

Death and Funeral Practices in Aotearoa New Zealand

This book provides a shortform definitive reference text on the landscape and features of Aotearoa New Zealand that underpin its familiar, though country-specific, ways of caring for the dead. It provides an account of diverse funerary practices that have taken shape through the various cultures that have settled here. In the backdrop of the colonising history of Aotearoa New Zealand, the book examines the complex legislative framework that separates Maori and non-Maori funerary legislation and practices. Examining the mixed model of provision spanning municipal, commercial, and private organisations, the book outlines various aspects of funerals, such as the care of the body, funeral arrangements, costs, and what state support is available. It also delves into the two legal ways to manage the dead: burial or cremation, with cremation now the majority option. The book explores the numbers, ownership and locations of crematoria and cemeteries before identifying the new trends influencing death care including sustainability. It then looks at how death is memorialised in Aotearoa New Zealand, including in cemeteries, for war memorialisation, and other public commemoration and memorialisation. This book will be of interest to the growing body of local authority planners, researchers, and funeral professionals who must be responsive to and provide their services in complex multi-cultural contexts. As the scope of the book is historical and contemporary death practices, it will also appeal to social historians.

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27,50 €

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*vorbestellbar, Erscheinungstermin ca.
August 2026*

Artikelnummer: 9780367752934

Medium: Buch

ISBN: 978-0-367-75293-4

Verlag: Taylor & Francis Ltd

Erscheinungstermin: 01.08.2026

Sprache(n): Englisch

Auflage: 1. Auflage 2026

Serie: Routledge International Focus
on Death and Funeral Practices

Produktform: Kartoniert

Gewicht: 181 g

Seiten: 148

Format (B x H): 140 x 216 mm

