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# Portraits with a Posthumous Voice: Reinforcing and Contesting Social Norms in the Heterotopic Museum and Cemetery

Matthew J. Crissey

State University of New York College at Buffalo - Buffalo State College, [crissey.mat@gmail.com](mailto:crissey.mat@gmail.com)

### **Advisor**

Dr. Cynthia Conides

### **First Reader**

Dr. Cynthia Conides

### **Second Reader**

Noelle Wiedemer

### **Department Chair**

Andrew D. Nicholls, Ph.D., Chair and Professor of History

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Portraits with a Posthumous Voice:  
Reinforcing and Contesting Social Norms in the Heterotopic Museum and Cemetery

An Abstract of a Thesis in  
Museum Studies

By

Matthew J. Crissey

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment  
Of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Arts  
December 2018

State University of New York  
College at Buffalo  
Department of History and Social Studies Education

### **Abstract**

The following paper qualitatively analyzes and documents over 500 memorial-photographs/etched portraits on tombstones in ten Western New York cemeteries. This paper covers fourteen topics, ranging from religion to gang-violence. A juxtaposition of portraits exhibited within the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery with memorial-portraits on tombstones revealed heterotopic environments creating a public forum enabling the reinforcing or contestation of social ideologies. In other words, the author observed the similarities of identities and social norms publicly expressed on tombstones and gallery portraits.

A Social Constructionist approach enabled the study to examine how one social phenomenon contributes to the shaping of a culture. Viewed through a Sociological lens, portraiture displayed within cemeteries *and* museums are envisaged supporting particular social values (i.e. bravery) or challenging engrained belief systems (i.e. gender norms). A collective-identity and cultural ethos is latently reified through the public display of individuals within both the museum and cemetery. The sitter's expression, dress, and posture influence how members of a society internalize their worldview.

State University of New York  
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Department of History and Social Studies Education

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Approved by:

Cynthia A. Conides, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor, History & Social Studies Education  
Director of Museum Studies  
Thesis Advisor

Andrew Nicholls, Ph.D.  
Professor and Chair  
History & Social Studies Education

Kevin J. Miller, Ed. D  
Dean of the Graduate School

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

The following study aims to further the dialogue between museums and cemeteries. Through a Foucauldian-framework that situates the cemetery and museum as similarly designed heterotopias, the author contends that both sites are used to latently reinforce and contest societal norms. Pictorial representations, appropriated by others, are envisaged as creating a unique posthumous voice that serves a social group by protecting or challenging its values. Following the placement of an individual's image within these heterotopic spaces, the cultural object becomes an apparatus used to endorse and impart certain identities and character attributes onto succeeding generations. "Photography is powerful because we can place ourselves into the perspective of those we see in an image...we use photography to understand ourselves in relation to people around us" (Sari nana 1). Thus, within these heterotopias imbued with authority to influence how individuals internalize normative behaviors, the portraiture is envisaged reinforcing or challenging contemporary social identities through the development of empathetic feelings.

A collective-identity and cultural ethos is reified through the public display of individuals within both the museum and cemetery. Through extensive research of over ten Western New York cemeteries, various pictorial representations are understood as confirming or subverting contemporary customs and identities. Additional research was undertaken within New York City and Connecticut giving a better picture of certain identities being publicly expressed on the northeastern coast. Over five-hundred images and representations of individuals on tombstones were collected throughout the research. Observed was a vast array of identities being publicly expressed. The images are a declaration of an individual, and by extension, socio-cultural groups' existence while simultaneously becoming emblematic of their relative cause of

death. When memories of an individual fade, their plight remains relevant to a culture. Life's final rite of passage entails adopting this posthumous role within their respective community.

Portraits within the Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery were used as the primary museum to juxtapose with tombstone memorial-portraits found within cemeteries. Smithsonian's sterling reputation within society is purported to influence the populace's attitudes, beliefs and behaviors. Investigating a specific form of material culture (tombstones) reveals the various interconnected institutional dynamics covertly influencing society at the individual level.



## Chapter 2: Literature Review

The multi-dimensional nature of this study is reflected by the following review of literature drawn from a myriad of fields that includes history, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, geography, (evolutionary) psychology, and business.

Renowned French philosopher and social theorist Michel Foucault's notion of 'Heterotopia' provides the conceptual apparatus used to envision the cemetery and museum as similar spaces designed with parallel intentions (Foucault 3). Although not thoroughly articulated by Foucault in his own lifetime, his ideas have been presented by scholars within fields ranging from geography<sup>1</sup> to sociology. Other examples of heterotopias Foucault cites include zoos, carnivals, ships, theatres, and gardens. Contrasted to the *imagined* utopia, the heterotopia is a physical social space. The little extrapolation Foucault gives to his ideas regarding heterotopia (outside a 1967 lecture, and his short work, "On Other Spaces") allows for a variety of interpretations of what he meant to articulate. The value of the notion(s) does not lie in exactly ascertaining what the prolific philosopher meant per se; rather, what kinds of societal understanding his ideas could lead to.

Lecturer at Argo Paris Tech and Sociologist Dr. Morgan Meyer's research focuses on the emergence, governance and debates on new forms of biology. Kate Woodthorpe is Lecturer in Sociology at the University of Bath. Woodthorpe's research delves into the Social Aspects of Death, Dying and Bereavement. Extrapolating from Foucault's lecture *On Other Spaces*, sociologists Morgan Meyer and Kate Woodthorpe formulate ten important resemblances

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<sup>1</sup> One such example comes from Robert Topinka. "By juxtaposing and combining many spaces in one site, heterotopias problematize received knowledge by revealing and destabilizing the ground on which knowledge is built...destabilization can offer an avenue of resistance to hegemony."

between the museum and cemetery.<sup>2</sup> The parallels are as follows: Both institutions are simultaneously public and private; retain a strong organized interior; are separated from everyday society; are spaces where specific norms of behavior followed; transcend the here and now; function as a connection to ancestors; are tourist destinations; used for education *and* entertainment purposes; political in nature; and lastly, both are connected to death (Meyer and Wood Thorpe 2).

This author's intention is to extend this argument to envision tombstone memorial-photographs as functioning similarly to portraits exhibited within traditional Museums of Art. Sociologists Meyer and Woodthrope position the museum and cemetery as both spaces that are shaped and built upon the practice of making the absent present, "absence can be spatially located, and have a kind of materiality" (Meyer and Woodthorpe 8).

The author would extend this argument to include individual iconography seen within all memory-institutions. Whether they are portraits of our family members on tombstones or national icons seen on the walls of museums, the individual's perceived persona is deemed culturally significant following its placement within the public sphere. Functioning as heterotopic spaces, the museum and cemetery are both sites that "transform, freeze, materialize, evoke, enact, perform, and remember the absent" (Meyer and Woodthorpe 9). 'Freezing a moment in time', has multiple functions. The memorial-photograph (already a "moment suspended in time" at the moment of the photograph,) becomes the quasi-permanent material personification of an individual following its placement upon the gravestone. For that brief moment the onlooker spends looking at the portrait and ruminating on the deceased, time is again temporarily *suspended* permitting a transient moment of empathy to surface.

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<sup>2</sup> While designed by a society's bureaucracy to function as separate social institutions, this author's intention is to illustrate how these socially created spaces are not mutually exclusive entities within a culture.

A complex social space that is simultaneously sacred and profane, past-tense and present, as well as public and private, the cemetery provides the space for families of the deceased to critique contemporary social norms. In other words, the designated community-space is imbued with an ability to manipulate community perception through the temporary suspension of space-time. Positioning the museum and cemetery as similar heterotopic spaces, the author contends tombstone memorial photographs function within the community beyond solely (manifest) memorialization purposes. Rather, these images found on tombstones socially function with both manifest and latent results. Robert K. Merton asserts, “Given the concept of latent function, we are reminded that behavior may perform a function for the group, although this function may be quite remote from the purpose of the behavior” (Merton 118). Community members utilize the cemetery as a heterotopic space from which to portray and disseminate an alternative or opposing ethos while simultaneously memorializing ‘middle’ or ‘working class’ personages typically marginalized in other memory institutions such as historical societies, galleries, and museums.<sup>3</sup> The deceased’s continued political identity is posited as serving both the immediate family and through its ‘quasi-permanence’ within the public arena the culture’s succeeding generations are attempted to be influenced. Where home memorials allow people to be freer to express grief, public commemoration constructs the political identity of the deceased (Stengs 09 through Wojkowiak and Venbrux 210).

Recognized as the authoritative reference on memorial portraiture, Ronald Horne’s *Forgotten Faces: A Window into our Immigrant Past* provided the framework from which to explore the practice of using tombstone memorial photographs. Tracing the origins of placing

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<sup>3</sup> While the author’s intention is to illustrate how memory institutions similarly function within society, their obvious differences demonstrate how community members have appropriated photographs to attain *their* desired ends, rather than decisions made by a museum’s impersonal bureaucracy.

photographs on gravestones and following its progression into the present, Horne provides us with a strong overview of the phenomenon specifically within the United States. While informative in the practice's historical use in America, the study is limited to North America and does not delve into theoretical conjectures<sup>4</sup>.

Photographic art curators Deepali Dewan and Sophie Hackett present a dialogue positing the notion of 'Cumulative Affect'. Cumulative affect refers to the emotional reaction caused by the shared qualities of "images already familiar to the viewer" (Dawn and Hackett 338). Through the above mentioned 'temporary dissolution of selfhood,' gained through an innately visceral recognition of another, the vast chasm between life and death is slightly narrowed. Similar to Peggy Phelan's understanding of portraiture photography confronting our own mortality, cumulative affect stresses the importance of envisioning oneself as *other*. The brain is hard-wired to recognize familiar visual cues and to make sense of them. These signals include recognizing basic human features; eyes, nose, mouth. This process suspends 'otherness,' and the stranger becomes quite familiar; an extension of one's self. "Our face causes others to recognize, admire or avoid us...it can reach across time and tell other eras who we were" (Horne 119). This temporary 'dissolution of selfhood' is integral in conceptualizing how photographs can break down barriers allowing for empathetic feelings to surface. "Portraits articulate the dialect of imagery and symbol...We know the face through the power of its own expression...Neither time nor death extinguishes its humanity...Memorial portraits perpetuate life" (Horne 92). Although not implicit on the gravestone, the knowledge of premature-death demands the viewer to ponder

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<sup>4</sup> While this work primarily looks at portraits, additional research should be conducted on etchings made from photographs and busts/sculptures, as well as temporary shrines to facilitate a deeper breadth of the public display of deceased individuals.

the cause(s). Tombstone photographs memorializing premature deaths caused by cancer, suicide, drug-overdose, accidents, and murder have been ascertained following local cemetery research.

Dr. June Hobbs is a Professor of English at Gardner-Webb University and Editor of *Journal for the Association of Gravestone Studies* and argues in her piece, "Tombstone Erotics and Gender in the Graveyards of the South," "The stories that public pictures tell shape the way we understand one another" (Hobbs 23). Hobbs continues, "Portraits don't just communicate a message, but rather seek to establish a relationship of communication with the viewer" (Hobbs 24). Similarly, according to Pierre Bourdieu, a French sociologist, anthropologist and philosopher, photographs retain an intensely evocative nature. Through the acknowledgment of the memorial photograph, the viewer has an internal 'discourse' with the dead. As a new generation replaces the previous one and memories of an individual recede, their photograph transitions from a material representation and extension of selfhood, into a community identity marker. What the deceased intends to personify (strength, leadership, commitment etc..) is portrayed through various poses, expressions, dress, etc. The individual may dissolve into oblivion, but through their portraiture, their characteristics endure within these public spaces. Hobbs describes the variety of ways cemeteries within the 19th century Southern United States became places for females to articulate their identities. Sexually repressed women of this era are recognized creating new avenues that subverted the restrictive patriarchal system. Women rebelled against socially constructed gendered power-relations through sexualized monuments and epitaphs. For example, "Asleep in Jesus' arms" is understood as rebellious through an embodiment that is covertly sexual. (Hobbs 18). In addition to other intimate representations, monuments depicting beds and reliefs of holding hands are also envisioned as contesting

patriarchal-defined gender roles. Thus, tombstones are envisaged as becoming a transformative tool posthumously expressing emotions that were suppressed during life.

Professor of Philosophy Beth Lord asserts, “Museums are not fundamentally about objects, but about representation, and anything that operates as a space of representation can be called a museum” (Lord 7). How objects are displayed within all memory-institutions reflects their societal attitudes. For example, museum’s exhibit photographs of cultural icons that are grouped according to a system of classification (leaders, athletes, religious figures etc.).<sup>5</sup> Similarly, clusters of memorial photographs were also noticed near each other in many cemeteries. Memory institutions develop into a space in which to mirror or contest the ingrained division of social classes and mores of the living. Within both memory institutions, people are publicly depicted in a certain manner that latently<sup>6</sup> perpetuates the essence of an identity onto succeeding generations. In other words, photographs are (re)appropriated to perpetuate or challenge the status quo. Similar to June Hobbs’ assumptions on heterotopic spaces, Lord states, “the museum has the capacity to reveal political orders to be contingent and reversible” (Lord 11). By extension, the cemetery maintains similar liberating powers that have the capacity to reveal and contest the power structures of both past and present.

Professor of Anthropology and African Studies at Emory University Corinne A. Kratz’s award-winning *The Ones that are wanted* analyzed the ways contemporary portraiture is utilized within galleries. Convincing in her analysis, “The portrait...is a sign whose purpose is both the description of an individual and the inscription of social identity...involves recognizing people as

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<sup>5</sup> While the author uses the Smithsonian Portrait Gallery as the primary site for comparison, he extrapolates that similar institutions also categorize individuals.

<sup>6</sup> Robert Merton’s seminal work, *Social Theory and Social Structure* aids in the understanding of how community cemeteries function in manifest (disposing corpses) and latent (memorialization, norm perpetuation/contesting) purposes.

types, so it presents an important point where stereotyping can be either reinforced or questioned” (Kratz 116). Thus, the photograph is understood as being imbued with a charisma demanding the viewers’ attention. Kratz describes how the various poses, postures, and expressions are used in photographs and are exhibited in multiple contexts. A variety of postures was noted during the cemetery research that would similarly reinforce or contest a visitor’s engrained belief patterns.

Literature was pursued that described the general practice of photography and how institutions have historically manipulated this medium to reach particular goals. “The advent of photography had three effects that are particularly relevant to memorial portraiture...it facilitated the reproduction of images, made portraiture available to the lower and middle classes, and supplemented people’s memory of the past” (Montanarelli 22).<sup>7</sup> Authored by Director of American Studies at Temple University Miles Orvell, *American Photography* presents an overview that demonstrates how this medium changed the course of civilization and how we perceive the world (Orvell 13). Roger Hargreaves is the Education Officer in Photography at the National Portrait Gallery. Peter Hamilton is a lecturer in Sociology at the Open University, publishing extensively on sociology and photography. In *The Beautiful and Damned: The Creation of Identity in Nineteenth-Century Photography* authors Hamilton and Hargreaves retained similar outlooks that position photography as a form of art retaining intrinsic qualities that enable it to confirm or contest social positions. The nature of the portraiture photograph is revealed as opaque. The photograph’s connotation is dependent upon depiction and context. Both works explain how the same image may be interpreted differently across space and time. Hamilton and Hargreaves demonstrate the ways photographs were historically used within

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<sup>7</sup> Lisa Montanarelli is an author and editor who wrote the introduction to *Forgotten Faces: A Window into our Immigrant Past*

scientific fields to position criminals, the mentally ill, and non-whites as 'other'. As an apparatus purportedly incapable of providing false results, the photograph was positioned as a faultless reflection of an individual or group.

Written in 1960, influential French Sociologist, philosopher and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu's book *Photography: A Middle Brow Art* is an attempt to understand how classes of people utilize photography to differentiate themselves. Bourdieu regards photographs as a ritualizing medium that consecrates a group and communicates this identity to others. Photographs taken on birthdays, weddings, and funerals all allude to this ritual bestowing membership into a community. This transformative power is integral when hypothesizing how images on tombstones function to create group solidarity via perpetuating a continued presence within a community. In other words, following the placement of seemingly mundane photographs within public memory institutions, the portraiture is elevated to a superior level of recognition within a community. Acceptance includes a culture's new presence within a community, its dissimilar values, etc.

Chair of Stanford's Art Program, Peggy Phelan is interested in feminism, mourning, death, and love. "Death and photography force us to confront the mortal limit of the human moment as such" (Phelan 982). This notion is similar to Hackett's assertion that the photograph instills a sense of inevitable demise with not only the sitter, but also the viewer. In other words, by confronting another person's death, one faces their own. Inherently instilled with provocative qualities, the photograph now becomes 'hyper-confrontational' following its placement on a grave-marker. Phelan explains, "The belatedness of photography reminds us of our tendency to arrive too late to appreciate the unique drama of an individual, and by extension, our own mortality" (Phelan 995). Similarly, cemetery visitors looking upon photographs of the deceased



are confronted with ‘missing out’ on knowing the deceased and consequently might ruminate on a certain immigrant population, profession, religion, etc. This reflection on the non-familial deceased is envisioned as allowing empathetic feelings to surface.

American sociologist, lecturer and photographer Douglas Harper addresses how photography is used in conjunction with formally interviewing subjects. Similarly highlighting the photograph’s provocative nature, Harper states, “parts of the brain that process information are evolutionarily older than parts that process verbal information...images evoke deeper emotions of human consciences than do words” (Harper 13). By exploring this aspect of the human psyche, photographs conjure thoughts relating to the ‘other’ and themselves in relation to the ‘other’. Similar to ‘cumulative affect’s’, Harper realizes photographs are imbued with an ability to breakdown cultural barriers and tap into shared human experiences. By extension, photographs *humanize* an individual more than any other symbol found on tombstones.

Alluding to vernacular photography gaining cache when exhibited alongside mainstream pieces of art, Associate Professor of Art Catherine Zuromskis’ notion is applicable to this study regarding memorial photographs. This author observed a high percentage of tombstones containing pictorial representations surrounding the Rick James monument within Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, New York. Therefore, a similar cache is assumed being attained when memorialized nearest a famous individual. The photographs within the vernacular exhibition Zuromskis describes are taken out of context and are put on display to the public. Would the deceased wish for this particular photograph to be the quasi-permanent representation of them? Furthermore, similar to the vernacular-photograph exhibit, those memorialized in the cemetery rarely have autonomy in the decision-making process of the image to be shared publicly.

Thoughtful for regarding the subject's agency, we now can envision the gallery and cemetery as similar places where individuals make decisions regarding how others are recalled.

Post-mortem photography studies were obtained to appreciate the historical usage of placing these portraits on tombstones as well as how the advent of photography and cultural views on death shifted dramatically. Beyond simply rehashing the history of post-mortem photography within the U.S, anthropologist and foremost author on post-mortem photography Jay Ruby's book *Secure the Shadow*, of California's Museum of Photography, Dan Meinwald's *Memento Mori*, and Ronald Horne's *Forgotten Faces: A Window into our Immigrant Past*, shed light on how photographs have been specifically utilized on tombstones. Ruby explains how people have placed daguerreotype post-mortem photographs on tombstones since its inception in the 1830's (Ruby 142). Cemetery research has revealed many historic tombstones with empty picture-frames that once held a daguerreotype. Furthermore, Meinwald explains that society was undergoing a disorienting transition from extended to small family systems causing the death of one to be viewed as irreplaceable (Meinwald 2). This disorienting period Meinwald discusses may be correlated to the Greek and Italian communities the researcher observed within two Western New York cemeteries. The aforementioned cemetery sections were perceived as cementing a presence in a new homeland. A large Italian community that used memorial portraits in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century was discovered in Mount Calvary Cemetery, Cheektowaga, NY. During an era when American society was sharply segregated by ethnicity, it is postulated that perpetuating Italian art forms such as memorial portraiture was integral in sustaining a sense of an inclusive community. Furthermore, exhibiting these portraits in a public space rooted its presence within said community.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Ronald Horne contextualizes cemetery photographs within the U.S through illustrating the transmission of culturally specific forms of expression.

Professor of History at Columbia University and the preeminent authority on New York City, Kenneth T Jackson, whirls through *Silent Cities- the Evolution of the American Cemetery*. The book's intention is to grant an introduction to a history of the American cemetery and the various examples of tombstone iconography, ethnic burial grounds, etc. A more robust elaboration on these interesting topics would have better accompanied the books fantastic photographic material.

Dr. Paul Clements is a lecturer within the department for the Institute for Creative and Cultural Entrepreneurship at Goldsmiths University of London. His work that posits Highgate Cemetery as a heterotopic counterspace is helpful for envisioning the portraits capability in maximizing the spaces potential as a space to facilitate change. Foucault recognized that the "normalization" of individual subjects requires a mix of governmental powers and rationalized devices, techniques and technologies of governance employed to shape conduct... the cemetery can "civilize" society by influencing conduct and tastes (Clements 474). As similarly designed institutions within society the museum and cemetery both purposefully (manifest) *and* unintentionally (latently) modify behavior using portraitures.

Clements lends a valuable viewing of heterotopias within society based on six principals of hypertopology. The cemetery and museum function as intentional memory institutions within society. Heterotopias are sacred and forbidden places; are situated beyond the center of the city; are an amalgam of different and incompatible geographic and socio-cultural space; are linked to time and its disruptor; and they retain its own behavior codes and vocabulary; and finally, are spaces of illusion which may be marginal or oppositional (Clements 470).

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In his discussion of cemetery content, Clements cites Turner 1974, who positions cemetery texts as spatial markers of reputation operating during a transitional time when social order becomes fluid, thereby encouraging those bereaving to greater creativity and reflexivity, which may disrupt social hierarchies and challenge cultural traditions (Clements 475). This author would assert the memorial photograph is an opportunity for the bereaved to be similarly creative and reflexive with the choice of photograph to display. "...The power of the living and spatial dynamics continually reframes the dead" (Clements 472). The strategy on deciding which singular image best condenses the many possible character attributes for an individual is a decision unconsciously affecting the living.

Lecturer in Media & Cultural Studies Dr. Robert J. Topinka utilizes a Foucauldian framework in "Reworking Foucault" asserting that "by cutting and clashing with order, heterotopias force new forms of knowledge to emerge" (Topinka 64). Extrapolating from this argument, new forms of knowledge are revealed within society when an immigrant population establishes a museum within their respective community. By repurposing the museum, ethnic communities establish a permanent presence that reveals 'new forms of knowledge' to the wider community. In similar fashion, ethnically diverse memorial portraits similarly aid in cementing a social presence within their respective cemeteries.

Normative usage of memorial's is expected to be adhered to in the cemetery; if new modes of memorials come about, they are seen as a challenge to the dominant paradigm. One example discussed below includes the family of the slain young man who died as a result of gun violence chose to honor their loved one with seven separate memorial photographs. Typically, one image suffices for the many unique representations the individual assumed in life. The large quantity of images allowed the family to provide the community a more thorough understanding

of the departed while simultaneously defining their own new relationship to the deceased. In order to challenge dominant hegemony, the cemetery provides the arena to publicly announce a presence, posthumously ‘speaking’ for social issues otherwise marginalized in social discourse.

Heterotopias are envisioned as “spatial organs of knowledge production” (Topinka 66). Following Topinka, this author asserts photographs placed in heterotopic spaces allow for new modes of knowledge to be socially produced. This idea is further evidenced by the massive Russian-mobster tombstones that flourished in the 1990s.<sup>9</sup> A family’s claim of social significance latently announced the severity of violence produced from governmental upheaval. Museums have long been aligned as keepers and producers of information for public consumption. As an institution similarly designed to retain community memory, the cemetery is utilized to reveal past and present inequalities and illuminate the path for resistance to hegemony. In short, through portraiture the National Museum facilitates in fashioning a national identity, whilst the cemetery is envisioned aiding in the production of a community ethos.

Susan Sontag’s argument in *On Photography* that contests the photographs imbued power to appropriate the thing photographed assists in conceptualizing how portraiture is utilized within our memory institutions to perpetuate or challenge our norms and values. “Photographing someone turns people into objects that can be symbolically possessed” (Sontag 14). Following Sontag, the inherent or supplanted qualities of those photographed is the lasting impression(s) they leave on society or their respective communities. Cameras define reality in the two ways essential to the workings of an advanced industrial society: as a spectacle (for masses) and as an

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<sup>9</sup> Following the breakup of the Soviet Union the Governmental transition to a free market economy resulted in power struggles among organized crime factions. The City of Yekaterinburg became the center of gang wars in the 1990’s (theculturetrip.com). The Shirokorechensky Cemetery illustrates the use of grandiose tombstone laser-etchings depicting interred gangsters. Often the etching included a luxury automobile. In attempts to further display capital several of these automobiles had their own tombstone.

object of surveillance (for rulers) to furnish a ruling ideology (Sontag 28). Instead of the bleakness in which Sontag positions the photograph this author contends these images of people may be (re)appropriated to challenge contemporary cultural values and assert new ideals.

The process of determining ‘most representational photograph’ equally involves the photographer and those who decide on the image to be displayed in the museum or cemetery. “...photographers are still haunted by tacit imperatives of taste and conscience...in deciding how a picture should look; photographers are always imposing standards on their subject” (Sontag 6). The portrait is viewed through relative cultural lenses that condense individuality into singular personality traits, values, or a group identifier. Portraits are expected to capture the essence of the individual photographed. It follows that when a portrait is observed the particular posture, adornment, and expression is assumed the most accurate representation of that individual. Further, Sontag assists in viewing portraiture (placed in public settings) acting as sources of community empowerment. “Photography...is mainly a social rite, a defense against anxiety, and a tool of power” (Sontag 8). Viewed within their new context, (the museum or gallery,) photographs cease to be “about” their subjects in the same direct way...they become studies in the possibilities of photography (Sontag 133). The author would extend Sontag’s notion to encompass the range of “social-selves” one assumes throughout life. Different postures, expressions, clothing distinguishes cultural membership.

The faces in the stereotyped photographs affixed to tombstones contain a portent of their death (Sontag 70). The casual museum visitor who admiringly or admonishingly looks upon the portrait shares in the certainty of both the sitter as well as their own mortality. The context of the displayed image is paramount to the perpetuation or disintegration of a society’s value-system. “As Wittgenstein argued for words, that the meaning is the use- so for each photograph” (Sontag

106). Photographs are powerful tools imbued with additional cultural authority once placed within heterotopias.

Neuroscientist, photographer, and writer Joshua Sarinana posits in his piece, “Photography and the Feelings of Others: From Mirroring Emotions to the Theory of Mind,” that photography is a unique medium which is used to aid in our understanding of others and ourselves in relation to others (Sarinana 1). Recently, neuroscientists have identified a brain region called the temporal parietal junction (Sarinana 7). Non-human animals do not seem to have an analogous structure; hence, Sarinana asserts humans developed a theory of mind that allows us to scrutinize others’ emotions, desires and beliefs (Sarinana 7). Grave-markers with memorial portraits beacon the living unlike those without. Similarly, while human artifacts are revered within the museum it is the representation of another that stirs the innately human and most visceral empathetic feelings to surface.

“Imitation is an automatic and basic requirement for developing practical social skills, like empathy...when we see another’s expression those same muscles are unconsciously activated” (Sarinana 3). Continuing, “When someone is sad and frowns you too will activate frown muscles and feel similar to the person you’re looking at, granted to a lesser extent” (Sarinana 3). Through repeated viewings of the portrait in the cemetery or museum, unconscious empathetic feelings rise to the surface and leave residual impressions on an individual and by extension, society.

*Deathscapes* was edited by Senior Lecturer in Geography at the University of the West England, Bristol, Avril Maddrell and Professor of Political and Cultural Geography at the University of Amsterdam, James Sidaway. An invaluable multidisciplinary work of the highest scholarship, contributors are brought from an array of disciplines offering perspectives from

anthropology, history, sociology, geography, urbanism, and among others, artists. Penelope Davies is an Associate Professor in Roman Art and Architecture at the University of Texas at Austin; Polly Gould is an artist and writer; Sylvia Grider is Senior Professor Emerita of Anthropology at Texas A&M University; Jenny Hockey is Emeritus Professor of Sociology at the University of Sheffield; Leonie Kellaher is Emeritus Professor of Social Anthropology at the Cities Institute, London Metropolitan University; Anna Peterson is a PhD-student at the Department of Architecture and Built Environment, Lund University, Sweden; Joanna Wojkowiak is a PhD student in the faculty of Religious Studies at Radboud University Nijmegen in the Netherlands. The scope of this social phenomenon required an approach combining multiple disciplines. Each chapter engaged the reader concerning 21<sup>st</sup> century burial and memorial practices. Part III concerns negotiating space and memorialization in private and public space. These articles were especially helpful in unraveling the variety of symbolic expressions conveyed in different public spaces and how public and private spaces are distinguished. Part IV obliged in gaining a historical perspective of some of the political uses of tombstones.

Professor of Geography and Director of the committee on Social Theory at the University of Kentucky and Jeremy W. Crampton Professor of Political Theory and Geography at University of Warwick, Stuart Elden, present a comprehensive collection of Foucault's writings on spatiality as well as contributions from key social theorists that "situate Foucault in the contemporary contexts of power, politics, government and war" (Publisher's summary). According to Foucault the practice of the government shifted from the conduct of others under surveillance by an authority to the conduct of the self" (Crampton 324). The museum was historically utilized to improve a nation's social conduct and bolster its image on the



international stage. In a Foucauldian sense, a ‘self-policing’ amongst society has taken hold; the social body has accepted and internalized the established cultural norms of behavior and directed aspirations. Individuals are managed by society through psychological and therapeutic influences configured “techniques of the self” (Nikolas Rose through Clements 474).

Museums operate at the macro-level of society acting as purveyors of social values; the cemetery on the micro-level manifests similarly to function as familial and community norm perpetuator. “As the knowledge and practice of space, strategy can serve to subvert power itself. This knowledge/practice cannot be neutral and if it is to be used it must be reinvented” (Elden & Crampton 26). Heterotopias can be reinvented and re-appropriated by marginalized segments of the population.<sup>10</sup> Contemporarily, mourning family members commission massive, multiple, and candid memorial photographs affixed to the tombstones of their loved ones. The proceeding examples from the cemetery attest to the increased reinvention, or (re)appropriation Elden and Crampton allude to.

*The Secret Cemetery* is authored by Research Associate Doris Francis of the Museum of International Folk Art, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Professor Emeritus of Social Sciences at University North London Leonie Kellaheer. The distinguished authors present a compelling work that is helpful when understanding who uses the heterotopia and in what capacity. In short, individuals from all backgrounds visit the cemetery, thus revealing most of the society is invested in perpetuating norms. “Men, women and children of all ages, religions, ethnicities and income levels visit cemeteries at various frequencies” (Francis, Kellaheer, Neophytou 20). The authors discuss how “burial grounds are more than a metaphysical place; it is a social space, an extension of the residence and like the home demands ongoing attention” (Francis, Kellaheer,

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<sup>10</sup> Foucault’s second identifying principal of a heterotopia defines them as “functioning in very different fashions as history unfolds, for each heterotopia has a precise and determined function within society” (Foucault 5).

Neophytou 85). The repeated and continuous maintenance of the grave the first few years following the death latently reinforce social norms discussed below. During these visits from family members, photographs assist in recalling the past and bring the deceased present. Such reminiscence sparks an internal dialogue with the deceased which also leads to self-introspection. "Cemeteries are arenas where intimate and social memories are crafted and where individual and group identities are constructed and given material statement" (Francis, Kellaher, Neophytou 107). Not only is the deceased's memory shaped within these memory institutions, their surviving family member's social identities is also simultaneously expressed.

New business models have adapted to create highly personalized gravestones that accommodate rises in secular attitudes and advances in technology. Consequently, the business side of displaying an identity on tombstones was researched to uncover what future demonstrations may entail in *Death and Digital Media*. University of Melbourne authors Bjorn Nansen, Michael Arnold, Martin Gibbs, and Tamara Kohn argue the deployment of digital cemetery technology points towards an individualization of the community of death (Nansen, Arnold, Gibbs, and Kohn 1). The authors assert the creation of interactive headstones, including sound systems within caskets, create a social agency for the departed linking them to the living (Nansen, Arnold, Gibbs, and Kohn 8). An analysis of the trend towards individualism and a shift away from strictly religious displays has led to secular business models. Similarly, in Peter Marnesco and Ahmed Zafar's piece, "Personalized Gravestones: Your Life's Passion for All to See and Hear," it is asserted that a depiction of a person's family and interests have increased significantly as opposed to religious iconography (Marnesco and Zafar 3). The author's contention that the impetus behind employing new technology is an attempt to "out-do each

other” (Marnesco and Zafar 8,) is shortsighted by not sufficiently accounting for the transformative nature of the tombstone used by a family and culture.

### Chapter 3: Heterotopia & Autonomy

Heterotopias exist within society perpetually accumulating community knowledge. “Public memory is part of the symbolic foundation of collective life and often lies at the heart of the community’s sense of identity” (Maddrell 11). After all, public memory is an “invented tradition selectively embellished, and mythologized versions of events which serve social, political ends” (Foote, Grider 184). These social and political ends the author contends are the subject of this following study. It will be argued these social norms and behaviors are latently reinforced through the use of public photographs. Foote and Grider continue, “these traditions create a register of sacred history- a set of shared historical experiences and attitudes which define and bond a community...public memory is then part of the symbolic foundation of who we are” (Foote and Grider 184). This author contends that museums and cemeteries similarly allow individuals to create quasi-permanent remembrances to ensure character attributes outlive them. Visitors within both environments are able to mentally “travel” through time and internally cultivate what a person’s portrait means to them. “...Ongoing ties between the living and the dead are articulated, reinforced, contested, renegotiated and reconstructed through memorial behavior and personal conversation” (Francis, Kellaher, Neophytou 177). Whether the portrait depicts a famous personage in the gallery or a commoner within the cemetery the individual’s internal dialogue makes sense of the image only through a comparison with the viewers own life.

The memorial photograph serves merely as *quasi*-permanent reminder of personhood. The individual responsible for commissioning the memorial portrait onto the tombstone was cognizant the memorial is not everlasting. It follows that the intention is not for the memorial to continue in perpetuity; rather, the family hopes to have the image last long enough to impact living and immediately succeeding generations. Within both outlined heterotopias the majority of

those photographed did not select their displayed image; that choice respectively being made by museum staff and the deceased's family.

The laser-artist will exclude anything from the photograph that is prohibited by cemetery guidelines, or upon the request of the deceased's family members. Items such as cigarettes and beer cans have been removed from the original image thereby allowing a more 'dignified' version of reality to be represented. "A fake photograph falsifies the history of art" (Sontag 86). The selected image presented in heterotopias is purported to be the closest representation of the individual essence. An individual's photograph condenses a variety of potential representations of selfhood and its placement within publicly-sanctified spaces latently articulates the values members of a society are expected to uphold or challenge. Following (Walter 1996,) Maddrell and Sidaway argue shrines represent an attempt to find a space in which to reconfigure the identity of the mourner" (Maddrell 11). Intentionally or otherwise, the mourner chooses an image of their deceased relative that best suits *their* needs. Projecting the deceased's admirable characteristics reflects well on surviving family members.

In contrast to sudden fatalities, elderly couples presumably commissioned their own memorialization in anticipation of their death. Differentiating from the photographs seen in the museum and gallery, agency resides within those depicted. The board of directors at a museum ultimately sanctions what will be displayed and the way it is presented for consumption. Within non-denominational cemeteries families have a greater ability to express to an artist how they wish to be remembered within a community. However, elderly couples do not have complete autonomy; one must consider the artist may have given the couple a select amount of options to choose from and additionally these options would have to be approved by a bureaucratic hierarchy.

## Chapter 4: Museum and Cemetery Parallels

### *I. Repeated visits*

The ritual performance of visiting the grave is sanctified through repetition. “One is invested in the sense of the sacred when they are associated with repeated memorial visits” (Davies 258). Repeated visits to the memory institution are coupled with an attempt to inspire introspection. Benches are used to encourage prolonged stays to ruminate on the deceased. Similarly, “museum users need regular areas of seating ... in allowing the learner to reflect and make sense of her experiences is an essential part of engagement and central to the process of learning” (Black 102).

Discussing museums as reflective institutions, Goodin contests “much of the work of understanding others...is done inside your own head projecting yourself into their place” (Goodin 2003). For example, the tomb of Scipios presents evidence of providing seating for the visitor. In 2<sup>nd</sup> Century Rome elite funerals were a principal venue for recalling, reenacting and reinforcing lineage.<sup>11</sup> Presupposing an audience, places to sit were provided for contemplation and to reinforce the demands made from the tombs’ inscription. Contemporarily, new forms of funerary art similarly convey comparable attempts at boasting ancestral clout. The authors assert annual journeys to the cemetery “encourage social comment on the values of the past in terms of the present, articulate, reinforce and also modify traditional cultural ideals” (Francis, Kellaher, Neophytou 192). This author contends this encouragement is brought forth via the photographic image that conveys a posthumous authority. “Recurring activities at memorial places function as a small ritual in which given grief patterns and symbolic gestures serve as tools to deal with initial emotions of grief” (Patterson 150). Quoting Durkheim, Patterson conveys the way

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<sup>11</sup> Penelope J.E. Davies presents a thorough description of the political usage of Roman tomb in piece, “Living to Living, Living to Dead: Communication and Political Rivalry in Roman Tomb Design.”

repeated visits from future visitors to the museum or cemetery internalize behaviorisms. “Rites affect the collective consciousness of a society by reaffirming social and moral values and preventing them from fading into memory” (Patterson 150). The repetitive viewing of portraits in both settings facilitates the internalization of behavioral cues.

Furthermore, the site of the remains creates an additional psychological undertaking for the viewer. “For many, the memorial *is* the departed, but the marker gains this attribution only through its proximity to the bodily remains” (Francis, Kellaheer, Neophytou 124). The tombstone represents the material personification of the deceased; the memorial photograph exacerbates this anthropomorphic ritual of visiting the dead at the site of the remains.<sup>12</sup>

## ***II. Epitaphs and labels***

Exhibition labels are interpretations that contain a rhetoric of what we want to see and how (Kratz 130). Seen as framing devices, labels shape how the viewer individually interprets a piece. In Kratz’s exhibition of African photographs the captions refer to the subject by nickname. The subject expresses agency by asserting how they want to be remembered within the community. Nicknaming is understood as serving to “create a relaxed atmosphere and familiar tone, as if seeing a friend” (Kratz 128). Similarly, the non-denominational cemetery is a space used to stimulate a relaxed moment with the onlooker.

Subania explains, “Exhibition texts are more than a source of information, they design elements whose placement, order, and typology might signal beginnings and endings and appropriate paths through an exhibition” (Kratz 196). Similar to the organized interior of the museum, one must often pass by various older sections in the cemetery before reaching their destination. While walking through the aforementioned memory institutions one is presented

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<sup>12</sup> The corpses of national figures have become visited shrines within their respective countries. Ho Chi Minh, Vietnam; Vladimir Lenin, Russia; Kim Jong Il, North Korea; and Jeremy Bentham, England (theculturetrip.com).

with reflections of the changing societal ideologies within a particular location. The aforementioned heterotopic environments capture many dramatic transformations that include displays of religion, femininity, and the inclusionary achievements of minority/immigrant communities.

Tombstone epitaphs are like museum labels in that they attempt at providing contextualized information about the photograph. Various forms of epitaphs were noticed within non-denominational cemeteries. Those buried within Catholic cemeteries often used bible verses. One wonders if the quote is a cliché used on many other gravestones or one personally tailored for the deceased. One questions the museum and cemetery text's intention, origin, and objectivity. Similar to the museum wall-text, the author of the epitaph is ambiguous thus creating a mysterious aura. A high quantity of epitaphs alluded to loving and missing the departed, and one particularly small Catholic cemetery researched contained very few epitaphs. This omission was analogous to the lack of identifying representations seen within military sections in cemeteries.

Experts from mission statements from both the National Portrait Gallery and Mount Auburn Cemetery demonstrate a similar emphasis placed on *inspiration*. New museum theory places emphasis on providing tangible results that enrich the surrounding community. Catholic Cemetery Association Tombstone Policies state:

“All markers must contain at least one Christian symbol, any additional symbol must be approved, and if desired, bust is allowed which is limited to a person's head, neck and upper part of the shoulders.<sup>13</sup>” Further, the Buffalo Catholic

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<sup>13</sup> [www.ccemetry.org](http://www.ccemetry.org) -The Catholic Cemetery Association, Inc Archdiocese of Boston



Diocese specifies, “etchings must not exceed 10% of the face of the die ...you are entitled to just one etching of a non-religious nature<sup>14</sup>.”

While the museum portrait is contextualized with assistance from a label, the memorial photograph often relies on itself; the accompanying epitaph often generic or lacking enough insight into the deceased’s character. The author contends that it is this lack of informative label that allows the photograph to take ‘center-stage’ projecting condensed expressions onto succeeding societies.

### ***III. Inspiring the public***

Excerpts were taken from mission statements from the National Portrait Gallery and Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts to illustrate the aspirations of each prestigious institution to remain relevant in contemporary society by positioning themselves as a foundational feature of a healthy capitalist society. The Smithsonian National Portrait Gallery articulates the need to display individuals that “shape the nation’s history, development and culture.<sup>15</sup>” Furthermore, Mount Auburn Cemetery “Inspires all who visit, comforts the bereaved, and commemorates the dead in a landscape of beauty.<sup>16</sup>” Both institutions are noted as placing an importance on *inspiration* through their respective statements of purpose.

### ***IV. Museum as a place to facilitate change***

The latest wave of museum theory posits the museum as agent for change. In their piece, “Change and Complexity in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Museum- The Real Relics on Our Museums May be the Ways We Think and Work,” museum consultant and former professor in the Department of Recreation and Park Administration at Indiana University, Bloomington, Lois H. Silverman

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<sup>14</sup> [www.buffalocatholiccemeteries.org](http://www.buffalocatholiccemeteries.org) -Burial Guidelines

<sup>15</sup> [npg.si.edu](http://npg.si.edu) – About US / National Portrait Gallery

<sup>16</sup> [Mountauburn.org](http://Mountauburn.org) – About Mount Auburn Cemetery

and head of museums and galleries, Glasgow City Council, Scotland, Mark O'Neill assert economic and political constraints have led to the museum having to redefine itself in the public sphere and justifying its continued presence. In addition to the conventional role's museums have held (preservation, collection, education, memorializing elite groups, expressing civic pride) their place within society has expanded to areas to include such areas as entertainment, therapy, economic regeneration and civic dialogue" (Silverman and O'Neil 198). Moreover, "The decisions make over what and how to collect, display, interpret and shape the very culture they profess to safeguard...hence, the museum is both keeper and maker of culture" (Silverman and O'Neil 196). It follows that those national figures we choose to remember facilitates in creating a befitting societal ethos.

Stephen E. Weil was a renowned legal expert in the arts and a museum administrator for the Smithsonian Institution. His influential book, *Making Museums Matter* illustrates where museums came from and how they need to prepare to meet future demands. The new museum model endows the contemporary museum with the ability to contribute to the quality of human lives and communities (Weil 171). Weil explains the major paradigm shifts in modern museum theory. Collections were paramount in 1970, but by 1984 education was declared the 'primary' purpose of museum...in 1997 the emphasis shifted entirely to involve and empower audiences (Weil 174). Similar to the cemetery, the museum is positioned as having the capacity to influence or change what people may know or think or feel and affect what attitudes they adopt or display and influence the values they form (Weil 179).

Graham Black is a Reader in Public History and Heritage Management at Nottingham Trent University and similarly contends the 21<sup>st</sup> Century museum needs to adjust to suit contemporary demands. The last two decades museums have transformed from a collections-

based institution into one that is audience-focused (Black 75). Museums can support community empowerment and engagement and develop social capital by encouraging debate through the utilization of the space to conduct forums (Black 267).

## Chapter 5: Case Studies

### I. Individuality

Cemeteries and museums have similarly become spaces for demonstrating individuality. There seems to be an inherent drive for a culture to perpetuate itself; a key factor in achieving this end is the creation of memory institutions designed to preserve and publicly honor its chosen exemplars. One cenotaph example from Forest Lawn Cemetery exemplifies this culturally valued independent spirit. The cenotaph included a picture of a man in masonry garb set beside his personal reflections on life. Not following the conventional religious iconography typically seen on funerary art, this individual conveyed to future audiences his particular worldview as the following statement reflects, “I have shared the gifts of my life with all-work ethic, caring, humor, appreciation and love” On another woman’s tombstone, she is alluded to by nickname (“Da Boss”,) and is portrayed laughing with a cup of coffee in hand.



*Figure 1: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

Although a decorated officer, this woman’s carefree disposition becomes the initial and or lasting impression with which the viewer is left. There were many other individual expressions noted within the cemetery and museum.

In both the museum and cemetery, the portrait is presented to project their most admirable character attributes. Comparing the aforementioned tombstone images to American

philosopher/naturalist Henry David Thoreau's photograph within the National Portrait Gallery serves to demonstrate how both institutions similarly celebrate individualistic characters.

Thoreau has become one of the symbols of individualism as the portrait's label explains:

Described by a contemporary as "the apostle of individuality in an age of association and compromise," author Henry David Thoreau followed his own moral compass and lived a life largely unfettered by convention.<sup>17</sup> Thoreau's gaze is not directed at the camera; looking detached from the moment, he is depicted as a man unto himself.



*Figure 2: Henry David Thoreau – National Portrait Gallery*

## **II. Femininity**

The way images of women are displayed in public arenas is indicative of the society's gender norms. Within museums and cemeteries, we see how images of women reinforce or challenge its norms. Institutions built to restore memory are inherently emotionally -charged public spaces where normative behaviors may be (re)defined. Images displayed in contemporary memory institutions reflect the accepted or contested dispositions towards historically marginalized women. "By drawing attention to the spatial specificity of the performance of gender identities, geographers have demonstrated how all space is sexualized" (Crampton 310).

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<sup>17</sup> Npg.si.edu - National Portrait Gallery

The aforementioned overt displays of femininity also hint at the ways in which heterotopic space(s) are highly politicized and gendered spaces.

June Hobbs discusses how cemetery objects possess a transformative quality that “shaped how women experienced their own lives” (Hobbs 26). Hobbs asserts that “grave markers are highly allusive and heavily condensed expressions of values that order a culture, often in challenge to its authoritative texts and official ecclesiastical policies” (Hobbs 11).

One particular woman’s gravestone memorial photo highlights an example of latently subverting patriarchal hegemony. The candid photograph portrays her confident and independent character.



*Figure 3: A tombstone at Elmlawm Cemetery – Tonawanda, New York*

Pictured without an accompanying male figure this woman’s photograph poses a subtle threat to the patriarchal order. Further, this woman’s clothing is more revealing than all other images observed. Her countenance exudes delight whilst her attire exposes her femininity. The slightly (unintentional) provocative angle in which the photograph was taken challenges conservative gender-norms. Thus, the cemetery is utilized as a public space for cultural modification while simultaneously reflecting changing social customs.

For comparison, one gravestone in Lockport, NY was simply etched ‘My Wife’.



*Figure 4: A tombstone at Cold Springs Cemetery - Lockport, New York*

Positioned as an extension of her husband, this example illustrates how women's social position has been dramatically enhanced following the passage of approximately one-hundred years. Within the same geographic area and separated by a century extraordinary advances towards gender equality are reflected within the cemetery.

Both institutions provide the necessary public arena to protest community marginalization and social injustices. The aforementioned woman's memorial photograph is juxtaposed with the iconic image of Marilyn Monroe standing over a vent.



*Figure 5: Marilyn Monroe – Shaw Family Archives*

Although photographed by another, Marilyn's coy expression positions her as autonomous agent. Marilyn is seen embracing life's spontaneous moments as she projects apathy over social reprisal for flaunting societies accepted behaviors regarding sexuality.

### *III. Children*

Representations of young people yielded a high percentage of tombstone photographs. It can be assumed that visitors are more likely compelled to ponder the causes of a premature death. The image confronts the onlooker imploring them to question societal values. How did the child pass and could it have been avoided? How many children around the world die under similar circumstances? The author asserts that by provoking cemetery visitors through personal imagery the images serve to create a posthumous form of agency. Doss understands our ‘Ghoulish fascination with inexplicable death is accompanied by feelings of guilt and gratitude and concerns over personal responsibilities’ (Doss 89). Additional internet research yielded various circumstances that wrought premature death. One gravestone of a young girl particularly drew the researcher’s attention.



*Figure 6: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

“Photographs have the strong effect of bringing the dead to life and halting us in our tracks...a face peering out from a gravestone calls attention to the person whose life the stone memorializes” (Montanarelli 12). Toys surrounded the gravesite of this child who never was able to realize her potential. Although specific cause of death is typically not detailed on gravestones, modern research-technology allows one to uncover cause of death. It was ascertained from further study that this child died of cancer. The young girl’s image is conceptualized as transforming from public memorial into cautionary reminder.



“The very survival of our species relies on understanding how others feel, attending to those needs, and to work together towards a better society (Sarinana 6).

#### Photographs within the Ann Frank House



*Figure 7: Ann Frank – Ann Frank House*

and a child-laborer photographed by Lewis Hines



*Figure 8: Child Laborer - Museum of Modern Art*

were compared to the aforementioned memorial portrait. Within these contexts, photographers are noted as creating a ‘voice’ for an individual, group, or cause. Ann Frank has become exemplar for courageousness and intellect beyond her years. Children are typically depicted as vulnerable in sculpture and portraiture...these sentimental bodies address the pedestrian” (Jackson and Vergara 66). Oriented to project her innocence Ann Frank’s photograph reflects contemporary attitudes held towards children; their death representing the crumbling of society’s most basic tenants.

In contrast, Lewis Hines framed his child-subjects as serious looking adults. Early in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Lewis Hines was appointed staff photographer to the National Child Labor

Committee and his photographs of children working in coal mines, cotton mills and beet fields influenced legislators to make child labor illegal (Sontag 63). One particular photograph of a boy conveys his dejection. Consequently, the publicly displayed photographs of children imbue them both with an emblematic posthumous voice. “Our ability to identify with and imagine someone else’s point of view is deeply ingrained into the architecture of our brain...photography plays a unique role in triggering the network of brain regions that underlie empathy (Sarinana 2) ...what better way to collectively engage in empathy than to share the images we take?” (Sarinana 5).

#### ***IV. Financial Success***

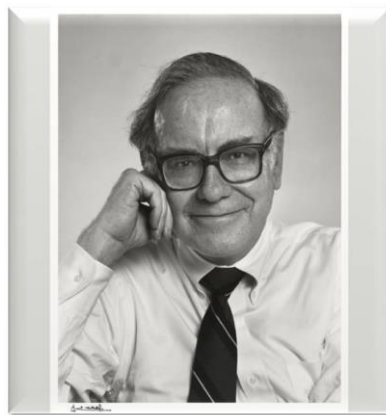
Funerary art has long been used as a medium to articulate political clout. By the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century the individualization of elite tombs began to be tapped for its propagandistic potential and freedom of self-representation” (Davies 225). Like all capitalist societies, the United States places great importance on achieving financial success. Memory institutions promote these attempts to become affluent. “Being the subject of a public portrait symbolizes membership in a high-status group, and worthy of contemplation and commemoration” (Hobbs, Fraser and Hanneth 24). An example of this form of success was uncovered within Forest Lawn Cemetery. Atop the impressive tombstone a massive photograph of a man took prominence.



*Figure 9: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

This black and white image was the largest of all memorial photographs observed. Wearing a professional suit that exuded business acumen, the portrait was presumably taken while the individual was at the pinnacle of his career. Placed on both sides of the tombstone, the portrait could be seen by passersby on the street as well.

To show the similar ways cemeteries and museums express desired attributes, Warren Buffett's photograph is compared to the aforementioned memorial portrait.



*Figure 9: Warren Buffet – National Portrait Gallery*

Business mogul Warren Buffett has become synonymous with financial success. Adorned with similar business attire and confident countenance, the profile of a successful businessperson is similarly conveyed. The play on Buffett's lips projects a haughtiness and is similar to the smirk seen on the abovementioned memorial portrait. The onlooker is presumed to admiringly look upon both photographs of individuals who have been financially successful. Placing large portraits of successful business persons in the heterotopia reinforces characteristics or traits that made them successful: ambition, intellect, leadership, competitiveness and communication skills. Since Buffett is photographed without suitcoat, an alternative interpretation of the image may internalize this casualness as a sign of him being more affable than the aforementioned businessman.

## V. *The impoverished*

The perception of homelessness within a community is contingent to the amount of assistance that is given. Authors Nansen, Arnold, Gibbs, and Kohn assert the tombstone monument is an expression of a “democratizing immortality”. A more accurate assessment would account for those marginalized in life *and* death. Within this democratic cemetery, those families with the most capital boast a ‘louder posthumous voice.’ Those unable to afford this form of ‘quasi-immortalization’ achieved through tombstone iconography are absent from the community’s narrative during *and* after life. “The cemetery remains a place of exclusion with the marginal unable to afford a plot, denying their right to the city” (Clements 482).

The disregard for the poor has been a trend since antiquity. From the eighth century until the nineteenth, most people in England were buried in the few acres around a church...while pauper’s graves were repeatedly reused and over-buried (Francis, Kellaheer, Neophytou 30). Potter’s fields in New York City, Chicago and New Jersey represent the ultimate in anonymity. “Paupers are buried in groups of thirty-five in mass graves and fields are twenty times more crowded than the average rural cemetery...names, if known, are only put on coffins” (Jackson and Vergara 36). Those that hung onto the fringes of society whilst alive are similarly ignored in death. There are no photographic memories displayed for those that are unloaded into mass graves. Even if these images were present there would be no visitors to acknowledge them. These unvisited spaces are similar to waste dumps on the outskirts of the city; out of site and social consciousness. This burial ground is not viewed as a ‘true’ heterotopic space- as it nullifies the existence of societies’ poor while simultaneously perpetuating its social stratification. This space offers no hope for change through the challenging of contemporary community values for it reproduces those already in practice.

Funeral-issued memorial markers were discovered in several of the researched cemeteries. "... (stylized texts) may have less emotional impact than a stark unadorned wooden cross on the pauper's grave which may confront and play on the guilt of those who are comfortable in life" (Clements 477). One example was found in Wooster Cemetery in Danbury, Connecticut.



*Figure 10: A temporary marker at Wooster Cemetery – Danbury, Connecticut*

The small marker includes the deceased's name, years of life and accompanies their small photograph. Underneath the image of the deceased is the name of the funeral home that provided the marker. Although the marker is only four years old and may be temporary, the grave marker still serves in illustrating that simple or poorly made gravestones are analogous to the surrounding capitalist society; those with cultural capital linger longer in a society's collective consciousness. While the cemetery provides an arena for members of the community to challenge hegemony, the family must have the financial capacity to do so. This constraint obviously puts limits on who is remembered within a community. Society has chosen to generally neglect the indigent and the typical lack of photographs to publicly remember them reproduces this societal disposition.

Despite of the similar absence witnessed within the National Portrait Gallery (emphasizing nationally known and influential characters,) other museums and galleries have brought awareness to poverty by emphasizing the homeless plight with exhibitions. For example, History Colorado's exhibition entitled "Searching for Home" showcases extreme poverty within

the state. Another example of a museum bringing awareness to a social issue is the Figgie Art Museum in Davenport, IO.



*Figure 11: A homeless man - Figgie Art Museum in Davenport, Iowa*

This author contends that exhibiting the homeless within the gallery/museum legitimizes the validity of the social crisis by giving it “a face”.

#### **VI. Diasporic communities**

The first cemeteries emerged alongside increasingly territorial notions of land and social space” (Pettitt 249). Similar to the Italian and Greek sections that were observed in local cemeteries, a publicly-defined space functions to establish permanence in a new homeland. One modern section within Elmlawn Cemetery in Tonawanda, New York is occupied with tombstones memorializing those with Greek heritage. Representations of Greece and their iconic columns are displayed alongside memorial images of the deceased. Various representations of Greece were without accompanying religious or individual expressions. As evidenced by the tombstone displays of Greek Identity that features Iconic Columns, “National or ethnic identity often supersedes religious identity or at least persists alongside it” (Stockton 62). This overt display of nation-pride was understood as being essential for a new cultural group establishing a permanent presence within a society. Through the conjunctive display of images of both the individual and country of origin, an ‘anchor’ publicly manifests within a new homeland. Burial

in the Diaspora may be seen as an attempt at preserving and recovering traditions and creating communal spaces of belonging” (Francis, Kellaheer, Neophytou 181).

An Italian section within Mount Calvary showed a high frequency of early 20<sup>th</sup> century memorial photographs.



*Figure 12: A tombstone at United German and French Cemetery – Cheektowaga, New York*

“Though patented by the French, the Italians popularized and have valued and enhanced the art of memorial portraiture since its inception...their widespread use of photo-ceramic portraits led to its continuing refinement” (Horne 53). From the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century to World War II, Italian Americans favored elaborate tomb structures...photographs of the deceased also played an important role in articulating the monument (Jackson and Vergara 50). The ceramic memorial portraiture communicated a symbolic permanency within a new homeland for Italian immigrants. Further blurring the lines between communally shared and personal, the photo ceramic portrait establishes the important link between the private space of the Italian-American home and the public space of the cemetery” (Inguanti 16).

For many previously marginalized groups, shared memories of past injustices are a critical source of empowerment” (Misztal 18 through Black 275). One of many potential examples, the Moy family exhibit within Chicago’s Chinese-American Museum illustrates how

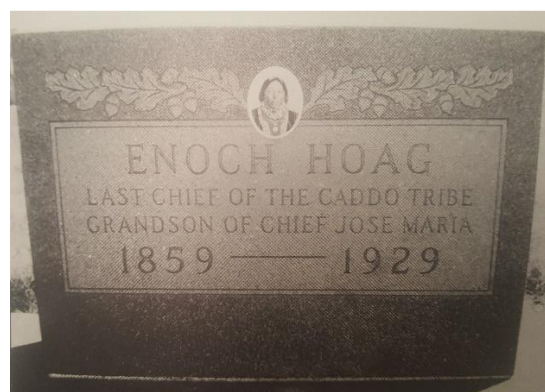
appropriated images of individuals establish a presence within a new homeland for an immigrant community.



*Figure 13: A picture at Chinese American Museum of Chicago*

Hobbs argues, “The stories that public pictures tell shape the way we understand one another” (Hobbs 23). Images that have historically objectified the ‘other’ are (re)appropriated by immigrant communities thus demonstrating membership into society.

A Native American man’s tombstone further emphasizes the point of ‘anchoring’ in new lands. “An oval porcelain photograph (on gravestone) of Hoag Enoch specifies him as “the last Chief of the Caddo Tribe... wearing traditional garb further emphasizes his American Indian Identity” (Gradwohl 14).



*Figure 14: A tombstone at Memory Lane Cemetery – Oklahoma.  
Photographed by David M. Gradwohl*



Hoag's stoic expression and native dress are tangible reminders within the community of the historic dismantling of Native tribes across the United States. In addition to recalling past indignities against Native tribes the photograph conveys a proclamation of perseverance.

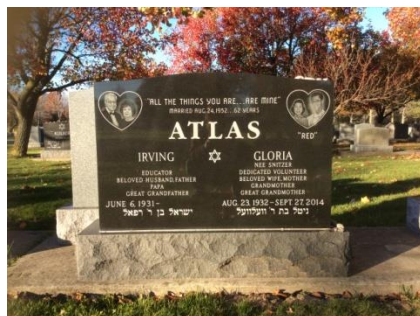
Jackson and Vergara Discuss how Czech-American's within the Bohemian National Cemetery utilize large niche spaces to memorialize their family. "In addition to formal portraits, candid photographs portray people in their everyday activities.... offering glimpses into people's lives, beliefs, and aspirations" (Jackson and Vergara 114). The author extends this argument and contends the new strategy of utilizing candid photographs within the public sphere offers unique glimpses into an individual's character, and by extension, a culture's value-system.

The effort and expense Hispanics tend to incur for the commemoration of their dead represents more than a survival of ancestry burial customs. It signifies a claim to their adopted land as well" (Jackson and Vergara 59). Additionally, the authors argue that "the cemetery...is used as a site for reworking the dialectic between assimilation and resistance" (Francis, Kellaher, Neophytou 194). Both the museum and cemetery are understood as being institutions useful in facilitating change in societal attitudes.

## ***VII. Marriage***

Marriage is a critical institution within contemporary society as it encourages two parents for child rearing purposes. "...people take values such as spousal love to the grave; values that are central to modern society" (Maddrell 10). A high frequency of memorial photographs depicted elderly couples. Typically pictured happy and together, the couple reflected a shared lifetime. "Unlike other themes of funerary-art, marriage is commemorated by every ethnic group and class" (Jackson, Vergara 64). These portraits are envisaged reflecting valued cultural ideals. Photographs of elderly couples reproduced monogamous relations by symbolically encouraging

a sustained marriage, with the assumption of reproduction. Depictions of elderly couples allude to an endured monogamous relationship. One tombstone memorializing a Jewish couple includes two images of the couple; one an etching of them as young, the other a photo of them as elderly.



*Figure 15: A tombstone at Elmlawn Cemetery - Tonawanda, New York*

Between the images is the date of marriage and a testament to its longevity (sixty-two years). Highlighting the endurance of marriage illustrates how community members (latently) employ their autonomy within a public space to perpetuate socially beneficial institutions. Furthermore, many women were memorialized wearing their wedding gown. “For at least a century, the wedding photograph has been as much a part of the ceremony as the prescribed verbal formulas” (Sontag 8). Recontextualized in the cemetery, the marriage custom’s social importance is reinforced through this imagery. Many memorial photographs were images depicting individuals on their graduation day. Commemorating one’s life with an image depicting their rite of passage reinforces its importance to the health of the society.

Multiple tombstones depicted etchings of couples with wilderness backdrops. The facial profile of a happy couple is shown continuing their love onto the next plane of existence. A variety of flora and fauna provides the backdrop. “Backgrounds, settings, props become ways to convey social roles, personal identity” (Kratz 119). Various examples of elderly couples were also seen within many mainstream museums. These displays similarly reinforce a model

expressing society's reliance on marriages. Many instances of married couples are included in the National Portrait Gallery.



*Figure 16: A picture of a married couple at National Portrait Gallery*

This specific example illustrates the social longevity of promoting a sustained marriage.

### **VIII. Individuals with disabilities**

The memorial photograph is conceptualized as becoming emblematic of a disability or disease. “Photographs cannot create a moral position, but they can reinforce one- and can help build a nascent one” (Sontag 17). While disabled people have been historically marginalized within their respective communities, museums have historically repeated this disregard until recently. Museums and galleries are currently utilized to bring awareness to those differently-abled and who have been historically publicly under/or misrepresented.

Multiple (perceived) memorial portraits of handicapped individuals were observed in Forest Lawn Cemetery.



*Figure 17: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

It was noted in two instances that if the disabled individual was memorialized the parents also put their name and photograph on the gravestone as well, thus showing a continual parental protection. “Particular photographs have the mnemonic power that prompts people to talk about events, people and social relations, going beyond what is shown” (Kratz 148). Commemorating a handicapped person in the heterotopia may stimulate an internal and/or social dialogue that can subtly influence societal perception.

As discussed, cultural institutions exhibiting photographs are compelled through their mission statements to highlight the elite that shape societies. The photograph of Helen Keller is such an example within the National Portrait Gallery. She has come to personify an individual’s triumph overcoming multiple obstacles. Keller is photographed with an open book upon her lap whilst she smells a flower; illustrating her equal capabilities.



*Figure 18: Helen Keller – National Portrait Gallery*

“To photograph is to confer importance” (Sontag 28). Within the museum and cemetery individuals bestowed with a posthumous cultural-capital has residual consequences for the surviving family members and others with similar debilitating conditions.

### ***IX. Gang Violence***

Buffalo, New York averages approximately fifty murders a year; gang violence representing a disproportionate percentage of these deaths <sup>18</sup> Following research, multiple memorials were revealed to be commemorating a victim of gang violence through photographs or etchings of photographs. One man was memorialized through seven different photographs that depicted him in various candid poses. The young man was pictured with family, friends and one posturing confidently alone. The man’s individual photograph, with outstretched arms and illustrating bravado, is the centerpiece among the seven memorial photographs.



*Figure 19: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

Among other photographs pictured with family and friends, one image shows the memorialized feigning his finger like a gun.

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<sup>18</sup> Wgrz.com “Gang Homicides Still Plague Buffalo” Steve Brown 2017

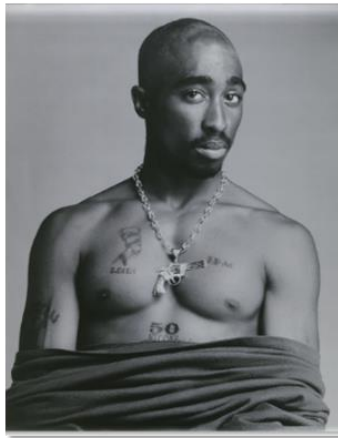


*Figure 20: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

“Some acts of remembrance may be transgressive...they insist on recognizing events that expose social and cultural tensions which remain unacknowledged” (Foote and Grider 201). The ‘Black Lives Matter’ movement recognizes police brutality towards people of color. Unlike the memorials for the children from the Sandy-Hook tragedy (which is nearly devoid of memorial portraits) gravestones of African American men slain by police officers typically include a photograph and have been noted to offer an accompanying political statement. The photograph of the deceased is sometimes accompanied by a poignant phrase. These cemetery texts confront the viewer and challenge expectations by displaying dissent in the form of ideological and political messages (Clements 478). The combination of the deceased’s image and the challenge-statement confronts the reader leading them to question societal issues. As Maddrell observes, “throughout history human communities have converted the dead into sources of living power by grafting symbolic structures onto them and their place of internment....when conflict arises and meaning and handling of the dead are disputed by interested parties, the battle for control can lead to important changes in both identity and the distribution of power” (Maddrell 6). For example, if the aforementioned slain was memorialized through the standard one photograph instead of seven, and ‘handling the dead was done differently’, would the same identity be

expressed to the public? Would the author have delved into his story to uncover his particularly violent end?

Tupac Shakur's photograph within the National Portrait Gallery is compared to the memorial in Forest Lawn Cemetery.



*Figure 21: Tupac Shakur – National Portrait Gallery*

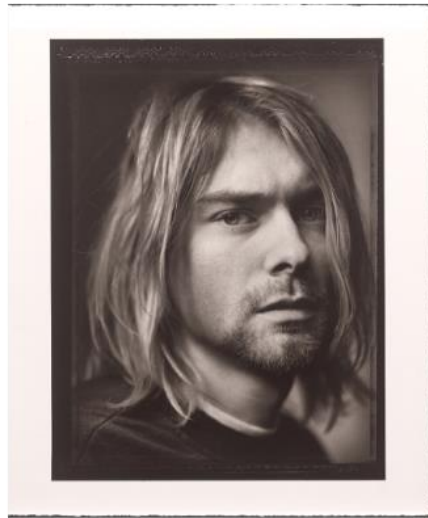
Shakur was an influential rap-artist known for his commentaries on social injustices within African American communities. Similar to the young man being commemorated on his tombstone, Shakur was also young when he lost his life under violent circumstances. Displayed in the heterotopias, both portraits symbolize a lack of community dialogue/programs aimed at supporting inner-city violence. The community examines urban-violence within both heterotopic settings through imagery.

Both men posture in confrontational stances while staring directly into the camera. “Different types of facial and body expressions, types of social identity, and the various types of photograph traditions affect a photograph” (Kratz 118). These public portraits serve as a visual public reminder of a culture of violence.

X. *Victims of suicide*

Suicide is one of the leading causes of deaths among young people.<sup>19</sup> While gravestones do not allude to the cause of pre-mature death, one may speculate or conduct research to find out how they did. Multiple instances of suicide were ascertained upon further research. One young man was memorialized through an etching depicting his facial profile. Family members of the suicide victim honored their son according to contemporary conventional patterns of gravestone iconography. The deceased is alluded to as ‘perfect son, beloved uncle, true friend.’” In past, more pious societies, suicides were condemned and met with shame. Traditional cemeteries built up lines to separate religious identity and ‘good Christians’ who had a right to be buried on holy ground, from others such as suicides, heretics, aliens (Sautkin 666). This adjustment in memorialization over time signals a change in societal attitudes towards victims of suicide.

A photograph of Kurt Cobain is exhibited within the National Portrait Gallery and is used for juxtaposition purposes with Ernest Hemingway.



*Figure 22: Kurt Cobain – National Portrait Gallery*

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<sup>19</sup> Afsp.org American Foundation for Suicide Prevention





Figure 23: Ernest Hemingway – National Portrait Gallery

Cobain was a famous musician who was a heroin addict and committed suicide in 1994. His somber photograph is artistically angled to convey a sense of depression. The side of his face is shaded, alluding to the darkness that dwelled within him. Hemingway, a Pulitzer and Nobel Prize winning writer, shot himself following years of alcoholism.

By displaying both images in the public sphere, the individuals are deemed worthy of commemoration. A critique may conversely state that the way the suicide victim is displayed refutes the possibility of him being an emblem for suicide. Since we do not know the causes of death, how is awareness to suicide expressed? Although neither photograph directly alludes to the suicide, the author contends that images implore the onlooker to introspectively ask *why* the individual died prematurely. The author contends these empathetic feelings allow the deceased to assume a posthumous role of representational figure.

## ***XI. Military***

Noted within many of the cemeteries researched were isolated military sections designated for those lost during battle. Within these sections no memorial portraits were observed. Such personal identifiers run counter to the code of inclusivity that emphasizes group over individual. Jay Ruby's study illustrates that although no formal policy is written, an

unwritten rule forbids photographic displays within Arlington National Cemetery (Ruby 32). Separate sections researched were noted dedicated to those who died following their service. Memorial photographs of members of the armed services were pictured in military regalia exuding bravery and commitment to the country.



*Figure 24: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

Although retired for many years these men chose to be memorialized as young in military outfit, thus illustrating tremendous pride in service. A nationalistic devotion to the country is reproduced through uniform, posture, and expression.

Within the National Portrait Gallery, a photograph depicting an African American Civil-War Union soldier is exhibited.



*Figure 25: A Union Soldier - National Portrait Gallery*

Like many of the men photographed during this era, the individual's gaze is directed outside the frame. Turning away from the camera is conceptualized as "symbolically making civilized classes less available" (Katz 122). The viewer is therefore assumed not being able to comprehend the subject's plight. The distant gaze, especially in male figures, was a technique employed in Roman sculpture. The classicism style of monuments with "eyes wide open in a far-off gaze, lips firmly set, chin raised ... likenesses of ordinary people seem permanently at peace apparently removed from the here and now" (Jackson and Vergara 42). This continued use of the 'distant gaze' illustrates a remote masculine inaccessibility. This perceived masculinity portrayed by the "distant gaze" reinforces gender roles positioning males as emotionally detached.

The distinction between famous and notorious is blurred with the passage of time. Famous graves are often visited to show commitment to a value with which the dead was associated. In these public depositories of community history, the use of the heterotopic environment shifts, as does the conception of those interred. The grave of disgraced war veteran W.W Belknap in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia exemplifies this point. Although impeached for financial irregularities, he remained popular among his fellow soldiers (Elliott 42). Today, visitors unwittingly gaze admiringly at the massive tombstones bas-relief portrait, standing beside a large cannon. A sense of patriotism is expected to be felt while visiting said memorials for veterans of war.

In some cases, military veterans unable to afford a tombstone are provided standardized tombstones in designated military sections.<sup>20</sup> The tombstone includes: name, year born and died, military branch and rank, and any wars in which they took part. In these instances, destitute

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<sup>20</sup> It was gleaned from working with a cemetery this was a service provided to the local veterans who were impoverished.

veterans are reduced to a uniform portrayal of nationalistic devotion thereby reinforcing useful patriotic notions of ‘country over self’.

Museums and cemeteries both devote much energy to displaying the local soldier’s commitments to the country’s war efforts. “Monuments to soldiers congratulate them and covertly intimidate people who view them; material tributes honor slain warriors by implying that their death was required and even glorious, all the while discouraging alternative valuations of combat” (Quarterly Editors 3).

The image of the soldier, wearing military regalia and stern countenance, expresses the unquestioned brave commitment to country. This display of nationalistic devotion to country reinforces societal commitment to the military-industrial complex.

## ***XII. Pets***

Art historian Marjorie Cohn explains that grave sculptures of dogs became popular capitalizing on traditional canine iconography of fidelity and protection. (Wilson 47). Contemporarily, dogs have been observed being utilized on tombstones to solidify relationships to their owner, and by extension, marking their place as extended familial member.

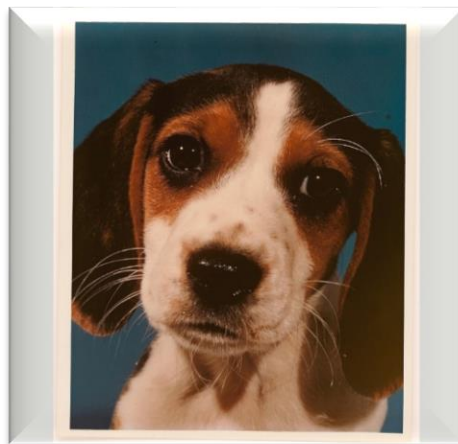
Cultural norms in the U.S indicate strong connections between people and their pets. The researcher noted two examples of people choosing to be represented by their pets on their tombstones. One instance of a married woman being memorialized by her cat highlights this phenomenon. One is left to speculate if the pet is buried with the person or separately. Nevertheless, her attempt to extend the bond with the feline highlights this unique bond. Another example includes an etching of a dog that covers a significant portion of a man’s gravestone.



*Figure 26: A tombstone at Cold Springs Cemetery – Lockport, New York*

The deceased was a marine, and one wonders if this connection to the dog went beyond the normal human-pet relationship. Was the canine the individual's partner in law enforcement or a service dog? It is theorized that displaying pets on gravestones reproduces *and* subverts societal attitudes regarding human and non-human relationships. Pet photographs undermine normative human displays on tombstones while they reinforce culturally-held attitudes towards pets.

A photograph entitled 'American Pet' within the American Portrait Gallery similarly normalizes this strong connection between human and pet.



*Figure 27: A picture at National Portrait Gallery*

The puppy looks inquisitively back at the camera stirring affectionate emotions wrought from millennia of the evolving human-canine relationship. The pet's ascension from companion

animal to extended family member becomes customary once consecrated within these public institutions.

### ***XIII. Religious identity***

Religion plays a vital role in relation to how an individual identifies with her fellow community members. Research was undertaken within Christian and non-denominational cemeteries. Exploring cemeteries of various religious denominations illustrated some of the contemporary negotiations that balance displays of individualism while adhering to ecclesiastical policies. Conversely, many memorials depicting individual and secular expressions were observed within non-denominational cemeteries. Discerned was a vast array of identities in full-body photographs that appear in poses generally prohibited within Catholic cemeteries.

“While photo tombstones are most popular among Italian Americans, they are also common among Jews who trace their ancestry to Eastern Europe” (Horne 86). Although not a universal practice, the Jewish denominations the author researched prohibited the use of photographs inlaid on gravestones. Research revealed only two etchings of couples on tombstones within these Jewish sections. Although the manifest function was memorialization of the deceased, images latently subverts normative displays of Jewish identity. While no photographic images were observed within these sections of the cemeteries two tombstones memorializing Jewish individuals contained photographs *outside* Jewish-designated sections. Individuals were understood as negotiating between displaying individuality and complying with ingrained religious dogmas.

New ways to express religious identity have been granted as a result of relaxed cemetery policies. Although Islamic culture is complex and evolving, Islamic faith has generally prohibited the display of images in public. This prohibition thereby removes the ability to utilize

the heterotopic space to socially construct identities (i.e., feminist, secular-individuality) that could potentially challenge the religious-patriarchy.

Within both museum and cemetery religion is portrayed through photographic examples of various religious icons. One tombstone in Forest Lawn Cemetery illustrates an African American deacon wearing sun-glasses and hat.



*Figure 28: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery – Buffalo, New York*

Emphasized by his cool demeanor, he portrays a confident man who preached with conviction. In comparison, within the American Portrait Gallery the photograph of Pope John Paul II bestows *his* religious authority.



*Figure 29: Pope John Paul II - National Portrait Gallery*

“What is curious about human action is that by and large what I am deliberately doing depends on the possibilities of description...hence, if new modes of description come into being, new possibilities for action come into being in consequence” (Hacking 3). In the 21<sup>st</sup> century

United States religious milieu, avenues to express religious identity have been widened to include new forms and mediums to express different religious identities. The Pope projects a dignified solemnity pictured in identifiable religious garb and gesturing his hand. Placed inside the cemetery and museum, both images confer authority extending beyond their current context.

#### ***XIV. Motor vehicle casualties***

Motor vehicle accidents account for a significant portion of unintentional deaths in the United States.<sup>21</sup> A tombstone in Danbury, Connecticut memorialized a young man using both his image, and separately, his motorcycle.



*Figure 30: A tombstone at Wooster Cemetery – Danbury, Connecticut*

It was gleamed from research that the man had perished in an accident involving his motorcycle. His family is presumed to have chosen to use the image of a motorcycle because the deceased was passionate about riding and now so inextricably linked to it. What manifests in the public arena as a loving tribute honoring an individual latently serves as a cautionary reminder of the dangers on the road. A police officer who died on duty is another example from Forest Lawn

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<sup>21</sup> Cdc.gov – National Center for Health Statistics – “Accidents or Unintentional Injuries”



Cemetery that simultaneously serves as cautionary reminder and value (hero) perpetuator. Struck by a car while chasing a criminal across the street, the tombstone includes an etched image of a car. Displaying the vehicle is similar to the previously mentioned motorcycle-memorial example. Both images of vehicles allude to particular causes of death. Another young man was memorialized both with his etched portrait in addition to the portrayal of a car intersecting with a semi-trailer truck. Although the cause of death was unable to be ascertained, the first impression of the image leads one to believe the truck was either his profession or that it alludes to the cause of death.

The worldwide media coverage following the sudden death of beloved British public figure Princess Diana was unprecedented. Diana's fatal automobile crash tragically cut short a life already filled with much intrigue and altruism. The remnants of Diana's character attributes live on through the display of her image in multiple mediums (photographs, paintings, etc.) and settings including the National Portrait Gallery. While there are two viewable paintings of Diana within the American National Portrait Gallery, England's National Portrait Gallery boasts forty-seven.



*Figure 31: Diana, Princess of Wales – National Portrait Gallery, London*

Figure 31 above best projects Diana's disposition towards the paparazzi who relentlessly hounded her. While most portraits display her elegance, charm and beauty, it is photographer Roger Hargreaves's image that best exemplifies these struggles in the public-eye that eventually

factored in her demise. Diana would later tell Hargreaves, the official photographer of the exhibit opening for her portraits at the National Portrait Gallery, “they (the paparazzi) never leave me alone... They make my life a misery.”<sup>22</sup> Juxtaposing the image of Diana with the memorialized motorcyclist illustrates the conjunctive utilization of portraiture while referencing a specific cause of death. Images of both the deceased and the associated cause of their deaths is a reminder of the 40,000 traffic deaths that occur within the United States annually.

#### ***XV. Post mortems***

“Americans have attached photos to tombstones since the invention of the daguerreotype” (Montanarelli 25). The initial impetus for this project was the discovery of a man’s post-mortem photo inlaid on his tombstone.



*Figure 32: A tombstone at Cold Springs Cemetery – Lockport, New York*

The deceased is photographed in casket and presumably was taken at his funeral. “It is likely that only a few hundred post mortem photographs inlaid on tombstones, at most, still exist in the United States” (Horne 62). The post-mortem photograph displayed in the public-sphere was a way to preserve one’s likeness for a family/community to mourn, remember, and retain customs. Aside from the photograph seemingly to be out of context, even jarring to the sensitive contemporary on-looker, the survival of the piece is impressive. The corners of the photograph are seriously whitening and soon the photograph will be indecipherable. Years from now,

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<sup>22</sup> [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk)

contemporary memorial photographs will similarly become worn and will need preservation measures taken in order to salvage this important relic of material culture from a bygone society. The weathering of these artifacts is unlike those within mainstream museums whereby preservation and conservation measures are taken to ensure the piece's longevity.

As a heterotopia, the cemetery manifests differently across space and time (Foucault 3). Recognizing how practices change within a society, the post mortem photograph manifests in a modern society as one which runs counter to current patterns of gravestone display. Seen through the eyes of a contemporary onlooker, the image of death on one's tombstone may offend sensitized attitudes towards death.

The George Eastman exhibition of post mortem photographs is used as a site to compare post-mortem photos.



*Figure 33: George Eastman House – Rochester, New York*

The cemetery photograph manifested as a tool for a community to remember the deceased. Conversely, at the Eastman Museum the post mortem photograph has been taken out of its original context (the home) and is exhibited separately and as an antiquated practice.

#### **XVI. Heroism**

Many purported heroes in the museum center around nationalistic devotion to the country's military. For example, an exhibition at the National Portrait Gallery "highlights the

courage of the men and women of the Armed Forces and honors the sacrifices they made.<sup>23</sup>” Presidents and military leaders are highlighted in this exhibit that caters to youths. Although bravery and altruism may manifest very differently, heroism and the military have become synonymous in American vernacular.

Heroism is represented in both the cemetery and museum. Rarely is the heroic deed recorded on the stone. It was uncovered that this man was a pilot who bravely crashed his failing plane away from a residential neighborhood for which it was destined.



*Figure 34: A tombstone at Forest Lawn Cemetery, New York*

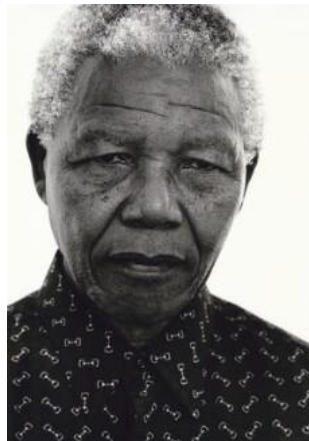
The family affixed the deceased’s photograph to the tombstone that does not allude to his tragic sacrifice. This black granite stone emerged conspicuously within the oldest section of the cemetery. The striking contrast of modern (black) stone amongst those fashioned in the 1860’s hints at an attempt for the deceased and their character traits survive within a community. Another example of alluring the passerby by the contrast of the tombstone comes from Sleepy Hollow Cemetery. Surrounded by stones erected in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, a modern black granite stone similarly catches the eye of those that pass by. A laser etching from a photograph depicts the couple alongside their motorcycle.

<sup>23</sup> <http://npg.si.edu/blog/day-heroes> National Portrait Gallery “Day of Heroes”



*Figure 35: A tombstone at Sleepy Hollow Cemetery- Sleepy Hollow, New York*

Conversely, heroes within the museum are framed as such. Detailed alongside the photograph, the label helps frame the individual as cultural icon. Nelson Mandela was a South African anti-apartheid revolutionary and a symbol of national heroism. Mandela's portrait within the National Portrait Gallery illustrate a national commitment to retaining memory of those brave few willing to stand up to oppressive governmental regimes.



*Figure 36: Nelson Mandela – National Portrait Gallery*

Bill Foley's 1990 photograph of Mandela captures the essence of a man that fiercely fought social injustice throughout his entire life. The social reminders of heroic national figures remind of the ability for humans to be equally horrific as heroic.

## ***XVII. Drug-related deaths***

In 2017, for the first time in United States history heroin-related deaths overtook gun-related deaths.<sup>24</sup> The high frequency in which these memorial photographs of young people are distributed within U.S. cemeteries reflects wider societal dilemmas. Several memorials dedicated to young people whom perished due to the ongoing opiate epidemic were identified from obituaries and accompanying guestbooks. The author personally knew several individuals who perished from opiate use during this project. These young people will presumably also be memorialized with photographs chosen to be ‘most representational’ of their character for their public memorial. Memorials for those who overdosed have not been observed making mention of the drug-epidemic.

The portrait exhibited within the museum is accompanied by a label that sometimes details the individual’s demise. The exact cause of death of those memorialized in the cemetery is initially ambiguous. The ambiguity of death leads to guesswork or to conducting research to uncover the specific cause of fatality. If no military affiliation is signified to denote a war-fatality, one is presumed to believe the premature death was wrought by accident, disease, violence, or was drug-related (also can be included in the *accidental* category). The author contends that while the exact cause of death remains unknown, the brief reflection on one of the four aforementioned causes of death will (however briefly and superficially) evoke empathetic feelings to surface.

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<sup>24</sup> WashingtonPost.com “Heroin deaths surpass gun homicides for the first time, CDC data shows” Christopher Ingraham.

There were fewer than 3,000 overdose deaths in 1970 when a heroin epidemic was raging, and fewer than 5,000 during the height of the crack epidemic in 1988; more than 64,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2016.

Exhibiting drug-related deaths within the museum takes on a different tone due to their national authority. Jimi Hendrix's and Janis Joplin's photographs are both displayed in the National Portrait Gallery. Iconic musicians who died amidst crucial social turning points in the 1970's, their presence in our memory institutions lends expression to past and current drug epidemics. Deaths of national figures such as Hendrix and Joplin would eventually lead to President Nixon's 'War on Drugs' campaign. Hendrix's black and white portrait reflects his personality.



*Figure 37: Jimi Hendrix – National Portrait Gallery*

Hendrix's distant gaze does not confront the camera. Hendrix holds his sunglasses in his mouth depicting a man concerned with otherworldly pursuits rather than mundane trifles. Joplin's photograph candidly captures her whilst laughing holding a cigarette in one hand and pointing towards the camera in the other.



*Figure 38: Janis Joplin – National Portrait Gallery*

Her expressive nature is conveyed to audiences without directly addressing her battles with drug addiction. While memorial photographs on gravestones will not prompt the same national outcry as beloved musicians their image within the ‘community-maintained’ heterotopia insists their continued social presence is given a ‘posthumous voice’ speaking for a variety of potential causes.



## Chapter 6: Criticisms

Dr. Peter Johnson is a lecturer and editor of Heterotopian Studies at Bath Spa University, U.K. Johnson asserts “heterotopias cannot free us from power relations nor offer any promise, any hope or any primary form of resistance or liberation” (Johnson 70). This author suggests oppositely; heterotopias by their intrinsic nature reveal past and present relations. Exposing said power-relations through images can lead to both an internal and social dialogue that may influence how one envisions the society in which they live. While the museum is used to provide the public with knowledge of societal issues the cemetery offers a unique avenue for people of all backgrounds to challenge cultural preconceptions. Johnson also asserts heterotopias “in some way, provide an escape route from power” (Johnson 86). If these spaces offer an ‘oasis of escape,’ then it follows that this space can and *is* being utilized beyond superficial uses. This ‘escape’ may be characterized as an avenue to resist dominant hegemony.

A.A Sautkin is an Associate Professor of Political Science and Law at Volgograd State University, Russian Federation. Sautkin asserts that “the features of the urban cemetery as a locus of death ceases its function of social identity producer...the dead are no longer needed by the living...living people form their identity based on the diverse possibilities of life, and not on an idea of death” (Sautkin 674). The author would argue that the living continue to use the remains, corporeal or cremains, in order to spatially locate grief. The values and traits that the photographic image can project onto succeeding generations perpetuate the ethos of that cultural. Furthermore, Sautkin contests “cemeteries in a big city generate particularistic identity, becoming only conglomerations of individual life stories and singular grieving” (Sautkin 674). To the museum and cemetery visitor these ‘conglomerations of stories’ become a generalized trait or value to be perpetuated or resisted. Although Sautkin asserts that “cemeteries can be used as an

ideological tool and become a scene for patriotism...because of the isolation of the dead from the living those actions are rather distanced from everyday life” (Sautkin 673). The author would contend it is exactly this proximity to the corpse that imbues the cemetery and museums with the capacity to construct new identities or perpetuate those already woven into the fabric of the community.

## Chapter 7: Conclusions

The tombstone memorial photograph causes the visitor to respond viscerally. A tribute to a lost family member, the individual's representation beacons the visitor in similar fashion as portraits gracing the walls of traditional museums. Photographs are appropriated by family intending to memorialize a loved one. Simultaneously, the image latently perpetuates or challenges social values. Photographs of individuals are subject to interpretation dependent upon space and time. How one internalizes an individual's posture, countenance, dress, etc., is contingent upon culture. What the author understood as a portrayal of individuality, another may conceive as a sign of conformity. Regardless, the photograph leaves residual impressions with the viewer. The heterotopia provides the arena for community members to publicly dissent or reinforce the status quo; the museum at the macro level of culture, the cemetery at the micro.

Pointing towards further research, many other international cemeteries will be examined to reveal patterns expressing different identities. For example, in Australia, a new form of tombstone features a life-size image of the memorialized.<sup>25</sup> The company provides an example of a large tombstone that depicts an image of a boy playing soccer. Future displays on tombstones will presumably integrate new technologies. How this new trend will inevitably manifest depends upon how attainable technology will become. With continued demand there will be businesses that will find ways to meet contemporary demands. People are currently trending towards personal rather than religious iconography and new secular demands will creatively be met.

Moreover, the LGBTQ community is better represented in specific locations. For example, within the Congressional National Cemetery Vietnam veteran and LGBTQ activist,

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<sup>25</sup> Nomispublications.com "Lundren Monuments Introduces the Photo Statue"

Leonard Malkovich chose to be buried near J. Edgar Hoover, who waged an anti-gay war in the 1950's and 60s. Since Matlovich's burial, approximately around thirty-five other people have chosen to be buried nearby. The site has become a location serving as the physical manifestation of solidarity for homosexuals in the military. "Ceremonial acts, offerings and prayers illustrate the grave serving as rallying point for members of the group, a focus for their solidarity" (Crampton and Elden XIX). The gravesite of Hoover, a closeted homosexual himself, becomes a space for Hoover's legacy to be symbolically liberated.

Although green burial and cremation are changing burial practices and the bodily remains and place of inscription will be separated with the rise in cremation (Patterson 165,) memorialization will continue to include pictorial representations in order to assist in 'anchoring' the grieving-space while simultaneously providing the space to publicly express.

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