

My nights at the Museum: following Biber around

The Metropolitan Police's Crime Museum - once known, and often referred to colloquially, as the 'Black Museum' - is closed to the general public. It was once occasionally open with visitors from members of the royal family to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Harry Houdini and the visiting Australian cricket team of 1893! Radio Luxembourg listeners were treated to Orson Welles take on it in the 1950s. In early 2016 about one quarter of the items in the museum were displayed at the Museum of London. I chaired 4 evening events at the Museum introducing and interviewing the two Curators of the exhibition. The final event specifically considered the future of the museum and also involved the Met's current curator and a volunteer at the museum (also a Ripper Tour guideⁱ). I also led a party of my criminology students to the Exhibition. This paper uses those experiences and consideration of the literature to consider the ethical and cultural issues raised by such museums. This public criminology in a cultural space raises recurring ethical issues within criminology. Comparisons are made with other exhibitions of crime, including the fictional, which also highlight some of these issues. As a criminologist I am profoundly ambivalent about 'truecrime', even in its academic form.

Keywords: public criminology, 'truecrime', 'gothic' criminology, museum, popular criminology

Intro

Biber (2018a) suggests a starting point for writing her book was viewing and then re-viewing and reflecting on William Jones's *Tearoom* in which police hidden camera footage of a 1962 Ohio Police sting in a public toilet was shown in art galleries. Two starting points for me are my experiences as a 'public criminologist' of compering evening events at the Museum of London's hosting of the Metropolitan Police's 'Special Collection' and reading her journal article (Biber, 2013) in which she lambasts Bond (2009). A background is my ongoing ambivalence about the 'truecrime' phenomena, an ambivalence that recognises my employment has probably depended on students' 'unhealthy' fascination.ⁱⁱ Biber (2018a) devotes a whole chapter to the Museum of London exhibition and to another exhibition on Forensics which I also had visited.

This article proceeds from my experiences and readings of the exhibits (not just evidence produced in court), catalogues, interactions with the curators and public, students and social media before expanding into other museums including popular cultural ones. Is this public criminology, popular criminology or just dark tourism?

Crime museums worldwide

There are many prison/police/crime museums worldwide some even mention criminology in their appeal to the public. Walby and Piché (2011) mention many, with 15 alone in Ontario. Rome boasts a *museo criminologico*; its website mentions both Beccaria and Lombroso but the pictures suggest the artefacts tend to the gory rather than the theoretical.ⁱⁱⁱ The *True Crime Museum* in Hastings offers more seaside schlock.^{iv} Athens' Criminology Museum is more medico-legal and housed at the University and still boasts Greece's only guillotine.^v Regener (2003) fully describes

Lombroso's own in Turin (closed to the public since 1914) and mentions many others. She cites Groß on the forensic medico-legal reasoning behind such museums to augment information to be found in books but to be kept out of 'unqualified hands' (1894:4)!

My only visit to such museums, other than to the Museum of London's and Forensics exhibitions, was to the former Oxford prison which now hosts a museum and a boutique hotel.^{vi} At all these exhibitions as a criminologist I was able to perceive the criminological within the tourist-oriented material, sometimes by its absence. Lombroso's museum and another in Hamburg from the same period that Regener describes (both sound very chaotic) are intended only for the insider yet she detected:

an aura of knowledge surrounded the collection of artifacts of deviants, establishing as it were a metaphysics of evil: the object's essence could be grasped merely by gazing at it. (2003:48)

That is the visual, the messily material trumps the carefully constructed narratives of the criminologist. Rather hopefully she concludes:

Museums today have become unnecessary for specialists because the processes of determining criminal behavior is carried out by other techniques than the mere examination of criminal objects. And for the public, evil can be portrayed in much more real terms through the medium of film than it can in a criminological museum. (2003:56)

There is a separate study to be made of the websites, catalogues and blogs about those museums analysing the graphic and textual content and aporia. Ricordeau and Bugnon (2018) is a good place to start, they credit the Crime Museum (around 1870) as the first such museum and list Buenos Aires (1899); Paris (1900) and Ottawa (1909) as being in this first wave of science and detection museums/collections with pedagogical intent.

Huey (2011) visited many sites of 'dark tourism' but focusses on the Vienna Kriminalmuseum. After an extended discussion of the philosophy of the sublime as applied to dark tourism and specifically the attractions/repulsions of crime she guides us through the chronologically ordered rooms. On entering she notes the lights are low with effective spotlighting. This sparks two thoughts; first that dark tourism sometimes requires dark presentation but secondly that good conservation practices often also require low lighting.

Apart from boasts about the excellence of Viennese criminal justice and criminology the highlighted cases and themes of violence and murder rather than more mundane crimes is shared by all such museums. However, when we get to Room O she notes:

the predominant theme of this room is illicit sexuality: prostitution, pornography and sadomasochism [...] Indeed, one section of the room is staged to look like a brothel, complete with faux period wallpaper and hangings, ornate mouldings and a cardboard replica lady of pleasure reclining

on a cardboard sofa. Along with reproductions of confiscated artists' drawings showing masturbation and sexual orgies (2011:390/391)

Strangely Freud only gets a mention coupled with Lacan in an earlier discussion of scopophilia. Obviously, a Freudian reading of the room is possible, but more simply that Freud and his patients lived in the same milieu. I have visited Vienna but sadly not this museum, but her descriptions sound exactly right. It does raise the point that the date of visit is important when considering the literature but also when any significant curatorial changes were made. Freud could have visited - it was open then – but what would he have seen?^{vii}

Freud might have enjoyed the section on *Lustmord* (sexual murder). Huey could have been channelling Bond (2009) as she provides us with a photograph of the mutilated unnamed naked female torso whose only purpose seems to be to illustrate (titillate?). Biber's (2018) mention of *Lustmord* is linked to a discussion of Jenny Holzer's artwork at the Forensics exhibition.^{viii}

McCorristine is clear, 'human remains acquire new meanings as they pass through the hands of different practitioners, custodians, and collectors' (2015:2). The same rules might apply to photographs of the same. Biber (2013) is condemnatory of Bond (2009), perhaps she ought to include Huey (2011) in such criticism. Scott Bray mentions both the Forensics and Crime Museum and others and has recommendations for curators but also for us as consumers, 'we need to remain alert to the significance of context, the politics of consumption, the global economy of images and the tensions at the heart of circulating terrible pictures (2017:149/150).

Many such museums are often closed to, but sometimes become open to, the general public. However, we now turn specifically to the Museum of London's 'Black Museum' exhibition.

How is the Metropolitan Police's crime museum depicted?

In calling it the Black Museum I'm using the term of popular and journalistic use. The appellation 'black' invites 'dark' tourists. However, that tourism was, until the exhibition, vicariously virtual or in the imagination of a reader. Keily and Hoffbrand (2015:2) specifically mention Honeycombe's two books (1984 and 1994) and Waddell's (1993) as providing the public with its 'limited knowledge' of the Museum and fixing its name in their minds. The editions of Honeycombe I have seen all feature a noose on the cover and two the death masks of hanged criminals. Both play on the gore but Honeycombe, a journalist, laces his with plenty of social and historical context with criminal statistics and even quotes criminologists Morris and Blom-Cooper (1984:21) on the subject of murders. The earlier book contains 52 murders and the second 20, between them over a thousand paperback pages. It would be interesting to know how many readers rushed past the epigraph attributed Albert Pierrepoint in 1974:

I do not now believe that any of the hundreds of executions I carried out has in any way acted as a deterrent against future murder. Capital punishment, in my view, achieved nothing except revenge.

At the time of publication his fame may not have required the explanation that Pierrepont had been Britain's long serving executioner/hangman in the 1940/50s who had ended the lives of many notorious and less celebrated criminals including Nazis for war crimes. Honeycombe's chapters present a murder apiece in which some of the objects from the Museum are mentioned but only glancingly. He takes the opportunity to raise concerns about the death penalty when discussing the case of Craig and Bentley (1984:443). His books are branded as 'Black Museum' but have little about any objects from the museum or how they relate to the crime. He gives considerable space to the crimes and is largely respectful of the victims but uses the crimes to add his own commentary on society or even bizarre coincidences around killers' names or birthplaces.

Waddell was the long-time curator of the museum and made a docudrama too, *The Secrets of the Black Museum* (1988)^{ix}. In it he examines, with the help of dramatic reconstructions and interviews with some of the officers, a selection of cases loosely based on objects from the Museum. The programme opens with the Whitechapel murders and confirms the paucity of the Museum's material on 'Jack' and closes with speculation on the likely killer. 'Jack' as ever is 'he who must always be mentioned'. In between he covers a selection of the cases.

In the section, 'Tottenham a Hotbed of Anarchy' tells the story of an armed robbery by two immigrant anarchists that lead to their suicides, the death of PC Tyler and a ten-year-old standerby, Ralph Joscelyn, in what the papers of the day called the 'Tottenham outrage'. The story is also used by Honeycombe (1994) and involves many bullets, an extended chase involving stolen cars and a hijacked tram. Neither Honeycombe nor Waddell tie this back to an object in the Museum.

An opening shot of lock picks introduces us to Harry Edward Vickers, aka 'Flannelfoot', an accomplished cat burglar. His case appears almost as light relief before getting on to more murders.

The cases of Crippen (pyjamas and hair) Christie (shovel); Ruth Ellis (the revolver); the Acid Bath murderer (the gloves and gas mask he wore when putting his victim in what was actually an oil drum); death of Georgi Markov (the pellet that delivered the poison); the Great train robbery (a tomato sauce bottle and beer cans with the gang's finger prints) and Dennis Nilsen (his cooking pots). The case of Harry Roberts and his gang killing of three police officers is barely tied to the museum's objects; an opening shot just shows a gun. It seems to be included to show the dangers of police work. Some issues around capital punishment are raised in the section on Ruth Ellis. It is of some concern that Timothy Evans only gets the most glancing mention in the Christie case. A lodger at Christie's house he was wrongly convicted and hanged for the death of his own wife and child. Evans and his wife Beryl get their due in Keily and Hoffbrand (2015). Biber (2018a and b) touches on miscarriages of justice. It is hard to imagine official encouragement of a dedicated miscarriages of justice museum let alone the commercial success of one.

In her discussion of the Forensics exhibition Biber (2018a) mentions the Orson Welles radio series *The Black Museum* to recount hearing the episode about the Bath in the 'Brides in the Bath' case there.^x The 52 other episodes also take an object as their starting point. Behind the programme title 'Meat Juice' we hear about

the murder of James Maybrick by his wife. Here 'Jack' is shoe-horned in as Maybrick is suspected by some to be the Whitechapel murderer. 'The Trunk' is about the murder of Minnie Bonati by John Robinson in May 1927. Her body was dismembered and left in a trunk at Charing Cross station. Sutton-Vane (2020) examines the evidential residue and ethical issues of three other trunk murders of women in the inter-war era and we'll return to her views on ethics later.^{xi} Welles' commentary is supplemented in some of the cases by dramatic reconstructions, mood music and sound effects.

Moss and Skinner (2015) also take the route of examining the objects but expand on them. As with the near contemporary official guide by Keily and Hoffbrand (2015) they have the benefit of colour pictures and modern design to fully display the objects. Moss and Skinner (2015) present the materials of the Crime Museum as a history of policing and methods but unashamedly is also a memorial to the 'Fallen' as their appendix 4 records all Metropolitan Police officers who have been killed on duty. In addition to the objects some of the sections have further cases and discursive commentary added; for instance, they do set out the near miscarriage of justice when Colin Stagg, accused of the murder of Rachel Nickell was cleared and only later DNA evidence showed that the already detained Robert Napper was the culprit (2015:364).

In 2018 a tourism website (Culture Trip^{xii}) declared, 'Forget Black Mirror's 'Black Museum', There's a Real One in London' thus tying a real but imagined museum which could not be visited to a media representation which you can visit online.^{xiii} The episode of Charlie Brooker's *Black Mirror* (series 4 episode 6) referred to may be entitled 'Black Museum' but is clearly not our museum but with its, 'authentic' criminological artefacts which have 'a sad, sick story' behind them engages with the ideas that motivate myself, Biber (2018a) and many others discussed here. Satisfyingly for some that Museum is burned down at the end of the episode.

Ricordeau and Bugnon (2018) give a French perspective on the occasion of a proposal in 2016 to create a national museum of Justice and Security at the HQ of the *police judiciaire* bringing together scattered collections and allow public access to previously undervalued resources. They noted the International Police Association listed over a hundred police force museums in the United States alone, located in the majority of states. In France such museums are said to be rare as is academic writing about them. They cite work from Latin America on the relationship of the police to authoritarian regimes as an influence on police museums there. Their own work involved visiting 3 French museums, five in the United States (including 4 in Texas) and two in Italy and one in each of Hong Kong, Belgium, Brazil and Canada.

In the next section my 'methodology' is set out but first how does Biber (2018a) depict the Museum; and what were her methods? Her chapter starts with the Forensics exhibition at the Wellcome Foundation in London in 2015. As some of the cases and issues are the same, I'll follow her. The museum's own website^{xiv} declared it would be:

Challenging familiar views of forensic medicine shaped by fictions that came out of the sensational reporting of late Victorian murder cases and popular

crime dramas, the exhibition highlighted the complex entwining of law and medicine.

Biber (2018a) notes the mix of science and art, including clips of from films featuring medical witnesses. She picks out the forensics of the Crippen case. She joined a guided tour by one of the curators with a friend. The tour focussed on the artworks, by female artist focussing on the victims. She provides a nuanced and sensitive reading – sometimes guided by the curator – of the artwork, but the grisly nature of much of that material, makes the Crime Museum seem quite tame. The final room considers how DNA might be used to right miscarriages of justice by looking at the photographs of *the Innocents* by Simon.^{xv}

For the Crime Museum Biber spoke to two Museum of London staff before the exhibition – Annette Day, head of programmes, and Finbarr Whooley, director of content – and, ‘was struck by the degree to which they considered questions of ethics, voyeurism, legality and affect’ (2018:123). Day (nd) has since written about the event for Museum iD website setting out the pains they took and responses to the exhibition. Biber sets out the process of ethical approval and advice they received which Keily and Hoffbrand (2015) emphasise.

Four cases and associated objects were the subject of protracted ethical debate and even focus groups. Dennis Nilsen’s cooker and cooking pots (for rendering his victims down) feature in Waddell’s documentary already mentioned but were excluded from the Crime Museum. Nilsen is still in prison and not all his victims have yet been identified. Other older cases particularly if they illustrated a particular point in crime detection: a bloody fingerprint from 1905, for instance were included.

Biber (2018a) sets out the care taken to liaise with the relatives of any victims and to attend to the wellbeing of staff in handling such emotive material and I can confirm from my conversations with Jacki Keily and Julia Hoffbrand the depth and sincerity of the preparations. Moss and Skinner (2015) are not so explicit about their choices beyond their admiration for the detectives and respect for the victims. Yet they do cover Nilsen’s case recording that the Crime Museum has the pots, pans and cooker, knives and a bath. Most poignantly it has the collar of Nilson’s border collie, Bleep. However, that is all in the text. The picture they chose, and the section heading must surely be intended to throw the curious off, ‘40 Picture of a Drain’ (2015:162) and the picture is of just that, the otherwise unremarkable drain in which incriminating body parts were found. There is no index reference to him, but the index is far from compendious. Honeycombe (1994) gives over 50 unillustrated pages to the topic. More objects and cases will be discussed later but now my experiences.

My nights - a sort of methodology

I often style myself as a ‘public criminologist’ and blog, tweet and occasionally publish in journals as such (Groombridge, 2007) and have been criticised for this too (Carrier, 2014). My social media profile was sufficient to cause the Museum of London to engage my professional services to present 4 evening events at which the public paid extra for less crowded access and an event at which I interviewed the two curators on stage and chaired a Q&A session. I also mingled with those

attending as they examined the cabinets and read the descriptions and introduced myself. Obviously, I took the opportunity to discuss their interests and many of the themes of this article but then with no intention of publication, so I have no fieldnotes beyond my annotated cribsheet for the interviews and memories sparked by rereading the literature set out here.^{xvi} At the time I monitored tweets under the hashtag #crimemuseum and these largely mirrored comments received live. One tweet specifically questioned the decision to include 'abortion' as one of the 12 themes in addition to the 24 cases, and this will be picked up in the discussion of ethics.

Some attendees were there for 'truecrime' reasons and expected me to share their enthusiasm for and encyclopaedic knowledge of serial killers. Some though had connections to victims, offenders or the police they were pursuing for genealogical or social history purposes. Sutton-Vane notes that Minnie Bonati's niece and great-nephew visited the Crime Museum (2020:293).^{xvii} I talked to a group of American students who were on a Masters programme in museums studies. I also took the opportunity to lead a small party of my St Mary's University students round on a further occasion where some of the same issues arose as from the general public, but a greater criminological content could be given them and then followed up in seminars later.

The exhibits

Because of her interest in law and criminal justice Biber (2013, 2018a and 2018b) proceeds from the evidence and examines its afterlife. As an academic criminologist with a strong bent to the cultural and media representation of crime I am more interested in that evidence as a present cultural artefact or text rather than its past as evidence or its future. Moreover, I want to expand well beyond the strictly evidential to include the ephemeral; that is things exhibited which have no legal or forensic basis for collection or retention but still represent curatorial decisions. In this section a selection of exhibits is discussed referring to the accompanying book available to those who bought it and a free leaflet (describing the first two rooms) given to all visitors.

The curators (Keily and Hoffbrand, 2015) speak of their difficulties in narrowing down the Metropolitan Police's holdings from approximately 2,000 items to the 600 that appear in the exhibition and the 400 that then appear in their book. Keily and Hoffbrand (2015) set out some of their criteria mostly related to ethics and fitting the artefacts into their chosen themes. In addition to choices about contents are issues of presentation. Huey (2011) noted the dim lighting in Vienna; at the Museum of London the lighting was bright.

Keily and Hoffbrand (2015) chose to attempt the correction of 'fallacies' about the museum's holdings. To be specific they hope to end speculation about the Museum's holdings in respect of 'Jack the Ripper' by displaying all they hold, viz:

- an appeal for information poster
- a police notice to householders and
- a number of items associated with known possible suspects who were convicted of other crimes (2015:3)

Yet other than mention of a 'terrorist backpack' only 'Jack' material is specifically mentioned in Yun's (2018) contemplation on the Museum. Biber only glancingly mentions 'Jack' but notes the curator's desire to remind visitors of that, 'the crimes were not fictional, despite their widespread cultural dissemination' (2018:128). I prefer to use the term Whitechapel Murders for the events but 'Jack' only when speaking about the widely disseminated media-creation. Honeycombe (1984) backs up the curators on the paucity of material about the Whitechapel Murders by explicitly stating no name of a suspect is given in the files and implicitly by making no mention of any holdings in discussing the case. But in a book about the Museum why give a twenty-page chapter early in the book about a case the museum barely covers? Surely it is the brand 'Jack.' I could probably increase readership of this article were I to use that name in my title or keywords.

Moss and Skinner chose only 100 objects taking into account the views of Scotland Yard and not wishing to concentrate 'unduly on violence' (2015:7) and express this hope, 'That the stories behind these objects will create a better public understanding of the museum and about crime itself' (2015:9). I must choose fewer still. Clearly, some objects have already been discussed above. Ethical issues have already been mentioned in respect of choices made by authors and curators and more general ethical issues of these museums will be examined later so other issues will be addressed here. The order in which they appear in the museum is largely followed. They are often chosen to make particularly criminological points and readers should look at all the sources cited to see if it is a fair one. Some of you may have been to the exhibitions.

Waddell (1988) notes the phrenological intent of the death masks but more ambiguously states they were to show detectives 'what criminals look like'. Is this for prospective Lombrosian purposes or, more likely, retrospective Lacassagnian anthropometric ones? Keily and Hoffbrand mention the phrenological but also simple curiosity, 'not unlike the making of wax figures at Madame Tussaud's' (2015:12) but they exhibited anthropometric callipers and cards recording details of prisoners sentenced to more than a month (2015:44/45) and a police circular has photographs of travelling criminals from the Registrar of habitual Criminals (2015:28/29).

A selection of ropes used to hang various criminals raises ethical concerns but my concern here is why they are there in the police's keeping at all. The stories behind each are often illuminating but there is no sense this is why the ropes were kept or acquired. In 1883 the then hangman, William Marwood, visited the Museum but in 1876 had turned down a request to donate a rope or even a piece of it, though Moss and Skinner (2015:338) suggest he relented later. Neither source mention the practice of hangmen cutting up ropes and selling them off as souvenirs or lucky charms. Davies and Matteoni note that Marwood's collection of 21 ropes came up for sale on his death. They detail an extensive European trade in 'money for old rope' (including haggling and fights at the gallows) and the French proverb (2017:68), "*avoir de la corde de pendu*" ('to have the rope of the hanged'). Were the police seeking to corner the market in luck?

Cora Crippen was murdered by her husband, Dr Hawley Harvey Crippen. Usually the focus is on him and his capture involving a transatlantic chase and wireless

telegraphy and the museum's objects are plentiful: Cora's hair, pyjamas and the spade used to bury her. Significantly, a whole page picture of her adorns Keily and Hoffbrand's book (2015:58). Moss and Skinner (2015) concentrate on the pyjamas. Of the 24 individual cases for display by Keily and Hoffbrand (2015) chosen 5 are of women murdered by a husband/partner or man they were in a relationship with and 6 are of instances police officers murdered or attacked. In addition to full page pictures of Cora, Leslie Stone and Beryl Evans smaller pictures of victims appear where available.

The themes section allowed the curators to come more up to date. The themes were: offensive weapons; disguised weapons; drugs; firearms; abortion; capital punishment; terrorism; public protest; espionage and the cold war; burglary and robbery; counterfeiting and forgery and police procedures. Most of these clearly fulfil a pedagogic (if sometimes rather historical) remit for the police and a broadly educational one for us.

Themes like abortion have already been mentioned and will come up again. The materials for discussion of capital punishment clearly exist in the police collection but one suspects are only examined in the Museum of London's use of them. The theme or terrorism is illustrated with materials from IRA, Angry Brigade and later islamist attacks which is pedagogic but what constitutes terrorism is not questioned.

I'd be more critical of the failure to address the crimes of and against women seeking the vote in the exhibition but know that the next year they devoted a whole exhibition to it – which I enjoyed. And they maintain a permanent collection.^{xviii} One tactic of the suffragettes was public protest and Keily and Hoffbrand offer the Culley Cup and a burnt riot shield as objects to illustrate this theme and note:

both objects highlight the challenges of policing public protest. They also highlight the complexity and ambiguity of objects, which can represent different meanings for different people (2015: 164/165)

The same two objects are discussed at greater length in Moss and Skinner (2015:20/27). The radical businessmen who clubbed together to buy the silver cups for the coroner's jury members who returned a verdict of 'justifiable homicide' in respect of PC Robert Culley killed by rioters at Clerkenwell, London in 1833 took one view. One can guess the opinion of police now and then. It is less clear what the Cup is doing in their possession. The riot shield was burnt at the riots in Tottenham, London in 1985 and might be seen to be a relic and memorial to PC Keith Blakelock who died during them. The same might be said of the space given to the deaths of DS Christopher Head, temporary DC David Wombwell and PC Geoffrey Fox (Keily and Hoffbrand, 2015:122/125) by Harry Roberts and his accomplices.

A roulette wheel seized at Barnet Fair is not linked to any case but has clear pedagogic value as it is rigged and any of the 20 plainclothes detectives, 4 sergeants and 44 PCs attending the 1874 one might have learned about it (Keily and Hoffbrand, 201:37).

Throughout the exhibition a number of items which are far less immediate than the ropes used in executions again raise the issue of the intentions of the police. Even if

the Papier-mâché snuff box is that of John Thurtell, hanged in 1824 for the murder of William Weare (it is only allegedly his) why has it been kept? The court room illustrations scattered throughout make for a fascinating social history and would be in any crime museum I curated but how do they serve the training of police officers? They might even have made tasteful souvenirs in the gift shop. The shop at Museum of London did sell Metropolitan Police pin badges, some Crime Museum Uncovered totebags and mugs as well as some novelty items such as miniature collector police cars and but their bestseller was a police teddy bear.^{xix}

Purely commercial crime museums or side shows within other attractions are less ethically challenged though the Lombroso museum has been protested for racism (Ystehede, 2016) and a 'Jack the Ripper' one for sexism.^{xx}

Another potential gift might be Annie Parker's sampler hand crocheted lace embroidered with her own hair and given to the Chaplain of the Clerkenwell House of Detention and passed on to the Museum in 1879.

gift shop ethics

We have already touched on Keily and Hoffbrand's (2015) own ethical concerns and those of the museum. It is not clear what ethical concerns faced the makers of the Orson Welles radio programme but in all bar one case they used pseudonyms. Only in episode 42 'The Small White Boxes' did they use Madeleine Smith's real name. Intriguingly they changed the alleged murderer's gender from male to female in episode 20 'The Hammerhead' about another 'trunk' murder (see also Sutton-Vane (2020).

Yun (2018) notes visitors were presented with questions about the exhibits at the Crime Museum: 'What does it mean to put these objects on public display?' 'In what ways can the display of these objects be educational?' and 'Where do you draw the line. It is not known what visitors thought but I contributed mine. Biber (2018a) conclusion considers the destruction of evidence post trial. She notes (with Linnemann, 2017) that even images of such destruction can become trophies.

Ystehede (2016) notes that the protestors against Lombroso included descendants of peoples described by Lombroso as 'criminals' whose remains were anatomised and displayed. He had supported Piedmont against the South. The protestors did not want their ancestor's skulls displayed. Imagine if protestors turned up at the first International Congress of Criminal Anthropology in 1885 when Lombroso took 70 skulls and Lacassagne over 2,000 pieces of tattooed skin (Ystehede (2016). Lofty science needed not ethics approval nor trashy knick knacks.

Linnemann (2017) is critical of the police use of trophy shots and Biber (2018a) cites and acknowledges him. Some of the holdings of the Crime Museum seem trophy-like but until recently only for a limited private audience of fellow officers. Ferguson (2016) suggests the Met's Crime Museum is not actually a museum because of its closed nature. Perhaps the cultural cache of 'museum' was too hard to resist. Interestingly, Regener (2003) uses the terms 'cultural archive' and 'trophyzation' in her work though neither Biber (2018a) nor Linnemann (2017) cite her.

The Wooden Eagle Moss and Skinner describe (2015:332) might be seen as robber's attempt to magically capture the insignia or spirit of his nemesis, the Flying Squad, but it ended in the Crime Museum.

Talbot (2018)^{xxi} had privileged access to the Crime Museum in 2010 when it was at New Scotland Yard and found herself asking if it was a 'chamber of horrors' or served a pedagogic purpose. She thought that in such a liminal (and limited) space the pedagogic and memorialising in-house was managed and has confirmed that the re-curating done by the Museum of London team addressed all these issues.^{xxii}

In addition to ethical concerns about the totality of the exhibits some only took exception to particular cases or themes. Biber (2018a) doesn't pick up on this perhaps because she accepts – as do I - Keily and Hoffbrand's explanation that the items, 'reflect the reality of illegal abortions' (2015:148) and that, 'some themes, such as abortion, reflect a crime that has completely altered due to changes in the law' (2015:4) On which topic they continue, 'some possible themes, such as prostitution or illegal gambling, were either not represented or had not been sufficiently collected.' (2015:4)

Exit via the gift shop may be a film by Banksy (2010) but the concept he was alluding to is the very mundane and cliched fund-raising issue for all museums of seeking to keep funding going by the provision of souvenirs. Though these may not be shrunken heads from Pitt Rivers museum just post cards thereof that is one of Biber's (2018a:164) few direct mentions of such issues. She does note the extent of gifts and even scholarly work in the bookshop at the Forensics exhibition (2018:110). Relatedly she mentions 'dark tourism' (Lennon & Foley 2000; Strange and Kempa 2003 and Dalton, 2014) mostly in respect of international crimes but those include the prisons of Alcatraz and Robben Island. Strange and Kempa (2003) argued that rather than 'dark' 'multi-hued' was the appropriate term as reasons for visiting sites could be quite nuanced. One can imagine visiting Robben Island to pay homage to the memory of Mandela or Alcatraz inspired by Hollywood's version. "Hellcatraz" versus "The University of Robben Island" is how Strange and Kempa (2003) headline it. Walby and Piché (2011) suggest a variety of meanings are available to visitors to crime museums: critical, indifferent and punitive interpretations are all possible.

Conclusion but not conclusive

I identify as a criminologist but have cited from or alluded, if only implicitly, to museology, tourism studies, cultural and media studies, ethics, aesthetics, sociology, psychoanalysis, religion, philosophy, history and heritage studies etc throughout. Not all have cited each other. Crime throws up the most interesting Venn diagrams. This kaleidoscope of disciplines may fuzz the focus of those individual disciplines but I would argue allows one to step back and see a bigger, more colourful, picture.

Sometimes a different critique or defence of crime museums broadly emerges from these disciplines or from different perspectives. Unkindly the defences might seem like justifications or special pleading. Given the popularity of toy Metropolitan Police dolls in the tourist shops of London one can imagine the amount of money that could be generated for policing were their Museum opened to the public. The Daily

Express suggested this in 2013 to make £4.5 million from 300,000 visitors. Boris Johnson, when Mayor of London visited the exhibition, announced plans for a permanent Police Museum.^{.xxiii} There appear to be no current plans to do so. Neither does the Paris museum that Ricordeau and Bugnon (2018) mention appear to have progressed.

But as Biber (2018a) clearly sets out the Museum of London senior staff and the curators took extraordinary pains to address issues of voyeurism and ethics. And I would endorse that, but their careful framing of items, information boards and labelling - all set out in the accompanying book (Keily and Hoffbrand, 2015) - could not overturn the reasons why visitors came. Strange and Kempa (2003) found Hollywood trumped all of the National Park Service's attempts to repackage Alacataz. Worse Rubenhold (2019) drew online abuse from 'Ripperologists' against her attempt to present the Whitechapel Murders victim's perspective (Lister et al, 2020). Yun (2018) is kinder; exploring the terms, 'curiosity' and 'wonder' from educational and epistemological perspectives to explain what a museum must offer us. Or what PT Barnum (the Greatest Showman) is said to have said, 'Nobody ever lost a dollar by underestimating the taste of the American public'. Honeycombe (1984 and 1994) might have set a liberal penal reformist context for his work but it is the murders that are given centre stage.

I conclude that the Museum of London's Crime Museum Uncovered must escape the worst of the criticism of such museums. Specifically, official police and prison museums open to the public may be seen as doing ideological work and the critical criminologist should seek to engage with them. A good example is Ferguson (2016) who shows how dedicated police museums always present the police positively but other museums with some police/crime content don't necessarily.^{.xxiv} Ricordeau and Bugnon (2018) provide an example, in that the Texas Rangers Hall of Fame Museum in Waco cheer leads for the police but the Texas Rangers Museum in San Antonio is a section of a commercial museum focussing on wider Texan life playing on the Texas Ranger brand. 'Jack's' brand has been mentioned earlier but in the radio series Orson Welles is the brand as much as the 'Black Museum'.

To come back to criminology. Are its hands clean? Are mine? We know or suspect that we are like the Rangers at Alcatraz attempting to offer alternative readings to 'true crime', 'gore fest' etc. We are not moving towards a 'gothic' criminology (Picart and Greek, 2004; Rafter and Ystehede 2010) we are already there as criminology is just another branch of 'dark tourism'.

I now volunteer at my local town's Museum and hope to start a series of talks/events in which their limited holding of crime and criminal justice feature. Of particular interest is that the newly refurbished building housed the local Assizes and the court has been refurbished too. At a low level of complicity, I admit I know the former police officer whose whistle can be seen in one case. Clearly, I would hope to attempt once again to direct the forces of 'dark tourism' like Strange and Kempa (2003) towards the light or multi-hued.

The extended history of the Metropolitan Police's Crime Museum with different curators and policies (or absence of policies) means it is difficult to pin down what is precisely for. Talbot (2013) found it to be less horrifying than historic or

contemporary journalism represented it. Its destruction or dispersal would require careful ethical engagement. The temporary Museum of London exhibition was closely curated and overseen. It was clear in its intentions and equally clear on what objects it should not contain or subjects it should not broach. Any future public version of the Police one should be more like the Museum of London's one.

Which means I must put up with people presuming that criminology is synonymous with 'truecrime' or fixated upon serial killers. In seeking to do public criminology one must truck with the popular and try to tone down the dark in tourism. This might also trade on the camp or gothic about which I propose to write further. Strange and Kempa (2003) show how the Park Ranger's responsible for Alcatraz sought to include other voices than the criminal and penal including this of the Native American protest occupation of 'the Rock' in the Nixon era. A critical perspective in the 80s found the National Park Service having to give way to the Bureau of Prisons. Keily and Hoffbrand (2015) sought to downplay some of the worst excesses of the 'truecrime' and gothic genres. In my events and walking around the Exhibition with students and visitors I offered other critical readings beyond the bald 'facts' of a 'case'.

This article has struggled to curate a number of disciplines and narratives but hope that each might notice each other. I have touted the concept of the brand to discuss: 'Jack', the Black Museum and even Orson Welles. I have used the terms 'relic' and 'memorial' and must now add 'taboo' following Talbot (2013). Space and competence prevent expanding on those here but all might merit attention. And finally, a plea: that criminologists might be asked their opinion before and during the planning of such museums and not have to play catch-up.

Bibliography

- Biber, K., 2013. In crime's archive: The cultural afterlife of criminal evidence. *British Journal of Criminology*, 53(6), pp.1033-1049.
- Biber, K., 2018a. In *Crime's Archive: The Cultural Afterlife of Evidence*. Taylor & Francis.
- Biber, K., 2018b. Evidence in the museum: Curating a miscarriage of justice. *Theoretical Criminology*, 22(4), pp.505-522.
- Bond, H., 2009. *Lacan at the Scene*. MIT Press.
- Brown, M., 2009. *The culture of punishment: Prison, society, and spectacle* (Vol. 23). NYU press.
- Carrier, N., 2014. On some limits and paradoxes of academic orations on public criminology. *Radical Criminology*, (4), pp.85-114.
- Dalton, Derek., 2014. *Dark Tourism and Crime*. Abingdon UK: Routledge.
- Davies, O. and Matteoni, F., 2017. *Executing Magic in the Modern Era: Criminal Bodies and the Gallows in Popular Medicine*. Palgrave Macmillan.
- Day, Annette (n.d.), 'The Crime Museum uncovered: The complex ethics and expectations', Museum iD , accessible at www.museum-id.com/idea-detail.asp?id=1566.
- Ferguson, M., 2016. *Penal Spectatorship at Three Police Museums in Ontario* (Doctoral dissertation, Université d'Ottawa/University of Ottawa).

Groombridge, N., 2007. Criminologists say...: An analysis of UK national press coverage of criminology and criminologists and a contribution to the debate on 'Public Criminology'. *The Howard Journal of Criminal Justice*, 46(5), pp.459-475.

Groß, H., 1894. Die Ausbildung des praktischen Juristen, *Zeitschrift für die gesamte Strafrechts-wissenschaft*, 14, pp. 1-18.

Honeycombe, G., 1984. *The Murders of the Black Museum 1870-1970* Arrow Books.

Honeycombe, G., 1994. *More Murders of the Black Museum 1835-1985* Arrow Books.

Huey, L., 2011. Crime behind the glass: Exploring the sublime in crime at the Vienna Kriminalmuseum. *Theoretical Criminology*, 15(4), pp.381-399.

Keily, J. and Hoffbrand, J., 2015. *The Crime Museum Uncovered: Inside Scotland Yard's Special Collection*. IB Tauris.

Lennon, John and Malcolm Foley (2000), *Dark Tourism*, London: Thomson.

Linnemann, T., 2017. Proof of death: Police power and the visual economies of seizure, accumulation and trophy. *Theoretical criminology*, 21(1), pp.57-77.

Lister, K., Milne-Smith, A., Van Der Heijden, M. and Colpus, E. (2020) The five: the untold lives of the women killed by Jack the Ripper, *Women's History Review*.

McCorristine, S., 2015. The Dark Value of Criminal Bodies: Context, Consent, and the Disturbing Sale of John Parker's Skull. *Journal of Conservation and Museum Studies*, 13(1): 2, pp. 1-7,

McDermid, V., 2015. *Forensics: What Bugs, Burns, Prints, DNA, and More Tell Us about Crime*. Open Road+ Grove/Atlantic.

Morris, T., and Blom-Cooper, H., 1964. *A Calendar of Murder*. Michael Joseph.

Moss, A. and Skinner, K., 2015. *Scotland Yard's History of Crime in 100 Objects*. The History Press.

Picart, C. J. and Greek, C. (eds) 2004 *Monsters In and Among Us: towards a Gothic Criminology* Fairleigh Dickinson University Press

Rafter, N. and Ystehede, P., 2010. Here be dragons: Lombroso, the gothic, and social control. *Popular Culture, Crime and Social Control*, 14, pp.263-284.

Regener, S., 2003, Criminological Museums and the Visualization of Evil, *Crime, Histoire & Sociétés / Crime, History & Societies*, Vol. 7, n°1 | 43-56.

Ricordeau, G. and Bugnon, F., 2018. La police au musée: une perspective comparative. *Deviance et Societe*, 42(4), pp.663-685.

Rubenholt, H., 2019. *The Five: The untold lives of the women killed by Jack the Ripper*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

Scott Bray, R., 2017. Images of fatal violence: negotiating the dark heart of death research. *Mortality*, 22(2), pp.136-154.

Strange, C. and Kempa, M., 2003. Shades of dark tourism: Alcatraz and Robben Island. *Annals of tourism research*, 30(2), pp.386-405.

Sutton-Vane, A., 2020 'Murder Cases, Trunks and Entanglement of Ethics: The Preservation and Display of Scenes of Crime Material' in *Crime and Construction of Forensic Objectivity from 1850*. Palgrave.

Talbot, L., 2013. The Unclean Truth. *Fieldwork in Religion*, 8(2), pp.175-187.

Waddell, B., (1993) *The Black Museum: New Scotland Yard* Little, Brown & Company

Walby, K. and Piché, J., 2011. The polysemy of punishment memorialization: Dark tourism and Ontario's penal history museums. *Punishment & Society*, 13(4), pp.451-472.

Ystehede, P.J., 2016. Contested spaces: On crime museums, monuments, and memorials. *The Oxford handbook of the history of crime and criminal justice*, pp.338-352.

Yun, S., 2018. Curiosity, Wonder and Museum Education. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 52(3), pp.465-482.

i Lindsey Sivitar - this website has her details <https://www.jack-the-ripper-tour.com/tour-guides/lindsay-sivitar/> accessed 3 April 2020

ii Lecturing at St Mary's University for twenty years has given me an interest in the gothic as it is the site of Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill House where he wrote the first gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*.

iii Museo Criminologico <https://www.museocriminologico.it/> accessed 1 April 2020

iv The True Crime Museum <https://www.truecrimemuseum.co.uk/location/> accessed 1 April 2020

v Criminology Museum, National and Kapodistrian University of Athens https://en.uoa.gr/about_us/museums/criminology_museum/ accessed 1 April 2020

vi I was visiting to examine an MPhil/PhD transfer. Oxford Castle and Museum <https://www.oxfordcastleandprison.co.uk/about/news/marking-20-years/> 1 April 2020

vii Wiener Kriminalmuseum <http://www.kriminalmuseum.at/> accessed 8 April 2020

viii Wellcome Collection 'Lustmord and the three perspectives of murder' <https://wellcomecollection.org/articles/WqfvayUAAKsrVreh> accessed 8 April 2020

ix The Secrets of the Black Museum 1988 Central Television <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=08D7ZL2FeYQ> accessed 2 April 2020

x Internet Archive website https://archive.org/details/OTRR_Black_Museum_Singles/BlackMuseum-01-The22CaliberPistol.mp3 accessed 2 April 2020

xi See also her blogpost about the Crime Museum <https://angelasuttonvane.com/2015/11/13/the-crime-museum-uncovered-and-the-edges-of-dark-tourism/> accessed 2 April 2020

xii Culture Trip 12 January 2018 'Forget Black Mirror's 'Black Museum', There's a Real One in London' <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/united-kingdom/england/london/articles/forget-black-mirrors-black-museum-theres-a-real-one-in-london/> accessed 3 April 2020

xiii Available on Netflix in April 2020

xiv Wellcome Collection 'Forensics: The Anatomy of Crime' <https://wellcomecollection.org/exhibitions/W31pfCkAACkAP4iL> accessed 4 April 2020

xv The Innocents <http://tarynsimon.com/works/innocents/#1> accessed 9 April 2020

xvi I have also checked some of these memories and asked the opinions of my son Rhys and wife Hilary who also came on separate occasions.

xvii Sutton-Vale has curated a police museum for over 11 years herself and took a close interest in the exhibitions that Biber and I attended. She wrote about it for the Conversation (November 2015) and asked herself rhetorically if she could identify 'dark tourists'.^{xvii}

xviii Museum of London 'The Suffragettes' <https://collections.museumoflondon.org.uk/online/group/18146.html> accessed 8 April 2020

xix Thank you, Sarah at the Museum's shop, for the information (email 7 April 2020)

xx East London Advertiser 07 November 2017 'Jack the Ripper museum besieged by women protesters in Cable Street again' <https://www.eastlondonadvertiser.co.uk/news/jack-the-ripper-museum-besieged-by-women-protesters-in-cable-street-again-1-5267058> accessed 6 April 2020

xxi See also her blog about her visit to the museum <https://deadmaidens.com/2016/04/10/the-crime-museum-uncovered/> accessed 3 April 2020

xxii Personal communication by email 8 April 2020

xxiii Mayor of London 09 October 2015 'Mayor announces plans for permanent Policing Museum in London' <https://www.london.gov.uk/press-releases/mayoral/crime-museum-uncovered> accessed 4 April 2020

xxiv Ferguson was following on Brown's (2009) wider work on prisons and popular culture.