The time is out of joint: Atmosphere and hauntology at Bodiam Castle

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A B S T R A C T

Drawing on recent work in emotional and cultural geography, the author brings Derrida's concept of hauntology into communication with thinking about atmospheres. The research deployed a mixed-method approach including audio documentation, observation, focus groups and interviews to look at the use of spectrality in the making of atmospheres associated with *A Knight's Peril*, an interactive game played at Bodiam Castle in the South East of England. The paper argues that the figure of the ghost is a useful heuristic towards understanding how designers conjure and exploit the emotional and affective power of atmospheres. At Bodiam, these techniques are deployed in an attempt to facilitate new understandings of the past.

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1. Introduction

Uncover the Castle's Deadly Secrets. It's 1387 and someone wants Sir Edward Dallingridge dead. Help his daughter Kate discover who before it's too late. Experience the sounds of medieval life around the castle in an interactive audio investigation. THIS IS NOT AN AUDIO GUIDE.' (*A Knight's Peril* Adventure Map)

Visitors to Bodiam Castle who play *A Knight's Peril* are driven by this urgent plea to foil the plot against Sir Dallingridge. Guided by an adventure map, echo horn, and the ghostly voice of twelve-year-old Kate (a fictional 14th century character who drives the narrative and assists in the players' investigation), participants interact with a few of the historic and imagined personalities associated with the castle as they solve the mystery and intervene in the past.

In this paper I build on recent work on atmospheres in *Emotion, Space and Society* (Anderson, 2009; special issue edited by Bille et al., 2015; Urry et al., 2016) and elsewhere to examine the production and staging of *A Knight's Peril*. Drawing on Jacques Derrida's hauntology (1994) and considerations of spectrality in social phenomena (Gordon, 1997; Edensor, 2005; Wylie, 2007; Cameron,

2008; Maddern and Adey, 2008; Matless, 2008), I focus on how the game's design conjures ghosts through narrative and sound in support of particular atmospheres and experiences at Bodiam Castle. Coined by Derrida in *Specters of Marx*, hauntology concerns the deconstructive critique of the priority given to concepts such as being and presence (over non-being and absence for example). It is also a philosophical and ethical destabilisation of all manner of dualisms and universalising totalities (Critchley, 2014). In hauntology, the ghost plays a crucial role in this destabilisation via its characteristic uncertainty. As Liz Roberts explains, a hauntological position 'is one of deliberate indeterminacy, enforced hesitancy or uncertainty over presupposed givens and operations involving visibility and invisibility that constitute our reality' (2012, 393).

Geographical and urban scholarship on spectrality often draws on Derrida's work and has brought attention to the ways in which spaces are always haunted (see Till, 2005, 2012; Wylie, 2007; Edensor, 2005; Cameron, 2008; Maddern and Adey, 2008). Here, ghosts are a pervasive, yet often unnoticed or unaccounted for part of social life. As Jameson writes, spectrality 'is what makes the present waver', it is the notion that 'the living present is scarcely as self-sufficient as it claims to be; that we would do well not to count on its density and solidity … ' (1999, 38–39). For urban and social research, taking a hauntological position and being mindful of ghosts can serve as a heuristic device towards unsettling commonly-accepted ontological categories and assumptions. 'The

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logic of the ghost', according to Derrida, is that it 'points toward a thinking of the event that necessarily exceeds a binary or dialectical logic' (1994, 78), such as its tendency to blur the boundaries between supposedly stable ontological categories (e.g. living/dead, being/non-being, and presence/absence).

Atmospheres are arguably the prototypical spatial form of hauntology. Vague, irrational and indeterminate, they haunt the middle ground between subject and object (Böhme, 1993, 2013). 'We are unsure where they are' (Bille et al., 2015, 32) yet we feel them all around us. Like ghosts, their ontological status is always insecure. From the perspective of atmospheres, concepts such as 'presence and absence, materiality and ideality, definite and indefinite, singularity and generality' are always expressed as 'relations in tension' (Anderson, 2009, 80). For hauntology, these relations are not only tense, but are inseparable as each term can be found to contain traces of its opposite (Buse and Stott, 1999). Despite this overlap, theoretical and empirical connections between spectrality, hauntology and atmospheres are relatively underexplored (but see Edensor, 2012).

In this paper, I take scholarship forward by bringing these areas into communication and taking a hauntological position in the investigation of the atmospheres associated with Bodiam Castle's *A Knight's Peril*. I argue that the framework of hauntology brings a fresh perspective to scholarship on atmospheres. The paper demonstrates how the purposeful making and installing of atmospheres (Böhme, 2013) can be a process through which to redress historical absences – in this case, the absence of women and children in medieval record.

Research for this paper was conducted over two phases during 2014 and 2015. The first phase centred on general background to Bodiam Castle and interviews with designers and historians (n = 4) who were involved in creating *A Knight's Peril*. The second phase occurred over six days and encompassed the main research activity at the castle. Methods included the use of visual and audio methods (e.g. photography and recording), participant observation, focus group discussions and interviews with players (15 groups consisting of 46 individuals). Data collection was not focused on reproducing a single or neutral representation of the conditions at Bodiam Castle. Rather, the approach sought to animate some of the atmospheres associated with playing *A Knight's Peril* by focusing on the affective, emotional and sensuous elements of the game. The approach was explorative and inspired by recent methods discussions within non-representational theory (Vannini, 2015; Anderson and Ash, 2015; McCormack, 2014) where a diversity of methods are often deployed in order to help 'look at, listen to and feel the space differently' (Adey, 2008, 303).

This information was analysed with particular attention on processes of staging and constructing atmospheres at the castle and the experiences of participants who played *A Knight's Peril*. Nevertheless, while the paper captures and names discrete atmospheres (Anderson and Ash, 2015), these are circumstantial forms of sense-making (McCormack, 2014) where envelopment (naming) simultaneously gives consistency while remaining open to the contingency and dynamism of social experience. Moreover, as Simpson (2017b) notes, individuals do not arrive at research sites with identical past experiences. Indeed, even among young siblings who participated in the project, experiences and histories will have been diverse and a day out at a National Trust property can stimulate divergent affective and emotional responses.

The structure of the paper is as follows. Following this introduction I review *A Knight's Peril* within the context of contemporary trends in heritage interpretation. I then discuss recent writing on atmosphere, focusing on design and staging as well as the role of spectrality in producing paradoxical temporality surrounding these phenomena. The empirical discussion presents the ways in which

narratives and staging techniques such as the introduction of sounds both enable and co-produce atmospheres which inform and mediate heritage experience and understandings of the past. This work is further analysed through a hauntological lens, reflecting on Derrida's non-linear conception of time and the role of spectrality in the production of emotionally resonant social spaces. I conclude with reflections and suggestions for further research.

1.1. Playing with history in A Knight's Peril

A Knight's Peril is a pervasive game (Montola et al., 2009) – an interactive, augmented reality experience – played at Bodiam Castle (see Fig. 1) in the South East of England.

Built by Sir Edward Dallingridge in 1383, Bodiam has the look of an archetypal late medieval castle (Saul, 1995). While the structure suffered an extended period of decline, I found that its wide moat, elegant, symmetrical shape, large towers and country setting produced an evocative and picturesque heritage space.[1] Its current condition can be attributed to a series of conservation efforts starting in the early 1800s when the castle was repaired and maintained by individuals and families interested in preserving the structure as a 'romantic ruin' (National Trust, 2001, 9–10). Today, the castle is owned and managed by the National Trust, a charitable organisation that operates a range of historic houses, properties, landscapes and nature reserves in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland.[2] In 2014 an independent design company (Splash & Ripple[3]) was engaged by the National Trust to create *A Knight's Peril*. The broad objective of the project was to improve the experience of *explorer families* – described as families that actively learn and play together (National Trust, 2014). Interest in this demographic is representative of the charity's desire to diversify its visitor base and reach new audiences.

A Knight's Peril deploys a choose-your-own-adventure game model to enable player interaction with a few of the personalities associated with the castle. It facilitates this primarily through a fanciful *echo horn*, constructed specifically for the project. The device is RFID[4] enabled to allow digital interaction at the site. However, it has the look of a type of object one might find in the 14th century. According to the game narrative, Kate Dallingridge (Sir Edward's daughter) has left echoes around the castle and where they have seeped into the stonework, a small seal has grown. When placed in contact with a seal, the horn can tap into Kate's echoes. With echo horn in hand, participants interact with her character and work together to foil the plan to assassinate her father (see Fig. 2).

A Knight's Peril is illustrative of heritage learning where non-didactic ways of engaging people with past experience are being explored (e.g. beyond the guidebook and audio guide). Such projects typically involve the introduction of digital media or the creation of virtual environments where visitors can engage in learning activities (Mortara et al., 2014). A range of motivations are evident including: to modify and enhance conventional heritage experiences, to decentre heritage experience away from dominant narratives; to facilitate user agency, and to boost attendance through the incorporation of fun and engaging activities and technology (Hertzman et al., 2008; Coenen et al., 2013; Mortara

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[1] Further images of the castle at: https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/bodiam-castle.

[2] The National Trust is one of the most highly visible and influential institutions within the UK's cultural industries. In 2015 there were over 21 million visitors to their properties (National Trust, 2015).

[3] Production involved designers, historians, creative technologists, writers, actors, producers and the Splash & Ripple director as well as National Trust advisors.

[4] Radio-frequency identification.

Fig. 1. Bodiam castle, East Sussex England (Photo: Author).

Fig. 2. Visitors playing *A Knight's Peril* at Bodiam Castle. The child is holding an echo horn (Photo: Author).

et al., 2013).

A Knight's Peril reclaims and reimagines traces of what has vanished over the course of time. It is an example of how heritage interpretation can encompass or contain a part of the past and to bring it to the present (Till, 2005). The game's setting – Bodiam Castle – is itself a preserved piece of the past 'adrift in a modern sea, an isolated feature that stands out because it *alone* is old' (Lowenthal, 2013, 438). Almost by magic, the castle is physically present yet seems to belong to another time. I found Bodiam's evocative, haunting feel was in no small part due to this uncanny quality of being neither wholly past nor present. Part ruin, the castle is particularly conducive for the conjuration of ghosts. Ruins, as DeSilvey and Edensor (2012, 471) note are 'characterized by multiple temporalities … offer(ing) opportunities for constructing alternative versions of the past, and for recouping untold and marginalized stories'.

Bodiam is managed in such a way to allow ghosts to fill its spaces. The structure and grounds are uncluttered and have been restored and maintained with an eye toward simplicity and clarity. The castle has no roof, interior furniture or other medieval artefacts and is surrounded by simple landscaping all of which maintains focus on the massive stone structure. The result is a simple, yet

evocative and haunting space. Such an architectural landscape 'has a particularly important part to play allowing the uncanny nature of the past to become somehow visible to visitors' (Maddern, 2008, 365; Edensor, 2005). As a site of memorialisation, Bodiam allows visitors to draw on their own memories and expectations of what castle life might have been like.

Of course, interpretations of the past always involve decisions about how history is to be represented and understood (Till, 2005). These stories tell us as much about our contemporary selves as any historical moment. Maddern refers to this interpretive work as a conjuration that involves 'simultaneously … *excavating* and *burying* histories and material assemblages' (2008, 369 italics in original). In other words, the absences — what we hide or do not talk about — are likely to be just as important as that which is memorialised and remembered. Moreover, as I will explore further in this paper, this process of commemoration — evident at Bodiam Castle and countless historic districts, listed buildings, museums, and monuments to past events — involves the purposeful staging of atmospheres through which resonances of the past can be witnessed and experienced.

2. Atmospheres

Much has been written recently about atmospheres and ambiances (Anderson, 2009; Bissell, 2010; Edensor, 2012, 2015; Ash, 2013; Buser, 2014, 2017; Lin, 2015; Sørensen, 2015). Most productively, the concepts have been deployed to express a range of spatio-temporal conditions that challenge static representations of space. To centre on atmospheres is to understand social experience as sensory (Thibaud, 2011), collective, more-than-human (Anderson and Wylie, 2009), and consisting of dynamic and multiple fields of intensities (McCormack, 2008, 414). In social research, atmospheres help capture and characterise the shifting 'moods, feelings, sensations and dispositions' (Lin, 2015, 287) associated with being-in-the-world.

However, as Bissell (2010) and Simpson (2017b) note, much of what we call atmospheres occurs in the background and is often unrecognised. These are the affects which, while outside cognitive perception, have the potential to modify a body's behaviours, actions and emotions. For Philippopoulos-Mihalopoulos (2016, 151), such 'affectively directed' atmospheres are political in that they can seduce and lure, 'numb(ing) a body … into an affective embrace of stability and permanence'. Indeed, whether or not atmospheres are perceived by (or involve) a human subject does not diminish their existence or power (Ash, 2013; Sørensen, 2015). This is particularly relevant here as much of the design work employed at places such as Bodiam Castle involves manipulating background environments in subtle ways to produce or support particular forms of behaviour (Turner and Peters, 2015). That individual visitors may or may not be cognitively aware of particular atmospheres is less important than the effects they have on the relationships between bodies. At Bodiam, these relations have been carefully staged through design techniques intended to engineer particular atmospheric qualities.

In the following, I introduce two areas of research relevant for a hauntological examination of *A Knight's Peril*. The first centres on critical examinations of the practices and effects of 'making atmospheres' (Böhme, 2013, 2). The second foregrounds scholarship that considers the ghostly temporality of atmospheres.

2.1. Staging atmospheres

The practice of purposefully staging and manipulating atmospheres is pervasive, evident amongst the landscape of shopping malls, festival markets, sports and grand events, public spaces and other sites of managed social experience. In these locales, architects and designers manipulate spaces and objects in order to generate 'imaginative representations' — generators which influence individual and collective behaviours and emotions (Böhme, 2013, 4). As Simpson notes, 'through the design of a space and its particular layout/configuration, different sorts of atmospheres might be produced, encouraged and felt' (2017b, 430). Such generators include the myriad ways in which space can be manipulated through, for example, light and illumination (Edensor, 2015, 2012; Bille, 2015), smell (Hudson, 2015), visual materials (Biehl-Missal, 2012), decay (DeSilvey, 2006; Turner and Peters, 2015) and the wider urban environment (Bissell, 2010; Simpson, 2017b).

For Böhme (2013, 5) atmospheres and ambiances are a 'felt presence … in space' produced by architects, designers and others (including non-humans) who shape the experiences and affective and emotional connections or engagements to particular places. Designing or staging atmospheres can range from the most extravagant (e.g. Olympic sporting events, music festivals, etc.) to the everyday practice of care and management (e.g. sweeping a pavement, planting flowers) of the built environment (Thibaud, 2015, 43). Yet, any 'making of atmospheres' involves setting out the 'generators' which make it possible for an atmosphere to materialise (Böhme, 2013, 3—4). Assembled in the material world, atmospheres have social impacts. For example, atmospheres associated with consumption (Healy, 2014), public space (Buser, 2017), securitisation (Adey, 2008; Urry et al., 2016) and other cultural settings manage social experience. In these and other settings, the configuration of material assemblages contributes to the emergence of feelings and emotions (Anderson, 2009) as well as the potential for action (or non-action). Nevertheless, Bille et al. (2015, 36) argue that rather than reinforcing hegemonic positions, the staging of atmospheres can work to 'create discontinuities' in understandings and experiences of the world, pointing to the possibility to disrupt dominant views.

Of course, such engineering is never certain (Simpson, 2017b) as atmospheres emerge through the coming together of bodies in uncertain ways. For example, at Bodiam Castle, while visitors may share particular demographic characteristics, they can be affected by and experience atmospheres in widely divergent ways reflecting bodily and social contexts, histories and dispositions (Simpson, 2017b). Moreover, atmospheres can co-exist alongside one another without being in conflict or fusing into something new (Anderson and Ash, 2015). Awareness of the potential for multiple atmospheres means any attempt to forge a singular experience — as is common in the design of historic or commemorative sites (Sumartojo, 2015) — is problematic.

Yet, while purposeful staging is pervasive, it is still commonly overlooked. Very little scholarship has analysed how such atmospheres are created, or how they might be used to counter dominant discourses (but see Duff, 2010; Thibaud, 2011; Emotion, Space and Society Vol 15, 2015; Urry et al., 2016; *Visual Communications* Vol 7, 2016). Moreover, little attention has been paid to examining the production of heritage from the perspective of atmospheres (but see Turner and Peters, 2015; Sørensen, 2015). My research seeks to continue the movement towards filling this gap.

2.2. Temporality and spectrality in atmospheres

The second area of scholarship on atmospheres of interest here calls attention to their 'ghostly', complex and multivalent temporality. The durability of any atmosphere is belied by an incessant potential for transformation through the introduction or realignment of objects, bodies, and affects (Anderson and Ash, 2015; Buser, 2017). Atmospheres are always less solid than our representations. Moreover, as geographers have long argued, the experience of space is socially situated, ' … usually conditioned by previous

experience, by habit, by familiar emotions and sensations that produce feelings of belongingness or otherwise' (Edensor, 2012, 1114). Yet, the material artefacts and affective resonances of particular atmospheres and phenomena may linger and 'circulate as a field of movement' long after their disappearance or dissipation (McCormack, 2008, 425). In other words, the material and emotional connections to particular places have their own duration which can outlast any unique moment.

These understandings reveal a paradoxical non-contemporaneity of atmospheres — a temporal uncertainty that draws on aspects of nostalgia, memory, repetition, expectation and anticipation (Edensor, 2012). Such insights defy efforts to demarcate the 'pure presence' or the essential immediacy of any situation (Jameson, 1999, 58). For Bille et al. ' … atmospheres emerge as multi-temporal tensions: they are at the same time a product of the past and future' (2015, 34). This temporal indeterminacy reveals the ways in which the *time* of atmospheres can seem *out of joint*[5] (Derrida, 1994). This is a hauntological conceit pointing to the ghostly folding of space and time (Maddern and Adey, 2008) where the present, past and future cannot be cleanly divided but rather are co-constitutive, with each always containing traces of each other. Atmospheres, in other words, can express hauntological characteristics, constructed through the 'persistences, repetitions, [and] prefigurations' (Fisher, 2014, 29) of social experience.

These hauntological qualities are particularly evident in scholarship on the atmospheric qualities of ruins and sites where ghosts have not been exorcised by the need to tell a singular narrative and where the past is less fixed in place (Edensor, 2005, 2011; DeSilvey and Edensor, 2012; Maddern, 2008; Gallagher, 2015). According to Edensor (2005, 834), the cluttered, disorganised and tangled qualities of these spaces produce an 'excess' where 'memory is elusive, dependent upon conjectures about the traces of the overlooked people, places and processes which haunt ruins'. Ruins, can express ghostly qualities of indeterminacy and ambiguity where the past remains strange, not yet eradicated or re-interpreted through dominant forms' memorialisation. Such spaces can draw attention to the ways in which 'our experience of the world is haunted' such that the 'past and future co-exist, and interact, in uncertain and unpredictable ways (Hill, 2013, 381). Within this scholarship, spectrality and the figure of the ghost is crucial to understanding the less-than-settled, non-linear ways people experience the world. In heritage spaces such as Bodiam Castle, ruination is a form of curation (Turner and Peters, 2015) where decay is visible, yet checked in order to facilitate haunting and evocative experiences and to tell stories of the past.

2.3. Staging atmospheres at bodiam castle

The *making of atmospheres* at Bodiam Castle is entangled with issues of conjuration and the deliberate practice of making (certain) traces of the past visible. This section is organised around three analytical concepts. First, I examine how particular spectral traces are made visible through narrative and the effects they have on both the modern-day chronicle of the castle and the production of atmospheres at Bodiam. I then turn to the role of sound in *A Knight's Peril* and how specific design techniques about how the narration is delivered influences experiences and atmospheres. Finally, I consider the spectral and anachronistic qualities of these elements and how these contribute to the production of new, arguably richer, ways of experiencing and understanding the past.

2.3.1. Conjuring ghosts and addressing representational silences: narrative in the atmospheres of A Knight's Peril

Geographers are increasingly engaging with narrative and storytelling in research (see Cameron, 2012 for an overview). Here, I focus on the way stories and storytelling might be used to destabilise prevailing discourses (Bulken et al., 2015; Gibson-Graham, 2006; Pratt, 2009).

A Knight's Peril is a form of storytelling that engages through 'everyday' characters. For the motivated visitor, the 'official' story of Bodiam Castle can be easily found in the National Trust guidebook or the DVD. These authoritative materials highlight information about the castle's builder (Sir Edward Dallingridge) and provide detailed reviews of the castle's design including the ubiquitous cross sections and renderings of the structure as it would have been in the 14th century. There is also information about individuals and families involved in the castle's conservation and restoration. These authoritative resources privilege particular medieval histories and serve as 'affective signals' (Bissell, 2010, 279) which contribute to the types of atmospheres one might experience (Sumartojo, 2015) at historic sites such as Bodiam Castle.

In producing *A Knight's Peril* project designers and historians did not want to retrace these traditional narratives but sought to approach the history of Bodiam Castle 'from below' (Poole, 2017, 10). According to Steve Poole (project historian), *A Knight's Peril* celebrates non-didactic, personalised ways of engaging people with past experience:

' … it requires them [participants] to enter into it and to interpret for themselves how things were. We try to feed in some context without saying "hey, listen, this is what you need to know"'.[6]

For Poole, interactive and sensory-based games offer heritage sites a means of 'telling the story' that is more intimate, engaged and varied than traditional means allow. It is through imagination and immersion into the narrative that this personalised form of heritage interpretation occurs.

Central to the approach at Bodiam was the desire to tell a story about lesser-known characters. Unfortunately, records from 14th century England are limited and the ability to tell alternative stories or to speak confidently about everyday characters is constrained by medieval social systems and record keeping procedures. Set within patriarchal 14th century England, well-documented individuals are typically wealthy, male landowners or nobility. As a result, relatively little is known about women, children or the Bodiam household beyond Sir Dallingridge. This absence of evidence continues to influence the National Trust's representation of Bodiam and this period of history. For example, without formal documentation to substantiate their experiences, women and children are largely missing from the guidebook and DVD.

A Knight's Peril attempts to overcome these representational silences by mixing known persons and commonly accepted facts with fictional characters and creative storytelling. The experience conjures a female child via fictional, 12-year-old Kate. As one historian noted, Kate was developed to generate visitor interest amongst young girls, but also to address a representational injustice:

'we wanted a young woman to be the guide partly because this is such a … male dominated environment … it is easy to assume that men are the only doers and shakers in this event. Now, that's an impression created by the evidence because it is men

who control the means of recording this and who were allowed any kind of formal role in politics and public life … '.[7]

Through *A Knight's Peril*, project designers and historians introduced a new historical form into the atmosphere of the castle. Kate shapes visitors' experiences and emotional responses to the material environment of Bodiam Castle. She is an 'emotional opening' (Gibson-Graham, 2006, 136) towards the construction of a counter-narrative. Several interviewees noted the importance of a female at the centre of the story and their experience of the castle. For some, her character was 'appealing'[8] and provided a sense of personal attachment — 'I liked it because you could imagine you were Kate'.[9] Others found it was the perspective of a child that made absences present. One father noted how he began to think about the nature of childhood in a 14th century castle (e.g. the difficulty getting around, the limited possibilities for play). Whereas previously castle life was about knights and battles, having a child tell the story and listening to his daughter's own reflections altered this frame[10]. New questions and thoughts about the castle emerged: What was life like for the child of a local nobleman? What kinds of games did she play? Who did she play with? Was she able to run and explore or was her life filled with work and hardship? Did she struggle to make her way though the winding stone staircases? Tracing through Bodiam at the behest of a spectral child coaxes particular forms of movement and bodily empathy (Edensor, 2005) about life at the castle. Conjured by historians and game designers, Kate's ghost possesses and guides modern bodies towards new understandings of history.

Kate makes traces of what has been lost — here, the erasure of women and children — visible. Producing real material effects (Gordon, 1997) in the atmospheres of the castle, Kate reminds us of the absences and makes them present in contemporary narratives of medieval history and the way visitors experience Bodiam. Embracing Kate's fictional qualities meant she represented those …

'… who just aren't in any records because they didn't know or because the records have been lost, or they're just not important people, so they don't get written down at all'.[11]

Within *A Knight's Peril*, ghosts are active agents in the production of Bodiam Castle's atmospheres. Their contribution within the narrative — as part of a new chronicle of the castle — sets in motion the repair of longstanding representational silences, disrupting conventional ideas about medieval castle life and constructing new understandings of the past.

2.3.2. The echo horn and the sonic production of atmospheres

During *A Knight's Peril*, participants listen to the voices and sounds of a 14th century castle. This sonic environment is transformative. Sounds, as Michael Gallagher notes, are not only capable of 'activating feelings and emotions' but also are 'a kind of affect — an oscillating difference, an intensity that moves bodies' (2016, 43; Duffy et al., 2016).

Recently, geographers have shown increasing interest in diversifying sensual understandings social experience to include the role of sound (Gallagher and Prior, 2014; Hill, 2015). While there is insufficient space to review all of this literature, of particular relevance is research on the role of sounds and soundscapes in shaping the qualities of place (Anderson, 2004; Simpson, 2017a; Duffy and Waitt, 2013). This attunement to sound 'calls attention to something that is ordinarily ignored' (Gallagher and Prior, 2014, 271) but which can greatly influence atmospheres. Moreover, geographers have shown how sounds 'can produce particular embodied relationships with the past' (Simpson, 2017a, 91; Gallagher, 2015) Sounds contribute directly to how we come to understand particular spatial settings.

As might be expected, sounds — in the form of dialogue and narration — are used in *A Knight's Peril* to convey meaning. Through the voice of Kate and the characters she encounters the audio communicates specific information for participants. For example, references to war with France and the recent Peasants' Revolt are included as contextual material that historians felt was important for visitors understanding of the time. In addition, at the end of each instalment, the audio provides clues and specific choices about who to follow and where to go next in the castle. As such, playing *A Knight's Peril* encourages a form of interacting with and moving through Bodiam Castle that requires careful listening and interpretation.

In addition to these cognitive elements, the audio also affects participants in less reasoned ways. Most obvious was the hurried way in which players tend to move through the castle. Pleading with visitors to help solve the mystery, Kate's voice incites this urgency, prompting participants to 'hurry up'. She implores, 'we don't have much time' and later, reflecting on the beauty of the castle she laments, 'we don't have time to see all of it … we need to figure out who might want to hurt my father'. In my experience as a player and as witnessed during observation, this tended to produce repetitions of pausing to focus on dialogue and directions from the echo horn, followed by a quick dash to another room.

Other, more ambient, sounds are introduced to facilitate imaginative connection to medieval life. At various points of the game visitors will hear: 'traditional' medieval music; banging and clattering of pots and pans in the kitchen; doors creaking open; the drawing and clashing of weapons; and the flight of arrows. These sounds reshape and adapt visitors' relation to the site by 'amplify(ing) the haunted qualities' (Gallagher, 2016, 468) of Bodiam Castle. They bring ghosts to the surface of recognition.

Particularly powerful is the conjuration of Kate — a remarkable and mysterious sonic moment that occurs when the echo horn comes in contact with the initial seal. At first, a faint voice can be heard, echoing and straining to gain players' attention. Soon, the echoes fade and the clear voice of 12-year-old Kate materialises. This 'spectrality effect' (Parkin-Gounelas, 1999, 128) disrupts certainties about the present. Echoes are a well-used storytelling device that often signal the crossing of a threshold and the jumbling or contamination of time and space. This spectral use of sounds is also a well-developed trope with connections to hauntological music (Sexton, 2012) where a range of aesthetic devices such as decay (e.g. a purposeful erosion of sound) and crackle used 'to effect a ghostly infiltration of the present by the recent past' (Gallagher, 2015, 481; Fisher, 2014; Fisher, 2012). The sonic environment associated with *A Knight's Peril* deploys these techniques to facilitate the magical shift away from the 21st century and into the medieval past. Following the (hauntological) appearance of ghostly Kate, players enter the castle immersed in happenings of the 14th century.

Indeed, one parent spoke about how his children became thoroughly immersed in the experience and noted how 'the horn

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[7] Interview 22 October 2014 with project historian 2.

[8] Interview 28 October 2014 with group 8, consisting of four adults and two children ages 11 and 6.

[9] Interview 20 October 2014 with group 2 consisting of two adults and two children ages 7 and 9.

[10] Interview 27 October 2014with group 3 consisting of two adults and one child age 7.

[11] Interview 14 October 2014 with Splash & Ripple lead designer.

really activated it for them'.[12] The audio device helped to bring these visitors into contact with the castle and its history and magnify emotional resonance. This father went on to explain how 'they were really present and focused' when participating in *A Knight's Peril*. Others noted how the horn itself was particularly memorable and helped Bodiam Castle stand out from other heritage sites.

'we go to a lot of National Trust places and we often can't remember one from the other, they merge into one a bit, this would be quite different'[13]

'Sometimes one castle is like any other castle and this will probably help them to remember this castle in particular'[14]

These comments are illustrative of how the staging and making of atmospheres through sounds and audio devices can contribute to significant emotional resonance and meaning. This was a purposeful objective of the design team which sought to forge a strong sense of medieval life and attachment to the castle amongst participants through an engaged and immersive experience.[15]

Yet, this is not a total immersion. Of course, not all players experienced the game in the same way. Indeed, during my observations, some children were clearly bored, others concentrated intensely, while others simply used the echo horn as a piece of medieval fashion. Moreover, adults generally played along but were mostly supporting younger participants by pointing out spots on the map or repeating certain phrases from the narrative. It is evident that bodily capacities and social histories (Simpson, 2017b) played an important role in mediating experiences of *A Knight's Peril* and the emergence of atmospheres at Bodiam Castle.

Moreover, sounds emanating from the game overlap with 'live' sounds of the castle as well as other the audio of players in the same room (multiple versions of the audio can be played and heard at once). It is an experience that some non-players I spoke with found frustrating and distracting to the otherwise tranquil atmospheres of Bodiam. Sounds are not universally received, but can variously enrich, 'plague and pollute' (Lorimer and Wylie, 2010, 7). Moreover, the overlapping of sounds associated with *A Knight's Peril* can differently mediate movements through the site (Gallagher, 2015). For some, this occurs in concert with Kate and her quest. For others, it can be a repulsing force. On these occasions, multiple atmospheres come into conflict and result in new relations and new atmospheres (Anderson and Ash, 2015).

This affective-materialist perspective points to the ways in which sounds co-produce social space (Simpson, 2017a) and atmospheres (Doughty and Lagerqvist, 2016). The sounds (and associated audio devices) of *A Knight's Peril* contribute to the production of atmospheres at Bodiam Castle through diverse bodily relations (Simpson, 2017a) and hauntological techniques. Their contribution to conviviality of the site depends upon a range of contextual elements including one's angle of arrival (Ahmed, 2010). As Simpson (2017a, 91) notes, sounds are differently received and how 'listening bodies' are 'disposed towards hearing those sounds' has significant implications for the types of relations and atmospheres they can produce.

2.3.3. Towards a hauntological understanding of atmospheres

The time is out of joint. O cursed spite, That ever I was born to set it right!

Nay, come let's go together.

(Hamlet, Act 1, Scene 5, Page 8)

In *Specters of Marx*, Derrida cites the above passage from Shakespeare as a provocation and challenge to linear understandings of time. Calling on the ghost of Hamlet's father, he draws attention to the possibility that pasts, presents and futures are more likely to be jumbled than linear or clearly compartmentalised. The ghost alludes to how past, present and future mix in our minds and our emotional connection to place. In other words, past histories and future expectations shape how we experience and interpret the present. In this section I apply Derrida's hauntological position to the concept of atmospheres, reflecting on the case of *A Knight's Peril*. I note the ways in which the atmospheres associated with the game draw on and reinforce disrupted, non-contemporaneous notions of time.

The ghosts of *A Knight's Peril* attempt to destabilise visitors' sense that the past is fixed or inert. Kate, the central figure, arrives from the past, but she is clearly not the same as any individual named Kate from the 14th century. Neither alive nor dead, from the present nor the past — Kate's ghosts reveals the ontological instability associated with both atmospheres and hauntology. Her existence in the 21st century — a time where she does not belong — is anachronistic as she floats between and among various times and spaces of Bodiam Castle. Like atmospheres, she has an uncertain ontological status; never fully present, she remains with us and influences players' emotions and behaviour. Moreover, Kate makes demands of those in the present, recruiting visitors to solve the mystery and save Sir Dallingridge. During my research, this sense of urgency and desire to put right certain events of the 14th century were echoed by many participants. 'I really liked just trying to help her', one young visitor noted.[16] Kate's ghostly presence pushes us and implores us to act.

Of course, there is something more being asked than simply to play a game. Like the ghost of Hamlet's father, Kate is an apparition who provokes. Yet, she does not call for murderous retribution. Rather, her justice rests with our changed sense of the past. This new representational construct involves an expanded recognition of the lives of marginalised persons from medieval history. Moreover, her (re)appearance signals an as-of-yet future, traces of which we might only sense. Indeed, our work in the 14th century salvation of Sir Dallingridge is peripheral to the world it foretells — central to which is the possibility of a more equal and just future. This notion of equality in representation is something *A Knight's Peril* designers and historians sought to build into visitors' experience of the castle. By introducing the ghost of a young female child into the chronicle of the castle, new atmospheres are facilitated centring on playfulness and whimsy and new questions are asked — what was it like to be a young girl in this place?

The making and conjuration of atmospheres at Bodiam Castle is not simply a memorialisation of the past. Rather, it is as Derrida might say, a 'phantomatic mode of production' (1994, 120) where visitors are not only encouraged to walk with ghosts, but where their spectral demands are taken seriously. Through simple yet evocative and engaging generators (e.g. hauntological sonic

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[12] Interview 27 October 2014 with group 4 consisting of two adults and three children ages 11, 8 and 5.
[13] Interview 28 October 2014 with group 7 consisting of one adult and two children ages 10 and 12.
[14] Interview 27 October 2014 with group 4 consisting of two adults and three children ages 11, 8 and 5.
[15] Interview 14 October 2014 with Splash & Ripple lead designer.

[16] Interview 28 October 2014 with group 14 consisting of 3 adults and 3 children ages 8, 6, and 4.

techniques), the atmospheres of *A Knight's Peril* take on a sense of openness which strengthens emotional connection and allows for ghosts and memories to take hold. This deliberate production of atmospheres is a conjuration that makes (in)visible particular stories (here, the experiences of women and children) through narrative and sonic design techniques. Moreover, by allowing space for ghosts it implies a renegotiation and disruption of the supposed stability between concepts such as presence and absence. At Bodiam Castle, the resulting social spaces make obvious the uncanny, non-linear nature of time (Hill, 2013) and, for many people who play *A Knight's Peril*, facilitate powerfully emotional and resonant experiences. Such efforts are part of a hauntological strategy of remembrance which does not exorcise ghosts, but conjures them, drawing attention to the 'discontinuities and irruptions' which characterise processes of memory (Edensor, 2005, 829).

3. Conclusion

This paper studied the production and staging of *A Knight's Peril* at Bodiam Castle. The research examined particular representational and material elements associated with the game including the characters created and deployed as well as the use of hauntological sonic and aesthetic techniques. Building on scholarship in emotional and cultural geography (Wylie, 2007; Maddern, 2008; Sørensen, 2015; Edensor, 2012; Bille et al., 2015) this research detailed the ways in which historians and designers sought to intentionally shape experiences and emotional responses to Bodiam Castle through the production of atmospheres. Endeavouring to address a representational silence of medieval history — the widespread absence of women and children in historical accounts — the design team not only conjured the ghost of Kate Dallingridge, but exploited a suite of hauntological tropes (e.g. echo, decay, anachronism) to disrupt conventional readings of the past. Drawing on these techniques, the atmospheres of *A Knight's Peril* can be seen as purposefully staged framings which — under certain circumstances — can re-order visitors' understandings of the medieval history and potentially disrupt hegemonic views and assumptions about the world.

Bringing Derrida's (1994) concept of hauntology to the study of atmospheres, the paper explored the role of spectrality in the production of *A Knight's Peril*. Similar to atmospheres, ghosts belie ontological certainty. To think of the atmospheres at Bodiam Castle as hauntological is to suggest that there is something 'out-of-joint', not just right or uncanny about them. I argue that temporal uncertainty, facilitated via the figure of the ghost, is one way in which *A Knight's Peril* gains its emotional and affective power. This suggests that research which examines spectrality in the making of atmospheres (within or outside heritage contexts) can help understand the effects designers have on the moods, emotions and behaviours of people in social spaces.

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