



PALGRAVE HISTORICAL STUDIES IN THE  
CRIMINAL CORPSE AND ITS AFTERLIFE

# PUNISHING THE CRIMINAL CORPSE, 1700-1840

AGGRAVATED FORMS OF THE  
DEATH PENALTY IN ENGLAND

Peter King



Palgrave Historical Studies in the Criminal  
Corpse and its Afterlife

Series Editors  
Owen Davies  
School of Humanities  
University of Hertfordshire  
Hatfield, UK

Elizabeth T. Hurren  
School of Historical Studies  
University of Leicester  
Leicester, UK

Sarah Tarlow  
History and Archaeology  
University of Leicester  
Leicester, UK

This limited, finite series is based on the substantive outputs from a major, multi-disciplinary research project funded by the Wellcome Trust, investigating the meanings, treatment, and uses of the criminal corpse in Britain. It is a vehicle for methodological and substantive advances in approaches to the wider history of the body. Focussing on the period between the late seventeenth and the mid-nineteenth centuries as a crucial period in the formation and transformation of beliefs about the body, the series explores how the criminal body had a prominent presence in popular culture as well as science, civic life and medico-legal activity. It is historically significant as the site of overlapping and sometimes contradictory understandings between scientific anatomy, criminal justice, popular medicine, and social geography.

More information about this series at  
<http://www.springer.com/series/14694>

Peter King

# Punishing the Criminal Corpse, 1700–1840

*Aggravated Forms of the Death Penalty in England*

palgrave  
macmillan

Peter King  
University of Leicester  
Leicester, UK



Palgrave Historical Studies in the Criminal Corpse and its Afterlife  
ISBN 978-1-137-51360-1      ISBN 978-1-137-51361-8 (eBook)  
DOI 10.1057/978-1-137-51361-8

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017944586

© The Editor(s) (if applicable) and The Author(s) 2017. This book is an open access publication.

The author(s) has/have asserted their right(s) to be identified as the author(s) of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

**Open Access** This book is licensed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits use, sharing, adaptation, distribution and reproduction in any medium or format, as long as you give appropriate credit to the original author(s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license and indicate if changes were made.

The images or other third party material in this book are included in the book's Creative Commons license, unless indicated otherwise in a credit line to the material. If material is not included in the book's Creative Commons license and your intended use is not permitted by statutory regulation or exceeds the permitted use, you will need to obtain permission directly from the copyright holder.

The use of general descriptive names, registered names, trademarks, service marks, etc. in this publication does not imply, even in the absence of a specific statement, that such names are exempt from the relevant protective laws and regulations and therefore free for general use.

The publisher, the authors and the editors are safe to assume that the advice and information in this book are believed to be true and accurate at the date of publication. Neither the publisher nor the authors or the editors give a warranty, express or implied, with respect to the material contained herein or for any errors or omissions that may have been made. The publisher remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.

Cover credit: William Hogarth, *The Four Stages of Cruelty; The Reward of Cruelty*, 1751.  
© Antiqua Print Gallery/Alamy Stock Photo

Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature  
The registered company is Macmillan Publishers Ltd.  
The registered company address is: The Campus, 4 Crinan Street, London, N1 9XW, United Kingdom

*This book is dedicated to Lee Hodgson-King and Joshua King*

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the support of the Wellcome Trust. This research was funded by their programme grant WT095904AIA ‘Harnessing the Power of the Criminal Corpse’. I would also like to thank the entire team working on that project: Sarah Tarlow, Elizabeth Hurren, Owen Davies, Francesca Matteoni, Shane McCorristone, Floris Tomasini, Rachel Bennett, Emma Battell Lowman, Zoe Dyndor and especially Richard Ward who has kindly read and criticized the manuscript as well as providing the vast majority of the research material and being a great companion on our trips to Wales and elsewhere. Thanks also to my old friend Randy McGowen who kindly read some of the chapters, and to John Beattie for inspiring me during my many years of writing on criminal justice history. Especial thanks to my wife and son, to whom this volume is dedicated, for putting up with my post-retirement toils on this book. For inspiration during the process special thanks to Bruce Cockburn, Ian Adams, E.P. Thompson, Richard Rohr, Brian McLaren, Henri Nouwen and the writer of the Old Testament book of Ecclesiastes (especially Chap. 9, verse 7 and of course Chap. 12, verse 12.)