). Moreover, most of the merchandise found in the shop was symbolizing the official NYPD and FDNY logos on the tags (Participant Observation, 2013). It should also be recognized in this analysis that - although not at the time of purchase, but more so after - I too formed a relationship to this given symbolic system and became a part of interpreting these men and woman as heroes and wanted a piece to show off their emblem and remember them by. As a result, I find myself in possession of a t-shirt with an official NYPD

logo on the front and the words "9/11 Memorial: 10 Years. Honor and Remember" on the back (Plate 21).

Plate #21: Relationship to Given Symbolic System
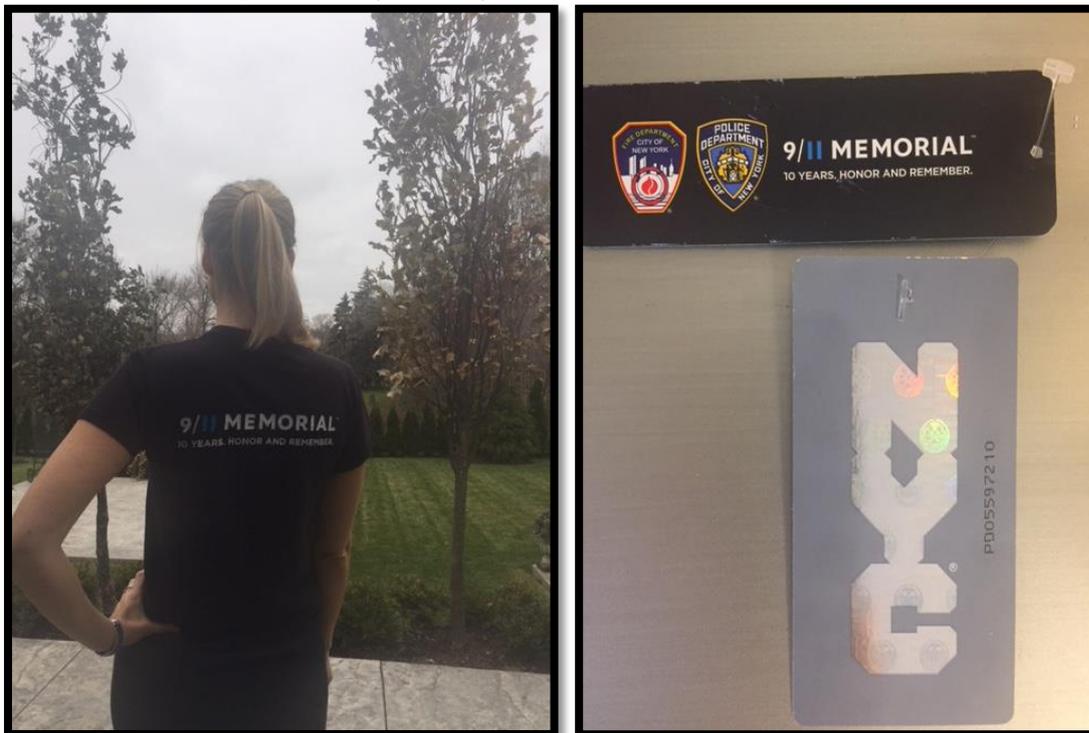
In order to demonstrate social solidarity within the group, rituals exert pressures toward conformity and thus show various kinds of social relationships that are enacted by the different shades of deference rituals (Collins, 2004). "These range in time and continuity from brief face engagements to acquaintanceship anchored in past relations, to the obligations incurred by varying degrees of intimacy" (Collins, 2004; 25). Another way in which respondents could be demonstrating their mood or manner of interacting at the 9/11 site is through social bonds pertaining to the dead and the power they have to induce strong reactions in people that consequently allow them to substitute the emotional relationships they once had with death, with a material good or physical surrounding. Interview #15 (2013) explains;

> "I feel sorry for the victims, actually, sympathy for the families, that's my thing, especially being parents and grandparents. We bought this book today. I guess I didn't really think about that (sale of commercial merchandise). And this we really like".

Another comments on the emotional relationship felt in the gift shop:

"And then when we went into the shop and just looked at the merchandise, it seemed to bring back memories, you know when we looked at all that. It's supposed to be a business centre but you go in and it's all about some mugs and things. You look at the time line (Events of 9/11) across the top and that was quite interesting. It makes you realize what happened to these people. Obviously, we lived through it but to recount it, yeah, makes me remember that" (Interview #20, 2013).

The morals represented and reflected by the group at the 9/11 site also elevates the bond to this space or the material good which in turn produces higher visitor patronage and increases the sales of commercial merchandise through emotional connection to the site (Plate 22). Goffman (1967) refers to these as pressures to conform and set boundaries that are related to a bond which in turn persons perform ritual work to both keep up an expected tie and to fend off intrusions. A telling example of this looks to those who condone sales of commercial merchandise from authorized 9/11 Memorial and Museum Retailers but do not from other sources. One says quite plainly, "well at the visitor centre, I don't have a problem but out on the street, then I don't like it" (Interview #14, 2013). Another explains that:

"I don't necessarily agree with it (commercial sales of merchandise) unless there is a charitable outcome, maybe to keep the site going or if it was dedicated to families that have lost a loved one – maybe something like that" (Interview #18, 2013).

Finally, one states:

"I mean, for the museum itself, to help with all the proceeds and stuff, I do like that but individual people who are doing the books and stuff, I try to avoid that, personally, myself. I think it depends on who it is that's doing the promoting. The reason being - the way that the 9/11 Memorial does it is a good way to go about it. But for other companies that might be using it, it's just a merchandise thing, definitely not" (Interview #16, 2013).

Plate 22: Entrance to the 9/11 Memorial Museum Store
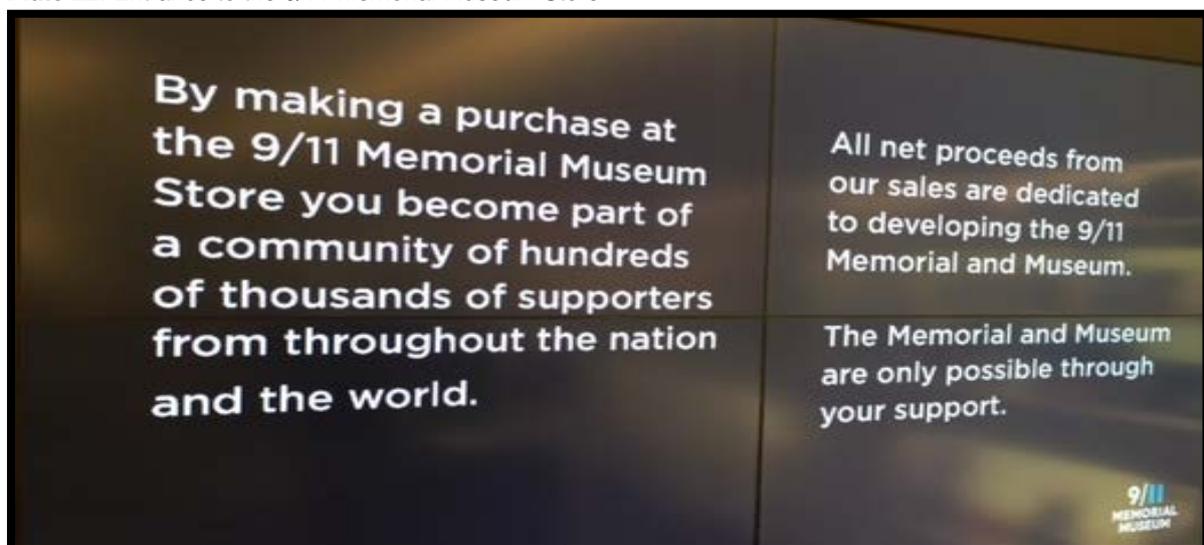
Emotion or the experience of involvement those had with the site was used as an outlet to entice visitors to buy products or to demonstrate their devotion to the given symbolic system dedicated to the site. This is represented by those respondents who expressed they do not have a problem with the sale of commercial merchandise. Some support this stance by looking at it in the practical sense: "you go to places, you have to sell something...it brings awareness, it brings funds and monetary means to keep it going for many years to come, so I'm not against it" (Interview #22, 2013). Or: "I believe they have to do it to afford it. It just is. It's free to go and visit so they've got to pay for it somehow" (Interview #13, 2013). One discusses the fact that as long as sales aren't too apparent:

> "If I don't have to go out through merchandise, that's one good thing. So yes it's fine, there's no obligation. Yeah because often when you go somewhere, you have to exit through the shop. I thought maybe they would do that today but they didn't, so that's quite good" (Interview #10, 2013).

Some respondents even admitted sales on site didn't even cross their minds or observed that there were so little sales around the site it didn't affect them: "I didn't really see that. Well I saw books. Yeah, well I didn't really see because I wasn't looking for anything" (Interview #21, 2013). Others note:

> "Ummh, oh, I hadn't thought about that (commercial sales of merchandise). Yes, I think that's fine because you can use it for the site and yeah, I think it would be fine. I like the place. I think it's pretty good" (Interview #9, 2013).

Or:

> "I was actually surprised I didn't see as many as I thought there would be (stores). We saw one business there. It seemed very minimal for the actual 9/11. Now we've - there was a store on the way out but we kind of walked through really quickly and then when we got our visitor passes" (Interview #17, 2013).

Though some still supported sales around the site, it was recognized that this may not always be the best approach. "It's disrespectful but it's also such a phenomenon worldwide that commercial interests are attracted to places where people visit" (Interview #25, 2013). Similarly:

> "It seems a little bit like exploitation, people making a profit off a pretty tragic event. But we are a free country. People are entitled to do what they want. That's what I do. I protect the people so they can do what they want to do" (Interview #31, 2013).

Although the above findings suggest there was a clear majority of respondents - all American except two - who suggested the sale of commercial merchandise in and around the site was acceptable, there were some - all International except one - who did not like this: "I don't think it's good, no. I don't think you should combine that. It's such an emotional thing, you shouldn't combine" (Interview #8, 2013). Or, "we didn't really like it. We didn't care for it. I didn't think that it was appropriate that people were going around selling things and smiling" (Interview #20, 2013). Others tend to remark about the sadness of it: "that's a bad - a bit sad thing. I don't know, it's a place of memorial - people died there. So I don't know if it's right to make a commercial benefit out of this story" (Interview #24, 2013). And, "sometimes it's very sad that if you donate money there, it is like a business. I think it's not a tourist zone. So even if you will never give money for them, you must go and see it. But I don't like when they just donate money, I can't" (Interview #30, 2013). Finally, one refers to this phenomenon as an "American" thing:

> "Oh, they're insistent on it! Supposedly...The U.S. are...I just don't understand that...You're not going to be able to stop it. No, we didn't sell souvenirs for the bombing on July 7th. We made a wee bit by more people coming through the coffee shops around the site - but they're making it a commercial enterprise, the one with the donations, I think this will turn it into a tourist attraction" (Interview #19, 2013).

Of course, the commercial enterprise on site nicely highlights again the tension that may arise between those who view things as "sacred" or "profane" (Plate 23). In Durkheimian terms, the mundane activity of producing income to pay expenses may be said to be "not sacred" but "profane". Yet, given the "sacred" nature of the site experience, the emotion or experience of involvement with the deaths about and the interactions in the site experience, some may be accepting of the commercial enterprise as simply part of the ritual interaction while others would see them as "profane" in that sense they are "sacrilegious".

Plate 23: The Sacred versus Profane

7.3　Conclusion

In the preceding Chapter 6, the findings demonstrated the manner in which the visitor experience may be comprised of a series of interactions with death system components. These interactions with the components follow ritual processual ingredients that have been made clear by Collins (2004) and may be said to produce for visitors, even momentarily with each successful interaction, a new reality.

This Chapter 7 then has considered selected interactions within the context of four of the critical functions of the death system. The functions of the death system in operation at the site are not discrete ones, but rather interconnected. The obligation or motivation to gather at the place of the actual disposal of so many of the dead from the 9/11 event is of importance within the visitor experience as it permits a place for mourning on an individual and collective level. Along with this gathering at the site of disposition, visitors as part of their experience were allowed the opportunity to seek or offer social consolidation at the site of

the death event, which resulted in a number of observations about the therapeutic experience or closure shared by so many of the visitor respondents. And, perhaps because of this, visitors are able to make sense of what some might describe as the senselessness of the death event itself. And finally, the visitor experience was observed to include social or moral guidance insofar as the death event itself is concerned, as well as arguably the pressures to conform or set boundaries related to the death event as well as future (mediated) reactions or actions to it are concerned. These aspects of the visitor experience and the interplay within the operation of these functions contribute to the mediation of death.

With the benefit of some of the conclusions reached about the interaction rituals involving components of the death system at the 9/11 Memorial noted in the Conclusion to Chapter 6, the following conclusions relevant to the proposed model and the research question (and objectives) I would suggest that they are supported by the empirical research and discussion in this Chapter 7:

A. The (death system) components and functions at the site become the mutual focus of attention and produced a shared emotional mood among these visitors. Interactions with site components as described by visitors typically involve or relate to one or more of the four critical functions of the death system with respect to the death event represented at the site.

B. As suggested by the findings, the mutual focus of attention and shared emotional mood was apparent as visitors reflected upon the site as a safe, sacred place for the actual and symbolic disposition of the "souls" or remains of the dead. Visitors participated in social consolidation by way of both internal and external interactions that most visitors described as "therapeutic" that seem to address emotional responses to the grief and mourning about the death event that visitors say they share on an individual and collective basis. Visitors used this term to refer to healing of shared emotions within their social world, and not their private world. This is one of

the ritual ingredients used by Collins (2004) and the interactions that turn into the "situation(s)" discussed in Section 3.6.3 (a).

C. The opportunity for "social consolidation" of the site was especially noteworthy when visitors described their interactions. Visitors were motivated or attracted to continue their interactions given the new emotions they experienced on site.

D. The interplay between the sacred place and the opportunity for social consolidation is seen by visitors to bring the dead and the living closer together, or as one international visitor described it to have "empathy with the victims, but share the same humanity and common understanding of love" (Interview #24, 2013). This interplay among the functions is further seen when considering the visitors reactions to making sense of the death. Notwithstanding being confronted in interactions by the graphic or senseless or evil nature involved with the facts of the death event itself, visitors reported that not only did the site visit allow their anger or sadness to turn to new emotions, but that they were allowed "closure". For many visitors there was social or moral guidance provided, not only with respect to the status of victims and first responders, but also with respect to the manner in which visitors may act or conform after the site visit having regard to their new collective and individual feelings. This relates to Section 3.6.3 (b) and the discussion of the death system components and functions at the site and the interplay between them.

E. The internal and external ritual interactions create, for a time at least, a shared emotional mood that was reported by a majority of visitors. This is a collective emotion (rather than an individual one) from the visitors' perspective. This interaction process seems to involve a piacular rite or interaction ritual that has created a new or altered reality about the death event – a feeling of being able to deal with what many visitors described as "grief", "mourning", "anger" or "sadness" by being brought out of oneself into something larger and more powerful. To this end, visitors describe their

experience as noted throughout the findings to be something "sacred", "peaceful", "therapeutic", "helpful", "a relief", "a connection with souls of the dead and the living", "a sharing of humanity and love"; and so on. This experience relates back to the discussion noted in Section 3.6.3 (c).

F. As outlined in Section 3.6.3 (d), the cumulative interactions or situations with their attendant emotions, together with the operation of critical death system functions at the site, is the focus at which the mediation takes place. Visitors, in their interviews and based upon my observations, did not experience a new or altered reality about the death event based on any one particular interaction. Rather it was the whole of the experience, not one particular part, that must be considered in understanding both the process by which, and the focus at which, mediation takes place. Looking to the findings, and notably the visitor interviews, it certainly seems to be the case that the neutralization of the emotions (as Durkheim (1995; 405) describes it) that visitors brought to the site, the "therapeutic sessions", "closure" and "strength" arose from the visitor experience with its cumulative interactions.

G. The mediation of the death event is achieved not by narrative alone, nor by education or entertainment connecting the dead with the living which may involve cognitive processes and activities as proposed by Stone (2012) and suggested in Section 3.6.3 (d) and (e). Rather, it is clear that the visitor experience involves emotion and that the mediation of the death event is a mediation of, by and through emotions that are part of the visitor experience. This mediation is produced internally and externally for visitors by interactions involving what Durkheim (1995: 405) described a communion of "souls", or a communion of individual visitor consciousness and emotions through interaction rituals involving death system components that are organized around death system functions.

H. The four death system functions considered at the site are not discrete functions; they are interconnected in many ways as suggested in Section 3.6.3 (f). As one observes the sacred disposition of the death (and perhaps an interaction occurs with the use of an object, such as flowers on the parapets), one is connected to opportunities and interactions for social consolidation, making sense of the death, or for moral guidance. The four functions are similar to, but broader and more comprehensive than the modalities of narrative proposed by Stone (2012) (i.e. Haunting Memories, Memorialization, Moral Instruction, and Momento Mori). While the visitor respondents did identify some of these narrative modalities in the description of their experiences, they all pointed to emotion, rather than narrative, as the integral part of their visitor experience. And the emotions and interactions described by the visitors appears to correspond to the four functions.

Having considered ritual interactions within the context of four of the critical functions of the death system and the focus at which mediation may occur as part of the visitor experience, the next Chapter 8 will now complete the analysis of the mediation of the death event and the outcomes from the visitor experience.

8   RITUAL OUTCOMES: SOLIDARITY OR EMOTIONAL ENERGY

8.1   Introduction

This Chapter 8 will consider the outcomes from the visitor experience reported by respondents to determine whether visitors experienced feelings of solidarity (Durkheim, 1995) and emotional energy (Collins, 2004). These outcomes will be considered from the perspective of the proposed third observation point in the model, that is, at the end (or exit) of the visitor experience at the site (see Figure 8.1 below). Then this chapter will also consider whether some visitors may have completed a piaculum or whether additional interaction may be predicted for some visitors.

Figure 8.1: Observation Point #3
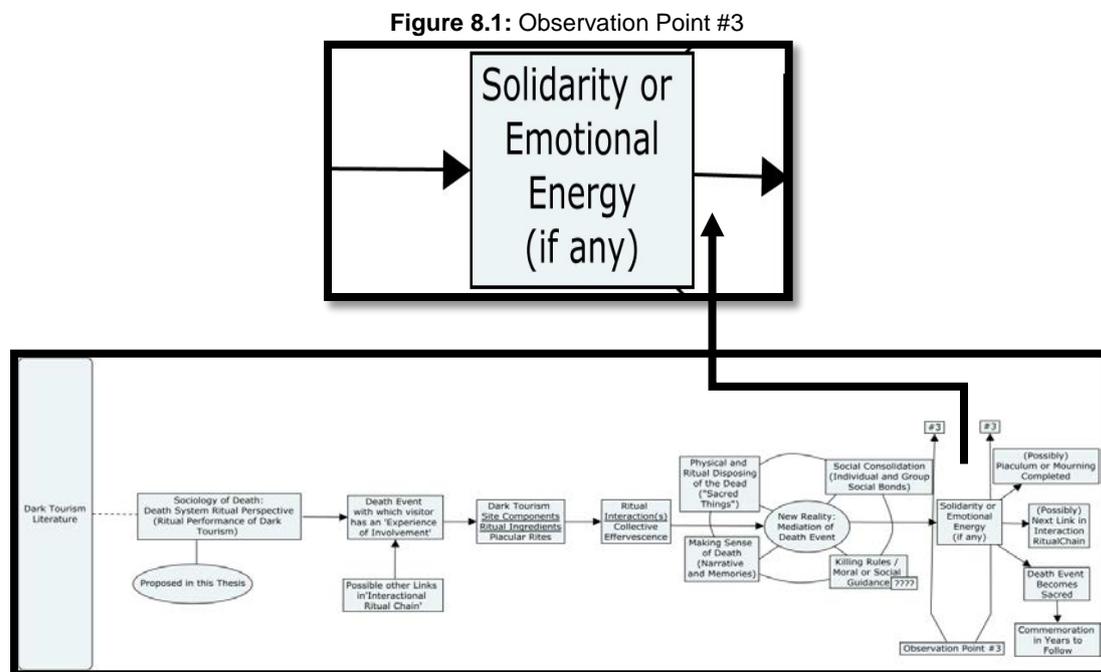
What will be made apparent in this Chapter, from both observation by the participant observer and by the respondents themselves is that a number of interactions take place during the visitor experience at the site that lead to outcomes of what Durkheim (1995) described as feelings of "solidarity", what Collin's (2004) described as emotional energy. As described in chapters five through seven, these interactions started with visitors bringing their own emotions and prior interactions to the site. Then, through a series of interactions involving the interplay between a mutual focus of attention and emotions involving components and functions of the death system at the site, a form of collective effervescence

is produced that brings visitors out of themselves into a new reality which is a collective emotion. This new reality then creates in the visitors a charged sense of solidarity or emotional energy.

Collins (2004) notes that "solidarity" (as used by Durkheim (1995)) and "emotional energy" are the same concepts. They are individual emotions. Solidarity or emotional energy is, a socially derived "feeling of confidence…a morally suffused energy; it makes the individual feel not only good, but exalted, with the sense of doing what is most important and most valuable" (Collins, 2004; 39). This emotional energy outcome produces or re-enforces positive membership feelings, sacred objects or symbolic emblems; and moral feelings of right and wrong.

8.2   Solidarity and Emotional Energy Outcomes

The production of high emotional energy is clear from a review of the language used by respondent visitors when talking about the outcome of their visit. Although emotions cannot be represented by words as pointed out by Franks (2006), it is the case that words that convey meanings that are consistent with Durkheim's (1995) and Collins (2004) explanation of solidarity and emotional energy may be found throughout the responses from many visitors. The visitor experience produced for visitors feelings they describe as being associated with: "stamina" (Interview #23, 2013); "love" (Interview #5, 2013); "gratitude"(Interview #7, 2013), "pride" (Interview #1, 2013), "resilience" and "closure" (Interview #18, 2013); "peaceful" (Interview #17, 2013), "spiritual" (Interview #25, 2013), "beautiful" (Interview #30, 2013), "hopeful"(Interview #9, 2013), "inspired" (Interview #10, 2013). And this to identify but a few of the words that may be associated with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy reported by respondents.

The findings above reveal the outcomes of a successful interplay of focus of attention and shared emotion in interaction rituals at the 9/11 Memorial site. It is these types of outcomes that are described by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) as examples of successful interactions – the completion of a piaculum with feelings of solidarity or the

presence of positive emotional energy. The outcomes were further analyzed and certain themes selected for consideration in this Chapter:

- Positive Disposition towards Group Membership

- Sadness or Anger Turns to Resolve, Altruism and Love; Dark Experience Turns to Bright Experience

- The Ambiguity of the Sacred and the Death Event Transformed

8.2.1 *Positive Disposition towards Group Membership*

This feeling of "membership" is a common product of emotional energy and is the essence of "solidarity". Findings suggest that the group assembled at the 9/11 Memorial were generating a number of feelings that had to do with strength, status and group membership (inclusion and solidarity with the group). Interview #16 (2013) projects this strength of his group after his visit. He explains that "I don't find it dark - the pools themselves, it almost kind of lifts you to show the stamina (of the country)". Interview #23's (2013) emotional energy is engaged both at the time of the visit and in what are expected to be future rituals related to the tragedy:

> "In our society...in the U.S. society...I think we have rituals and activities that we go through. Something like this was such a national tragedy that we continue to memorialize and talk about it. But I think in a lot of places, once it's over, it's over. So it's a little different.

Similarly reflected in an on-site observation:

> "We share the same humanity and common understandings of love. As much as Americans will never forget, so will I not forget my walk around what used to be the icon of New York – Singapore" (Participant Observation, 2013).

Many - mostly those who were directly involved with the events of 9/11 - could also be witnessed experiencing the highest degree and the strongest effects of emotional energy and the sharing of emotions. Interview #7 (2013) explains:

> "You can tell that they are just so grateful when you're done, like just the gratitude. I think that's why they like to hug. And then really, once they start going through that

kind of emotional turmoil, they're like, Oh my God, if that's what she feels, then that's where I think that connection gets built".

In this particular situation, it may even be the case that those participants experiencing a high degree of emotional energy - for example gratitude or pride for membership - have a trickledown effect in that they help contribute to the emotional energy, solidarity and attachment of others to group symbols and feelings. Collins (2004; 116) explains that "at one end of the continuum individuals are always in other people's presence, under their eyesight and in their surveillance; this leads to a high degree of conformity, a feeling of social pressure on oneself, but also a desire to make other people conform as well".

Interview #1 (2013) highlights emotional energy's "pride of membership" and the "pride" in the site – even in the face of a tragic event - by saying:

> "It's such a big deal in our country and we just wanted to share (this site with others). We came here with a group of people – leaders from other countries. So it's a way to show them a part of our history".

While Interview #15 (2013) notes that interactions with visitors from other countries acknowledge and support group membership even on an international scale through their site interactions:

> "I think it (the site) was very respectful. Very Respectful. I think it showed resilience... There was a group of firefighters from Germany. There were probably ten at least and they had all their uniforms on and it's just so impactful and so great to see countries coming together. They came to see the Memorial site."

This poster observed at the 9/11 Memorial (Plate 24) also supports that "membership" is a common feature of the emotional energy generated on site.

Plate 24: Group Membership

"On that terrible day, a nation became a neighborhood, all Americans became New Yorkers."
Governor George Pataki
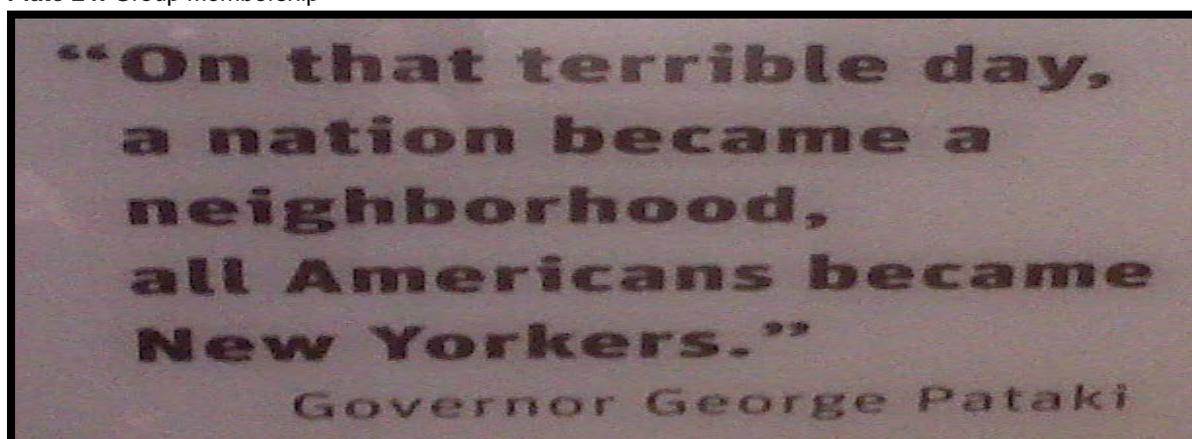
8.2.2 Sadness or Anger Turns to Resolve, Altruism and Love; Dark Experience Turns to Bright Experience

Collins (2004) observes that emotional energy may produce feelings of altruism and love to replace those emotions brought into the interaction. As a result of visits to the site, many respondents, who had expressed anger as being part of the emotions brought to the site, admitted to having been calmed and leaving with a sense of resolve about the future, including future interactions involving the site and the death event. Interview #23 (2013) expresses that his anger has subsided in that he feels:

> "It helps to face the memories and other things that I have from that day. I'm done being angry years ago. Anger just begets more anger. So I would have to say you carry on".

While Interview #5 (2013) adds:

> "I was very cynical and jaded post 9/11 because you know this happened and you get angry. Why would they do this? Why me? Why my family? Why! You know, you get angry. I'm starting to realize, though, that it's not healthy to be that mad all the time and it's not that constructive. The only person you hurt with that anger is you. So once I started doing Tribute (9/11 Site Tours), I started feeling a lot of love from people and it worked. Because I was very jaded about people. I'd be, "Oh, I hate people!" Interviewee #5 (2013)

Another notes that further ritual in the form of reflection may be necessary:

> "Imagine being in that position of making that decision. How am I going to die? I mean it's unfair. It's hurtful. It's why many people have anger against the terrorists and what they did. So I try to channel it and understand it but it's still with me and it still makes me angry and so I reflect on it" (Interview #6, 2013).

Collins (2004) identifies that participants who are full of emotional energy may feel like "good people" and wish to move forward with kindness, a new appreciation of life and even "love" as they feel righteous about what they are doing. Thus, feelings of solidarity or emotional energy may go beyond replacing negative emotions and generate specific acts of altruism and love (Collins, 2004). Many left the site - feeling just that way. Interview #17 (2013) explains his feelings about kindness to others:

> "I don't think it's really dark. It's really solemn. I think people feel more open to talk about things when there's something like this – I mean, even when the tragedy happened, when 9/11 happened, the world has become so much more open – it just seems being kinder to each other in expressing and talking about things. I actually

thought about looking into people's faces and I go, 'I actually hope people are thinking hey, life matters. You never know when your time is going to come."

Interview #6 (2013) explains his feelings about helping others:

"I don't know that it's going to totally change a person's wellbeing but at least when they come here they can put it into context for a while and at least if they chose to, in the future, change a small part of their life to either try to help people. Like when I talk to kids, I tell them that you've got some choices. You can either help people or hurt people, that's what I think".

Interview #7 (2013) explains her feelings about receiving the gift of love from the site experience:

"9/11 can't be justified – nobody on that day deserved it, 9/11 never should have happened...but this site is incredible – I got an incredible gift back. The love that you get from these people is truly so moving and it's really, really, like – I always come away smiling".

Interview #23 (2013) expresses his feeling about understanding what needs to change in the world:

"I would say I just feel a little bit more in a different place. You come in and your kind of in town, and then you come here and you feel a little somber and just yeah, I don't know. Emotion around how this happened and then we're doing this and then this place is here. Do we learn anything from this? Do we take anything away from this? What needs to change in the world. Yeah!"(Interview #23, 2013).

And Interview #1 (2013) makes it clear that the emotional energy from site interactions opens up possibilities even for those from a faith based philosophy:

"We have some non-believers (about 9/11 events) with us so this is (the site), as in other areas, is leading to opportunities to question the eternality of the soul, the justice of God, the oneness of God, and this is one of those events to talk about it" (Interview #1, 2013).

This confidence and enthusiasm surrounding the feelings or emotional energy brought on by the site was followed up by many other respondents who specifically relate to strong feeling words such as "brightness", "beautiful", "gratification", "inspiring" and "hopeful". As Collin's (2004: 108) noted, many participants get "pumped up with emotional strength". Respondents recognized this in describing the experience.

"I guess it's how you would interpret death and dying really, whether it's very dark or something that also goes into brightness, cosmic spirituality. So I would say it has all of those things and so it is a one and a ten, both. It's a place of tremendous sorrow

but it's also a place of spirituality which I think gives brightness to people in their lives" (Interview #25, 2013).

Interview #32 (2013) highlights this by saying:

> "The site, it's beautiful. The other two times I was here were many years ago – 2004 and 2005. It's awesome. It's beautiful. It's more of a personal thing for me. I think it's very important for other people that don't know much about it that want to learn about it and they show up here. It far exceeded my expectations. I think it's today actually, made it all that much more important to me."

While others similarly observe: "If they know some of the background, they'll feel some of the gratification (Interview #2, 2013) To making it more specific to those involved in the events on site: "it made me think about the brave people – what a lot of people. It's very inspiring" (Interview #10, 2013). And lastly, "I don't think it's dark. It's more like hopeful!" (Interview #9, 2015). While continuing to relay what matters based on the continuum of events on site through confidence and enthusiasm, others chose to do so by illustrating how the site acts in ways that will continue to feed into their emotional energy even after they leave the site. Interview #3 (2013) explains "we're bringing back home now something that is staying in us". While Interview #1 (2013) remembers the experience by saying "they have things you can take with you to remember it, you know". Finally, Interview #13 (2013) adds, "well I think people are going to take different things from it and if its grief, then that's fair. Yeah. Part of the role of this site is to bring it back."

Some respondents are not only enthusiastic and confident supporters of the experience, but many now feel as though they are leading figures on it. This is described by Collins (2004) when one feels good with the group and is able to be an energy-leader and can stir up contagious feelings when the group is together. This was most often recognized in those that had a connection to the event and volunteered their time as a site guide leading groups on tours. Interview #5 (2013) reflects on the feelings experienced in her tours:

> "What I didn't expect was the amount of emotional healing it really gives you. I told my story on the Plaza and I had 27 people with me and this adorable little Indian woman from India was just so moved. You can really see it on their face. They hug you so tight. You can tell when they hug you that tight, they're trying to pay you somehow. They don't want to give you money but they want to let you know how much it means to them that you did that and it really makes you feel awesome!"

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Another guide supports this feeling in that:

> "For years we gave the tours around the perimeter and that was nice, just looking in and seeing it. But now, to set foot here and to see what they've done – and on a day like today it's beautiful...I've had so many people on tours and I tell my story but you gather the people after (the tour) and all they want to do is tell you where they were. The 98% or 100% want to tell you" (Interview #26, 2013).

Interview #3 (2013) furthers this notion:

> "Therapeutically, if it comes out, it's so much nicer than keeping it inside of you. And we relate that to the other people there and connect. It's something that you can talk about and come out here and talk about it to all the people and they feel the same way. This is why (the site) is so much better – to bring it out (emotions) than to keep quiet."

Lastly, in a pictorial illustration described in Plate 25 used in combination with an interview to "draw" out emotion describing feeling and thoughts on site, Interview #5 (2013) creates some telling drawings to describe the three different time periods depicted in the pictures below by Blais and Rasic (2011) happening at the 9/11 site. The drawing highlights feelings and emotions such as shock, sadness and then that of being calmed, by way of solace and a message to always remember, including types of remembrance that have to do with future interactions involving the site and the death event.

Plate 25: *Sadness or Anger Turns to Resolve, Altruism and Love; Dark Experience Turns to Bright Experience*
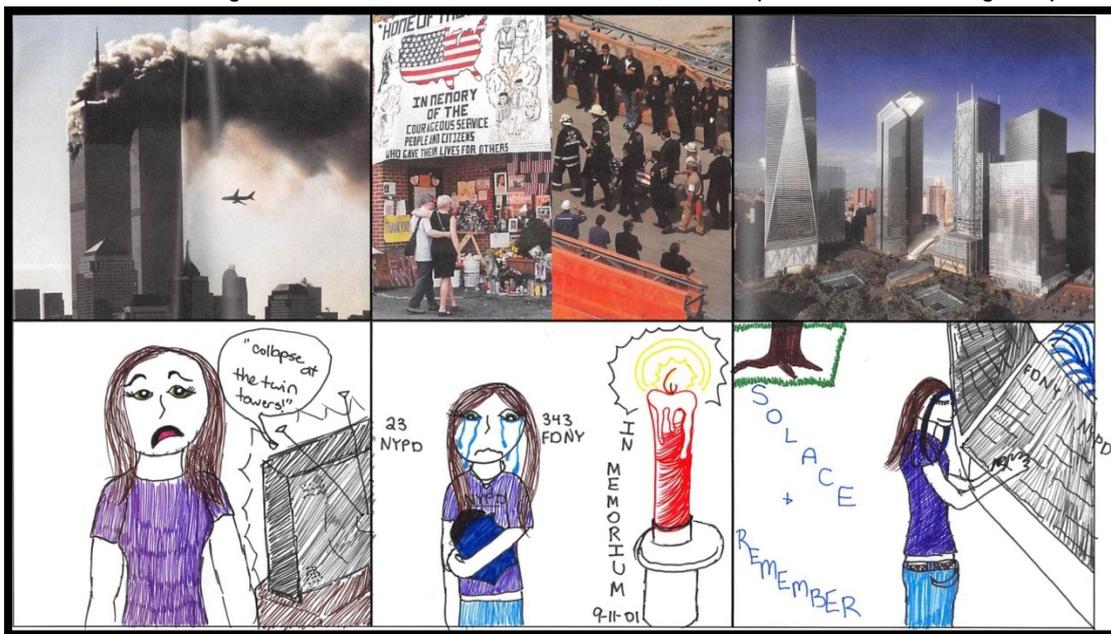
8.2.3 *The Ambiguity of the Sacred and the Death Event Transformed*

These feelings of solidarity, and emotional energy reported above not only suggest that there are "high levels" of positive emotional energy associated with these ritual outcomes as Collins (2004) has described them, but also suggest that what may have been "dark" is now a "bright" experience as far as visitors are concerned. These outcomes and the sacredness of the site and the death event for visitors also underscore what Durkheim (1915) described as the "Ambiguity of the Sacred". That is, that evil powers or events themselves are transformed into sacred events. This is reflected in many of the excerpts above, but also by the following respondents who make it clear about their group membership and about the transformation of a tragic death event into a sacred one:

> "This is the first time to remember our reasons about what happened and why. It's the first time we had an attack on American soil that was something of any meaning to us" (Interview #17, 2013).

> "It's our first trip to New York and I think every American should go if they have the opportunity. I don't find it (the site) dark - the pools themselves, it almost kind of lifts you to show the stamina, I guess" (Interview #31, 2013).

> "It's something we always wanted to do as Americans. We tried on other occasions and weren't able to get the passes and stuff. It's very peaceful, yeah. The water is very calming, yeah. Very peaceful" (Interview #21, 2013).

Finally, Interviews #5 and #14 (2013) assure me that they would "make sure 9/11 history keeps going forward" and "I think the site is a ten, so we don't forget it". For the visitors interviewed, not only the 9/11 Memorial site, but the death event itself has become something sacred (Plate 26).

Plate 26: The Ambiguity of the Sacred and the Death Event Transformed

8.2.4 *Feelings of Closure and Recovery –Completion of a Piaculum?*

After the visit to the 9/11 Memorial site, visitors expressed strong views about how the site left them feeling. A sense of "good self-feeling" was a common mood shared by participants coming out of the site (Collins, 2004; 107). A sorrowful feeling surrounding peace, healing and closure at "the site" or as many now use in their narrative "the cemetery" was felt to be the leading emotions expressed by those in that they felt it's "very therapeutic, especially if you knew someone, or if it were just a traumatic day for you. Same as closure a little bit" (Interview #18, 2013). A tour guide also describes what was taken away from his site tour by a visitor in that "all she wanted was to come here and through my tour, she got closure from the events of that day, and that it meant so much to her" (Interview #26, 2013). Others describing the energy left from the site as "I think going to the site is therapeutic, like coming to the cemetery" (Interview #12, 2013). Or "almost like coming to a cemetery - a sense of coming to a cemetery - so I think it does give a chance to pause about that" (Interview #2, 2013). A family member related to the dead and site guide expresses "there are 400 of us

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and we all say same thing - that this site and people are the most beautiful, therapeutic sessions that we have had for the rest of our lives here" (Interview #3, 2013). Finally, some respondents even consider the therapeutic feeling both at a cemetery and memorial one in the same: "I mean you could certainly go - people go to cemeteries and people - like here, you would go to the Memorial" (Interview #6, 2013). Likewise, "if I had lost somebody yeah - I think I would appreciate having a memorial and a massive event like this to help me....It's a peaceful place and yet it's a cemetery" (Interview #17, 2013).While maintaining these good self-feelings, an added sense of closure through the ritual solidarity created by funerals was also touched upon. Interview #22 (2013) builds on this by saying the site draws people to:

> "be involved and experience it or find closure of some sort. I think that grief that a lot of people have is not having the closure. So many people not being able to bury a loved one because of the manner in which they died. So it gives them a place like a cemetery in which they can go to and visit - and have something tangible that they can go to."

Similarly, another respondent touches upon the feeling that the visitor experience offers "rituals" that allows one to move forward when describing that:

> "It's always nice to think, when you have lost somebody, you can come and think well he's there somewhere. I would say having a funeral and going through rituals. That's what this (site) is. I would say a funeral because my Gran died in 1994 donated her body to science and we didn't have anything and my mother didn't see her. They had a service and I think going through something as simple as a funeral would be better. It gives closure" (Interview #19, 2013).

Lastly:

> "You get that connection to death because they died. That's how you start to mourn. So when you share that your personal connection died, people go, "What if my personal connection died?" So it's almost like at the site - it's like going to the funeral if they learn the similar way" (Interview #5, 2013).

While respondents may have felt sorrow and likened their visit to a funeral or cemetery, ritual, this is really expressing the outcome of a successful funeral ritual, which is an emotional form of energy. Thus, while having closure within what many refer to as in a cemetery by creating rituals similar to that of a funeral sparks a short term emotion surrounding a good self feeling or sense of sorrow, it should also be recognized that the main "ritual work" of the "funeral" and associated terms used to describe the site is in

producing (or restoring) the individual and group solidarity - this is the role and function of emotional energy (Collins, 2004).

The emotional energy associated with group solidarity at the site makes visitors feel a desire to honour the group. This is often reflected at the site by respondents for whom protecting the dead or demonstrating pride of country is important. Interview #6 (2013) explains "you had to rebuild bigger and stronger and better to show strength to the terrorists." Similarly Interview #17 (2013) adds to his desire to defend and honour by saying "I've stopped feeling angry. I've thought about it war and the Middle East but I didn't get angry about it here. I just want to protect our country so it won't happen again."

In my discussions with and observations of respondents during the 2013 fieldwork, a consistent outcome of the site visit may be stated as follows: "America may have lost thousands of lives due to the 9/11 death event but America is stronger than ever!" This theme from respondents has been echoed in many other sections of the review of the data. The opportunity for social consolidation on the site, the way this function interacts with the other functions and through interaction rituals, creates new emotions that mediate the death event and produce feelings of renewed strength and emotional energy from these piacular rites may well provide greater insight to the phenomenon identified by a number of writers, including Tony Walter (2008; 317) who observed "several thousand are dead, but America lives on, and will not be defeated. It is precisely when groups – from families to nations – are depleted by death that they reconstitute themselves, symbolically and practically".

Again, while the 2013 data was not collected with the renewed strength from piacular rites and emotional energy from interaction rituals in mind, it is suggested that the information provided by respondents and the observations of the participants certainly warrant further research using these piacular rites and interaction rituals as a framework of inquiry. Indeed, as suggested earlier in this thesis, piacular rites and interaction rituals may be useful to analyze a continuum of gatherings, from spontaneous ones that occur in the immediate aftermath of a death event (as was the case after the 9/11 attack) to those that occur over time at sites where social actors gather to mourn for as long as a mourning rite is

needed. These rites may often be observed to be practiced immediately after a tragedy. Yet, Durkheim (1995; 405) makes it clear that piacular rites may be part of repeated ceremonies necessary to bring about the relief that follows mourning and may be practiced over a number of years as "death is a profound change, with wide and lasting repercussions for the group. It takes time for those effects to be neutralized." Through one or repeated ceremonies, Durkheim (1995) goes on to suggest, there will be a strengthening of the individual and collective consciousness of participants – social consolidation or an adjustment for individuals and the group in the words of Kastenbaum (2001) – through these repeated "piacular rites of mourning". The crucial sociological point is that the interaction rituals and mourning rites observed and practiced during the dark tourism visitor experience allow what Durkheim (1995; 405) described as a "communion of consciousness" that increases "social vitality". This social vitality is a form of emotional energy that brings with it a positive disposition towards group membership. This increase in social vitality, from on site interactions certainly reflected in the respondent interviews and site observations. And, to paraphrase Durkheim (1995), the new reality of this social vitality erases the effects of the crippling death event that occurred to begin with, and in this way the sensation of cold that death everywhere brings with it is dissipated. The group feels its strength and gradually coming back to it; it begins again to hope and to live. One comes out of mourning, and one comes out of it thanks to mourning itself" (Durkheim 1995:405).

While the 2013 fieldwork was not conducted with a piaculum (or any interaction rituals) in mind, the findings do strongly suggest that, for these visitors who experienced high levels of solidarity and positive emotional energy, a piaculum has been completed by and through the visitor experience (Plate 27).

Plate 27: Feelings of Closure and Recovery

8.3 Completion of the Ritual Performance and Possible Next Links in the Interaction Ritual Chain related to the Death Event

The fourth and final point of observation proposed for understanding the visitor experience at a dark tourism site would consider where the visitors and their supply of emotional energy go from the site (see Figure 8.2 below). If Collins is right in his theory, visitors would presumably seek and become involved with another interactional ritual related to "what matters". When the conditions of successful interaction rituals are present, and high levels of emotional energy occur, Collins theorizes that individuals seek to preserve the memory of this emotional memory through the use of symbols (or sacred objects) (also noted as another one of Collins ritual outcomes). The emotional charge carried by symbols, however, has a natural half life and will tend to dissipate over time unless they are "revitalized" through subsequent interaction rituals. This is the point at which, if necessary, participants seek to engage in further ceremonies or rituals because they realize the supply of emotional energy will be time limited (as Durkheim acknowledged about the piacular rites) or because the

interaction itself has not been sufficient alone to satisfy the needs of participants (for example, as Durkheim (1995) observed with respect to death because death is a profound change, with wide and lasting repercussions for the group so it may take time for those effects to be neutralized). Or, as Collins might suggest because in the flow of daily life, emotional energy outcomes are important because they influence the overall disposition of individuals in their routines they will gravitate towards encounters that provide higher emotional energy payoffs through interaction rituals that may be both "culturally familiar and emotionally rewarding" (Boyn, 2015; 151).

Figure 8.2: Observation Point #4
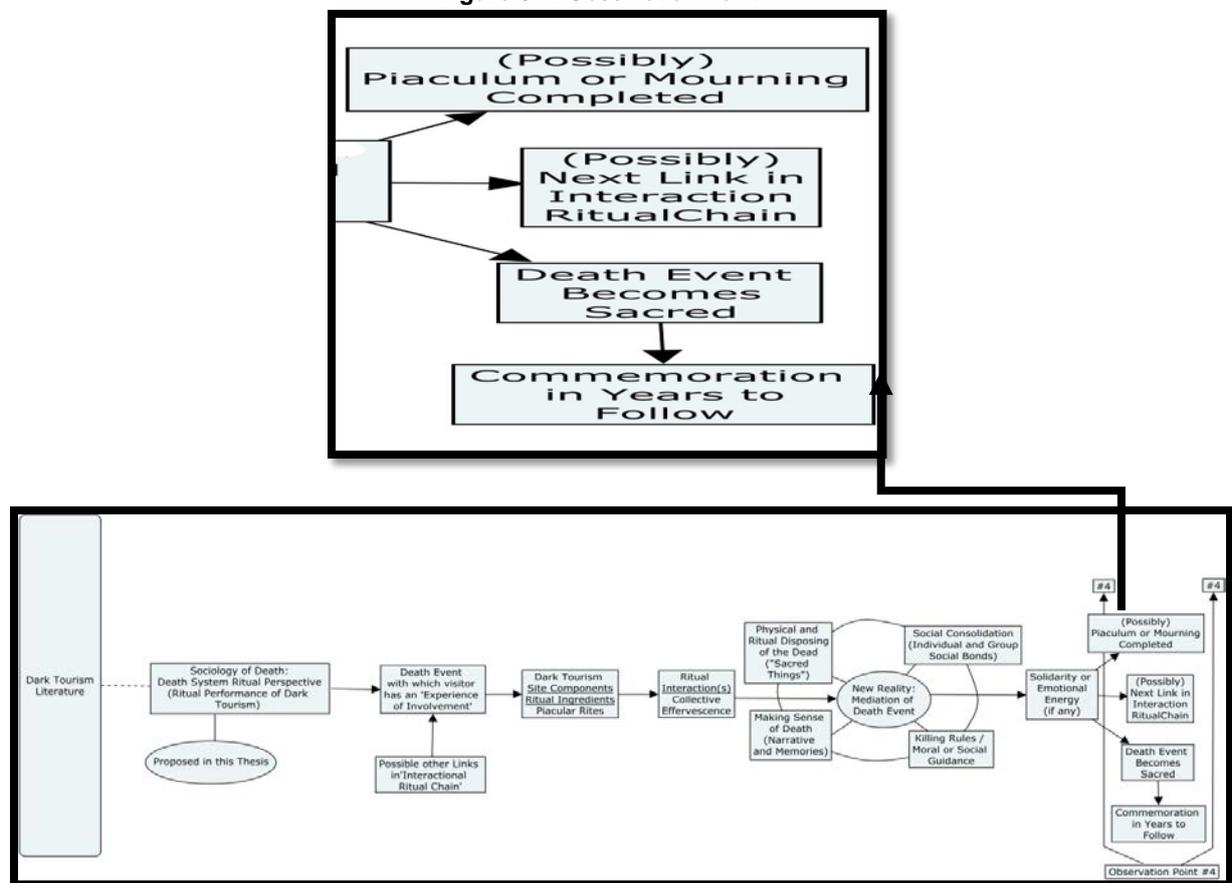
"Intense moments of interaction ritual are high points not only for groups but also for individual lives" (Collins, 2004; 43). These are experiences and emotional energy that we remember, that give meaning to personal and collective biographies, and sometimes give rise to obsessive attempts to repeat them: whether participating in some great collective

event such as a public gathering or being a spectator at some storied moment of popular entertainment or history (Collins, 2004).

Of course, the scope of the research carried out at the 9/11 site in 2013 did not "follow" the respondent visitors. Future work may be able to do just that. But it is suggested that the findings would allow the following future outcomes as at least possible, if not probable:

(a) If the piaculum or mourning of the visitors had not been completed at the site, visitors may repeat other ceremonies that may be considered to be "piacular" in nature. (Durkheim 1995:405).

(b) If the "emotional energy" generated by the site was not "high" or a very limited duration, the visitors would seek other ceremonies and interaction rituals within them that would produce or restore high levels of emotional energy.

(c) If the piaculum or mourning was completed, and the emotional energy such that the death event would be considered by visitors as having been transformed from something evil to something sacred, visitors would engage in Commemorative Rites to preserve the memory, revitalize and re-generate the history of the mediated death event and the social vitality that ensued from the rites.

8.4 Conclusion

This Chapter 8 considered the outcomes from the visitor experience reported by respondents in the 2013 fieldwork. It also considered whether visitors may have completed a piaculum and / or whether based on the outcomes reported, additional interaction rituals may be predicted for some visitors with respect to the death event. Having regard for the findings reviewed in this Chapter 8, the following conclusions would appear to be supported by the empirical research that are relevant to the proposed ritual performance model and the research question (and objectives):

A. The outcomes of the visitor experience, reported by visitors suggest that the interaction rituals at the site have been successful. The visitor interviews and observations suggest that the mediation of the death event has taken place, resulting in outcomes in the form of emotions associated with feelings of solidarity (Durkheim, 1995) and emotional energy (Collins, 2004). This is relevant to the proposed model as set out in Section 3.6.4.

B. These "emotions" are individual emotions, that are carried away from the situation, and include a "sensation of renewed strength", or "a feeling of confidence or strength": love and initiative in taking action as proposed by Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004). Not only was there an increase in feelings of group membership, but "negative" emotions (including sadness or anger) were changed to "positive" ones in many visitors according to the visitor interviews.

C. Related to this, a "dark" experience was perceived by many visitors to have turned into a "bright" experience as a consequence of the visit at the site. And this is in keeping with the interviews and observations that suggest the "evil" event represented by the deadly attacks, had become sacred as Durkheim (1995) proposed.

D. The respondents' explanation of their feelings at the conclusion of the site visit strongly suggests the completion of the piaculum or state of mourning for some visitor(s) – although further rites may need to be completed in order to restore or maintain the strength of the individual and the group. (These further rites may be piacular or commemorated in nature).

E. Indeed, given the outcomes for visitors the death event may be said to become (even more) sacred – with the possibility that commemorative rites may be practiced in the future with respect to the death event. Some visitors related that they had observed

commemorative or anniversary events related to 9/11 – Durkheim (1995; 379) proposed that by commemorative rites the group re-generates a historical sense of itself, integrating members and the past (as outlined in Section 3.3.1.4).

F. While the fieldwork did not address it, visitors who are charged with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy, according to Durkheim (1995) and Collins (2004) may initiate action. So visitors possibly proceed to the next "link" or interaction in the interaction ritual chain outside the site, including as Sather-Wagstaff (2011) and others have suggested by "trickling down" or sharing their site experiences.

G. As Stone (2012) and Walter (2008) have observed, the dark tourism visitor experience may be one of a family of mediating institutions that mediate mortality and the empirical research supports this. The ritual performance model in this thesis proposes that the outcomes of the dark tourism experience may be feelings of increased solidarity and a form of emotional energy that impacts or influences the social order. The outcomes in this Chapter 8 support this. The outcomes reported are broader than those suggested by Stone (2012; 1582), who proposed outcomes in the mortality mediation model that "engender a degree of thanatopsis and meanings of ontology", and allow visitors to "construct contemporary ontological meanings of mortality."

And while the empirical work did not follow the visitors from the site, the proposed *Observation Point #4* in the ritual performance model may be the subject of future work to determine the consequences or action taken post visit given these feelings of solidarity and emotional energy. Collins (2004) proposes that these feelings are individual emotions that will initiate further actions – that visitors will be emotional energy seekers and proceed to the next link or interaction to confirm or generate more emotional energy. The model proposes that visitors charged with feelings of solidarity and emotional energy as a result of their

visitor experience will be motivated to seek new links or situations in an interaction ritual chain. Or that, from a Durkheimian perspective, these feelings of solidarity and renewed strength from the piaculum will be the source of the "obligation" to gather in the next piacular or commemorative or positive rite performed by visitors. These future interactions might range from finding and participating in other piacular rites (for one comes out of mourning by virtue of the mourning itself), repeated visits to the site, or other actions prompted by a sense of obligation or motivated by seeking more emotional energy that may be as simple as relating their visitor experience over coffee or tea to other members of the group the next day. The point being, that the range of future interactions is very broad but that future research may reveal surprising results after following the visitor experience past the site itself. This possibility for future work would offer a more detailed consideration of the proposed model as outlined in Section 3.6.5.

9   Conclusions

9.1   Introduction

My intention in this thesis and research was to explore whether the dark tourism visitor experience provides an opportunity for *some* visitors at *some* dark sites to share an experience of involvement, through the performance of death rituals and emotional interactions or mourning rites within the dark site, that may be observed to provide visitors (and through them, the group or society in which the visitors are members) with outcomes suggested by Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1959;1967) and Collins (2004) in their respective works on interaction rituals, as well as to fulfill four of the important functions associated with what Kastenbaum (2001) proposed as society's death system.

This thesis is located, not within the analysis of consumption or production largely found within the existing dark tourism literature, but rather as part of a dynamic ritual theory of emotions and interaction at the sites. There is very little theoretical work, much less empirical evidence to support this thesis within the existing dark tourism literature. As described in Chapter 2, the existing dark tourism literature is largely based on tourism management studies which address the research question and objectives from a business studies or consumption – production perspective. Indeed, the existing dark tourism literature is subject to substantial criticism from within as has recently been recorded by Light (2017) and Stone (2016), at least as far as the definitional and theoretical foundations of the study are concerned. It is to be noted, however, that a valuable contribution to the dark tourism literature was advanced by Sharpley and Stone (2009) and Stone (2012) who proposed a mortality mediation model based on respected theories from thanatology and the sociology of death. Nevertheless, as noted in Chapter 2, I proposed to approach this thesis from the point of view of individual and collective death related rituals or interactions, rather than the thanatological condition of society. In Chapter 2, I also identified "gaps" in the existing literature involving the manner in which emotion, which has long been an undercurrent in the theoretical and empirical literature, has been ignored from a theoretical perspective as a

possible insight into an analysis of the visitor experience and outcomes at dark tourism sites.

The purpose of this thesis therefore was to address this gap in dark tourism knowledge and in the study of this phenomenon, as well as to augment the dark tourism literature, by proposing relevant frameworks of inquiry from a sociological perspective upon whether a model of inquiry might be founded and applied to analyze the visitor experience at some sites and notably at the 9/11 Memorial.

Focusing upon the experience of involvement and death rituals that arguably take place within some dark tourism sites, rather than focusing upon the thanatological condition of society (or society's reactions to and perceptions of mortality), this thesis proposed relevant frameworks and a model for an inquiry into the visitor experience and into the research question, and then attempted to test the frameworks and the model by examining tourist experiences at the 9/11 Memorial site in New York City based on data from fieldwork undertaken in 2013, prior to the consideration by me of many of the theoretical frameworks or the development of the model proposed in Chapter 3.

The research question and objectives proposed for consideration in this thesis are as follows:

Why are some social actors motivated to travel to, interpret, and encounter death at dark tourism sites, in particular the 9/11 Memorial?

To evaluate this, empirical research will explore whether it is in part of or the need for:

- Social Consolidation (maintain social order and constructs)

- Making Sense of (or to make meanings that mediate or reconcile) the Death Event

- Fulfilling Social / Emotional Factors that require Death to be "Mediated"

The conclusions, limitations and contributions of this study are set out in this chapter.

9.2   Dark Tourism as Part of Society's Death System

I have argued in this thesis that dark tourism is both a product of and a part of society's death system and that the death system framework of inquiry proposed by Kastenbaum (2001) may provide some useful analytical approaches with which to analyze the visitor experience. As noted in Chapter 3, the observation of the dark tourism phenomenon suggested to me that many dark tourism experiences, including some of those at the 9/11 Memorial site functioned as part of what Kastenbaum (2001) identified as a death system framework. I became familiar with Kastenbaum's (2001) work and initially thought that the death system might provide an adequate framework of inquiry with which to consider and answer the research question and objectives.

Having regard for the literature and drawing on the data from the fieldwork, I have argued that a dark tourist site experience not only features all of the components of the death system, but importantly the dark tourism visitor experience may provide opportunities for the fulfillment, through interaction rituals, of at least four of the critical functions of the death system proposed by Robert Kastenbaum (2001):

1)   Rituals related to the actual or symbolic disposal of the dead represented at the site, including the paying of respects and memorialization.

2)   Rituals related to social consolidation or social cohesion or adjustment occurs, including feelings of being part of something larger and being involved in something visitors described as therapeutic or healing.

3)   Rituals by which visitors are able to make sense of the death event, including emotional experiences of involvement provided by ritual interaction that allow visitors to engage in meaning making interactions which mediate the death event for visitors.

4)   Rituals by which norms for killing or moral or social guidance may be contemplated, justified or put into action, especially as this guidance results from feelings related to solidarity and emotional energy.

I argued in Chapter 3 that a dark site visitor experience may operate in such a way that all of the components of a death system and four of the death system functions are not only present, but serve in some manner to mediate the death event and shape or influence some aspect of the social order affected or impacted by the death event represented at the site. And I argued that by examining these components and functions at work at a dark tourist site such as the 9/11 Memorial, researchers will gain valuable insights into, and an appreciation of, what may motivate visitors to visit the site, what these visitors interpret at or from the site and what role the dark tourism experience plays in mediating encounters with the death event. These arguments were considered in the light of the fieldwork. In Chapter 6, interaction with selected components of the death system were analyzed, including the sacred space and built form, as well as inanimate objects, such as flowers, stairs, trees and bracelets, that became sacred symbols of the visitor experience through ritual interaction. Then in Chapter 7, I considered selected interactions with the four critical and interconnected function of the death system, notably interactions involving the actual and symbolic disposition of the dead at the site (through paying of respects and reflection) the opportunities to seek, receive or share social consolation (described as therapeutic and sharing of grief), the making sense of the death (through narrative and meaning making that provided closure), and the moral and social guidance taken from the site about the death event (and especially the expectations for presentation, conformity, and emotional responses on an individual and collective level).

Further, given that the death system framework of inquiry may allow insights into the manner or mechanisms by which death may be mediated on an individual and collective level (arguably) in any society, not just Western societies, I have argued that this framework will contribute to the recent literature on the dark tourism experience and mediation of death,

notably the mortality mediation model proposed by Sharpley and Stone (2009) and Stone (2012).

However, as pointed out in Chapter 3, there are limitations to the theoretical foundations of the death system framework. While the death system framework of inquiry permits an initial identification of the set of beliefs, practices and mediation outcomes with respect to the visitor's relationship to the death event or more broadly the social phenomenon of dark tourism, the process by which these death system beliefs, practices and outcomes are brought about within the visitor experience requires further theoretical foundations. To this purpose, I have argued that a ritual theory of emotions and interaction may serve to support these foundations and proposed that there is concurrence at many points between Kastenbaum's (2001) Death System framework on the one hand and theories of interaction ritual and emotion proposed by Durkheim (1995), Goffman (1967) and Collins (2004) on the other. This concurrence supports the approach taken in this thesis, that is, that the death system framework provides the framework of inquiry or "window" into the dark tourism site and visitor experience, but the emotion and interaction ritual theories presented in the thesis are needed to analyze the actions that comprise the visitor experience (including visitor motivations, interpretation and encounters with respect to the death event at the site),and to explain the process or outcomes of the mediation that may be part of some visitor experiences. Thus, while dark tourism is both a product of and a part of the death system in a society, and the framework may be usefully employed to inquire into the visitor experience, more is needed to present an improved understanding of the visitor experience and aspects of the social phenomenon of Dark Tourism.

9.3   Dark Tourism as an Elementary Form of Religious Life

I have argued in this thesis that some dark tourism visitor experiences may be analyzed as an elementary form of religious (or social) life (in the sense that this title or expression was offered by Durkheim (1995)) and that, specifically, the visitor experience for some visitors may involve piacular rites as part of a piaculum. Accordingly, this thesis proposes in Chapter

3 (and with the help of the fieldwork reported in Chapters 5 to 8) that Durkheim's (1995) theory with respect to piacular rites (and the ambiguity of the sacred) may be used as a framework of inquiry. Piacular or mourning rites are especially relevant to the dark tourism experience of some visitors in that visitors, when faced with the mourning that may arise from an emotional experience of involvement with the death event, feel an obligation to gather to visit a site that represents that death event. During the gathering, visitors may interact with the components and within the functions of the death system in such a way that "collective effervescence" is created. This collective emotion may then be followed by an outcome of an "excess of energy "that produced by repeated interactions that erase or dissipate the "sensation of cold that death everywhere brings with it" (Durkheim, 1995; 405). Through piacular rites, the individual and collective self feels strength gradually coming back and begins to hope and live again, clearly providing social consolation and making sense or meaning of the death event. As a result of these piacular rites "one comes out of mourning, and one comes out of it thanks to mourning itself" (Durkheim, 1995; 405). The performance or the rite and Durkheim's (1995) observation about the "ambiguity of the sacred" also explains how the evil representing the death event may be transformed into something that is good, pure, and sacred (Durkheim, 1995). It is proposed that once the piaculum or mourning is over, then what Durkheim (1995) described as the commemorative or representative rites take place to "sustain the vitality of these beliefs, to keep them from being effaced from memory and in sum, to revivify the most essential elements of the collective consciousness" (Durkheim, 1995; 379). It is the case, then, as argued in the conclusions to Chapter 3 and Chapter 5, using piacular rites as a framework of inquiry may answer the research question, address the research objectives and support a model of ritual performance. Yet there are limitations, both the theoretical development of piacular rites and to the amount of empirical research that has followed in the century since Durkheim (1995) described them.

The thesis proposes that further work may be done to consider the relevance of piacular rites for the study of the dark tourism visitor experience including the study of

spontaneous memorials and other gatherings in the wake of death events and disasters. It is suggested that further work at least will serve to renew an interest in Durkheim's (1995; 403) work on piacular rites as these rites appear to have been largely overlooked in the research literature, possibly due to the perception or misunderstanding that a piaculum, and therefore piacular rites, involve some type of "expiation" or "atonement", something Durkheim expressly rejects in his work. But it is also argued that piacular rites alone may not explain in sufficient detail the processes and ingredients involved in a visitor experience by which individual or chains of linked interaction rituals may take place that lead to the outcomes of the mourning rites contemplated by Durkheim (1995). And for this purpose, it is proposed that consideration be given to Collins (2004) theory of interaction ritual chains.

9.4   The Ritual Performance of Dark Tourism

I have argued in this thesis that some dark tourism visitor experiences may be seen as a ritual performance and that these ritual performances by these visitors may be analyzed by reference to processual ingredients of interaction rituals proposed by Collins (2004), based upon a model that Collins attributes to Durkheim (1995) and Goffman (1967). Further, considering the visitor experience as a ritual performance and drawing upon Collins (2004) theory of interaction ritual chains, the thesis also argues that the visitor experience must be seen as part of a link in a chain of interaction rituals. The interaction ritual chain framework certainly evolves the work of Durkheim (1995) and may be applied to piacular rites to permit a greater understanding of the role of previous experiences of involvement or interaction rituals for visitors, the role of collective effervescence as a collective emotion shared by visitors and the ritual outcome described as emotional energy that is an individual emotion with which visitors may leave the dark site if there has been a successful interaction ritual experience. Drawing on Barbalet's (2002) definition of emotion as an experience of involvement that registers in the physical and dispositional being, the thesis proposes that where visitors have an "experience of involvement" (as that concept is described by Barbalet) with the death event, these visitors may engage in a ritual or mechanism of shared

focused emotion and attention with site components and functions, producing a momentarily shared reality which may generate feelings of "solidarity" (Durkheim, 1995) and "positive emotional energy" (Collins, 2004) as an outcome of the visitor experience. The thesis argues that the momentarily shared reality represents a new "emotional" reality for visitors and that it is this new reality experienced by visitors in a series of interaction rituals that produces the outcomes of the visitor experience - feelings of solidarity and emotional energy - that may be said to mediate the death event for visitors. This mediation, the thesis argues, is a mediation of, by and through emotions. But there is more: in turn, these rituals and outcomes transform the death event from something impure or evil to something that is pure or sacred (Durkheim, 1995; 413). "Ritual impurity is turned into ritual purity, danger into security, chaos into order" (Hertz, 1907; 79).

The ritual performances (through interactions) involved in the visitor experience by some visitors at some sites provide the answer to the research question. As suggested in the thesis, notably in the conclusions to Chapters 3, 6, 7 and 8, visitors may be motivated by emotional energy to visit a site, experience interaction rituals at the site that follow a process described by Collins (2004), and have outcomes that promote social consolidation, meaning making and social guidance, among other things. But, in order to consider how there may be concurrence among all of the frameworks proposed in the thesis, and to allow these approaches to the research question to be analyzed in an organized fashion, a ritual performance model was proposed (Figure 3.2).

9.5   Proposed Ritual Performance Model

I have proposed a model with which to consider and analyze the experience of some visitors at some dark sites where the visitors have an emotional "experience of involvement" with the death event. As set out in Chapter 3 and as considered throughout the Findings Chapters, the ritual performance model has been advanced in this thesis as a model that may be capable of analyzing the visitor experience of some visitors at some sites where it may be said that the visitors have an experience of involvement with the death event. The thesis

argues that ritual interactions and emotions among visitors at some dark tourist sites, restore communion or unity or meaning for the individual self and the collective self in the face of the site's death event. This is the mediation of death. It is a mediation of the visitors' emotions – their experience(s) of involvement with the death event. More specifically, where the ritual interactions at the site involve the components and functions of the death system, it is proposed that the shared experience of involvement among visitors at these sites creates a momentarily shared new reality through a form of collective effervescence and then, from this collective emotional experience, visitors experience another outcome in the form of feelings of solidarity (Durkheim, 1995) or emotional energy (Collins, 2004). This outcome – these feelings - transform the death event into a sacred event, promotes social consolidation or solidarity for visitors, provide visitors with confidence and renewed strength in the context of the death event.

The thesis also compared the ritual performance model with the mortality mediation model offered by Stone (2012). Stone's insight into the role of dark tourism as a mediating institution between the living and the dead given the thanatological condition of society (society's reactions to and perceptions of death) is a useful and acceptable approach with which to analyze the experience of visitors for whom death anxiety and / or ontological insecurity are relevant considerations. Yet, the role of dark tourism as a mediating institution goes beyond the mediation of death anxiety and the purchase of ontological security. Through the ritual performance of dark tourism, including piacular rites and other interaction rituals, the findings in Chapters 5 to 7 make it clear that for the visitor respondents in the fieldwork, death is not just filtered or bracketed or denied; but rather the rituals neutralize death and actually increase social vitality in as much as the death event is transformed into a new reality in which the individual and collective self is calmed, at peace, strengthened, full of excess energy, reconciled, confident, accepting, restored, renewed, replenished, and in some cases, prepared to initiate action in this new reality.

In the comparison of the two models, the thesis has argued that the theoretical frameworks or premises upon which each model proceeds differ. The thanatological

condition of society is an acceptable but not an exclusive premise upon which to consider the visitor experience of motivation, interpretation, and encounters with death at dark sites – nor for that matter upon which to found a sociology of death. Rather, a sociology of death, and through it, the study of the dark tourism phenomena should also take into account the manner in which rituals and emotions are performed and outcomes shared about a death event that impacts the social order.

This thesis, through the findings Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 argues that the model within which the visitor experience may be analyzed as the visitor proceeds through stages of, or observation points for, the visitor experience that encompass the motivation for and ritual chains relevant to visitors travelling to, visiting within and travelling from the site of the experience. This approach has theoretical and empirical support that is significant enough to recommend further work be undertaken on this approach. This model brings the possibility of identifying the nature of the emotion or experience of involvement with the death event, together with other links in the interaction ritual chain concerning that event prior to or at the point of entering into the dark tourism experience. Then, the model allows for a managed and measured observation of the experience within the site, looking in particular for new or heightened or refined experiences of involvement with the death event occurring within the site. This model allows for the identification, not only of the performance of the interaction rituals and collective effervescence within the site, but also the components and functions of the death system in action as set out in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. Then the model allows for a consideration of the solidarity or excess emotional energy that may be found in visitors as they complete the experience and leave the site and go on to other experiences or, arguably, links in the chain of interaction rituals. The findings in Chapter 8 support this. The thesis also argues that success of the interaction rituals, the intensity, longevity and social consequences related to feelings of solidarity or emotional energy may be measured accordingly by follow-up or "tag along" observations using an appropriate methodology; but this is a matter that requires future work.

The model proposed allows for a consideration of how the research question and

objectives may be analyzed at different sites, regardless of the thanatological condition of the society within which the visitor experience takes place..

9.6   The Findings and the Research Question

Within the fieldwork and with the benefit of the ritual performance model proposed in Chapter 3, the answers to the research question and objectives present themselves from the analysis offered in Chapters 5, 6, 7, and 8. It is clear that most visitors to the 9/11 Memorial site who were interviewed in the 2013 fieldwork shared an emotional connection or "experience of involvement" of some type with the tragic event, its victims or its consequences on both an individual and collective level. Indeed, the observations and interviews suggested that Collins (2004) notion of prior links in the interaction ritual chain was relevant to an understanding of what "the visitors brought to the site experience."The history of interaction chains is therefore carried along to the site of interaction by way of previously held emotions and emotion leaded cognitions that become the ingredients for an upcoming emotional encounter that is important to understand in any analysis of visitor motivations to gather or the visitor experience itself (Collins, 2004).

Chapters 5 to 8 deal with the results and findings based on the fieldwork. The conclusions in these chapters address specific aspects of the research question and the objectives, as well as some of the ritual performances involved in the visitor experience. This section will highlight only selected aspects. Many visitors expressed that the motivation to visit the site was based on a sense of "obligation" to the dead, or to those affected by the death event or to themselves, or to "America," or to "do the right thing." This goes to help answer the research question at least insofar as this may answer what motivates visitors to engage in the dark tourism experience at this site. It also is consistent with Durkheim's (1995) view that individuals seek to come together and perform piacular rites as a sense of obligation when they seek one another out. It also supports Collins (2004) approach that individuals, and in this case visitors, seek out interactions at which there is an expectation of an emotional energy payoff. Interestingly, even though the visitor experience (and research)

at the site occurred 13 years after the death event, the visitors expressed feelings that were more in keeping with what might be described as mourning (sadness, anger, loss) than with commemoration of the past. It is as if visitors undertake, or at the very least are caught up with, an experience which results in the neutralization of the tragedy and the restoration of individual and collective sentiment by which visitors begin again to "hope and to live". Visitors largely echoed these sentiments in using terms such as therapeutic, closure, peaceful, calm, and beautiful. As Durkheim (1995; 405) observed "one comes out of mourning, and one comes out of it thanks to mourning itself." And the conclusions to the outcomes reported in Chapter 8 clearly demonstrate this.

Applying the framework of inquiry provided by Kastenbaum's (2001) death system, it was clear that these visitors focused their emotions and interacted with components of the death system found on the site in such a way that four of the critical functions of the death system were seen in operation: that is that visitors:

(a) found the site to be a (sacred) place of actual or symbolic disposition of the dead;

(b) either provided or received social support or solace or consolidation from the visitor experience;

(c) accepted narrative provided at the site, or interpreted the site in such a way, that made sense of the death event; and

(d) took away from the site some form of moral or social guidance relevant to either their individual or collective experience with the death event or the actions (or interactions) that would follow after the visit.

The interaction with site components by visitors, together with their emotional experience of involvement with the death event, the site and, often with one another, were observed, when visitors focused their attention and emotion on the components, to have created a collective excitement or electricity, or what Durkheim (1995) described as collective effervescence, as

part of the visitor experience at the site. These interactions with respect to selected components were reported in Chapter 6. This complements and explains the operation and fulfillment of the four critical functions of the death system at the site that was reported in Chapter 7. But it must be noted that the findings of the fieldwork strongly suggest that <u>social consolidation</u> – that function that contemplates the social adjustment that must be made on an individual and collective basis following a death – may be the principal function at play in the visitor experience.

Visitors reported (and were observed) <u>interpreting</u> the "site narrative" through the components at the site, including the narrative provided by guides/volunteers, memorial language or symbols to honour the dead at the site, or that allow for support/ reflection/ interaction to narrative can tell the "story" of 9/11 and the site, as well as to provide information and lessons or guidance. So it may be said that visitor interest in the death event was part of the experience. In fact, while visitors acknowledged the educational component and entertainment at the site as Stone (2012) has suggested, they reported that the <u>interpretation</u> experience involved something that affected or "moved" them. It would seem that emotion produced by interaction with the narrative around site components and functions is the critical element. It appears that this emotional response extends the mediation at the dark tourism site beyond the filter or bracket notion offered by Stone (2012). Rather than "death anxiety" or even a "fear of death" per se, mediation at the 9/11 site was in the form of a new (emotional) reality or perspective that arose from the visitor experience. Visitor emotions, then, were found to be both an ingredient in, and an outcome of, the mediation of the death event and the outcomes of visitor's dark tourism experience at the site.

Visitors reported feelings that support, or are consistent with, a visitor experience at the site that, in whole or in part, created or restored a sense of calm or confidence in their personal and collective lives. This is what Collins (2004) described as positive emotional energy. These reported feelings and outcomes from the experience are consistent with a positive disposition towards group membership and feelings of solidarity with, not just victims

and their families (the group most directly affected by the death event), but with their own social groups, and in some cases, with membership in a broader global social order. This sense then seemed to contribute to the belief on the part of many visitors that the tragic death event known as "9/11" should not be remembered as an act of evil or source of chaos, but rather as a sacred event that supports or (re) establishes the social order.

These findings add considerably to the dark tourism and sociology of death literature, notably as they are based upon the emotional condition or experiences of visitors at dark tourism sites, and suggest opportunities for further research initiatives that will continue to apply a sociological lens to the study of the phenomenon of dark tourism, including gatherings in the aftermath of death events or disasters that register in the physical and dispositional being of individual members of any group who has an experience of involvement with the death event or disaster.

9.7 Limitations

As with any work, there are limitations, both seen and unseen by the researcher, that, when properly understood may contribute significantly to an understanding of the need for future theoretical and empirical research of the social phenomenon under study. This is particularly true when there is an emerging body of existing literature that has recently begun to identify, not simply the gaps in its own literature, but the limitations in its own theoretical foundations. This is also true where an effort is being made to draw upon and adapt frameworks that have yet to be considered in the study of the phenomenon. While I am confident in the arguments that I have made in this thesis, I wish to identify five limitations in particular:

Firstly, the data used from the fieldwork conducted at the 9/11 Memorial in 2013 was not generated or collected specifically to consider the interaction ritual frameworks or the ritual performance model proposed in this thesis. As noted in the introduction, these frameworks and the model were unknown to me at the time of the fieldwork. The collection of the data was undertaken using accepted methodologies and in particular using an interview guide that explored the feelings or emotions of respondent visitors about their

motivation to visit, their interpretation of the site or death event, and their experience at the site, as well as their notions of dark tourism and the death event itself. Now that this thesis has proposed a ritual performance model, my future work will involve the selection of a research design and methodologies with this model in mind. Then, I propose to implement the model in analyzing a variety of sites. For the consideration of those who may be interested in future work, I would initially propose that the model be considered for analysis of the visitors' experience at a spontaneous memorial, preferably at a site of public disaster without significant political or cultural implications such as those that may be inherent in the 9/11 event. This may simplify the application and the analysis for the purposes of this initial effort. I would also propose to study the visitor experiences related to a death event within a society that is not considered to be "Western" in order to determine whether the model is effective elsewhere.

Secondly, it must also be acknowledged that limitations arise because the study of the dark tourism phenomenon is struggling on many fronts with theoretical and empirical shortcomings. These shortcomings are carefully laid out in a recent analysis of the dark tourism literature provided by Light (2017) and before him by Stone (2013). There is almost an air of desperation in the search for firm academic foundation and an agreement about the parameters for the social phenomenon under study. But the shortcomings in empirical applications also extend to the frameworks contemplated by Kastenbaum's (2001) death system, Durkheim's (1995) piacular rites and Collin's (2004) interaction ritual chains. This thesis has acknowledged the shortcomings where possible and has also made (or echoed) calls for further theoretical and empirical work. Indeed these calls for further research likely will require researchers to go beyond the study of the dark tourism visitor experience, and possibly beyond the dark tourism phenomenon itself. There is a need for the sociology of death to embrace further study of the collective representations of death, including the social constructions of grief and mourning. This might be referred to as a need for further study of what Hertz (1960) describes as the manner in which "life has the last word over death".

Thirdly, the observation points proposed by me in the thesis are based on my understanding and interpretation of Collin's (2004) theory of the interaction ritual chain. It may be that their use in the proposed model may be attractive conceptually, but be difficult to follow in practice. They were not employed in the design of the 2013 fieldwork. Indeed, the observation points proposed for the purposes of the model and the understanding of interaction rituals may be difficult to incorporate in future research insofar as they involve the tracking of visitors' experiences through interviews at the entry to the site, at points inside the site, at the exit from the site and then afterwards, for the purposes of considering the continuing interaction ritual chain and the duration of the outcomes involving feelings of solidarity or emotional energy. As noted in the thesis, the manner in which the interviews were conducted during the fieldwork allowed for respondents to address their previous experiences with the death event, their motivation to visit, their in-site interpretation and experience, as well as the outcomes visitors reported from the experience at the point of departure. Indeed, as was suggested in the thesis, using "group tours" with visitors who have consented to participate in the fieldwork may help simplify the process for future data collection. However, these group tours may also present other limitations or issues for the researcher.

Fourthly, the nature of the sample - the respondents who participated in the fieldwork - may present limitations or influences that should be noted, at least for the purposes of future research efforts. Of particular note, is the number of guides or volunteers who participated as respondents and the lack of diversity of grief cultures among the respondents. As noted in the thesis, one third of the 32 participant respondents were guides and / or volunteers at the site, most of whom were from the New York area and had direct experiences of involvement with the death event at the site. Their prior interaction ritual chains, together with the power and status that may come with the role they fulfilled on site, may influence the ritual performance model or the findings. As related in some of the findings, guides in particular, may have a unique influence on visitors by telling their "personal story" or enhancing the intensity of the experience of involvement of some visitors.

The design of future research should consider these possible influences from "guided" tour experiences. Further, the respondents were predominantly from a similar (Western) grief culture and indeed most may be said to have expressed and shared experiences of involvement at the site that were representative of, or referenced particular national ideologies, - specifically an "American" nationalist ideology. This was apparent when reporting the data or observations in respect to many participant respondents. While the operation of this particular grief culture and / or national(ist) ideology is identified and commented upon in some of the findings, it would be beneficial in designing and carrying out future research related to the ritual performance model to address diverse grief cultures and to study the visitor experience related to a death event within a society that is not considered to be "Western" in order to determine whether the model is effective elsewhere.

Finally, there is the continuing problem of emotion. Despite the theoretical framework and the definition of emotion that is proposed in the thesis, it is recognized that "words" are not emotion; yet words are generally most of what respondent visitors have to offer the researcher. So future efforts to gather data from fieldwork about "what matters" to visitors, or how the death event (or the visitors experience itself) may be said to "register in the physical and dispositional being" of the visitors, certainly require careful attention and potentially new theoretical, empirical and methodological approaches. Of note, with respect to this thesis, the question of "words" as they are associated with emotions and as they were expressed by visitor respondents, were found sometimes to be challenging, especially in attempting to distinguish instances of collective effervescence (a collective emotion) from solidarity or emotional energy (an individual emotion). Further, the intensity of the respondents' emotions – how deeply or to what degree certain experiences or interaction rituals or outcomes had "registered" in the physical and dispositional being of visitors - was difficult to gauge. These limitations, as Light (2017) and others have observed, will require more nuanced and perhaps more sophisticated approaches in future work.

9.8   Contribution and Future Research

This thesis has made a contribution to the study of the dark tourism phenomenon by proposing and supporting the following with respect to the research question, research objectives, and the analysis of the visitor experience of some visitors at some dark sites:

A. It has positioned dark tourism as both a product of and a part of society's death system. It has recommended that future work be undertaken to apply the death system framework of inquiry to sites other than the 9/11 Memorial in order to gauge the usefulness of the framework for the study of the phenomenon.

B. It has provided theoretical and empirical support for the proposition that the dark tourism visitor experience may be analyzed as an elementary form of religious (social) life in the Durkheimian tradition and that, specifically, the visitor experience at some sites involves piacular rites. It has recommended that future work be undertaken both to explore whether dark tourism involves a form of piaculum for some visitors and to further inquire into the phenomenon using piacular rites as a framework of inquiry. It has also expressed the hope that more academic consideration might be given to contemporary representations of piacular rites as this aspect of Durkheim's work appears to have been overlooked for decades. Possibly due to a misunderstanding as to the nature of a piaculum.

C. It has provided theoretical and empirical support for the proposition that the dark tourism visitor experience may be analyzed as a ritual performance, taking into account the processual ingredients of interaction rituals, the role of interaction ritual chains and the outcomes of emotional energy advanced by Collins (2004). It has recommended that future work be undertaken to apply the interaction ritual chain framework of inquiry to the visitor experience within the dark tourism phenomenon.

D. It has provided theoretical and empirical support for a ritual performance of dark

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tourism model in those cases in which visitors have an experience of involvement with the death event. Further it has proposed four observation points to be employed together with the appropriate methodology for further research.

E. The thesis has presented frameworks, a model and findings that support the arguments in this thesis namely, that the dark tourism visitor experience for <u>some</u> visitors at <u>some</u> sites, including the 9/11 Memorial, may be considered and analyzed as (a) part of and a product of society's death system; (b) an elementary form of religious (or social) life and specifically a piacular rite; (c) a performance of a series of interaction rituals within an interaction ritual chain; and (d) mediating institution that has implications for social bonds and social order from both an individual and collective perspective. It has recommended that further research be undertaken to explore these arguments, the proposed model and to address (or rectify) the limitations acknowledged in this work.

F. It has proposed that the visitor experience and the ritual interactions that comprise it (before, during and after the visit) must be the focus of the inquiry as to what motivates dark gatherings, how they are to be interpreted and what outcomes may result from them.

APPENDICES

List of Appendices

APPENDIX 1: DEMOGRAPHICS INFORMATION

Interview #	Nationality	Age	Education	Gender
1	American	18-30	Post Graduate	Male
2	American (ny)	46-60	Post Graduate	Male
3	American (ny)	61 +	High School	Female
4	American	31-45	University	Female
5	American (ny)	18-30	University	Female
6	American (ny)	46 - 60	University	Male
7	American (ny)	18-30	University	Female
8	Dutch	46-60	University	Female
9	German	18-30	Post-Graduate	Female
10	English	46-60	University	Male
11	American (ny)	46-60	University	Male
12	American (ny)	46-60	University	Female
13	Canadian	46-60	University	Female
14	American (ny)	61+	University	Female
15	American	46-60	High School	Female
16	American	18-30	University	Female
17	American	46-60	University	Male
18	American	18-30	Post-Graduate	Female
19	Scottish	61+	High School	Male
20	English	46-60	High School	Male
21	American	46-60	University	Female
22	American	31-45	University	Male
23	American	61+	University	Female
24	German	18-30	University	Male
25	American (ny)	61+	Post Graduate	Female
26	American (ny)	46-60	University	Male
27	American (ny)	46-60	University	Female
28	American (ny)	46-60	University	Male
29	American (ny)	46-60	University	Female
30	Russian	18-30	University	Male
31	American	61+	High School	Male
32	American	31-45	University	Male

APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Visitor Motivation and Experience

1. What motivated you to visit this site?

   OR

   What is your primary reason for visiting this site today? Was it to;

   a) Pay Your Respects to the victims of 9/11
   b) Educate yourself about the events of 9/11
   c) Further Understand the effects death and dying at 9/11
   d) Media inspired you through a particular outlet
   e) Other_____

2. Have you been here before? If yes, why did you come back?

3. Are you personally related to or connected to anyone affected by this event/tragedy?

4. Bring yourself back to September 11, 2001 - if you feel comfortable – could you please tell me how you first heard about it?

5. Have you visited any other museum and/or site related to 'dark tourism' before? If yes, which one(s)?

6. Based on your visit to the site today, what term do you consider yourself as;

   a) Visitor
   b) Tourist
   c) As making a Pilgrimage
   d) None of the Above

7. And after visiting the site today, would you consider this a tourist attraction?

8. How would you rate this site in terms of its "darkness"? (ie. based on horrific of events)
   (If low) Is there a site that you may consider darker than this?

Interpretation

9. What do you think about the sale of commercial merchandise on site?

10. Based on your observations of other people today at the site, how do you think others were interpreting it?

11. Is there anything you would have done differently or suggest to the Museum or Memorial Site to change?

12. Looking back at your visit today, was there anything that surprised you or presented in a different light?

13. As you visited the site today, were there any issues or concerns that you were uncomfortable with?

Remembrance and Mourning

14. On a scale of 1-10 (10 being most important), how important is it for you that the 9/11 Memorial Site and Museum exists? And if it is important, could you please explain why?

15. While visiting the site today, what were your personal thoughts about how these victims died?

16. At any point during your site visit did you ever think about your own demise or death?

17. Have any loved ones you've lost in your life come to mind today?

18. In your opinion, do you believe that visiting this site may encourage others to think about their own life and death?

19. When you visited the site, did you think about the death of anyone else close to you?

20. Does this site provide a therapeutic atmosphere when dealing with the aftermath of 9/11?

21. Did this site in a sense break down some awkward barriers within your family when talking about the issues of this dark site?

Emotions and Society

22. After visiting the site today, what emotions do you feel?
    OR
    a) Angry at the perpetrators
    b) Sorry for the Victims
    c) Depressed
    d) No Feeling
    e) Other

23. After visiting this site, do you think it could help one with any personal loss or separation experienced in the past?

24. Do you consider this site important when dealing with mourning, grief and healing?

25. Do you think this site – and the tourism industry as a whole- should promote disaster/black spots such as this one to attract visitors? If so, what could some of the main purposes of this site promote for people?

26. After your experiences visiting the site today, could you identify what you think is the main purpose of the 9/11 Memorial and Site?
     OR
   a) A place to pay Final Respects to those who died and to their families
   b) For Education purposes
   c) A place to mourn for those who died
   d) Entertainment for visitors to New York City
   e) To further understand the effects of Death and Dying
   f) The Media inspired you through various outlets
   g) Other_____

27. Did this particular site raise any discernible emotions while visiting today? If so, what emotions and on a scale of 1-10 could you please report your emotional state before you visited the site compared to right now?

28. Is this site relevant to your emotional needs or wellbeing in any way?

29. What do you think are the most effective ways we cope with death and dying in today's society?

30. How do you think visiting a place that relates to a tragedy – such as this one - might affect someone who is coping with loss?

31. Do you ever feel uncomfortable with discussion or images that relate to dying?

Last Question

32. Is there anything else you would like to share about your reasons for visiting today? Something that you learned?

General Questions

Question

What Nationality are you?

Question

What age group do you fall into?

| 18 - 30 | 31- 45 | 46 - 60 | 61+ |

Question

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

| High School | College | University | Other:_____ |

Question

Are you Male or Female?

APPENDIX 3: BRUNEL UNIVERSITY ETHICS FORM

**SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH ETHICS CHECKLIST- Sociology and Communications
(Effective 1 Oct 2007)**

If the ethics submission relates to staff research for which an application to an external funding agency will be/has been made, then please complete and submit the full University ethics submission form.

Section I: Project Details

1.   Project title: Black Spots and Meaningful Journeys: The Role of Dark Tourism in the Individual and Cultural Management of Grief

Section II: Applicant Details

2.   Name of researcher (applicant): Erin Dermody

3.   Student ID Number: 1203179

4.   Status (please circle): PGR Student

5.   Discipline: Sociology and Communications

6.   Email address: erin.dermody@brunel.ac.uk

7.   Telephone number 07906960428

Section III: For Students Only

8.   Module name and number PhD Research Project

9.   Brunei supervisor's or module leader's name: Chris Rojek

10.   Brunei supervisor's email address: chris.rojek@brunel.ac.uk

Supervisor: Please tick the appropriate boxes. The study should not begin until all boxes are ticked:

X   *The student states that he* or she has read the *Brunei University Code of Research Ethics.*

X   The topic merits further research.

X   The student will possess the skills to carry out the research by the time that he or she starts any work which could affect the well-being of other people. He or she will be deemed to have acquired such skills on passing the relevant research skills module.

X   The participant information sheet or leaflet is appropriate.

X   The procedures for recruitment and obtaining informed consent are appropriate.

		YES	NO
1.	Does the study involve participants who may be particularly vulnerable and/or unable to give informed consent, thus requiring the consent of parents or guardians? (e.g. children under the age of 16; people with certain learning disabilities)	☐	X
2a.	Will the study require the co-operation of a gatekeeper for initial access to the groups or individuals to be recruited?	☐	X
2b.	If the answer to Question 2a is Yes, then will the study involve people who could be deemed in any way to be vulnerable by virtue of their status within particular institutional settings? (e.g. students at school; disabled people; members of a self-help group; residents of a nursing home, prison, or any other institution where individuals cannot come and go freely)	**N/A**	
3.	Does the research involve observational/ethnographic methods?	X	☐
A.	Will the study involve discussion by or with respondents or interviewees of their own involvement in activities such as sexual behaviour or drug use, where they have not given prior consent to such discussion?	☐	X
5.	Are drugs, placebos or other substances (e.g. food substances, vitamins) to be administered to the study participants or will the study involve invasive, intrusive or potentially harmful procedures of any kind?	☐	X
6.	Will blood or tissue samples be obtained from participants?	☐	X
7.	Is pain or more than mild discomfort likely to result from the study?	☐	X
8.	Could the study induce psychological stress or anxiety or cause harm or negative consequences beyond the risks encountered in normal life?	☐	X
9.	Will the study involve prolonged or repetitive testing?	☐	X
10.	Will financial inducements (other than reasonable expenses and compensation for time) be offered to participants?	☐	X
11.	Will the study involve recruitment of patients or staff through the NHS?	☐	X
12a.	Have you undertaken this study as part of your work placement?	☐	X
12b	If your answer to Question 12a is Yes, then have the employers at your work placement conducted their own research ethics review?	**N/A**	
13.	Does the research involve MRI, MEG, or EEG methods?	☐	X

Give a brief description of participants and procedure (methods, tests used etc) in up to 150 words

The main mode of research employed in this study will be through primary methods. The majority of the data will be obtained through the use of qualitative semi-structured interview questions.

Although semi structured interview questions are going to be the principal method of data collection in the study, to enhance the understanding of the research, some contextual details - based on ongoing observations and a participant produced drawing exercise - will also be incorporated into the findings. These methods will be used to complement the semi-structured interviews.

Upon each visit to the dark tourism site (Ground Zero and 9/11 Memorial Museum) the researcher will make her own way through the dark tourist attraction. A number of first hand insights and observations will be recorded (ie. visitor reactions, comments made by front line workers and when viewing the 'guest comment books') followed by the friendly and non-obligatory recruitment of participants to be engaged for interview at site.

Name of Principal Investigator at Brunei University (please print):   *ERIN DERMODY*

Signature of Principal Investigator at Brunei University: *Erin Dermody*

E-Mail Address: *erin.dermody@brunel.ac.uk*

Date: *May 9, 2013*

(1) Approved

This request for expedited review has been: (no additional ethics formis necessary)
                                                                (2) Declined (full University ethics form is necessary)

Signature of Departmental Research Ethics Officer: *SS Weaver*
                                                  :

Date: *9/5/2013.*

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Black Spots and Meaningful Journeys:
The Role of Dark Tourism in the Individual and Cultural Management of Grief

Dear Site Visitor:

Thank you for your participation in this important study, which is part of my PhD Research at Brunel University London. The goal of the study is to better understand the motivation of consumers to visit Ground Zero or the National September 11th Memorial and Museum and the effects that such visits have on consumers. It is vital that we gain insights into what motivates people to visit the site and discover the emotions or effects the site has on visitors.

This questionnaire and your responses - both verbal and written – are kept completely confidential. However, you may withdraw your participation at any time or refuse to answer questions that make you feel uncomfortable. The interview guide will be given an identification number that is used for site identification only. Your name will never be placed on the interview guide or linked with your answers in any way. All resulting data will be kept secure for five years and it is after this time period that all information will be destroyed.

If you have any other questions or concerns, do not hesitate to contact Erin Dermody at erin.dermody@brunel.ac.uk or my research supervisor, Dr. Clive Seale at clive.seale@brunel.ac.uk.

Thank You.

Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Erin Dermody
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Kingston Lane
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Appendix 5: Consent Form

Full Title of Project:

Black Spots and Meaningful Journeys:
The Role of Dark Tourism in the Individual and Cultural Management of Grief

Name, position and contact address of Researcher:

Erin Dermody
PhD Candidate
School of Social Sciences
Department of Sociology and Communications
Brunel University London
Kingston Lane
Uxbridge
Middlesex UB8 3PH

Tel: +44 (0)1895 274000
Fax: +44 (0)1895 232806

Please Initial Box

1. I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet for the above study and have had the opportunity to ask questions.

2. I agree to take part in the above study by participating in an interview.

3. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without explanation.

4. I consent to the interview being audio recorded.

5. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes and drawings from my interview in publications.

_____   _____   _____
Name of Participant   Date   Signature

_____   _____   _____
Name of Researcher   Date   Signature

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