

Walking in the steps of Jack the Ripper

Understanding the motivations, experience and evaluations of participants in the
Jack the Ripper walking tours in London

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ABSTRACT

This research focuses on the motivations, experience and evaluation of participants who take part in the Jack the Ripper walking tour in London. The field of dark tourism shows much interest in the motivations of tourists who take part in dark attractions. However, most of the studies concerning the motivations of tourists focus on death as the main motivational factor in their decision to take part in these dark activities. Despite the fact that Jack the Ripper walking tours focus on death, it is not the main motivational factor in the decision of the participants. Moreover, not much data is found concerning the experience and evaluation of the tourists' experience. Thus, this research has the purpose of bringing to light the main motivations of the participants, but also analyzing their experience and evaluation of the experience by answering the following research question: What are the motivations, experience and evaluation of participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tours? This research focuses on what motivates a participant to take part in this walking tour, how their motivations and expectations impact their experience and how they evaluate their experience by focusing both on the negative and positive aspects. This project uses qualitative research through the process of interviewing participants who have taken part in the Jack the Ripper walking tour. The collected data has been analyzed thematically in order to discuss the motivations, experience and evaluation of participants. It has been divided in to three different parts. Firstly, the study focuses on the motivations of tourists by analyzing the common themes that are brought up during the interviews such as the mystery surrounding Jack the Ripper and the case. It also highlights how tourists are motivated by the educational purpose and the chance to experience Victorian London. Secondly the expectations of the tourists have also been analyzed in order to show how much of the expectations lie on the tour guide to create a memorable experience. It also discusses how the expectations of tourists depend also on their preconceived notions and images, which are formed and distributed by the media. Finally, it highlights their experience as the tour guide's skills are responsible for the outcome of the participants tour. This research discusses how the tour guide has the ability to transport the tourists back in Victorian London through a combination of narratives and story-telling techniques. It explains how tourists go on these walking tours in order to experience on site the pre-conceived images which are present in their imaginations. And finally, the data shows how these experiences perpetuate the distribution of this image of Victorian London while also contributing to the place identity of Whitechapel as a poor neighborhood filled with crime. This paper seeks to contribute to the studies on place identity and tourist motivation by showing how the motivations of tourists and participants are linked and motivated by the preconceived ideas they have of a site. It will also contribute to studies on tour guides by showing how the guide is the most crucial factor of an enjoyable experience.

KEYWORDS: Motivations, Expectations, Experience, Jack the Ripper, Dark Tourism, Place Identity, Experience Economy.

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INTRODUCTION

When one thinks about Jack the Ripper, one hardly associates this infamous serial killer with tourism. Yet, in the East End of London it is possible to visit the sites of the murders of Jack the Ripper's victims while also visiting sites related either to Jack the Ripper or to his victims. During the course of this walking tour, a participant is able to visit these sites related to the murders and/or the victims accompanied by a tour guide who explains the socio-economic background of Victorian London and the circumstances that led the women to becoming prostitutes. What is all the more surprising is the popularity of this tour. Indeed, on TripAdvisor, it is the fourth most popular walking tour in London ("THE 10 BEST London Walking Tours (with Photos) - TripAdvisor", n.d.). However, the Jack the Ripper walking tour is classed behind a Stonehenge trip and a Harry Potter Studio tour. Therefore, the Jack the Ripper walking tour is in second position and is the second most popular walking tour in London according to TripAdvisor. Moreover, as stated by Powell and Iankova (2016), it is the third popular dark tourist attraction in London. It is intriguing that such a dark touristic activity, which is based on the murder of five women, is such a popular touristic activity in London.

However, this walking tour is not a new touristic attraction. For instance, Seaton and Dann (2018), discuss how from the time of the crimes, people were attracted to the sites of the murders. This interest shown towards the sites by "Ripper Trippers" caught the attention of a police surgeon who in 1905 put in place the first Jack the Ripper walking tour (Seaton & Dann, 2018. pp. 67). Therefore, in the beginning of the 20th Century, a market was developed for people who showed an interest in Jack the Ripper. It is an interesting development and it shows how people seem to have always been attracted by the macabre and dark events to the point that a niche market was developed for them. Moreover, the sites of the murders were all the more attractive at the time of the crimes due to the transgressive nature of the East End of London. Indeed, the East End had previously attracted slum tourists due to the nature of the crimes that took place there (Seaton & Dann, 2018). This shows that the East End of London has always attracted dark tourists which explains the popularity of the Jack the Ripper walking tours. In fact, the East End of London is still associated with crime and poverty, thus it has the setting which is attractive for dark tourism.

As said previously, the Jack the ripper walking tour is a popular dark touristic activity, but what is exactly dark tourism? Dark tourism has many definitions as it is used by academics as an umbrella term to englobe any form of tourism related to death and crime (Light, 2017, pp 277). However, for the purpose of this research Stone's definition of dark tourism has been chosen. Stone's definition concerns "*travelling to sites of or sites associated with death or 'difficult heritage'*" (Stone et al., 2018, p. xvi). This definition is the ideal choice for the case of Jack the Ripper walking tours as the tours deal with sites where macabre murders took. The tours also deal with sites related to the victims, thus sites related to death. Indeed, the main focus of the tour is the murders of the five victims of Jack the Ripper. Therefore, it shall be interesting to discover whether death is the main motivational factor for participants in this particular case.

Dark tourism is not a new phenomenon. As a matter of fact, people have been attracted by the morbid and death for centuries. In fact, in ancient Rome, people would attend gladiator fights as spectators, which is similar to people going to the cinema today. Additionally, in Medieval times, the public was able to witness public executions (Seaton & Dann, 2018). Hence, death and difficult heritage has always been a form of entertainment and an attraction for people. This could be a possible reason for the popularity towards true crime documentaries and detective medium in our contemporary society. True crime has become a popular form of entertainment which revolves around real criminal activities and real people but in the form of entertainment such as books or movies. Its popularity can be explained by the fact that people are inherently attracted to crime and death and witnessing it raises their adrenaline (Yardley, 2019). It also mixes fact and fiction, which makes it entertainment and something less gruesome to watch or read from the comfort of their own homes (Yardley et al. 2018). Thus, a more recent example of dark tourism is the creation of walking tours that were developed to meet this niche market – that of fans of true crime. For instance, in the city of Seattle, Washington, it is possible to take part in a walking tour that highlights the criminal past and dark history of the city. This tour delves into the neighborhoods of dead celebrities such as Kurt Cobain and Jimi Hendrix. It takes the tourists to the grave of Bruce Lee and Ted Bundy's neighborhood (Capitol Hill Tour — Private Eye on Seattle Ghost & True Crime Tours", n.d.). This is not a typical tour if you compare it to a more common walking tour such as the Harry potter walking tour in London. Indeed, the former focuses on death and serial killers as opposed to the latter which focuses on magic and wizards. Nonetheless, this walking tour

in addition to the Jack the Ripper walking tour both highlight the growing fascination that people have for crime, death and serial killers as it combines all of these aspects in a single tour.

Due to the growing importance of social media and television there seems to have been a global rise in tourists partaking in these types of dark attractions, alongside a growth in the academic field. Indeed, the field of dark tourism is a rather young field in the domain of heritage studies as it took root two decades ago (Light, 2017). Since then, the field has grown to the point that an institute for Dark Tourism Research was set up in the United Kingdom, at the University of Central Lancashire (Light, 2017). The birth of an institute for dark tourism explains that much interest has been shown towards this field. Undoubtedly, the creation of an institution is the result of an interest shown in the field so as to further studies and to be able to understand the field and develop it more. Moreover, this field has focused on the distinction between different types of dark tourism, the ethical debates of dark tourism, and the motivations of dark tourists (Light, 2017). Further research has been done on place identity and tourist motivations in this field by Leanne White and Elspeth Frew in their book *Place Identity: Managing and Interpreting Dark Places* (Stone, 2018). The role of place identity in dark tourism shall be a point of interest for the purpose of this research.

This research shall combine pre-existing concepts from various fields in order to contribute to the academic field of dark tourism. Concepts such as *the public's general fascination for serial killers* (Yardley, 2019), the *armchair detective* (Yardley, 2018) and the *mythization of Jack the Ripper* (Andrew, 2019) which come from the field of criminology will be used in order to highlight the interest participants have in crime and death so as to get a better understanding of the motivations of the participants. This paper will discuss concepts such as the *experience economy* (Andersson, 2007, Pine & Gilmore, 1999) and *place identity* (Wang & Chen 2015) which were developed in the field of heritage in order to highlight the importance of history and the importance of the experience economy on the experience of the participants. Finally, the concepts of the *narrative techniques* of the tour guide and his role in *staging experiences* for the participants shall be observed in order to discuss what impact the guide has on the experience of the participants and how tour guides influence the evaluation of the participants (Bryon, 2012; Wailer & Walker, 2014).

This research seeks to answer the following research question: *What are the motivations, experience and evaluations of participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour?* In order to answer this main research question, this research shall have the following sub-questions: What role does

the pre-conceived images the participants have of Whitechapel – the neighborhood where the crimes took place – and of Jack the Ripper play on their experience? And how important is the role of the tour guide in the experience of the participants? In order to gather sufficient and consistent data so as to answer the main research question, qualitative interviews shall be undertaken with a set list of questions that will be adapted according to each interview. The research method and shall be explained in more detail in the method section and an anonymous list of interviewees shall be found in the appendix

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework shall be divided into three main sections in order to answer the following research question: What are the motivations, experience and evaluation of the participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour? The sub questions are the following questions: What role does the pre-conceived images the participants have of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper play on their experience? And how important is the role of the tour guide in the experience of the participants? These sub questions will be focused on in order to answer the main research question. Therefore, the theoretical framework shall be divided firstly into the motivational factors of the walking tour. Secondly it will focus on participants experiencing the walking tour and finally the evaluation of the participants of walking tour shall be discussed.

The motivational factors of the Jack the Ripper walking tour

The motivations of tourists has been a topic widely discussed in the academic field of cultural tourism but also in the field of dark tourism. Indeed, previous studies in the field of dark tourism that have focused on the motivations of tourists have usually put the focal point on the tourists' fascination with death (Stone, 2018). These studies also focus on the role of place identity and tourist motivation (White & Frew, 2013). However, the field of dark tourism is a broad field and various people have various motivations. It is complicated to class together the different motivations of people and tourists. Moreover, not much data seems to have been gathered concerning the motivations of tourists who take part in tourism focused on crime and serial killers. Therefore, this section shall explore the motivations of participants who partake in the Jack the Ripper walking tour and compare the data gathered in order to contribute to the field of dark tourism and previous studies on the motivation of participants. This first part shall focus on the motivations of the participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour so as to bring to light just how strong the *public's fascination with serial killers* (Yardley, 2019). The concept of the *armchair detective* will also be discussed in order to show how participants are motivated by puzzles and enigmas, as the case of Jack the Ripper is shrouded in mystery (Yardley, 2019; Worsley, 2016). Lastly the concept of the mythization of Jack the Ripper shall be developed in order to show how strongly the participants are attracted to the mysteriousness of the case.

Firstly, Yardley (2019), discusses how serial killers are fascinating for the general public as they give people the ability to be in close proximity to death from a safe distance. This causes adrenaline in those consumers, which is a powerful emotion that is both stimulating and addictive. Moreover, with the rise in popularity of true crime, people have been increasingly showing interest towards the psychology and the motives of serial killers. Yardley (2019) explains that the public shows much interest in serial killers because they are enigmas which people want to make sense of. It is also a way for the public to feed their need for danger and excitement from a safe distance. Thus, the fascination with serial killers seems to be a possible motivation for participants to take part in the walking tour as it is both an educational and entertaining way to learn about Jack the Ripper. Moreover, this particular serial killer is all the more interesting due to the mystery surrounding his identity. Indeed, as Worsley (2016) says “people love a good mystery.” Hence, his unknown identity is a strong reason people become interested in the case. Moreover, watching true crime documentaries and Television shows or even reading true crime novels, blurs the boundaries between reality and fiction as people combine entertainment with education. Hypothetically, this blurring of lines could mean that a distance is established between the participants and the past crimes in order for them to enjoy the experience. Therefore, during the walking tour there is a distance that is put in place between the participants and the past crimes committed by Jack the Ripper so as to not feel guilty about enjoying the walking tour.

Furthermore, the development of true crime entertainment and technology permitted the concept of the armchair detective to develop. According to Worsley (2016), the development of the detective genre and of forensic science gave way for the birth of armchair detectives. An armchair detective is when people become involved with a case to the point that they actively try to solve it from a safe distance, that is to say most often from the comfort of their homes. This concept became more popular due to the development of technology and social media which created online platforms for people to exchange ideas and theories about present or cold true crime cases. On Facebook there are many groups which contribute to the discussion of Jack the Ripper or his crimes. There is also a website entitled casebook.org that talks about various aspects of the case. The majority of consumers of true crime act as armchair detectives while partaking in the consummation of true crime. But this is not a new development as seen above, members of the Victorian public used to send letters to the press and detectives citing their suspicions and methods to solving cases. However, social media has made it possible for people to gather together in order

to discuss these theories and create a sense of closeness between these fans (Broll, 2019). They are able to take part in the cold case by exchanging pictures and clues about the investigation (Yardley, 2019). Thus, this might be a further possible motivation for participants to take part in the walking tour. It will be interesting to understand how strong the armchair detective concept is for the participants in this research project.

Finally, an additional motivational factor for this particular walking tour would be the mystery surrounding this case. Yardley (2019), discusses how Jack the Ripper has become a “brand” around which a whole industry has developed. Indeed, his crimes have been adapted in various mediatic forms such as movies, books and video games. The combination of a growing interest in true crime and the development of technology, more specifically social media, has also contributed to elevating serial killers to the status of celebrities, as it combines both violence and stardom while feeding the public’s fascination with death (Broll, 2019). Nonetheless, Jack the Ripper is an atypical case, as he is famous for being unknown. The stark interest in his identity combined with the mysteriousness surrounding his identity has elevated him to the status of a celebrity. (Andrew, 2019). Andrew (2019), explains that this mystery which surrounds the case of Jack the Ripper, this infamous serial killer, seems to be the main attractive feature of the case, as up to this day, his identity remains unknown. The absence of the identity of Jack the Ripper has left a void which in turn has been filled by a myth. Thus, Jack the Ripper’s notoriety and his adaptation to various forms in the media, means that his presence is pervasive in our contemporary society and has become part of our culture. This seems to be linked to the mystery surrounding the case and this serial killer.

Thus in line with this discussion, I would like to propose the following hypotheses: the mythologization of Jack the Ripper has transformed this notorious serial killer into a sort of celebrity, which in turn has created further interest and has pushed tourists and participants to participate in the walking tour in order to learn more about the case, the murders, the socio-economic background and the psychology. But participants also seem motivated to participate in the tour in order to meet similar minded people so as to discuss the case and theories or experience the tour together. Thus, it can be concluded that the main motivational factors for participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour seem to be related to the public’s fascination with serial killers, the mystery surrounding the case and the concept of armchair detectives. All these concepts are related to the criminal aspect of the tour, as the wish to uncover his identity and understand the

motivations of this infamous killer seem to be a strong motivation for participants to partake in the walking tour. This shall be further developed, and the hypotheses brought up shall be answered in the data analysis section. Moreover, all these concepts appear to be related to entertainment and experiences. Therefore, the next part shall discuss how the participants of the Jack the ripper walking tour experience the tour.

Experiencing the Jack the Ripper walking tour

The experience of the participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tours depends vastly on the imagination of the participants which is mostly formed by the pre-conceived images they have of Whitechapel. These same images have been distributed since the Victorian era and is still present in the imagination of tourists and participants (Andrew, 2019). However, the popularity of this walking tour is also due to the importance given to experiences, as this walking tour is the opportunity to observe death from a safe distance, learn about the socio-economic background of Victorian London and experience Victorian London. We shall also see how important the tour guide is for the experience of the tour. The following concepts of the *experience economy* (Andersson, 2007; Pine & Gilmore, 1999), *place identity* (Wand & Chen, 2015), and of the *tour guide as a story teller* (Bryon, 2012) will highlight how the experience is manipulated and staged, in order for the participant to enjoy the Jack the Ripper walking tour.

In the field of tourism, when a tourist purchases an experience, he expects to enjoy a series of events that will stay in his memoires (Andersson, 2007). This experience is staged in order for the tourist to be engaged and fully enjoy the experience (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). No one knows beforehand whether or not the tourist will have an enjoyable experience, however as he is the one to put together his experience by doing research, he will most likely choose to partake in an experience that will meet his needs (Andersson, 2007). Andersson (2007), discusses how a tourist cannot buy an experience, rather it is about living the experience. Therefore, the interest shown in a Jack the Ripper walking tour might be explained by the combination of learning about this specific serial killer while also experiencing the hunting grounds of Jack the Ripper. Indeed, by walking in the steps of Jack the Ripper in the right atmosphere, that is to say in the dark, dimly lit cobblestone alleyways, participants are able to experience death and history from a safe distance, while simultaneously raising their adrenaline levels. As Yardley (2019), explains, learning about

while also witnessing death and crime raises the adrenaline levels in a person. Thus, by walking through the majority of the sites of the murders as well as further sites associated to the victims, the participants get an adrenaline rush. In turn, this creates an interesting, dark and memorable experience for the participants. Moreover, the walking tour combines people's need for entertainment and their interest in history and learning (Bryon, 2012). Thus, taking part in the tour creates an entertaining experience for the participants. This is why the tour mainly takes place in the evening, when it is dark and there are less people walking around. Then the participants are able to walk around dark and narrow alleyways, which sets a worrying atmosphere and feeling to the tour. This atmosphere stages the experience of the participant in the sense they are able to experience the dark atmosphere that people associate with Jack the Ripper.

In order to experience completely the dark atmosphere of the walking tour, the participant needs to be able to link the pre-conceived image they have of Victorian Whitechapel to contemporary Whitechapel. This is where the concept of place identity comes in. Place identity is an important concept for the experience of a site as a tourist tends to have a preconceived image of a site beforehand. These images tend to be distributed by the media such as in movies or books. For instance, tourists who wish to visit Paris tend to envision Paris as a romantic city. This image of Paris has been distributed for some time through movies and books. According to Wang and Chen (2015), the concept of *place* is a setting in which experiences, perceptions and emotions develop. Therefore, meaning is attributed to this environment by people or tourists. The meaning given to this setting, is a combination of the physical site, the activities that take place there and of a social process. Moreover, an identity is when the demeanor of a person is driven by a set of meanings that is used as a reference. Therefore, a setting becomes a *place* when a cultural and social process and meanings has taken place and in turn has given meaning to that same setting. We can observe the concept of place identity within the East End neighborhood of London, Whitechapel, which is still seen in our contemporary society as an impoverished neighborhood overrun by crime. Thus, participants take part of the walking tour with this pre-conceived image. However, in order to be able to imagine themselves in Victorian London and the dark atmosphere, which is associated with Jack the Ripper, they need to be on site. From them they will be able to imagine themselves in Victorian London during the dark nights of the murder. This is only possible through a work of the imagination on the part of the participant and a work of description in the part of the tour guide directly on site. Moreover, the identity of Whitechapel has lasted throughout

the centuries mostly due to the media. It shall be interesting to analyze to which degree this image of Victorian London is still present in the minds of tourists and the participants, and what impact it has on their experience of the tour.

Finally, the identity of The East End of London, more precisely Whitechapel, is linked to the notion of *transgression* due to its past with public punishment. Seaton and Dann (2018), discuss how due to the nature of the historical spectacles of public punishment in London, the East End of London was given a reputation for being a transgressive site. For instance, England had put in place public displays of punishment in order to control the population. In medieval times, public punishments would consist of public torture and executions, then in the 18th Century they were displayed as spectacles. However, public hangings were abolished in 1868, in the Victorian era. Despite the abolition taking place in the 19th Century, the image of the East End of London as a place of crime and punishment endured. This image was reinforced by the crimes of Jack the Ripper which were largely mediatized at the time. Indeed, the gruesome murder of five women circulated throughout England and forever linked the image of the East End of London as a site of transgression and poverty (Worsley, 2016). The site of Whitechapel makes it the perfect setting for participants of the Jack the Ripper walking tour to experience Victorian London while learning about the past. The pre-conceived image that the participants will have will help them imagine themselves more easily in the past and understand the circumstances.

Thus, I would like to propose the following hypothesis, that the experience of the participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour is shaped by the identity of Whitechapel and the preconceived image the participants have of Whitechapel.

In short, the main factors for the experience of the participants seem to rely on the pre-conceived images they have of the site, on the ability of the tour guide to make this image come to life and for the participants to experience Victorian London. However, the next section shall discuss how the evaluation of the tour relies mostly on the tour guide and their ability to meet the expectations of the participants and create an enjoyable experience.

Evaluation of the Jack the Ripper walking tour

The evaluation of the walking tour will be the final part of the theory section. Though the motivations and experience of the tour are important aspects, the evaluation of the tour explains

what the participants expect of the outcome of the tour. The evaluation of the Jack the Ripper walking tour relies on multiple factors such the motivations and expectations of the participant and the pre-conceived ideas they have of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper. However, an enjoyable experience does seem to rely mostly on the tour guide. This third part shall examine which abilities a tour guide needs in order to create an enjoyable walking tour and how the guide is able to meet the expectations of the participants.

Tourists have expectations of the tour guides beforehand. Indeed, Wailer and Walker (2014), discuss how tourists have the notion of what role the tour guide should have during the tour, which consists of roles such as educators, role models, leaders' mediators and so on. All of these roles have one thing in common, that is that the guide's skills and knowledge are used to give the tourists a memorable and enjoyable experience. Therefore, guides are seen as interpreters by tourists (Wailer & Walker, 2014). On the Jack the Ripper walking tour, most tourists will expect a combination of an educator and an entertainer, as the tour follows in the steps of Jack the Ripper. Additionally, the participants will expect to hear about the socio-economic background of Victorian London as the tour has an historical aspect. However, in order to take on these roles so as to meet the expectations of the tourists, guides need to make use of techniques and skills so as to meet those expectations

In order to meet the expectations of the participants, the tour guide needs to make use of his story-telling techniques. Indeed, through this technique, the tour guide is able to stage the experience of the participant so that they are more likely to enjoy their experience. The tour guide is responsible for the staging of the tour and creating a memorable experience for the participant. According to Bryon (2012), the tour guide makes use of his narrative techniques to create a memorable experience as it appeals to emotional side of the participants (Bryon, 2012) and their need to be entertained (Yardley, 2019). This can be applied to the case of the Jack the Ripper walking tour as a separation is made between the tourists and the dark reality of the Jack the Ripper case. A boundary is put in place and turns the grime nature of the case of Jack the Ripper into a story. This means that the participants of the Jack the Ripper tour are able to distance themselves from the grim reality of Jack the Ripper and the murders he committed in order to enjoy the experience. Moreover, the ability of the guide to tell stories, and describe the images gives the participant the ability to imagine Victorian London and immerse themselves in the dark aspect of the walking tour. Indeed, the dark image most people have in mind when thinking of Jack the

Ripper is a man in a dark cape, with a top hat in a dark and dimly lighted cobbled alleyway. This image is the stereotypical dark image which is represented in the media (Andrew, 2019) and which the guides try to recreate through their narrative techniques (Bryon, 2012). Thus, the tour guide has the ability to create an experience where participants are able to imagine what Victorian London was like. It will be interesting to compare the different experiences the tour guides provided for the participants.

However, the ability for the guide to describe and act as a storyteller is not enough. Indeed, according to guides and institutions, passion and engagement are two emotions that are necessary on the part of the tour guide in order to make the experience of a tourist enjoyable (Bryon, 2012). By showing his or her passion the guide is able to connect more easily with the tourist and thus keep their attention. Moreover, in order to capture a tourist's attention, the guide needs to be passionate and engaging in order to entertain the tourist. Thus, the success of a tour and the experience of the tourist relies majorly on the tour guide.

Therefore, the combination of the story telling skills, the passion and the entertaining way of delivering information of a tour guide contribute to creating a memorable and enjoyable experience for participants in order to meet their expectations. The experience economy seems to have had an impact on the methods of presentation of tour guides. Indeed, tour guides seem to have the responsibility to create a memorable experience for tourist. In doing so they contribute to the place identity of Whitechapel which only reinforces its identity with that of Jack the Ripper.

Chapter 3 Methodology

This paper has the objective of understanding the motivations, experience and evaluation of the participants of the Jack the Ripper walking tour. As the objective of this research is to understand the meanings that the participants attributed to their experience and their motivations, qualitative analysis was the chosen method. Indeed, as it is explained by Dey (1993), qualitative analysis is based on meanings and understanding, which means that we create concepts and ideas in order to develop our understanding of the results and the phenomenon. Whereas quantitative research is based on numbers and the analysis is made through statistics. This means that quantitative research is used to generalize theories and facts (Streefkerk, 2019). Moreover, Charmaz (2006), discusses how the conceptualization of one's research is formed by the theories and analysis of the data gathered. Quantitative and qualitative research both have their advantages and drawbacks, however the latter is more adapted for this research topic as concepts and theories shall be created in order to answer the following research question: *What are the motivations, experience and evaluations of participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour?* This project also has two sub-questions that will contribute to answering the main research question. Firstly, what role do the participants' pre-conceived images have on their experience of the walking tour? And secondly, how important is the role of the tour guide in the experience of the participants?

For the purpose of this paper, the method chosen to gather data is that of qualitative interviews. Indeed, this method is ideal to try to understand the subject of the interview from the interviewees point of view and to have them explain their experience in their own words (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). When comparing it to standardized interviews, qualitative interviews allow the interviewer more freedom to change their questions according to how the interview is going. Therefore, as is explained by Adler and Clark (2011), the interviewer has more control over the interview. This method allows the interviewer to delve into the motivations, expectations and experience of tourists who partake in the walking tours as these types of questions allow the subject to ask for clarifications and explanations, but it also allows the interviewee to explain things in their own way. Moreover, as the interviewer has researched the topic of the interview, they have more knowledge and are able to adapt the questions for each interview and participant. For instance, the interviewer is able to change the phrasing, the order of words and so on. For the purpose of this

research, a fixed set of questions was used, but were changed according to the path the interview was taking and to the interviewee. Moreover, by using different questions and having a style of interview which is freer, the researcher is also able to ask follow-up questions in order to get additional information (Adler & Clark, 2011). This method is very adaptable and well suited for interviews concerning the personal experience of tourists as opposed to structured interviews which asks every interviewee the same questions (Adler & Clark 2001). Having previously participated in a Jack the Ripper walking tour, this will allow the interviewees and interviewer to relate to one another and create a more comfortable and open interview.

The latter method will not necessarily gather the necessary information as they are closed off questions and assume the chosen sample all have the same thoughts. This will therefore produce biased and incomplete information (Adler & Clark, 2011). For instance, sometimes if there is a set of questions, sometimes the interviewees will answer a question and may give another answer to another question. Therefore, through these interviews It is possible to ignore ignore a question that has previously been answered and follow a different line of questioning that may be in line with the-research question.

The chosen sample group is simply that of tourists who have taken part in the Jack the Ripper walking tours, as interviewing other subjects such as tour guides would add too much information and the data gathering would become complicated if there was a wide range of sources (Adler & Clark, 2011).

Due to the global social situation, the search for interviews took place solely online. Indeed, from the month of March, the pandemic caused by COVID-19 took place. Thus, people were told to stay home and the borders between countries were closed. This means that it was a harder task contacting tourists and therefore the target sample group had to be changed from tourists to participants of the walking tour. Furthermore, this search for participants took place on the internet by posting on Facebook groups that were about Jack the Ripper. This had an impact on the target group as most of the interviewees had a previous interest in Jack the Ripper before taking part in the tour. There were no specific criteria for the choice of subjects. They were randomly chosen by order of comments. A message was posted on multiple Jack the Ripper groups explaining that for the purpose of this research, people who had previously taken part in a Jack the Ripper walking tour were wanted in order to take part in online interviews. Messages were also posted on expat Facebook groups in order to broaden the search for interviewees. When people answered, they

were given more details about the purpose of this paper and were told if they would like to participate in this research, their personal information would be anonymized. They were all asked if they would give their consent to be recorded either orally through messenger or visually through Skype. Therefore, every interviewee gave verbal or written permission to be recorded, which made the transcribing process much easier. Moreover, the interviews were done either in English or French depending on which language people were more comfortable with. The choice of language has an impact on the interview and the meanings conveyed. Indeed, people are able to give their point of view more easily and they are more comfortable in the chosen language. Being fluent in both these languages means the interviews were able to be done in either language, which created a connection between the researcher and interviewee. Thus, the interviews were able to progress more easily (Adler & Clark, 2011). Additionally, there were a few interviewees whose contact information were given by some previous subjects. Overall, a total of 14 interviews have been gathered for the purpose of this research over the course of a month.

The interviews themselves were divided into three main sections. Firstly, it concentrated on the motivations of participants. The questions focused on the dark aspect of the tour, the criminal aspect, the mystery of Jack the Ripper and the learning aspect in order to pinpoint the general motivation of participants. Then it focused on the expectations they had of the tour and the tour guide. Indeed, the main topics discussed concerned the expectations about the atmosphere of the tour and the type of narrative told by the tour guide. Finally, the last section concentrated on the experience of the participants and their evaluation of the tour. The main topics focused on during the interviews were that of the experience provided by the tour guide. The guide's ability to set the atmosphere of the tour and help participants immerse themselves in the past were also a big part of this section.

In order to gather data during the interviews, a choice in the method of gathering the data was made. The chosen transcription process which was employed was that of edited transcription. This process enables the researcher to summarize and edit non-relevant parts. It is similar to the Intelligent verbatim transcription which allows the researcher to write everything down while editing out fillers. It also allows the researcher to fix grammar mistakes and long sentences as it is an oral conversation that is being transcribed. Therefore, edited transcription allows the transcription to omit whole sentences as long as it does not change the meaning of the interviewee (Streefkerk, 2019).

Once all the data had been gathered, there was a need to analyze it. The data was analyzed through the process of thematic analysis. That is to say that common themes were analyzed and grouped together by common themes and ideas. This is done in order to analyze patterns but also differences so as to either support the preconceived concepts and themes or to create new ones. Thematic analysis is an approach that is useful when trying to comprehend the opinions, experience and views of people (Caulfield, 2019). Some attention was also given to the vocabulary employed by the interviewees in order to understand some more subtle themes. For instance, the use of lexical fields can be employed in order to analyze the degree of involvement of the participants in the walking tour but also the degree of interest in certain themes and aspects of the tour. However, there are some limitations with thematic analysis. Indeed, the classification and analysis are based on the researcher's judgment, which means that there can be bias due to the preconceived ideas of the researcher (Caulfield, 2019).

In the Appendix, can be found the list of anonymized interviewees as their names are not important for the purpose of this research. However, their countries of origin are accurate as it has been noticed that according to their country of providence, they have different ways of how they learned about Jack the Ripper. Yet it is interesting to observe how fixed he is in worldwide popular culture. The interviews lasted between 15 minutes to 1h30. They took place either through Skype or Facebook messenger. The former was reordered visually and orally through a Skype recording, whereas the latter was solely recorded orally through a Dictaphone depending on the wish of the interviewees. Consent was given for each interview by every interviewee either on tape or through the consent form.

ANALYSIS

This section of the research paper shall be divided into three main parts in order to answer the following main research question and its sub-questions: *What are the motivations, experience and evaluations of participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour?* This project also has two sub-questions that will contribute to answering the main research questions. Those are; What role do the participants' pre-conceived images have on their experience of the walking tour? And how important is the role of the tour guide in the experience of the participants?

The first section shall focus on the motivations of the participants, the second section will explore the experience of the participants and finally the third part will concentrate on the evaluation of the participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour. The data shall be thematically analyzed by searching for patterns but also by analyzing the vocabulary employed by the interviewees.

MOTIVATIONS

“[...] I’ve always loved a good mystery and Jack the Ripper is kind of an archetypal mystery. There are these things that happen that no one knows can explain, no one knows who did it. No one knows why they did it, it is just a bunch of questions.” (Carole, Chicago)

This quote underlines one of the main findings of the research, how the mysteriousness of the case seems to be the main motivational factor for the participants. Indeed, Carole explains that the mystery surrounding the case of Jack the Ripper is what attracted her the most. The fact that there are no answers simply questions makes the case all the more attractive. This quote supports Yardley’s explanation that people tend to be fascinated with serial killers because they feel the need to solve the puzzle (Yardley, 2019). Moreover, over half of the interviewees declared that they were interested in the mystery surrounding the case, like Carole. Indeed, the mystery is the main common factor which pushes people to participate in the Jack the Ripper walking tour. For instance, Jack the Ripper’s identity was never discovered, however the press covered the case in

such a sensational way that the murders and the serial killer attracted the attention of many people (Worsley, 2016). Moreover, the sudden disappearance of Jack the Ripper combined with his unknown identity, left a sudden void in Victorian society. This void was in turn filled by a myth and this image of a man in the narrow, cobbled alleyways of East End London in a top hat and a cape. Through the process of transmitting the myth, this image of Jack the ripper has been engraved in the imagination of people throughout time. This image is constantly perpetuated by the media and has contributed to the mythicization of this infamous serial killer. Thus, the mystery surrounding his identity has been transmitted since 1888 (Andrew, 2019). This is the main attraction of participants to the tour as they wish to learn more about the killer and the case. Yet, Jack the Ripper's identity is not the only mysterious aspect of the case. Indeed, there is not much known about the victims, but the last victim, Mary Kelley, is the most mysterious of all the victims combined:

“[...] Talk about her [Mary Kelley] much more than any other, For me she's not the most interesting one of the five. But she was the youngest, about 24/25, born in Ireland and came to Cardiff and married a Welshman. When he died, she lived with cousins who introduced her to the world of prostitution. The interesting thing is, with that history of her none of her family came forward. [...]” (Robert, England).

Thus, the mystery surrounding the victims is a further motivation for the participants. Interestingly enough, while interviewing Robert, the non-official tour guide, he quoted the following words “Somebody once described her as being a mystery in between an enigma.” (Robert, England). Thus, the mystery surrounding Mary Kelley's identity makes the case all the more attractive as there is double the mystery. Moreover, according to Worsley (2016), people do seem to be vastly interested in mysterious cases. However, mystery is not necessarily the main motivation for every tourist. Indeed, the psychology and general fascination for serial killers seems to be an important factor also:

“I am not fascinated by Jack the Ripper I am just interested in human behavior, psychopaths, sociopaths and other problems like that. [...] And serial killers in particular I

find them interesting as a study object to try to understand what happens in their minds or if they are just nut heads" (Dominic Belgium).

Curiously, a portion of the interviewees seem interested in the psychology behind the serial killer, which in a way, is also related to the mystery of the case. Dominic's main interest in the case of Jack the Ripper and the walking tour is mostly the psychology behind the serial killer. He wishes to understand why serial killers and sociopaths behave the way they do, so what pushes them to kill. Yardley (2019), discusses how people are generally fascinated with serial killers because they are a puzzle that people wish to understand, to make sense of. Therefore, by taking part in studying Jack the Ripper and participating in the tour, participants such as Dominic are able to feed their need of entertainment while simultaneously being informed, which according to Yardley (2019) is one of the main reasons people are interested in serial killers. Indeed, reading about crimes committed by criminals rises the readers adrenaline levels, which is addictive (Yardley, 2019). Therefore, if simply reading about crime raises the adrenaline of a person, then participating in a walking tour which highlights the crimes of an unknown serial killer in a dark atmosphere would logically be an adrenaline rush. Indeed, Yardley (2019), discusses how people feel the need for excitement and danger from a safe distance, which is similar to how Stone (2018) explains how dark participants wish to be in contact with death from a safe distance. This walking tour seems to be a combination of both of these aspects. Hence, serial killers are the adult version of horror movies for younger people (Yardley, 2019), which once again is an experience in our experience economy.

"God [...] I have no idea [...] As a child I've always read horror books uhm. So, I have just always been into stuff like that I suppose. And so yeah [...] Jack the Ripper no idea [...] Probably like in a movie some kind of fiction thing, but yeah like I said I've always been into sort of horror and uhm as I got older, I was sort of "oh serial killers, that's interesting." (Quinn, Australia).

In this quote by Quinn, she explains that younger she was interested in the horror genre but as she got older, she became interested in serial killers. This supports Yardley's notion that people

interested in serial killers were previously attracted by horror (Yardley, 2019). This explains why she became interested in Jack the Ripper, as his methods of killing were quite gruesome and has much mystery surrounding him. But the horror aspect of the tour is not something many of the tourist's expect. In fact, the majority are not necessarily interested in being frightened during the tour as can be observed in the following quote:

“Oh it was like two pounds cheaper and I’m a tight ass uhm.. [laughter] plus I was like, I don’t wanna be scared.” (Quinn, Australia).

Thus, the frightening aspect of the walking tour does not appear to be a motivational factor for the participants despite the dark aspect of the case. Moreover, the identity of Whitechapel is completely interwoven with Jack the Ripper. While analyzing the data, it was observed that out of 13 participants, 9 subjects in fact associate the neighborhood with this infamous serial killer and that they had the image of a poor and crime riddled neighborhood in mind when taking part in the tour. Therefore, it is interesting that despite having this dark image of Jack the Ripper and such a dangerous neighborhood in mind, people do not participate with the motivation to be frightened or spooked. Thus, being scared is not a motivation for the sample of participants interviewed for the Jack the Ripper walking tour. Interestingly enough, this same image of Whitechapel that is present in the minds of the participants is indeed a factor in their motivations, however it is not a motivational factor to purposefully frighten oneself.

In fact, the image that the participants have of Whitechapel is a motivational factor in the sense that it plays a part in their interest in experiencing Victorian London. For instance, many of the participants interviewed were interested in the historical aspect of the walking tour and wished to be taken back in time in order to experience and understand what Victorian society was like.

“Well, I think it gave me a better impression of what the streets probably looked like when the murders occurred because they all occurred either in the dark or in the very, very, very early morning. So, I think that gave me personally a better impression of that. It also allowed me to kind of ignore some of the more modern parts of the city. I could sort of focus my vision on to the more period looking things and I didn’t have all those skyscrapers and modern stuff impinging on my vision as much.” (Carole, Chicago).

Carole explains in her interview that mystery is the first factor in her motivation, but that history is the second factor. For Carole, the historical aspect of the tour, which is established by an introduction to the socio-economic background of Victorian London, taking the tour at night and the descriptions of the guide, give her the opportunity to put herself in the place of the victims and understanding the circumstances which led them to the life of prostitution. This simultaneously gives her the opportunity to experience the locations in the same settings as the night of the murders. She is able to experience the image she has of Whitechapel in reality through the dark atmosphere. It seems that participants wish to experience the night of the murders in a secondhand way, which could be about witnessing death from afar (Stone et al. 2018). Therefore, experiencing the locations of the murders is also important in the motivation of participants. Experiencing the locations of the murders is one of the most common factors in the motivation of participants who took part in the walking tour. Unfortunately, from the data gathered it was not possible to deduce why exactly experiencing the sites of the murders was important for the participants. Was this for mourning purposes, curiosity or simply about experiencing place? This could be interesting topic to focus on for future research.

Finally, another popular factor in the motivation for participants is learning. For instance, when asked if the dark aspect of the tour was attractive, Britta replied:

“Not specifically no, I would say I was just eager to learn more and talk to someone who had maybe knowledge that was different from mine.” (Britta, Scotland).

Indeed, many of the participants who have taken part in the walking tour are usually happy with a guide if he provides knowledge to share with them. Additionally, the tour it is also about blurring the boundaries. Either boundaries between the past and present or boundaries between fiction and reality. This blurring of boundaries is possible through the process of the imagination. Indeed, by using one’s imagination to step back in time, the tourist is able to experience more vividly, albeit through one’s imagination, the past.

“you’ve been to that part, but it’s like the city of London. It’s all like concrete buildings and I was like “oh this is not 1800” so I kinda just squint my eyes and pretend, you know, what it looked like. Yeah [...]” (Quinn, Australia).

It is interesting to see that Quinn explains she squinted her eyes in order to feel transported in Victorian London, to imagine what it was like. Therefore, it is a work of the imagination that is possible only directly on site. However, it is fascinating to see that not everyone is able to be transported back in the past:

“No, it would be very hard to do it because there is all this construction, noise and work happening all around. Even at night, like traffic and stuff. It didn’t put us in the mood, but it was definitely more interesting to go at this time because he showed us some original buildings that are still there. And we could paint how it would have looked like a 100 years ago, but it’s still not enough to put us in the mood of mystery and chills and stuff.” (Daniela, Brazil).

Indeed, for Daniela, the modern buildings contrast too much with the image of the Victorian London, moreover as she did not have much previous information about Whitechapel and the East End, she did not have a strong image of Victorian Whitechapel in mind. Thus, the absence of this image means that she experienced less of the dark ambiance of the tour, however this was not a disappointment for this particular tourist.

Therefore, the next part shall focus on the experience of tourists in order to analyze to what extent the experience of the participants is staged and manipulated in order to create a memorable experience.

EXPERIENCE

“[...] there’s an expression from Sales, KISS Keep It Simple and Specific. I believe in that. So, you don’t want to try to be too clever when you’re talking to a group of people. Because you want them to have an experience.” (Robert, England)

This quote given by Robert who is also an occasional tour guide for the Jack the Ripper walking tours, highlights how important the experience economy is but also how much the experience is staged for the participant. Indeed, his quote shows just how important the experience economy is in our contemporary society (Andersson, 2007). Robert explains that the tour guide does not wish to alienate the participants by over dramatizing the case or using complicated terms. Thus, the guide seems to want to create a memorable and enjoyable experience for the participants (Bryon, 2012). Moreover, the fact that Robert employs the term “*experience*” is all the more telling as the purposeful use of this noun clearly shows that giving the participant an experience is clearly the objective of the walking tour. The tour guide seems to be responsible for the experience of the participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour (Bryon, 2012). One of their roles is to create an unforgettable experience for tourists.

As explained above, the experience of the participant is the most important aspect of the walking tour. The pre-conceived images tourists and participants have of Whitechapel and of Jack the Ripper have an impact on their experience (Wang & Chen, 2015). When asked what image they had of Jack the Ripper the most common answer given is illustrated by the following quote:

“I think do you know what the stereotypes are all there, it will be a person with a cloak and a top hat and a walking cane, and fog and cobble streets and dark of night. Yeah and funny enough when I think about it nobody else is there it’s just one person, but that’s just a really stereotypical image that everybody has of the Ripper.” (Mark, England)

Out of the 14 interviewees, 6 subjects stated that the image they had of Jack the Ripper was of the stereotypes perpetuated throughout the media. Thus, this image of Jack the Ripper with his top hat and black cloak has been perpetuated worldwide and is still present in the mind of tourists and participants. Interestingly enough, it has been observed during the interviews that the story of Jack the Ripper is known worldwide and not simply known in Anglophone countries. Indeed, the participants interviewed came from France, Brazil, Belgium, the United-states, Scotland, Australia and England.

“I remember, but not the details, it was when I was like way younger and there was like these horror stories about Jack the Ripper, back in Brazil” (Daniela, Brazil).

Thus, the mysteriousness and the dark aspect of the case is so attractive that it has attracted people from all over the world to participate in the walking tour. This shows how the story of Jack the Ripper has become so engrained in our contemporary society, that various countries around the world have heard of this killer since their childhoods (Andrew, 2019). Therefore, these participants have expectations of the tour and their experience. The distribution of the story and the image of Jack the Ripper throughout the media has contributed to the mysteriousness surrounding the case but also to the dark aspect of the tour. Indeed, a dark figure in the dimly lit cobble streets at night is a threatening image. This image contributes to the dark atmosphere of the tour, which the majority of the participants wish to recreate.

“And I also did the tours when it was dark outside and I specifically did it for the atmosphere of darkness, because it adds like another dimension to the tour, and also all but maybe one of the crimes occurred at night, in darkness so I thought it was interesting to see the places at night.” (Dominic, Belgium).

Dominic explains that he purposefully took part in the walking tour at night in order to recreate the dark atmosphere. This atmosphere creates a dark experience that resonates with the identity of Whitechapel (Wang & Chen, 2015). When interviewing the participants, it was observed that some had a pre-conceived image of this neighborhood:

“Poverty, obviously. I mean if you read anything about the time of the Jack the Ripper murders you know that the area was full of poverty. I honestly wasn’t sure what it was going to look like, you know a hundred plus years later. It turned out a lot of it didn’t look like I expected it to look. A lot of it had been cleaned up, had been bombed in the war you know so sites were gone, there were a lot of changes. I mean I knew that there weren’t going to be prostitutes on the corner getting the money to buy gin. I knew that wasn’t going to be a thing. Although I will say back in 95 there were parts of Whitechapel that were still pretty dicey.” (Carole, Chicago).

Carole explains in her interview that the first thing that comes to mind when thinking of Whitechapel is poverty. It is interesting to observe that participants of the walking tour have an image of a poor neighborhood plagued by crime as this image dates back to the 19th century. Additionally, this image of Whitechapel contributes to the dark image of the case and the walking tour (Wang & Chen, 2015). Indeed, the dark aspect of the crimes committed by Jack the Ripper took place in a crime riddled neighborhood, therefore by setting in place the dark conditions of Victorian London, the participants are able to witness from a distance these dark crimes and experience this dark period. By taking the tour in this neighborhood with this preconceived idea, it adds a worrying touch to the tour. Therefore, when they take the tour in the right settings, that is to say in dark and narrow alleyways, this image is reinforced and thus the emotions and experience of participants is reinforced also (Wang & Chen, 2015). What is interesting is that despite having partaken the walking tour, some participants keep in mind the image of Victorian London despite having participated in the walking tour:

“In my mind I have sort of two different Whitechapels. I have the Whitechapel of Jack the Ripper that I feel like I’ve seen a little bit of but so much of it is gone. And then the other Whitechapel I have in my head is the one I’ve actually walked through. So, they sort of overlap each other in my head.” (Carole, Chicago).

Carole’s explanation that despite having experienced modern London, because of her interest in the case of Jack the Ripper the image she previously had of Whitechapel is still the strongest image in her imagination. Thus, such experiences reinforce the concept of place identity of Whitechapel (Wang & Chen, 2015). This explains why to this day participants still expect a dark atmosphere and the dimly lit cobblestone alleyways from Victorian London in the course of the tour. Moreover, during the interviews, when asked if the participants were attracted by the dark aspect of the tour, 8 out of 13 interviewees answered positively. Interestingly enough, 5 out of 13 answered negatively but the answers given by the interviewees, it was concluded that some participants do seem to be attracted to the dark aspect but are reluctant to say so because of the stigma surrounding this type of attraction:

“I suppose, I expected to learn more, and I suppose I kind of expected not to be entertained maybe but to be [...] yeah, I suppose a bit entertained. You know not singing and dancing, but you know kept entertained.” (Britta, Scotland).

In this quote when Britta was asked if she expected to be entertained, she directly answered negatively but then reluctantly changed her answer by saying she did in fact expect to be entertained. Moreover, Mark explains also how he does not talk about his interest in Jack the Ripper and true crime:

“I don’t tell people, no. There’s a friend of mine he said Mark likes Jack the Ripper and everyone was staring at me. And you’ll find most people don’t talk about that, because people tend to go, really? You’re a bit ghoulish aren’t you? People have that impression of you, you know?” (Mark, England).

Through Mark’s quote we can deduce that people are reluctant to talk about their interest in such subjects due to the stigma surrounding these subjects. Therefore, it would not be surprising if the participants were in fact more interested in the dark aspect of the tour than they lead us to believe.

Moreover, the images of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper are strong in the imagination of the participants, and participants wish to experience them during the tour. However, in order for them to experience these images, the tour guide needs to bring them to life through his narrative techniques (Bryon, 2012):

“It was a mix of a historian explaining and then of a storyteller.” (Daniela, Brazil).

According to Daniela, her tour guide explained facts in a way that captured her attention. Indeed, the storytelling aspect of a tour is a way to appeal emotionally to the participants (Bryon, 2012). This means that the participant is more involved in the tour and more likely to enjoy this experience. Moreover, this combination ensured that she had a good experience while learning about the history and facts. The tour exceeded Daniela’s expectations due to the way the guide treated the subject of the victims, as the victims were primarily the main subjects and were talked

about in a respectful manner. Moreover, Daniela explains that he delivered his information in a combination of historian and storyteller ways. Thus, the guide not simply attracted Daniela's attention, but he also had hold of it throughout the tour as the information was delivered in a manner that is not necessarily entertaining but attention grabbing (Bryon, 2012). Furthermore, by employing storytelling techniques, there is a separation made between the participants and the dark reality of the Jack the Ripper case. Therefore, there is a distance put in place between the dark aspect of the walking tour and the tourist. As the walking tour takes on a story like aspect, participants are able to enjoy the tour without any feelings of guilt. The ability of the guide to tell stories, and describe the images and so on, gives the tourist the ability to imagine Victorian London and immerse themselves in the dark aspect of the walking tour. Daniela went on to explain that the tour exceeded her expectations and that it was "awesome." It can be concluded that the experience of a tourist is largely dependent on the tour guide who creates the settings and atmosphere in order for the participants to have a memorable experience (Bryon, 2012). Therefore, the experience of the participants seems to be completely dependent on the skills of the tour guide.

It shall be interesting to see how strongly a positive the evaluation of the experience, that is to say the outcome of the experience, is related to the tour guide.

EVALUATION

"It was quite a bizarre experience, was it on the first or second tour I took? Because one of the guides looked a little bit freaky, crazy. And he also was interested in how you call it; supernatural things and he talked a lot about masonic connections and lines between murder sites and those kinds of things. So yeah, he probably focused a bit on those things, while for the second tour, the guide was more objective about theories. But he didn't appear to have any particular opinion, or anyway he didn't show it or tell us." (Dominic, Belgium).

Dominic's quote underlines how crucial the role of the tour guide and the content he presents is in the experience of the participant. It also shows how the outcome of their evaluation of the tour is directly related to the tour guide. Dominic has participated in two tours – his first

experience was not an enjoyable experience. He chose to take part in a second tour in order to hopefully have a better experience. In this quote, he explains that the reason for his disappointment in the first tour is because of the interest the guide showed in conspiracy theories and the supernatural, whereas Dominic prefers factual information. In fact, out of the 13 interviewees – the tour guide excluded – simply one of the participants seemed interested in hearing about the conspiracy theories surrounding the case. The majority of the participants seemed more interested in hearing about the victims and the circumstances which led them to the life of prostitution. Due to the importance of the experience economy much importance is given to learning in an interactive experience (Bryon, 2012). Therefore, it can clearly understand a positive or negative outcome of the tour is largely due to the guide and the content he presents.

Moreover, over the course of these interviews, it was observed that the outcome of the tour tends to be positive if the guide is either or both knowledgeable and passionate about the subject:

“He was very, I think the most important thing, he was very respectful with the victim’s stories. And he never ever made any kind of judgment on their lives, their choices and he described everything with a lot of passion for history. Before we started the tour itself, we were just at this point. He created a whole background, this is what was happening at that time, people were starving, it was always raining, blablabla. He made up all the scenarios so we could understand everything that he was going to explain from that time on.”
(Daniela, Brazil).

When asked what Daniela thought of her overall experience, she said that it was “awesome.” This positive evaluation of her experience is mostly due to her tour guide who set a complete background of the socio-economic background of Victorian London and took the time to explain everything. From the way Daniela talks of her guide, it is clear that his passion for the history and his explanations caught her attention and made her appreciate the walking tour all the more. Indeed, as Bryon (2012) explains, the story telling techniques and the passion of the tour guide involves the emotions of the participant in the tour so that they are more involved.

Furthermore, a walking tour is supposed to be an entertaining experience if the guide is also entertaining and enthusiastic. However, the Jack the Ripper walking tour has as a subject a dark and morbid story, therefore the entertaining aspect of the tour shall be analyzed:

“I suppose, I expected to learn more, and I suppose I kind of expected not to be entertained maybe but to be [...] yeah, I suppose a bit entertained. You know not singing and dancing, but you know kept entertained.” (Britta, Scotland.)

Britta’s quote is interesting because she first uses the verb “entertained” and then quickly corrects herself, yet she reluctantly confesses that she wants to be entertained during this tour. What is interesting due to the dark aspect of the tour and the morbid subject, people feel shame if they are entertained. The reason for this shame is because the story revolves around the murder of five women, thus there is stigma surrounding the entertaining aspect of the tour. This need to be entertained is because of the importance given to experiences (Andersson, 2007). However, this entertaining aspect of the tour, in combination with the narrative techniques of the tour guide, create a boundary between the dark story of the tour and the participants. Therefore, these participants are able to enjoy the walking tour without feeling guilty. Thus, the entertainment provided by the tour guide creates a positive outcome, a positive evaluation, on the part of the participants. In fact, out of 13 interviews, 6 participants said that the tour was entertaining and that they liked the entertaining aspect, whereas on the other hand 2 interviewees said they did not appreciate the entertaining aspect. Therefore, the number of participants who did not appreciate the entertainment is very low compared to those who enjoyed it. Moreover 5 participants declared that there was no entertaining aspect to the tour. Yet, this declaration seems to be slightly contradicting in the sense that there has to be a minimum of entertainment in order to keep the participants’ attention and to make the tour enjoyable.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this research is to answer the following research question: ***What are the motivations, experience and evaluations of participants in the Jack the Ripper walking tour?***

It had the objective of understanding what motivated the participants to take part in the Jack the Ripper walking tour, what their experience of the tour and their evaluation of the tour were by also answering these sub questions: What role does the pre-conceived images the participants have of Whitechapel and Jack the Ripper play on their experience? And how important is the role of the tour guide in the experience of the participants?

In order to answer these questions, the method of qualitative interviews was applied. This method was chosen so that the interviewees would give in-depth answers of their own experience, motivations and evaluation of the tour. This method means that the subjects were able to explain their own thoughts and experience in their own words (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). The interviews took place over the period of a month and a half, through Skype or Facebook Messenger as the interviewees came from various countries such as Brazil, The United-States, Belgium, Australia, France, England and Scotland. This underlines how infamous the story of Jack the Ripper is. The answers that were frequently brought up were mainly related to learning while experiencing Victorian London. The experience of the participants was mainly related to the tour guide as he is the one who is able to transport the participants into Victorian London through their imagination by using his narrative techniques, enthusiasm and knowledge. It is difficult to group together the motivations, expectations and experience of participants as they all had different degrees of involvement in the case of Jack the Ripper. Moreover, the motivations, experience and evaluations of the tour vary according to the participants. Therefore, this data is generalized to an extent. For instance, it was observed that the participants tend to have different motivations about participating in the tour. What was an interesting discovery was that simply one of the participants were directly motivated to participate in the tour because of the victims? From the answers gathered, death does not seem to be a direct motivation, as most participants they were directly motivated by the psychology or the crimes, then in the victims. It would be interesting to study more in detail participants who are directly motivated by the victims in order to understand their motivations. Is it about mourning the victims, paying their respects or about being closer to death as their lives were taken from them in a gruesome fashion?

Another surprising fact is that it was expected to have a slight portion of the participants to be interested in being spooked, as this is a dark tour with a morbid story. Yet none of them were interested in this aspect. Indeed, they did wish to experience a dark and unsettling atmosphere, but no one actively wanted to be scared. Therefore, it would be interesting for future research to interview tourists directly at the site in order to compare if they participate in the tour in order to be spooked or not.

The findings can be categorized into Three main parts, motivations for taking part in the tour, the experience of the tour and the evaluation of the tour.

Firstly, during the process of the interviews, various motivations were given, however it was recognized that when it came to the motivation of participants, it was mostly due to the mysteriousness of the case. Indeed, the two main factors that were brought up was learning about and experiencing Victorian London. They wished to learn about the case, the victims and Jack the Ripper as his identity is still unknown to this day. Jack the Ripper is an enigma that participants wish to understand (Yardley, 2019). Despite the big attraction to the mysteriousness of the case, none of the interviewees seemed to be armchair detectives (Yardley, 2018). Moreover, it was observed that experiencing the dark atmosphere of the walking tour was a major factor as participants accord much importance to experiences (Andersson, 2007). Indeed, most of the participants wished to immerse themselves in Victorian London in order to experience the sites of the murder in the appropriate atmosphere. However, the reason behind the interest in the dark tour was not delved into. Though, they were attracted to the case of Jack the Ripper due to the mythicization of the story (Andrew, 2019).

Secondly, it was deduced that the experience of the participants relies mostly on the pre-conceived images they have both of Whitechapel and of Jack the Ripper. That is to say of the top gat, the cloak, the dimly lit cobblestone streets in a poor neighborhood. These images have been distributed by the media since the Victorian Era and is still present in the imagination of the participants (Andrew, 2019). which in turn is distributed by the participants. Alongside the tour guide's help, the participants are able to experience Victorian London, which is present in their imaginations, by walking through the sites of the murders which are a symbolic anchor for the murders of the five victims and the story of Jack the Ripper (Nora, 1989; Wang & Chen 2015). Therefore, by taking the tour at night, and walking through those cobblestone alleyways, they are able to walk in the steps of Jack the Ripper because of the dark atmosphere. Moreover, the guide's

narrative techniques means that by using story telling techniques he is able to connect the participants emotionally to the story (Bryon, 2012) but by making it a story he is able to create a distance between the case and the participants so that they are able to enjoy the experience. Therefore, through the use of the guide's skills, the participants are able to imagine themselves in Victorian London and experience the dark story from a safe distance.

Finally, when analyzing the evaluation section of the interviews, it was observed that the outcome of the tour relies mostly on the tour guide and their narrative techniques. Indeed, this skill captures the attention of the tourist or in our case the participant and in turn the participant is more involved in the walking tour. But the tour also relies on the passion of the tour guide and how they transmit their knowledge (Bryon, 2012). Once again, this aspect of the tour guide attracts the participant and their attention, which means once again that they are more involved in the tour. Finally, the entertaining aspect of the walking tour is essential to a good outcome, a good evaluation of the tour, as the walking tour is an experience in which entertainment is a big characteristic of the experience economy (Andersson, 2007). Therefore, a participant will expect to be entertained despite the dark aspect of the tour.

This research has not developed new concepts, rather it has contributed to existing research on the motivations of tourists and place identity (White & Frew, 2013; Wang & Chen, 2015) by developing the motivations concerning tourism on serial killers. Indeed, this research shows how the image of Whitechapel from the 19th century is as attractive for the walking tour than the crimes committed by Jack the Ripper himself. It is a combination of dark features which make this walking tour attractive for dark tourists or in the case of this research dark participants. The general fascination with serial killers (Yardley, 2019) and the general mysteriousness of the case are the main attractive and driving features of the walking tour.

This research also contributes to the field of cultural tourism by highlighting how even in dark touristic activities, the guide is responsible for the experience and entertainment of the participants. Despite the participants declaring that they were not participating in the tour for entertaining reasons, the responses given concerning the dark atmosphere and setting imply that they do seek the right conditions to make the tour more entertaining. Thus, they expect a minimum of entertainment.

Limitations section:

As with every research there are limitations to this paper. Firstly, there was a time limit due to this paper being a Master Thesis. Indeed, the research was limited to a period of five months, which has an impact on the length and the depth of the interviews. It also has an impact on the data gathered as the data is more superficial than wished.

Moreover, this research was undertaken during the COVID-19 pandemic, which had an impact on the time it took to gather interviews. Indeed, it was not possible to be on site, Facebook groups such as Jack the Ripper groups and Expat groups were used in order to find interview subjects. This had an impact on the results of the interviews as there were only a limited number of accidental participants and they were mostly people previously involved in the case of Jack the Ripper or participants with the purpose of taking part in the walking tour. Due to the circumstances, the focus group was changed from simple tourists to *participants* of the walking tour. Thus, the people interviewed were more invested than tourists and had more motivations to take part in the tour. As a result, the data gathered is more likely to be more interesting but also more diverse. Additionally, the search for interview subjects on the internet meant that some interviewees were less reliable than others and would sometimes cancel without warning. Therefore, the time limit for the gathering of interviews took longer than planned and thus this had an impact on the writing of the thesis as it took longer to gather the data. Also, some of the collected data is also less reliable as participants had taken part in the walking tours quite some time ago.

The pandemic also had an impact on the data gathered as the method of ethnography was not able to be applied, that is to say participant observation. Indeed, this approach would have meant that the researcher would have been able to immerse themselves with the participants in order to observe their behaviors and interactions with the guide and other participants firsthand. This method would have given the researcher information that was more authentic, as during the interviews some participants could have given me answers they expected me to want rather than their real motivations or expectations.

Further research section

The field of Dark tourism has developed in recent years, that is to say in the last two decades (Stone, 2018). This research had the purpose of contributing to the concept of motivations despite the fact that it is a concept that seems to be relatively understood. Indeed, dark tourism is tourism to sites related either to death and/or “difficult heritage” (Stone et al., 2018. p. xvi). However, during this research the motivations of participants rarely had to do with death. In fact, none of them brought up the topic of death, despite the fact they visit sites of the murders or sites related to Jack the Ripper. Indeed, it is thought that the participants do not want to associate with the death aspect of the tour most likely because of the stigma associated to death and dark tourism. Therefore, it would be interesting for further research to delve deeper into phenomenon in order to understand whether the participants are not interested in encountering death or if it their contradiction is just related to the stigma.

Furthermore, while doing additional research for this paper, it was discovered that the minimum age to participate in these walking tours is 9 years old, and while focusing on TripAdvisor reviews it was observed that many families with young children participated in the walking tours. Therefore, it would be interesting to focus on what type of experience these children have and if it is simply for educational purposes or also leisure purposes (Light, 2017).

Finally, what could be interesting to focus on, is the entertaining aspect of the tour and the morality. For instance, the field of dark tourism is full of debates of whether it is ethical to visit some dark sites such as Auschwitz and so on (Light, 2017). On the other hand, we have The Jack the Ripper walking tour which showcases the sites of murder of five prostitutes and sites related to the murders, as well as other walking tours centered on serial killers. Moreover, some of the walking tours even project pictures of certain victims, with necessary caution given in advance. Therefore, it would be interesting to interview tourists on whether they think it is ethical to show the pictures of the victims. If they take part in the tour simply for educational purposes or also for entertaining purposes? At what point does it become disrespectful or a problem for these tours to exist? Additionally, some of the Jack the Ripper walking tours tend to be more on the theatrical side. Therefore, is it ethical to put on a show which is about the gruesome murder of five women? These topics would be interesting to delve into in the future.

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Appendix

List of interviewees (anonymized)

Eugene Laure (EG), Woman, France.

Duncan Mare (DM), Man, England.

Britta James (BJ), Woman, Scotland.

Melanie Roberts (MR), Woman, Australia.

Dominic Fuller (DF), Man, Belgium.

Diana Lasco (DL), Woman, The United-States.

Nevada Smith (NS), Woman, England.

Quinn Taro (QT), Woman, Australia.

Carole Lepraitre (CL), Woman, The United-States.

Daniela Piece (DP), Woman, Brazil.

Mark Déco (MD), Man, England.

Pamela Routier (DR), Woman, Sweden.

Steve Brosman (SB), Man, The United-States.

Robert Cohen (RC), Man, England. Unofficial tour guide.

Interview questions

Basic questions

- Where do you come from?
 - o Did you come to London for holidays or did you come specifically for the tour?
- Had you heard about Jack the Ripper before the tour?
 - o If yes
 - If yes, which sources provided you with information about Jack the Ripper
 - o If no
 - How did you become familiar with Jack the Ripper?
- Had you heard about the walking tour before partaking in it?
 - o If yes:
 - how did you hear about it?
 - o If no
 - how did you discover it?

Motivations & expectations:

- Why did you choose to take part in the tour?
- Did the location of the tour, Whitechapel, play a part in your choice?
 - o What preconceived ideas did you have of Whitechapel before the tour? Do you automatically associate Whitechapel with JTR?
- Did the dark aspect of the tour and Jack the Ripper attract you?
- What expectations did you have of the tour before participating in it?
 - o What did you expect the tour to focus on?
- Did you expect to hear the various theories about his identity? Or just one in particular? Or none.
- What part of the day did you do the tour? (Day/Night)

- Did it have an impact on the way you experienced the tour?
- Did you have any expectations about the ambiance/ atmosphere of the tour?
 - Weather conditions
 - What Whitechapel neighborhood was like back in the day
- When you think of JTR what are the first words that come to mind?
- When you think of Whitechapel what are the first words/ ideas that come to mind?

Experience

- How did you experience walking in the steps of JTR? (What did it feel like?)
- Did your guide have an impact on your experience?
 - Did it feel like he/she was instructing you or more entertaining you?
 - If entertaining = actor?
- Are you a fan of true crime?
 - If YES = Did true crime aspect have an impact on your choice in joining the tour and your experience of the tour?
- Are you a fan of detective stories?
 - Did it feel like partaking in a crime investigation? Or more serious respectful?
- Were you shown pictures? How did you feel about it?
- When you think of Whitechapel now, what do you associate it with:
 - What ideas do you have of Whitechapel?

Question about the evaluation of the tour:

- What did you think about the tour?
- What did you think about the guide?
- Did the tour meet your expectations?
 - If not, how did it differ from your expectations?
- What would you have liked to have been incorporated that wasn't?

Additional questions, if needed:

- Did the tour feel authentic to you at all?
- Did you use your imagination at any point to imagine what Victorian London was like, to imagine as if you were back then? Did the guide contribute to your work of imagination?