

purified **BY FIRE**

A HISTORY OF CREMATION IN AMERICA

STEPHEN PROTHERO

Purified By Fire A History Of Cremation In America

Stephen Prothero



Purified By Fire A History Of Cremation In America:

Purified by Fire Stephen Prothero, 2001-02-15 Just one hundred years ago Americans almost universally condemned cremation Today nearly one quarter of Americans choose to be cremated The practice has gained wide acceptance as a funeral rite in both our private and public lives as the cremations of icons such as John Lennon and John F Kennedy Jr show *Purified by Fire* tells the fascinating story of cremation s rise from notoriety to legitimacy and takes a provocative new look at important transformations in the American cultural landscape over the last 150 years Stephen Prothero synthesizes a wide array of previously untapped source material including newspapers consumer guides mortician trade journals and popular magazines such as *Reader s Digest* to provide this first historical study of cremation in the United States He vividly describes many noteworthy events from the much criticized first American cremation in 1876 to the death and cremation of Jerry Garcia in the late twentieth century From the Gilded Age to the Progressive Era to the baby boomers of today this book takes us on a tour through American culture and traces our changing attitudes toward death religion public health the body and the environment

Purified by Fire Stephen R. Prothero, 2005-04 This is the first book length history of cremation in the United States *Purified by Fire* Stephen Prothero, 2001-02-15 Publisher Fact Sheet A history of cremation in America

Cremation in America Fred Rosen, 2010-10-05 In this captivating review of the history the practice and the industry of cremation in America award winning former New York Times columnist Fred Rosen provides an authoritative source of information and many revealing facts about an increasingly common yet still controversial alternative to burial Rosen gives an entertaining first person account of his inquiry into the practice of cremation and its roots He describes the early ancient custom of cremation by funeral pyre and then explores why the rising Church banned the practice as a sacrilege He then traces the underpinnings of the modern cremation movement in the late 19th century among a colorful group of intellectuals and physicians This 19th century group endorsed this then illegal practice as a means to improve public health as a way to prevent seepage of burial grounds from polluting ground water and spreading disease Rosen goes on to examine in today s world people s feelings about death and religion as well as their sensitivities to cremation Given certain abuses he believes that this industry needs to be regulated However he finds much in favor of cremation when firsthand comparing its costs vs the excesses and extravagances of the burial funeral industry In an age when over 25 percent of the population is turning to cremation as a preferred funeral arrangement this book offers much timely useful and engrossing information History of Modern Cremation in Romania Marius Rotar, 2013-01-11 Cremation as a means of managing the post mortem body was reintroduced to Europe at the end of the eighteenth century but would not become common practice until the second half of the nineteenth century This was a major development with multifaceted implications which generated heated debate Initially armed with a variety of arguments hygienic economic aesthetic and philosophical arguments citing freedom of conscience and will the advocates of modern cremation who tended to come from the social and cultural elite sought to impose their new

model This brought them into conflict with the traditional structures and patterns of burial and thus with the Church which had of course originally ended the practice of cremation The present study is a history of cremation in Romania beginning with the emergence of cremationist ideas in 1867 and taking the reader up to the present day It analyses the following key periods the second half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century the Interwar period Romania then being the first Orthodox country in the world to possess a crematorium which provoked a vehement reaction against cremation on part of the Orthodox Church the Communist period when no new crematoria were built even though the Communist regime proclaimed itself to be atheist and the post Communist period

Corpse Encounters Jacqueline Elam,Chase

Pielak,2018-06-13 This book takes a critical glance at the ways in which we attend to the corpse tracing a trajectory from encounter toward considering options for disposal veneered mortuary internment green burial and its attendant rot cremation and alkaline hydrolysis donation and display and ecological burial Through tracing the possible futures of the dead that haunt the living through both the stories that we tell and physical manifestations following the end of life we expose the workings of aesthetics that shape corpses as well as the ways in which corpses spill over resisting aestheticization This book creates a space for ritualized practices surrounding death corpse disposal corpse aesthetics that shape both practices attendant upon and representations of the corpse and literary figural and cultural representations that deploy these practices to tell a story about dead bodies about their separation from the living about their disposability and ultimately about the living who survive the dead if only for a while There is an aesthetics of erasure persistently at work on the dead body It must be quickly hidden from sight to shield us from the certain trauma of our own demise or so the unspoken argument goes Experts scientists forensic specialists death care professionals and law enforcement are the only ones qualified to view the dead for any extended period of time The rest of us with only brief doses inoculate ourselves from the materiality of death in complex and highly ritualized ceremonies Beyond participating in the project of restoring our sense of finitude we try to make sense of the untouchable unviewable haunting and taboo presence of the corpse itself

Religion, Death, and

Dying Lucy Bregman,2009-11-25 A wide ranging anthology for general readers covering many religious ethical and spiritual aspects of death dying and bereavement in American society What do various spiritual and ethical belief systems have to say about modern medicine s approach to the end of life Do all major religions characterize the afterlife in similar ways How do funeral rites and rituals vary across different faiths Now there is one resource that gathers leading scholars to address these questions and more about the many religious ethical and spiritual aspects of death dying and bereavement in America Religion Death and Dying compares and contrasts the ways different faiths and ethical schools contemplate the end of life The work is organized into three thematic volumes first an examination of the contemporary medicalized death from the perspective of different religious traditions and the professions involved second an exploration of complex often controversial issues including the death of children AIDS capital punishment and war and finally a survey of the funeral and bereavement

rituals that have evolved under various religions *American Afterlives* Shannon Lee Dawdy, 2023-12-12 What do you think happens to you when you die And what do you want done with your body For three years Shannon Lee Dawdy travelled the U S from Vermont to California Illinois to Alabama posing such questions to a wide range of people from all walks of life Many of her interlocutors recently lost loved ones She also spoke to people who have made death their business funeral directors death care entrepreneurs designers cemetery owners and death doulas about the changes they were seeing and in many cases promoting in how the bodies of recently deceased persons are being treated and how the memory of the deceased are being memorialized in the U S Her ethnographic research resulted in this book a wide ranging investigation into rapidly changing death practices in the twenty first century United States The author is also working on a documentary film project on this topic with cinematographer Daniel Zox Still photos from the film work will appear in this book **Death Is All**

Around Us Jonathan M. Weber, 2019-04-01 Late nineteenth century Mexico was a country rife with health problems In 1876 one out of every nineteen people died prematurely in Mexico City a staggeringly high rate when compared to other major Western world capitals at the time which saw more modest premature death rates of one out of fifty two London one out of forty four Paris and one out of thirty five Madrid It is not an exaggeration to maintain that each day dozens of bodies could be found scattered throughout the streets of Mexico City making the capital city one of the most unsanitary places in the Western Hemisphere In light of such startling scenes in *Death Is All around Us* Jonathan M Weber examines how Mexican state officials including President Porfirio D az tried to resolve the public health dilemmas facing the city By reducing the high mortality rate state officials believed that Mexico City would be seen as a more modern and viable capital in North America To this end the government used new forms of technology and scientific knowledge to deal with the thousands of unidentified and unburied corpses found in hospital morgues and cemeteries and on the streets Tackling the central question of how the government used the latest technological and scientific advancements to persuade citizens and foreigners alike that the capital city and thus Mexico as a whole was capable of resolving the hygienic issues plaguing the city Weber explores how the state s attempts to exert control over procedures of death and burial became a powerful weapon for controlling the behavior of its citizens

Trouble with Death Finn Bowring, 2025-04-25 Are we accepting of death or in denial of it What insights can we gain from the ways death has been imagined theorized and organized throughout Western social and intellectual history that might help us respond meaningfully to the climate emergency This interdisciplinary study begins with the role of tragedy in Greek antiquity and examines European attitudes toward death especially their entanglement with colonial atrocities and politically organized killings Drawing on the work of philosophers sociologists historians and psychoanalysts this is a resounding call to confront our responsibility for the lives of others and the future of life itself amid the existential threats of the Anthropocene

Unveiling the Power of Verbal Artistry: An Psychological Sojourn through **Purified By Fire A History Of Cremation In America**

In a global inundated with screens and the cacophony of fast transmission, the profound power and emotional resonance of verbal art often diminish in to obscurity, eclipsed by the regular barrage of sound and distractions. Yet, set within the musical pages of **Purified By Fire A History Of Cremation In America**, a fascinating function of literary splendor that impulses with organic emotions, lies an wonderful trip waiting to be embarked upon. Composed by a virtuoso wordsmith, this interesting opus courses readers on an emotional odyssey, gently exposing the latent possible and profound impact embedded within the complex internet of language. Within the heart-wrenching expanse of the evocative analysis, we shall embark upon an introspective exploration of the book is key styles, dissect their interesting writing model, and immerse ourselves in the indelible effect it leaves upon the depths of readers souls.

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