

**“The Rise of Dark Tourism: Is the Medium Still the Message?”**

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Dr Brent McKenzie (Courtesy of Brent McKenzie)

**Abstract**

Dark tourism as defined by Sharpley and Stone (2009) is “the act of travel to sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre”. Dark tourism is not new, in many societies, visiting sites associated with death is, and has been, a considerable part of the tourist experience. What has changed is the growth in the interest in the topic, as well as the ways in which one can learn about, and experience Dark tourism. From Dark tourism sites themselves, to television programs, movies, books, and social media, one can experience “death” through many media. The focus of this presentation is to build upon the famous words of Canadian philosopher Marshall McLuhan, “The Medium is the Message”. This aphorism can help us to better understand that the way in which Dark topics are presented has an important role to play in how companies convey their Dark message, as well as how visitors/tourists understand the “darkness” of a site. The presentation will be supported through extensive research conducted in a region that experienced a very dark history in the latter part of the 20th century, the former Soviet Republics of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania.

Dr McKenzie’s open guest lecture is embedded in the research colloquium “Forum INPUTS” which is organised and conducted by Prof Kerstin Knopf. Dr McKenzie’s lecture will be held in English.

**Dr Brent McKenzie (Associate Professor)** is a leading expert on Marketing (Retail Sector) and Management (Dark Tourism; Transition Economies) theory and practice in the Baltic States of Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. He serves as Associate Editor: *Baltic Journal of Management*; Associate Editor: *Journal of Eastern European and Central Asian Research*; and Regional Editor – Eastern Europe: *International Journal of Business and Emerging Markets*.

**Wednesday, 5th June 2019 | 12:15-1:45 p.m.**  
**Universität Bremen, Building GW2 | Room: B 3010**

All interested parties are warmly welcome!

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