

GHOSTS AND GRAVEYARDS: COLONIAL PARK CEMETERY AND MEMORY  
CONSTRUCTION ON GHOST TOURS IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA

A Thesis  
Submitted to the Graduate Faculty  
of the  
North Dakota State University  
of Agriculture and Applied Science

By

Brenna Elizabeth Weston

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of  
MASTER OF ARTS

Major Department:  
Sociology and Anthropology

July 2016

Fargo, North Dakota

North Dakota State University  
Graduate School

---

**Title**

GHOSTS AND GRAVEYARDS: COLONIAL PARK CEMETERY AND  
MEMORY CONSTRUCTION ON GHOST TOURS IN SAVANNAH,  
GEORGIA

---

**By**

Brenna Elizabeth Weston

---

The Supervisory Committee certifies that this *disquisition* complies with North Dakota State University's regulations and meets the accepted standards for the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS**

SUPERVISORY COMMITTEE:

Kristen Fellows

---

Chair

John Creese

---

Angela Smith

---

---

Approved:

07/29/2016

---

Date

Jeffrey Bumgarner

---

Department Chair

## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines memory construction and landscape interaction on ghost tours at Colonial Park Cemetery in Savannah, Georgia. The research in this thesis centers on the ways in which ghost tours in the area interact with the cemetery's landscape and how oral narratives compare with written sources through the lenses of authority and authenticity. Ghost tour narratives are included in a larger argument for their usefulness and importance to archaeologists, especially for introducing dialogues with local communities about site interpretation and preservation. This may also be useful for archaeologists researching intersections of landscape interactions and modern interpretations.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my utmost gratitude to a number of people who have helped me in many ways throughout this process. You have all been there to share my happiness, frustration, little bit of desperation, and success on this journey. Specifically, I would like to thank my parents, John and Charlene, for your encouragement and support throughout my life, especially for your attempts to de-stress me through the use of wine and sugary foods (which worked like a charm). A special thanks to you, mom, for flying to North Dakota just to watch the cat while I went to Savannah for research. Thank you both. I don't think I would have decided to go back to school if it wasn't for your love and encouragement and I definitely don't think I would have finished if it wasn't for the "get it done" attitude and drive to finish that I learned from both of you. I love you.

Finally, I would like to thank my husband, Andy. I don't think I would have been able to finish this without you. Thank you for coming to Savannah with me, sitting in a stuffy archive for hours on end, and walking around in 100 degree weather, patiently waiting while I took pictures and walked all over the place. Thank you for calming me down when I thought I couldn't write any more. Thank you for comforting me when I became frustrated. Thank you for helping me figure out how to put my jumbled up thoughts into words. And thank you for reading and rereading my chapters and editing them with a journalist's eye. I am incredibly lucky to have met and married you and I am so grateful for all of your love and support. I love you. Always.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT.....	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iv
LIST OF TABLES.....	vi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION.....	1
CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL CONTEXT.....	7
CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK.....	18
CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY.....	44
CHAPTER FIVE: ANXIETY AND 1820.....	55
CHAPTER SIX: THE REMEMBERED AND FORGOTTEN AT CPC.....	82
CHAPTER SEVEN: LEGACIES OF THE CIVIL WAR.....	102
CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSION AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH .....	114
REFERENCES CITED.....	122
APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS .....	129

## LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Number of Deaths from Yellow Fever in 1820, Written Sources .....	58
2. Count of Persons Buried in CPC from Ghost Tours.....	83
3. Count of Persons Buried in CPC from Written Sources.....	85

## LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Current map of Savannah’s historic district, 2016.....	10
2. Plan for the establishment of the Negro Burying Ground adjacent to CPC, labeled here as “Church Cemetery.”.....	12
3. Plaque commemorating yellow fever victims from 1820.....	61
4. Plan of Bethesda Orphanage grounds.....	96
5. Broken and misplaced grave markers (also known as the orphan tombstones) placed along the eastern wall of CPC.....	104
6. Brick sidewalk along the western side of CPC.....	107

## CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

### Overview

Established in 1733, the city of Savannah, Georgia has a long history in the southern United States. In today's Savannah, a number of tour companies cater to the varied interests of tourists who visit the area. The historic district is an especially popular stop for tourists seeking details about the city's spectral history. On any given night, especially in the summer, there are a number of ghost tours operating within the city's two-square mile historic district.

This thesis arose from an interest in the ways in which ghost tour operators and their participants understand and contribute to their locale's heritage. Savannah's historic district was selected as a research location due to its substantial ghost tourism industry. While engaged in participant observation on different ghost tours, one location stood out as a consistent spot of interpretation: Colonial Park Cemetery. The cemetery, rather than the historic district as a whole, then became the primary focus of research for this thesis with the goal of analyzing memory making and the use of the landscape on the ghost tours and in written sources. Specifically, the questions pertaining to this thesis center on: how memory is constructed and reconstructed on ghost tours at Colonial Park Cemetery and how the cemetery's landscape is socially constructed in both the written record and on the ghost tours.

Colonial Park Cemetery (CPC) had a relatively short period of use but a long history within the city of Savannah<sup>1</sup>. CPC is now almost directly in the middle of Savannah's historic district, which makes it a popular spot for tourists and locals alike. Its association with a variety of ghost tours in the city made it a useful case study for this thesis.

---

<sup>1</sup> Colonial Park Cemetery went by many names in its 266 years of existence however, for clarity and consistency throughout this thesis, Colonial Park Cemetery will be used when referencing the cemetery, unless an alternate name is used in a direct quotation.



The research data comes from participant observation on a number of the city's ghost tours, open-ended interviews with ghost tour operators, tourists on the tours, locals, and city officials, and visits to the Georgia State Historical Society (GSHS) to examine written records. The GSHS houses many of the written sources utilized in the analysis, specifically archival data including archaeological excavation files, city council meeting minutes, and religious documents. CPC was also examined outside of the tour events and the landscape within and outside of the boundaries was photographed and captioned in iPhoto at a later date.

Ghost tours play a direct role in the creation and recreation of memories at CPC. Existing features (as well as absent ones) on the landscape influence the stories that are included on the tours. They are analyzed based on the ways in which the tour guides influence memory construction and reconstruction of events associated with CPC. The narratives are also examined through their associations with the landscape in and around CPC, particularly focusing on the ways in which the tour guides include and exclude certain markers on the landscape to influence memory making. Finally, the narratives are explored through their negotiations of history and modernity with regards to who/what is remembered on the tours and who/what is forgotten. The most notable finding in this analysis is the exclusion of two other nearby burial grounds from the ghost tour narratives and the inclusion of narratives about a playground adjacent to CPC. These exclusions and inclusions reflected differing ideas of importance of Savannah's historic citizens, particularly with regards to race and socioeconomic background.

Ghost tour narratives concerning CPC are considered for their importance and usefulness to archaeologists, particularly historical archaeologists. This case study with CPC plays an important role in archaeological, specifically historical archaeological, research. While it is frequently impossible for archaeologists to excavate cemeteries, the use of ghost tour narratives

is helpful as it allows them to learn of the cemetery's inhabitants, history, and use of landscape through the eyes of modern day society. Archaeologists, while more concerned with the past, should still examine modern interpretations of the places they are studying, as they are more frequently interacting with local communities. Narratives, like those of ghost tours, are useful for archaeologists as they often reflect what a community feels is important to remember and discuss. The tour guides, upon narrating their stories of the cemetery, were discovered to directly influence memory construction at CPC. This is not entirely one-sided as the tourists also played a role in the narration of ghost stories at CPC; encouragement by the tour guides led tourists to share their own experiences, which were included on future tours. This fluid kind of authority on ghost tours make them unique as tourists are often considered to be equal to the tour guides with regards to supernatural experiences. Authority is also important on ghost tours as they frequently differed from written sources thus making their tours a form of protest to the more orthodox forms of history telling (Hanks 2015). This addition of modern day narratives to archaeological studies is one that should be utilized more frequently, especially with regards to spaces where intensive surveys and excavations are not always possible, like historic cemeteries.

### **Layout of Thesis**

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 are the introductory chapters in which the topic of CPC is introduced, literature is reviewed, the theoretical framework for this research is discussed; the research questions and methodology are also described. Chapter 2 provides a history of Savannah and CPC. The historical context of the city and the cemetery provides a description of the interrelationship between the two entities up to the present day. This chapter also includes a broader historical context, which situates the analysis of the ghost tour narratives presented in later chapters.

Chapter 3 describes the conceptual framework underpinning this thesis. The conceptual framework includes both a literature review and a theoretical underpinning that will be useful for the analysis of ghost tour narratives at CPC. The literature review examines various works on a variety of subjects central to this thesis including memory, landscape, ghost tourism, mortuary archaeology, and authority and authenticity. The theoretical framework includes descriptions and examples of: Bourdieu's practice theory (2009; Moore 2012), memory and material culture described by Shackel (2010) and Jones (2007), and Low's theory of space and place (2000, 2003, 2014).

Chapter 4 includes the research questions and methodology utilized in the research for this thesis. As mentioned above, the overarching research questions address issues of memory construction and reconstruction and landscape use during these events. The methodology used consisted of a variety of activities including participant observation, semi-structured interviews, and archival research trips to the GSHS. Each activity was deemed necessary in order to collect enough data to answer the research questions.

Chapters 5, 6, and 7 are the analysis chapters in which all of the information from the previous three chapters and the information gathered during the research trips are analyzed to gain a better understanding of the relationship between ghost tourism and CPC. Chapter 5 examines the ghost tours' descriptions of the high mortality rates in the year 1820 and the discrepancies between the tour information and a number of written sources. The high number of deaths in 1820 and the endurance of certain causes of death are explored as a way for tour guides and tourists to explore anxieties in the modern world using a historical setting. These fears are analyzed based on their use in written sources and oral narratives and the use of a specific example of an urban legend told on one ghost tour as a way to discern underlying societal

concerns. The frequent discrepancies between written documents and oral narratives are also analyzed as an alternative form of history contrary to what is considered to be traditional historical sources (e.g. written records).

Chapter 6 analyzes discrepancies between ghost tours and historical documents, focusing on the overall number of bodies buried in CPC. This chapter also examines previously existing cemeteries in the vicinity of CPC and their erasure from Savannah's landscape. This chapter shows that the landscape affects what is or is not included in the ghost tour narratives. Finally, this chapter introduces an example from a number of the ghost tours that demonstrates the importance of the presence of a physical marker on the landscape; this narrative shows how the tour guides often manipulate history as a way to influence tourists' perception of the landscape, which then alters the tourists' memories of CPC.

Chapter 7 explores the effect of the Civil War on CPC and its enduring impact on Savannah as a whole. Many tour operators describe the negative impact of Union troops on CPC during their tours, which is analyzed in the context of the southern heritage that has persisted to the present day. The narratives from the ghost tours are compared with written sources pertaining to the Civil War's impact on CPC as well as observations within the cemetery by the author followed by a discussion on authority and authenticity on the part of the ghost tour operators. This chapter also includes a discussion of race among the ghost tour narratives; the tendency of tour guides to reference African Americans negatively, albeit not explicitly, is considered to be a subconscious form of racism. The common portrayals of the damage from the Civil War on CPC's landscape and the content concerning race on the tours are also analyzed for their effects on memory making among the tourists.

Chapter 8 concludes the thesis. This chapter will explore how various types of data (including ghost tours, written records, and the landscape) presented throughout the thesis speak to the ways in which memories are created. By including and excluding, and emphasizing and ignoring parts of the landscape, the tour guides directly influence what tourists remember about Savannah's, and more specifically CPC's, history. This chapter also comments on possible areas for future research based on the need for more information or other interesting questions that arose from this research. It concludes with final statements on the importance of this work for the fields of archaeology and cultural anthropology.

## CHAPTER TWO: HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The history of Savannah and of CPC stretches back to the mid-eighteenth century. The early years of the “last and poorest of the thirteen [English] colonies” were fraught with economic and social struggles, but with the introduction of slave labor the colony soon began to thrive (Lane 1992:27). The early history of Savannah is helpful to frame an overarching discussion of the establishment and subsequent development of CPC. CPC’s establishment occurred just before the colony began to prosper and its history serves as a unique way to discuss the content of present day ghost tours due to its long presence on the landscape and obvious association with death.

### **The Establishment of Savannah and the History of CPC**

#### Colonial Savannah

Acting on behalf of a group of trustees, James Edward Oglethorpe established the city of Savannah in 1733 (Davis 1976). The trustees had three motivations for establishing Savannah. First, they wanted to relieve the “worthy poor” in Great Britain. Essentially, the trustees wanted to take the destitute, but deserving, people from the streets of major British cities and bring them to Georgia where they would be able to earn a living and be happy instead of being a burden on British society (Davis 1976:8). Building on this, the trustees’ second motivation was to have Georgia assist in Great Britain’s trade network by producing silk and wine. Therefore, the settlers could earn their living producing trade goods for Great Britain and also, with their leftover money, import British goods. Finally, the trustees wanted to establish Georgia to serve as a buffer for South Carolina against the Spanish in Florida (Davis 1976).

While many people were chosen by the trustees to settle in Savannah, many also came at their own expense. Those who came on the trustees’ charity were given 50 acres of land to farm.

Others were sometimes given larger tracts, but no individual could own more than 500 acres. The new settlers needed to protect the colony; therefore their farms were grouped around the settlements in order to defend them in case of attack. Unfortunately, due to the location of their settlements on land of a poor quality, this meant that many tracts assigned to settlers were often barren. This made the settlers' production of any food or trade goods difficult, if not impossible. Another mitigating factor in the slow growth of early Savannah was the fact that the trustees did not allow slavery in the beginning years of the colony; that is they did not allow black slaves only white indentured servants. The trustees believed that slavery would make the settlers lose their will to perform hard work and were not needed for the "gentle arts of cultivating silk and wine with which Georgians were to occupy themselves" (Davis 1976:13). Perhaps most importantly, the trustees believed that slaves were dangerous to have during times of war as they had the potential to turn on the colonists thus threatening the safety of the colony (Davis 1976).

While it was clear that the settlers did not have the means to continue to farm unassisted, the trustees continued their ban on slavery in Savannah. However, after 1740, the donations made through private benefactors dwindled to practically nothing, the parliament had not given the trustees money to keep the colony afloat for half of the decade, and no new settlers were willing to come to Georgia (Davis 1976). Therefore, in 1750, the trustees overturned their ban on slavery (Russell and Hines 1992). This action dramatically altered the population of Savannah. The total population of the city doubled between 1753 and 1760 (Davis 1976). (This point will become relevant when discussing the racial history of CPC and the surrounding areas in later chapters.) Unfortunately for the trustees, their attempt to rescue the colony by implementing slavery did not work. They were not able to accomplish their goal and eventually signed

Savannah over to the crown in 1753 (Davis 1976). It is within this time period of economic upswing and population increase that CPC was established.

CPC opened in 1750 as a public burial ground in Savannah (Georgia State Historical Society [GSHS], Savannah, Georgia 1957: archaeological dig photographs and artifact list [ADP] 95016888). An ordinance from 1789 dedicated CPC to serve as a burial ground “for the internment of Christians in Savannah, regardless of their denomination” (GSHS ordinance [ORD] 95015141). As a result of its age and ownership, CPC has gone by many names including *Christ Church Cemetery, the Old Cemetery, the South Broad Street Cemetery, the Old Brick Graveyard, Broad Street Burying Ground, the Old Grave Yard, and the Old or Brick Cemetery* (Savannah Walking Guides 2014; Trinkley and Hacker 1999; GSHS 1857: rare pamphlet [RP] 95007998; MacDonell 1888:213).

### The Original Cemetery

In the 17 years before CPC opened, the dead in Savannah were buried elsewhere. The location of the original cemetery (not CPC) revealed many inconsistencies among sources. A manual for tour guides produced by the city of Savannah describes how the expansion of wards during the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries reached the original cemetery “laid out by Oglethorpe” along the McDonough Street axis (Fertig 2007). Today McDonough Street is split by Chippewa Square, which is the closest square to CPC on the west side. Another mention of the original cemetery’s location places it in Percival Ward (Trinkley 1999), which would correspond to the area of Wright Square today. This is directly north of Chippewa Square and is bordered to the south by York Street (see Fig. 1). Additionally, Wright Square is where Tomochichi, a Yamacraw chief and friend of Oglethorpe, was buried in 1737 (Fertig 2007), thus increasing the possibility that this is the location of the original cemetery used by colonists.



Based on the information above, the original cemetery is likely in the vicinity of CPC, whether it is northwest or west of CPC might not be known for some time as excavations (whether by the city or archaeologists) are not likely to occur in residential neighborhoods. The discrepancies amongst written sources are only the beginning of the layers of differing information discovered while conducting research for this thesis.



Figure 1. Current map of Savannah’s historic district, 2016. Adapted from <http://crhofmann.com/80/>, Wright and Chippewa Squares are highlighted in red.

### CPC: Establishment and Development

The establishment of CPC in 1750 is one of the only consistent dates across many of the sources that were examined, including the ghost tours. According to Statutes enacted by the Royal Legislature of Georgia (1754-1768), Christ Church (in Savannah) was established as one of eight parishes (Russell and Hines 1992) that make up the province of Georgia on March 17, 1758 (GSHS 95013462). Christ Church was granted possession of CPC after the parish’s

establishment, in the care of the minister Bartholomew Zouberbuhler (GSHS 1758: colonial record [CR] 95013462).

Two proposals by the city, one in 1759 and another in 1760, discuss the possibility of building a public school house on CPC's lot (Candler 1914). The proposal from 1759 discusses the possibility of selling one of the cemetery lots, since there were two, and using the proceeds to build the schoolhouse. In 1760, one of the lots (lot 2) was sold and the money was to be given to named trustees for the purpose of building a schoolhouse and employing a schoolmaster (Candler 1914). The only other mention of the schoolhouse comes in 1765 in which the same individuals associated with the earlier proposals as well as the Surveyor General were appointed to "prepare and certify a Plan of the said Lots" (GSHS 1765: CR 95013462). No other information regarding the building of a public school house right next to, or even on top of CPC has been located. Thus, the matter may have been dismissed for an unknown reason. A potential reason for the abandonment of this plan could be related to a recommendation from a committee in 1762, which advocated for the enlargement of CPC; this committee argued for the enlargement in order to continue burying individuals in CPC. The committee proposed using the spaces set aside for building the schoolhouse for the enlargement of CPC (GSHS 1762: CR 95013462).

Colonial records of 1762 and 1763 support the timeline of the enlargement of CPC in 1763 (Candler 1914; GSHS CR 95013462). In 1762, a committee gathered to examine the state of CPC and recommended the cemetery be expanded to the west to Abercorn Street and one hundred feet to the south to "contain a sufficient Space for a Burying Ground" as well as a suggestion to enclose the space (Candler 1914:720). Additionally, the committee recommended the building of a two hundred square foot burial place "for the Negroes and other Slaves" that,

based on the description and associated map (see Fig. 2) is not directly adjacent to CPC (Candler 1914). Rather, the burying ground is along a line with one of CPC's boundaries, as seen in the map below.

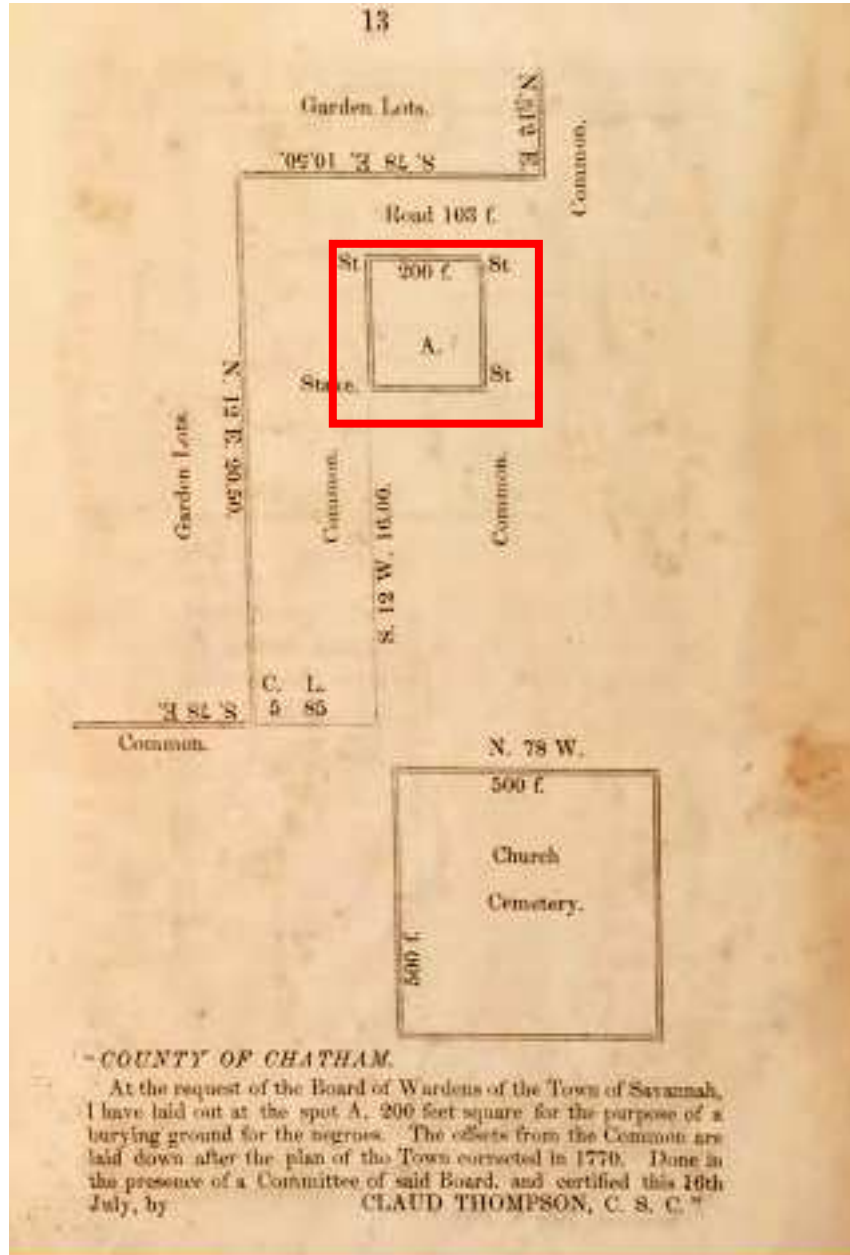


Figure 2. Plan for the establishment of the Negro Burying Ground adjacent to CPC, labeled here as “Church Cemetery.” The burying ground is highlighted in red at the top of the map, (GSHS 1857: CR B.5980.S25).

This is essentially what is discussed in 1763, however it was also discussed that the churchwardens be given permission to levy a parish tax, supposedly to pay for the enlargement of the cemetery (GSHS CR 95013462). In 1768, CPC was further expanded one hundred and seventy feet bordering the eastern side of the cemetery and subsequently enclosed (Candler 1914). Similar to 1763, the churchwardens and vestry were placed in charge of the enlargement of CPC (Candler 1914).

An ordinance from 1789 details the final enlargement of CPC, one hundred and twenty feet east and two hundred and ninety feet south, to its present day size (GSHS ORD 95015141). This ordinance differs from the earlier colonial records in that the County Surveyor, not churchwardens and vestry of Christ Church, was responsible for sectioning off the final portions of land for the cemetery (GSHS 1789: ORD 95015141). Although the cemetery was not sold to Savannah until 1897, the city, rather than the churchwardens and vestry, was responsible for the final addition to CPC. This was due to the fact that the city began advising Christ Church in the operation of CPC in the late eighteenth-early nineteenth centuries (GSHS 1857: RP 95007998). The 1789 ordinance also described the appointment of someone to “superintend the digging of graves” for four shillings, who was managed by the city and Christ Church (GSHS ORD 95015141; GSHS 1857: RP 95007998).

City Council meeting minutes from 1790 describe the brick enclosure of CPC: the wall being six feet high “with stone every fifteen feet” between the brick, and costing 600 pounds (GSHS CR 95013462). Assuming that 600 pounds was in sterling, the cost of enclosing CPC in today’s monetary terms would have cost approximately \$87,500 (Williamson and Officer 2016).

### CPC: Later Years and Closure

The years between 1791 and 1820 were uneventful in the activities associated with CPC, however 1820 was a year for both natural and manmade disasters in Savannah. The city suffered a massive fire in January that destroyed approximately 463 buildings within the area from the river to Broughton Street and from Jefferson to Drayton streets (Gamble 1900). In addition to the fire, a yellow fever epidemic between July and November of 1820 claimed many lives.

The decision to close CPC as well as two other cemeteries in the area, the strangers' burying ground and the Negro burying ground, following the establishment of two new cemeteries on the outskirts of Savannah in the mid 1800s. The stranger's burying ground is also referred to as the potter's field, which is a name commonly associated with burials of the poor. For the sake of clarity, it will be referred to as the strangers' burying ground, unless stated differently in a direct quote. The strangers' burying ground was used as early as 1839 (GSHS 1857: RP 95007998). It was used to bury strangers who did not have any relative buried in CPC, unless someone who had a vault in CPC gave their written permission for the stranger to be buried in their vault. This would have needed the approval of the mayor and/or the cemetery committee who had the authority to approve or deny burial (GSHS 1857: RP 95007998).

By 1852, 280 lots in Laurel Grove Cemetery had been sold, a full year before its official establishment in 1853 (Trinkley 1999). Initially, four acres in Laurel Grove were reserved for the burial of African Americans, which was increased to fifteen in 1857 (Johnson 1996). In 1855 the strangers' burying ground and Negro burying ground were exhumed and moved to Laurel Grove as were a number of bodies from CPC (Gamble 1900). While the reason for the exhumations is not stated, one possibility could be the need for the land to build the Savannah Medical College

in the mid-1800s that is on top of the old Negro Burying Ground (GSHS 1857: RP 95007998). The locations and importance of these two cemeteries are discussed in more detail in Chapter 6.

### The Decline of CPC

After CPC was closed to burials, Christ Church was concerned it might be used for another purpose so they petitioned the city for a large tract of the cemetery to make a private churchyard that would be available only to parishioners of Christ Church (Anderson 2006). The city denied the request and placed CPC under partial authority of the Committee on Squares (Anderson 2006). The litigation between Christ Church and the City of Savannah began as early as 1871 and by 1895 a special committee met with Christ Church to finally reach a conclusion (Gamble 1900). Christ Church sold CPC to the city in 1897, or 1895 according to Gamble (1900), for \$7,500 (approximately \$190,000 in today's current dollar value (Williamson and Officer 2016)) with some conditions: the city had the authority to remove walls and make repairs on the property and it was also responsible for the care of graves, tombstones, monuments and vaults in the cemetery (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). However, the city was not allowed to run streets directly through CPC, widen Abercorn Street (which would lead to paving over of graves) or to sell all or part of it (Anderson 2006). Gamble (1900) is the only source that explains the changing of the cemetery's name from the old or brick cemetery to its present day title of CPC<sup>2</sup>.

The city turned the care of CPC over to the Park and Tree Commission Department in 1897, which began a cleanup of the cemetery by moving broken tombstones over to the eastern wall (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). The city also may have burned off weeds and mule plowed the area to allow grass to be planted, although this was unable to be proved archaeologically

---

<sup>2</sup> Gamble's work (1900), while written within the time period of the litigation between Christ Church and the city of Savannah, is considered to be a secondary academic source, as it is written in the form of a history of Savannah.

(Trinkley 1999). While the extent of possible damage to CPC was not thoroughly documented during restoration work at the end of the nineteenth century, it can be inferred that the department tried to prevent future damage and correct the existing damage done to the cemetery at this time. The selling and subsequent cleanup of CPC coincides with the development of a number of heritage societies, including the Daughters of the American Revolution, who would later erect a memorial arch on the northwest corner of the cemetery and mark it as the main entrance (Trinkley and Hacker 1999).

The next hundred years or so would see the disrepair, vandalism, and further cleanup of CPC. As a result of increased park attendance in the 1940s, the Park and Tree Commission removed a number of damaged stones and put them in storage to prevent further destruction from visitors (Anderson 2006). Since the brick wall was torn down in 1896, a wrought iron fence was constructed in 1956 along the northern and western sides of the cemetery; additionally, a chain link fence was constructed between CPC and a children's park (known by the city as Davant Park) in an effort to curb the vandalism in the cemetery (Trinkley 1999; Anderson 2006).

Between 1967 and 1970, the Trustee's Garden Club used public and private funds to restore CPC; they cleaned and repaired brick vaults and tombs, removed unsightly trees and shrubs, installed a better watering system, repaired walkways, installed new lights and benches, reset stones with brick or concrete, and planted new and exotic trees (Anderson 2006; Trinkley 1999).

The 1990s saw a spike in activity with the extensive archaeological survey conducted under the Chicora Foundation, a non-profit heritage preservation group in South Carolina (Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999). Further restoration efforts for CPC also took place, including the production of new maps and attempts to stabilize the cemetery enough to promote a park-like atmosphere (Anderson 2006). Today CPC gives off such an atmosphere. Both locals

and tourists alike are encouraged to wander through the space during the day along pathways and experience a peaceful environment.

### **Conclusion**

The long histories of both the city of Savannah, Georgia and CPC have highlighted a few of the differences amongst the written records about these locations. A discussion of these inconsistencies continues as the oral narratives from the ghost tours are examined, which makes the written histories of Savannah and CPC important to understand as best as can be discerned. Today, CPC is seen as a park, it is even denoted in its name: *Colonial Park Cemetery*. Little archaeological work has been conducted in CPC, however what was done has resulted in reports and maps on CPC's current status as well as recommendations for the city if/when they choose to perform any work on the cemetery or the surrounding area (Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999). The history of CPC and Savannah is important contextualization for the analysis of the ghost tours at CPC.



## CHAPTER THREE: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

As described in the previous chapter, CPC has a long and interconnected history with the city of Savannah. Today the city manages numerous tour companies, many of which are ghost tours. These ghost tours, specifically the ghost walks, often visit CPC where the tour guides narrate various tales surrounding the cemetery's history. The purpose of this thesis is to better understand how these ghost tours interact with CPC. More specifically, this thesis seeks to examine how the landscape of CPC is negotiated through narratives on ghost tours and how these narratives reflect current cultural beliefs and concerns.

To answer these questions, a theoretical framework and thorough review of existing literature is needed before discussing methodology and, eventually, analysis. Practice theory is the most general theory that will provide the foundation for additional more specific theoretical foci. Subsequent theories that will be employed center on memory and space and place, specifically how the two theories are intertwined. Following the theoretical framework is an overview of existing literature that was deemed relevant for this research. The literature includes writings that narrow down the theoretical discussions to topics such as memory and ghosts, landscapes associated with death, ghost tourism (specifically walking ghost tours), folklore, authenticity, and mortuary archaeology.

### **Practice Theory**

Bourdieu argued that people's actions are not governed by a set of innate rules as Claude Lévi-Strauss described. Nor do people act entirely on their own free will as argued by Jean-Paul Sartre (Moore 2012). Furthermore, a culture cannot be understood outside of the "historical circumstances and traditions that limit or transform the 'rules' of a culture and/or the range of individual action" (Bourdieu 2009:405). Culture is actively constructed; it involves the interplay

of three domains (rules, individual action, and historical traditions) that are acted out through cultural practice, resulting in his praxis or practice theory (Bourdieu 2009). In essence, Bourdieu borrowed from Lévi-Strauss and Sartre's descriptions of culture in order to produce a new theoretical framework for understanding and studying culture. Practice theory involves looking at objective structures (what people say they will do) and acted out strategies (what people actually do) (Moore 2012).

Practice theory includes the concept of *doxa* (Moore 2012). *Doxa* occurs when conditions of the natural world and the social realm seem to correspond. Bourdieu's example is the idea that a woman's place is at home and not at work. Women who stay at home will create a social reality that a woman's place is at home and not at work and it will become a social norm for women to stay at home, thus becoming a cycle (Moore 2012). The cycle can also be applied to ghost tours at CPC; someone, a ghost tour operator, has a ghostly experience in CPC. They then insist on their tours that the cemetery is haunted and even present evidence of such hauntings. Locals and tourists then start to believe that CPC is haunted and may start to look for ghosts or even tell stories of their own personal haunting experiences in CPC that tour guides then retell on future tours.

Practice theory is important to this thesis, as it underpins the other theories used in examining CPC. By examining the content on the ghost tours as well as the ways in which they actively interact with the landscape of CPC, larger questions about ghost tourism at CPC can be answered. Ghost tours in Savannah, specifically those that stop at CPC, are an example of a broad cultural analysis that is useful to archaeologists who seek to understand the ways in which modern narratives can influence memory of landscapes. A number of additional authors included in this chapter also utilize practice theory in their writings (Jones 2007; Shackel 2010; King

2012; Hanks 2015; Gentry 2007) although it is not explicitly stated that practice theory is used, as it is such a broad and encompassing theoretical framework.

### **Memory**

This section narrows the conversation from the encompassing practice theory and provides a synopsis of memory work in relation to the social sciences, material culture, landscapes, and ghosts. This makes memory work a central theoretical concept to this thesis. The following theories and literature on the subject will help answer larger questions about inclusions and exclusions of events on ghost tours at CPC.

Memory is produced when people interact with the material world (Jones 2007). Mills and Walker (2008) describe the evolution of anthropological and archaeological studies of memory beginning with the 1980s and the work of Michel de Certeau; during this time, more attention was being paid to the importance of memory in everyday life and not just big events. The 1990s saw a shift in theoretical approaches with Bourdieu's practice theory (2009). The 1990s also resulted in the understanding that memory work involves a range of practices that include both remembering and forgetting (Mills and Walker 2008). Finally, the 2000s led to the understanding that memory and meaning are connected to one another through the semiotic nature of memory work (Mills and Walker 2008).

Remembrance and forgetting are in an inseparable relationship; most of what history is and has been revolves around deciding what to remember and what to forget (Meskell 2008). Shackel describes three different uses of memory: it can be used to (1) forget or exclude an alternative past, (2) create and/or reinforce patriotism, and/or (3) legitimize a specific heritage by developing a sense of nostalgia (2010). Memory, with regards to CPC, can be used in any of the three ways described by Shackel, however the first one (the use of memory to forget or exclude

an alternative past) can be most easily analyzed from the perspective of the ghost tours. The inclusion and exclusion of information by the tour guides reflects current cultural preoccupations, which, based on when the tours were given, results in differing memories about CPC. The ways in which tourists and tour guides negotiate the space in and around CPC is also important in understanding their construction of memories.

Jones argues that social scientists should move away from treating memory as a “complex mental structure” and should instead analyze remembrance as a complex process that incorporates interactions between the mind and the material world through sociocultural practices (2007:40). Jones, like Shackel (2010), argues that objects do not have agency by experiencing or storing memories, but instead they are the basis for which humans experience memory (2007). Both authors briefly mention their consideration of landscapes as part of material culture in their discussions of how material culture influences memories (Jones 2007; Shackel 2010). Material culture has both past and present meaning already ascribed to it and those meanings vary among individuals and interest groups (Shackel 2010). This also makes it easy to manipulate or transform material culture based on a group’s interests (Shackel 2010).

Material culture and memory are relational and act on a cycle where each influences the other. Jones examines cultural practices (in the form of artifacts) to see how people are mutually engaged with their world (2007). Material culture is also used to temporally situate people; that is, people are able to associate material culture with a particular time. It is also used to measure time since artifacts, and landscapes, connect past actions and events due to their physical endurance (Jones 2007).

Knapp and Ashmore define landscapes as the “materialization of memory, fixing social and individual histories in space” (1999:13). This definition directly ties landscapes with the

memories associated with them. Memories of landscapes frequently display the continuity of these spaces through re-use, restoration, and/or reinterpretation by “reinscribing past meaning(s) onto present landscape(s)” (Knapp and Ashmore 1999:14). Memories that are associated with current landscapes are able to improve understandings of various histories and complexities of local [and non-local] interactions with such landscapes. The interactions with the space of CPC on the ghost tours as a form of memory making will be crucial for the analysis performed in this thesis. It is also important to note that while memories can aid in understanding the histories of landscapes, people are transforming, ordering, and memorializing said landscapes simply by interacting with them (Knapp and Ashmore 1999), which will then alter the memories associated with them.

Landscapes *of* memory (how monuments were constructed and transformed) became an important bridge to understanding landscapes *in* memory (how monuments came to influence social practices) (Mills and Walker 2008). Landscapes are palimpsests in that they have pieces of former landscapes buried beneath present ones; the palimpsest forms as these spaces are altered physically and culturally, forming through interaction not from inscribed meaning (Jones 2007). Spaces thus become excellent ways of perceiving change (Jones 2007); humans can become so familiar with a location that they will notice whether or not features of it or within it have changed, like if a boundary was moved or something was disturbed. This makes the study of CPC’s landscape important within the context of the ghost tours as it affects what people commit to memory on the tours and how they remember it. Tourists are merely passing by CPC; they do not see it as frequently as the tour guides and locals do therefore their memories of CPC may change as the landscape does. By examining landscape as a form of material culture CPC will be examined as an active participant in memory making on the ghost tours.

A location's significance can increase when it is referenced with other spaces and/or when it is invoked by inscription of images or writing (Jones 2007). Jones uses prehistoric rock carvings in Ireland to illustrate his argument that if a rock formation has inscriptions or images carved into it, it becomes a more significant space (2007). However, this could be expanded to include historic examples, such as CPC but instead of inscriptions carved into rock, historical documents and oral story telling can be the mediums in which to study this form of memory making.

### Memory and Ghosts

While the landscape of CPC can be used to examine the ways in which ghost stories are used to negotiate spaces in and around the cemetery, the narratives about CPC on the ghost tours can also be used to analyze the forgetting or remembering of certain events. King examined the intersection of memory and archaeology at Point Lookout, Maryland, a prison camp for Confederate soldiers in the 1860s (2012). She argued that the landscape of Point Lookout influences how the site is remembered, often through ghost stories. King concluded that while the meanings of the ghost stories associated with Point Lookout vary between groups associated with the site, the ghosts are possibly “one way by which to make sense of a landscape of racial complexity” and are a way to force the modern world to remember the tragedies that occurred at a specific location (2012:169-170).

Furthering these ideas, King and Pirok have argued that historical archaeologists have a fresh way to understand landscapes and material culture through the “recognition of place based histories, the understanding of the past as concurrent with the present, and the uniquely unquestioned validity of ghost stories” (2015:7). King and Pirok essentially argued that ghost stories are a way to connect the past and the present and give new meanings to archaeological

landscape studies (2015), which illustrates the importance of ghost stories to archaeologists. In a similar vein, Richardson examined the history of ghost stories and their meanings in the Hudson Valley, New York (2003). Richardson argued for the need to investigate cases of hauntings as they often appear as an alternate form of memory making in which things that are often forgotten or repressed come to the fore (2003). CPC is a landscape that is visited by numerous ghost tours that often present conflicting stories of events that occurred in the city and the cemetery, making it an excellent case study for an application of all three of the authors' arguments.

Pile also discusses ghosts and the spaces they haunt. He argues that ghosts do not frequently leave these spaces because they are associated with death, loss, trauma, and injustice (2005). What is distinctive about the haunting of cities in particular is the “sheer quantity, heterogeneity and density of ghosts” which implies that cities are areas in which a multitude of pasts, traumatic or not, co-exist (Pile 2005:143). Ghosts often disturb a sense of space as they are frequently believed to be associated with specific sites, such as cemeteries, derelict buildings, theaters, and areas where death is believed to have taken possession of domestic spaces (i.e. the haunted house) (Pile 2005). The location and association of ghosts with specific spaces is important as the spaces become remembered in certain ways due to their association with not only death but with ghosts as well.

### **Space and Place**

The connection between memory and space has been described in varying degrees of detail by the authors mentioned previously, however a larger discussion on space and place is necessary to tie together the authors' assertions to studies on space without necessarily relating to ghosts and ghost tours. Michel de Certeau (1984) differentiated place from space in terms of relationships. Place is the “order of which elements are distributed in relationships of stable

coexistence” meaning that places are described in relation to other places, for example this place is beside that one (de Certeau 1984:117). Space is “practiced place” or the interaction of moving elements (de Certeau 1984:117), meaning that places become spaces through human interaction with the location. While de Certeau’s work has been devoted to differentiating space from place and discussing how place can evolve into space or vice versa (e.g. Low 2000), for the purpose of this thesis “space” will be used to describe CPC and the surrounding area as this term has been used by theorists like de Certeau (1984) and Low (2000) to describe areas that involve human interaction.

Low examined how people relate to the areas they occupy and how they make those spaces significant (2003). According to Low, there are two ways in which spaces are distinguished by physical and symbolic aspects: there is the *social production of space*, which combines a variety of factors (including social, economic, ideological, and technological) in processes that result in the material creation of space (Low 2000). There is also the *social construction of space*, which involves the “experience of space” through the ways in which people inhabit and engage the material setting through social exchanges, memories, images, and general daily use that transform it and bestow meaning (Low 2000:128). Basically, the social production of space involves the material manufacturing of a space and the social construction of space involves the attachment of meaning to a space through repeated interaction and use.

Low acknowledged later that this model has its drawbacks; specifically that its two-dimensional structure is constraining (2014). She borrowed from Hall’s idea of proxemics, or the study of how people use space as a facet of their culture, to solve this problem and proposed the concept of embodied space (2003). An embodied space is a location “where human experience and consciousness take on material and spatial form” (Low 2003:2), specifically that embodied



spaces are the physical manifestations of human's thoughts and memories. Embodied space is a helpful addition to the model as it helps anthropologists understand how spaces are created linguistically in addition to movement and spatial orientation (Low 2003).

The idea of embodied space assumes that people are mobile spatial fields with their own motivations, ideas, emotions, and subconscious cultural beliefs and practices, who create spaces as possibilities for social interactions (Low 2014). This then gives the spaces meaning and form (Low 2014). This is similar to de Certeau's (1984) assertion that places become spaces through human interaction. Eventually, with enough interaction, they become landscapes (Low 2014). People unconsciously and frequently create and alter the meaning of spaces through every day interactions that, over time, transform the spaces into landscapes. This addition of embodied space is part of Low's overarching argument that anthropologists (and archaeologists) need to engage in "spatializing culture," which involves studying culture through examination of space and place; it will help anthropologists uncover injustice and other forms of social exclusion (2014:34).

The examination of space and place in an effort to spatialize culture can often lead to contestations over sites, especially their interpretations, by different groups of people. Tourist sites, like CPC, are frequently contested spaces because they are formed and utilized for various (and often competing) social, economic, and political issues (Low 2003). The social construction of the space at CPC includes many pieces of information that are excluded from the ghost tour narratives, which is a form of suppression of other groups' stories for reasons that can be difficult to figure out. However the narratives associated with such contested spaces can, and do, change to reflect the social, economic, or political climates that are currently affecting them. Rodman, like Low (2003), also argues that the ways in which spaces are built through social

contestation and dynamic construction reflects “a temporary grounding of ideas” (2003:218).

Rodman’s argument suggests that biases associated with certain spaces can change due to the dynamic nature of the information discussed about such spaces; for example, the interpretation at a site might exclude information about a cultural group for a few years but management might shift and the tours become more inclusive of that cultural group’s involvement with the site.

Narratives frequently include spaces as part of their structure and these spaces are often included in both emically (those of inhabitants) and etically (those of outsiders) constructed narratives. However, spaces have their own unique narratives, which are shared with and relate to other people and other spaces (Rodman 2003). More importantly, these spaces are culturally constructed and can therefore mean different things to different people and, potentially, at different times (Rodman 2003). De Certeau (1984) argued that narratives surrounding spaces often manipulate them by telling people where to look within the space; upon following the directions of the narrator, people begin to notice things that they might have missed had they not been directed to look for it. This is frequently true on the ghost tours around CPC where the tour guides often direct the tourists’ gazes to enhance their story telling.

### Landscapes of Death

It has been established that spaces gain meaning through human interaction and they often change meanings to reflect changing cultural beliefs. Oftentimes, the fear of other people is extended onto a fear of the landscape, which is reflected in both the behavior associated with the space (e.g. avoidance) (Tuan 1979) and/or the narratives associated with the space, like those on ghost tours. Tuan argued that most, or all, human fears are associated with or stem from various landscapes (1979). These fears are innate as well as conditioned and culturally associated. In essence, human fear of the landscape lessens as a person grows and becomes more in control

over nature; however, fear of malevolent forces increases as they grow, not of Mother Nature but of human nature. Adults fear various malevolent forces of nature, both human and environmental, including disease, fire, supernatural elements, and witchcraft. All of these forces are associated with landscapes in urban spaces; according to Tuan, within a city, humans fear other humans and the possibility that someone will harm them, which leads to the avoidance of certain places (1979). Tuan's overarching argument of humans' innate and conditioned fear of landscapes seems to be associated more with a fear of other humans than a fear of landscapes. Although, fear of a landscape that is associated with malevolent forces of human nature and the environment could reflect a fear of past events that are associated with a specific location as well as a fear of the possibility of future negative events. This fear of landscapes as an extension of a fear of other people is useful for an examination of the ghost tour narratives and the possible reasons behind the inclusion and exclusion of certain narratives.

Fear of a space is also reflected in the ways in which people interact with the area. Tuan (1979) only briefly discussed avoidance behaviors resulting from a fear of landscapes, but Foote (1997) proposed other forms of action in and around spaces that people are afraid of. Foote analyzed landscapes of violence and tragedy in the United States and offers a continuum for placing sites of tragedy within four categories: sanctification, designation, rectification, and obliteration (1997). Each of these outcomes can result in substantial modifications to the landscape. Sanctified sites are set apart from the surrounding areas and are dedicated to remembering a specific event, person, or group. Designated sites are similar to sanctified sites in that they are marked for significance but they are not consecrated. Rectified sites are reintegrated back into everyday life with only temporary commemoration of memory of the violent act. Finally, obliterated sites entail the complete erasure of any evidence of the tragedy to remove it

from view and the sites are no longer used for the same purpose, if they are ever used again (Foote 1997).

Foote placed sites within one of the four categories; he noted the importance of the possibility for sites to shift from one category to another with the passage of time (1997). Most importantly, Foote stressed the value these categories of site placement have on memory; sites of violence are “inscriptions in the landscape...that help to explain how Americans have come to terms with violence and tragedy” (1997:33). While Foote’s categories are helpful in organizing the multitude of sites associated with violence and tragedy they often do not seem to have a lengthy temporal component and often focus on episodes/acts of violence within recent memory. His examples also lean towards the more high profile cases, like serial killers or spree killers, however, his categories could be applied to historical sites and sites of less renown, like CPC. For example, CPC was the site of burials of numerous victims of yellow fever in 1820, which is marked with a plaque. This makes CPC a designated site. The ghost tours tell different stories about the yellow fever outbreak in 1820 and the resulting alterations to CPC and the surrounding area, which emphasizes Foote’s argument that the categorization of sites can change with time.

Tuan’s research on the fear of landscapes, while outdated, is useful as it could speak to the ways in which tour guides manipulate the existing landscape of CPC on ghost tours. The tour operators’ manipulations of the landscape could be practiced in order to potentially increase or decrease tourists’ fear. Foote’s research fits with Tuan’s in that depending on the type of category a site might fit into (like obliterated or even rectified sites) people might tend to practice avoidant behavior of a certain space due to its association with a past negative event. This avoidant behavior does not have to be associated with a violent event within recent memory; it can result from a tragic event in a location’s history (for example, in the 1800s) that has led to

behavioral practices (i.e. avoidant behavior) from various stories about the space. The connection of the narratives on ghost tours to the landscape of CPC is important in explaining how the space of CPC has been altered over time, both physically and socially, and how CPC is utilized on the tours to influence how tourists remember and experience the space.

Bell examines the presence of ghosts on modern landscapes and argues that ghosts are a way for people to define and attach meaning to spaces (1997). In essence, landscapes have ghosts since, like people, they are experienced in a social manner. Bell defines ghosts as being a sense of presence of people who are not physically there. He likens these feelings to a “flood of images of people long gone, or people when they were younger” when a person revisits a space from their childhood (1997:813). Ghosts are likened to an intangible representation of people’s memories that are attached to landscapes they have encountered in the past; while some ghosts may be unsettling and scary, others are friendly and affirming. Additionally, people will treat landscapes differently depending on the ghosts associated with them; if a person senses a ghost that they find disturbing they will treat the landscape differently than if they sense a calming or friendly ghost (Bell 1997). This connects to Tuan’s (1979) writings on avoidant behavior of landscapes that people find fearful, which can be extended to the categories of sites of violence and tragedy described by Foote (1997). Bell’s work is useful to transition from a discussion on memory and space to a look at death and the dead through ghost tourism and mortuary archaeology.

## **Death and the Dead**

### Ghost Tourism

Ghost tourism falls under the larger category of dark tourism and thus goes by many other names including *dark tourism*, *haunted tourism*, *fright tourism*, *morbid tourism*, and

*paranormal tourism* (Lennon and Foley 2000; Stone 2005; Holloway 2010; Gentry 2007; Bristow and Newman 2004; Blom 2000; Thompson 2010). The variations in the names reflect the slight differences in the ways in which ghosts are understood and depicted by different researchers. Dark tourism involves traveling to sites that are associated with death and dying often with a macabre twist (Stone 2006) therefore dark tourism sites do not have to explicitly feature ghosts. Dark tourism has been relevant since the pre-modern age, with roots tied to religious pilgrimages or even Roman gladiatorial games (Stone 2005). An outcome of dark tourism sites is that they allow discussions about death to become more acceptable to bring up, often resulting in deaths that were once ignored being brought to light (Stone 2009). Ghost tourism serves as a way to bring death into the public realm. Fright tourism, on the other hand, is a “natural extension of adventure tourism that occurs when a tourist seeks a scary opportunity for pleasure at a destination that may have a sinister history or may be promoted to have one” (Bristow and Newman 2004:215, 220). Fright tourism suggests a theme park style of tourism that many ghost tours do not promote.

Ghost tourism specifically has been defined as “the desire to encounter ghosts, interest in the supernatural, and visitation of places associated with the spirit world such as cemeteries, haunted houses, castles, and historic towns” (Garcia 2012:14). Hanks defines ghost tourism as “any form of leisure or travel that involves encounters with or the pursuit of knowledge of the ghostly or haunted” (2015:13). Additionally, ghost tours specifically highlight what Hanks calls “public ghosts” in that the ghosts featured on the tours do not focus on ghosts associated with families or with family histories (2015:13). Instead, ghost tours feature ghost stories associated with local, regional, or national histories (Hanks 2015). The goal of taking a ghost tour, from the tourist’s perspective, is to have a positive experience that also engages in their negative

emotions, like fear (Garcia 2012). Ghost tours are also frequently depicted as not being as serious as other historical sites of death (Thompson 2010).

### Ghost Walks

Ghost walks have been studied by a handful of scholars, including Holloway (2010) and Hanks (2015) in the United Kingdom and by Gentry (2007) in Savannah, Georgia. Ghost walks, compared to other forms of ghost tourism like commercial ghost hunts or paranormal ghost investigations, gain the most attention as they frequently move through public spaces (Hanks 2015). Gentry introduced ghost walks as a dark tourism experience that is mobile in which the tourists often alter and negotiate their tour experiences (2007). Gentry argued the walking tours in Savannah give the tourists a better sense of space as well as greater control of the tour guide's performance (2007). The mobility of ghost walks also allows tourists to negotiate their tourism experience by influencing how long they stay in one location, how quickly they move, and what stories are told at each spot (Gentry 2007).

Holloway discussed the content of ghost walks and how they interact and affect tourists' ideas about ghosts (2010). Rather than being erased through the process of modernization and replaced with rational thought and the importance of material objects, the belief in ghosts is a form of "modern enchantment" in which tourists allow their imaginations to build on the ambiguous stories told on ghost tours (Holloway 2010:621-622). The belief in ghosts is also important for the success of a tour, according to Thompson; if the tour guide does not convince the audience of their belief in ghosts then the tourists will not have as much enjoyment in the tour (2010).

Each ghost tour is tied to its city and country of origin and they are also tied to the time period that produces it. This means that ghosts reveal more about the culture in which they are

produced than the era from which they originate. The tourists themselves seek both knowledge of and experiences with ghosts, both of which are intertwined. Knowledge of a ghost can be in the form of either information about a historical figure or the telling of someone's experience with a haunting; ghost tour guides, among other sources (e.g. mediums, paranormal investigators, etc.), can give tourists this knowledge. However, knowledge is connected to experience in the form of contact with a ghost; in order to know a ghost, one has to either directly experience an encounter with it or hear about someone else's encounter with it. Understandably, most tourists do not simply want to hear about other people's encounters with ghosts, they want to experience it for themselves (Hanks 2015).

#### Folklore, Urban Legends, and Ghosts

King and Pirok argued that ghosts have the "ability to define places and objects" and their political resonance is what makes them useful to historical archaeologists (2015:3-4). They go on to state "each ghost and haunting has the potential to tell us how people understand a site or object in terms of its past-use and how they see that past-use interacting with contemporary lives" (King and Pirok 2015:8). This is particularly important when discussing the relationship ghosts have to a specific location as they are often considered tied to those locations. CPC is haunted by numerous ghosts that each present a different perspective on the history of the cemetery and the city of Savannah; one such ghost is that of Rene Rhondolia. Rhondolia's narrative (discussed further in Chapter 5) will serve as an example of how the narratives that describe these ghosts can be utilized to better understand how the people of Savannah remember the history of CPC and how that history is presented to tourists.

Cultures have been studied through their folklore as early as the Grimm brothers in Germany. By seeking out vernacular artists and studying their language, tales, customs, and



beliefs, folklorists are able to better understand a culture's history and forms of expression.

Anthropologists tend to study folklore through the ways in which it “codifies and articulates the dynamics” of a group of people (Toelken 1996:31). Scholars are unable to reach a consensus on the definition of folklore, however they are able to include a list of items that comprise folklore, keeping in mind that each folklorist constructs their list with slightly varying items. A culture's folklore consists of informal expressions that are passed around long enough to become recurrent in both content and form, but they also allow for some variation in performance. The medium of transmission, while not always, is most frequently through oral narration (Toelken 1996). The ghost tours in Savannah fit into these categories that constitute folklore.

To narrow it down more from the larger folklore category are contemporary, or urban, legends. Scholars of this branch of folklore (Nicholaisen 1996; Oring 1996; Bennett 1996; Brunvand 1981), like the larger folklore scholars, are unable to cohesively define what a “legend” is. Brunvand takes an early stab at a definition when he proposed that urban legends are “realistic stories concerning recent events (or alleged events) with an ironic or supernatural twist” and these legends often involve the mass media playing a role in their dissemination (1981:xi). This definition is somewhat narrow and does not include legends that result from events in a more distant past. However, one of the most important aspects Brunvand argued about legends is their “unique, unselfconscious reflection of major concerns of individuals” in the societies in which the legends are frequent (1981). This precedes Hanks' assertion that ghosts reveal more about the cultures producing them than their own era of origin (2015), which makes this an important characteristic of the ghost tour narratives as they often reflect current (and past) societal anxieties albeit not explicitly.

Nicholaisen proposed a number of characteristics of legends that are useful for the purposes of this thesis (1996). Legends are shared narratives between the teller and listener; they provide “craftsmanlike structure to mere sequence of events and create...a textured believable past” through “entertaining narration” (Nicholaisen 1996:99). In essence, the construction of legend narratives are influenced by both the teller and the listener and both parties alter the way in which the story is told. If the narrator tells a legend, this inspires the listeners to share what they know of the legend and can often lead to additions to or new versions of the legend (Brunvand 1981). Legends often “depend upon information which is either unnatural, unknowable, or unlikely” which leads folklorists to frequently classify ghost stories as legends (Oring 1996:326). Legends are also able to straddle the line that divides fact from fiction and are therefore able to include both fictional and factual information (Bennett 1996).

Going a step further, a legend becomes true when it is being told; the act of narrating the legend both recreates and newly creates the past (Nicholaisen 1996). This is similar to the importance of oral transmission in what comprises folklore as a whole and is an important act in memory making, as the teller and the listener are able to construct and reconstruct memories about events associated with certain places. The narrator’s memories are passed on to the listeners through narration and the listeners’ reactions to the narrative influences future iterations. For example, if the listeners react negatively to part of a narrative, the teller might omit said part on their next telling. This then affects the ways a new group of people construct their memories of an event compared to the previous group. To clarify, the above characteristics do not necessarily define a legend, rather they are important when declaring a narrative a legend (Nicholaisen 1996). For the purposes of this thesis, the terms “legend” and “story” (or “ghost story”) will be used interchangeably when discussing narratives in later chapters.

### Authority and Authenticity on Ghost Tours

Ghost tours are able to give different interpretations about the past while also allowing for the formulation of new ways of gaining historical expertise. Each ghostly encounter results in potentially new information about the past that might not be supported by the historical record. However, in some cases, ghostly encounters may affirm historical records. Ghostly encounters also result in new experts who, in encountering ghosts, may present themselves as historical and/or scientific experts on ghosts and the past (Hanks 2015). While Hanks did not identify who the new experts may be, it can be reasoned that these experts may be both ghost tour guides and the tourists themselves. The ghost tour legends can be considered to be “quasi-history” in that they become more credible if they include more specific details of time and place (Brunvand 1981:3), which adds to the authoritative nature of the ghost tours as they often reference specific dates, people, and events that frequently are associated with historical events.

Hanks’ research conclusions regarding authority are specific to paranormal investigators, rather than tour guides, when she argued that they see themselves as serious, dedicated, and authoritative, essentially experts on the paranormal (2015). These investigators produce their expertise and solidify themselves as experts by conducting investigations (Hanks 2015). This argument can be applied to the expertise produced by ghost tour guides, as many of them are also investigators. By narrating their experiences of ghostly encounters and the experiences of others the tour guides are cementing their expertise as well. Furthermore, many of them produce evidence of such encounters in the form of audio files or videos that are shown to participants on the tours.

Ghost tour guides use their narratives to challenge experts of orthodox sources of information (including archaeologists and historians) about the past (Hanks 2015). According to

tour guides, to experience a ghost, one does not need special expertise or prior knowledge. This is significant in that ghost tourism emphasizes that anyone can discover new information about the past through ghostly encounters (Hanks 2015).

### **History of Mortuary Archaeology**

As stated above, the narratives on ghost tours are often told by mediums or paranormal investigators and are presented in ways that frequently contradict more orthodox sources about the past (Hanks 2015). However, it is important to consider some of these orthodox sources of information to better understand how and why certain information is included and other information excluded from the narratives on ghost tours. One important source of such orthodox information is mortuary archaeology.

Some of the earliest archaeological work on historic cemeteries is that of James Deetz and Edwin Dethlefsen (1978). The authors examined cemeteries in New England that were in use in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and found a change in gravestone motifs that corresponded to changes in religious ideologies at the time. They argued for more archaeologists to utilize grave markers in historic cemeteries as a way to study shifting societal trends during the years the cemeteries were in use (Deetz and Dethlefsen 1978). While this article only focused on gravestones in historic cemeteries, the authors made compelling arguments that could be applied to examine other aspects of historic cemeteries like the landscape.

Veit, Baugher, and Scharfenberger analyzed the relative lack of historical archaeological research on religious sites and cemeteries in North America (2009). Speaking more to religious sites than cemeteries, the authors argued little research has been conducted due to the rarity of sites that are in danger of being impacted by modern development. The authors also argued that there is little consideration for such sites to make the National Register of Historic Places list,

unless there are special circumstances. More importantly the authors explained there is an almost insidious lack of interest by many archaeologists to investigate the spirituality of past cultures in both an ideological and material sense. While the authors examined historical archaeological research on religious sites that have associated cemeteries, their arguments are also applicable to cemeteries without accompanying churches. Additionally, historical archaeological work of cemeteries is not conducted frequently due to the potential impact exhuming the dead might have on a community, especially if community members have ancestors buried in the cemetery (Veit et. al. 2009).

Tarlow delves into the historical development of mortuary studies from the 1950s onward (1999). She describes a shift in mortuary studies; mortuary evidence from burial sites was once valued only as a cultural indicator (i.e. to what cultural group did it belong). This shifted to the evidence becoming valued as indicators of complex cultural practices that is often reflected in status differentiation. Mortuary studies have also shifted with regards to social analyses from ethnographic comparisons to examining the evidence in the archaeological context. Tarlow also describes the positives and negatives about the data that result from historic period cemeteries; the high number of graves and more complete data from historic cemeteries provide more secure statistical inferences. On the other hand, due to their more recent material evidence, historical cemeteries do not receive as much state preservation as prehistoric cemeteries and often their grave markers become rearranged or demolished entirely (Tarlow 1999).

#### Archaeological Mortuary Research in Georgia and at CPC

Archaeological mortuary research began in Georgia in the 1800s and has continued to the present day. The earliest studies in the 1800s began around the revolutionary war period and were focused on “national patriotism and hero worship,” which was linked with creating

monuments for Georgians who died in war (Elliot et. al. 2014:4). The early 1900s saw a focus on cemetery relocations that were often crude and far below today's archaeological standards. The mid to late 1900s saw a shift towards more delineation of cemetery boundaries and intensive relocation efforts and the beginnings of examinations of cemeteries from an anthropological as well as an archaeological point of view (Elliot et. al. 2014). Joseph, Hamby, and Long discussed the state of mortuary archaeology in Georgia in a publication for the Georgia Archaeological Research Design; they argued, "cemeteries have received considerable archaeological attention in the form of archaeological involvement in their removal and relocation, but limited in-depth analysis" (2004:183). Some of the archaeological work at CPC (especially in the 1990s and 2000s) attempted to include more in-depth analyses; however, the work done at CPC has largely not been part of academic research, but instead has been part of government or preservation projects (see Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999).

Previous archaeological work at CPC consists of one excavation conducted in the 1950s (Elliott and Elliott 2009) and surveys conducted in the late 1990s and 2000s (Trinkley and Hacker 1999; Trinkley 1999; Elliott and Elliott 2009). The excavation information from the 1950s is limited because the GSHS has only processed the collection based on what information they were given, which is not much. From the little information found, the purpose of this excavation was to locate and verify the grave of Button Gwinnett, one of the founding members of the city of Savannah. Unfortunately, based on the files from the GSHS, it is unknown whether or not Gwinnett's grave was located. The GSHS file of this excavation primarily contains photographs of the excavation and grave markers, photographs of fragments of bones and hair recovered, and subsequent x-rays of various bones (1957: ADP 95016888). There is little writing accompanying the photographs and what is there mainly consists of short descriptions of

photographs themselves. There is no additional information regarding the excavation such as field notes, artifact inventories, soil profiles, etc. (GSHS 1957: ADP 95016888).

Trinkley and Hacker conducted their survey in the 1990s in order to identify areas within the cemetery where the city could dig and place utility lines and other underground lines without disturbing graves (Trinkley 1999). The survey resulted in two reports published for the Chicora Foundation in Columbia, South Carolina (1999; 1999). For the purpose of this thesis one report was found to be more useful than the other, which focused on documenting marked graves (either with tombstones or as burial vaults) and identifying areas of unmarked graves (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). Totals of 560 marked graves and 8,678 unmarked graves were identified, producing a sum of 9,238 graves within the 5.7-acre cemetery (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). Their grave markers documented known graves with relative ease, although the authors do not discuss whether the documentation of grave markers included those stacked along the east wall during phases of restoration.

To identify unmarked graves, the authors utilized a penetrometer, which measures the compaction of soil; areas with compaction over 150 pounds per square inch (PSI) indicated a non-grave and areas with compactions between 50 and 100 PSI indicated a grave. Unfortunately, distinguishing burial areas from non-burial areas was more difficult than the authors initially imagined. They found varying compaction rates throughout CPC. While they do not distinguish a time line of what they consider to be older or newer graves, they found that older graves had a higher compaction (between 120 and 150 PSI), more recent graves had a moderate compaction (between 80 and 120 PSI), and exhumed graves had the lowest compaction (less than 80 PSI). This resulted in their positing that most graves overlapped with one another on all sides (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). The authors' conclusion is tentatively agreeable, however by only

using a penetrometer to identify areas of marked and unmarked graves, the authors have a limited scope of data to view when analyzing their findings. Trinkley and Hacker could have potentially utilized other methods (e.g. ground penetrating radar, electromagnetic or resistance surveys, or thermal imaging) that may have generated different and more conclusive results; instead, the authors only used a penetrometer that produced results that led to less convincing conclusions. Although their methodology was not as thorough as it could have been, Trinkley and Hacker's resulting survey map provides evidence of the extensive burials throughout CPC. Their advice for city officials was to consult their [Trinkley and Hacker's] maps before any more work around CPC is performed, especially due to the fact that they were unable to establish firm boundary lines for the cemetery (Trinkley and Hacker 1999).

This research on mortuary archaeology, specifically archaeology of historic cemeteries and archeology in Georgia and at CPC, is important for this thesis as it provides a synopsis of the work being done in this field of research. It also speaks about the need of archaeologists to continue to investigate cemeteries as important sources of cultural beliefs and ideas. While not necessarily in the same vein as the researchers above, their arguments will be utilized as a way to provide an understanding of how the landscape of historic cemeteries, like CPC, can and should be utilized by scholars and non-scholars alike to better understand the influence the landscape has on memories and interactions with the space.

### **Conclusion**

CPC will be examined through the lens of the ghost tours that visit the cemetery using a combination of theoretical frameworks: practice theory, memory, and space and place. The research questions detailed in Chapter 4 will be addressed using one or more theoretical bases. Each of the theoretical frameworks, Bourdieu's practice theory, Jones' and Shackel's memory



and material culture, and Low's spatializing culture all connect to one another in terms of their execution. Bourdieu's practice theory is the overarching theoretical basis for this thesis. It is helpful to explain the active construction of a culture's every day actions, like how tour guides narrate ghost stories about CPC and what historical circumstances and individual choices are reflected in the material told to tourists. More importantly, Bourdieu's concept is important in explaining the contradictions that often occur between what is historically documented to have happened and what the tour guides describe. Jones' and Shackel's discussions on memory and material culture are helpful in describing the ways in which different people use the landscape of CPC to construct and reconstruct their memories of the space. Jones' and Shackel's works, while not explicitly stating their theoretical foundations (in that they do not detail which theoretical framework influenced their work), seem to utilize aspects of practice theory in detailing how material culture is used to influence memory construction. Finally, Low's argument of spatializing culture and the model of the development of spaces through interaction is useful to understand how CPC developed into a site of ghostly occurrences. It also ties in well with memory and material culture by examining the use of spaces to understand cultures and specifically the exclusion of certain groups of people, which affects the memories of a particular space.

CPC is a perfect case study to examine the ways in which places, specifically cemeteries, are remembered. The city of Savannah has a long history that included wars and destruction; the ghost tours associated with the city often pick and choose what items of a story to include and disregard on their tours, which makes an in depth discussion of memory associated with CPC important. The research gathered on CPC will further encourage discussions about memory in the form of ghost stories and haunted landscapes. While there has been some archaeological

work done in the cemetery in the past, it is almost impossible for an archaeologist to excavate an entire cemetery to answer questions about the early citizens of a city like Savannah. The material on CPC from the ghost tours and other historical sources represents useful ways for archaeologists to learn more about the physical and cultural landscape of a location. This research can be applied to larger mortuary and memory studies that combine anthropology and historical archaeology.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND METHODOLOGY

### Research Questions

Based on the conceptual framework described in the previous chapter, a series of questions have been developed that drive the research presented in this thesis. Two overarching questions underpin smaller, more specific queries. The research questions include:

1. How is memory constructed and reconstructed on ghost tours at Colonial Park Cemetery?
  - a. How is Colonial Park Cemetery interpreted on ghost tours?
    - i. What narrative elements, topics, characters, and themes are discussed in depth by tour guides, what is excluded, and why?
    - ii. What does the excluded information reveal about current cultural and social ideas?
  - b. How do tour guides negotiate history and modernity on the ghost tours?  
Specifically, how are the dead remembered and the living represented?
2. How is Colonial Park Cemetery's landscape socially constructed in both the written record and on ghost tours?
  - a. How do tour guides use Colonial Park Cemetery's landscape and surrounding area to present and alter its history?

The sub queries presented above allow for an examination of the types of information discussed by tour guides and how they use and, potentially, alter the information they have. Additionally, the final sub query allows for a better understanding of the multiple ways in which the landscape of CPC is understood by tourists and locals alike. The source materials and methods described below will be used to answer these questions.

### Methodology and Source Material

Over the course of two research trips to Savannah, one in the summer of 2014 and another in the summer of 2015, materials were gathered for this thesis from three major sources: narratives from ghost tours around the city's historic district; interviews with tourists on the

ghost tours, ghost tour guides, and Savannah locals, including city employees; and archival sources from the Georgia State Historical Society (GSHS). CPC was also visited apart from the ghost tours in order to reexamine and take photographs of the landscape of the cemetery during the day, as no one is allowed inside past 8:00pm.

### Ghost Tours

The city of Savannah has numerous ghost tour companies operating within its limits. For approximately two weeks in July of 2014 field methods in the form of participant observation were practiced on seven such tours in the city's historic district, an approximately two square mile area. The tours were chosen to gain a better understanding of how the city's history, specifically that of CPC, is portrayed to tourists. The tours, each permitted by the city, were primarily booked and paid for online, attended in the evenings, and much of the material discussed was recorded from each tour. All seven tour guides granted verbal permission for their tours to be recorded; the script for consent is shown in Appendix A. During the period of research, tour guides were required to have passed a test regarding the city's history.<sup>3</sup>

Savannah's physical environment lends itself to feelings of unease and tension on the tours. A combination of high humidity and temperature even at night led to a lot of shifting and moving at each stop on the tours. Large trees that often seem to loom over tourists and the uneven brick streets also added to feelings of discomfort on the tours. The time of day, or more specifically night, during which the tours took place is the final factor in the mood of the ghost tours as darkness frequently increases fears of what is out there and ramps up tourists' imaginations.

---

<sup>3</sup> As of 2016, the test is no longer required for potential tour guides. Now, guides simply have to be registered with a company or as an independent guide.

Each of the tours initially met in one of the city's squares. Once everyone arrived the tour guide would introduce him or herself and typically begin the tour in that particular square. Their stories lasted anywhere from five to ten minutes, many of which were accompanied by some sort of recording, photograph, or video evidence of the haunting they were talking about. The group would proceed to follow the tour guide to a different location for the next story. The tours would stop anywhere between four and nine times and took one and a half to two and a half hours to complete. Some tours walked shorter distances, approximately a half-mile, while others walked up to one and a half miles within the historic district. During the walks, the tour guide would frequently engage in informal conversations with the tourists about where they were from, why and how long they were in Savannah, or about their beliefs about ghosts and the paranormal; however, these informal discussions stopped once the next stop on the tour had been reached. While the tour guide was describing the activity at a location there was very little interaction between the guide and the tourists; at the most the tour guide would ask a question or two about whether or not the participants had heard of something before or they would ask participants to pass around a tablet to view accompanying evidence to their story. The tours finished in various locations within the historic district and the tour guide would offer to lead the participants back to the original square or allowed them to leave from the final location.

Six out of the seven ghost tours visited CPC, all of which were recorded. One recording was inaudible on the recorded file; therefore only five tours have been transcribed. As they were recorded and there was frequent movement during the tours, brief notes were made upon their conclusion and further notes were recorded while transcribing the audio files. The transcriptions were then coded based on topics of interest from the ghost tours (e.g. illness, war, children, burial numbers, etc.). After coding, the transcriptions were cross-referenced with subject matter

from primary and secondary written sources related to CPC. The written were examined to determine how the ghost tour narratives may or may not align with other histories of Savannah and CPC. As a small example, almost all of the tours gave differing numbers for the amount of people buried in CPC in relation to the number of headstones. A report given by Trinkley and Hacker (1999) was examined, in which they determined the exact number of marked graves/tombs (560) and the number of unmarked graves/tombs (8,680) in CPC. This contrasts with information given on a few of the ghost tours. An examination of primary and secondary sources in Chapter 2 produced a thorough historical timeline of CPC; comparing this information with the information delivered on the ghost tours will allow an analysis of what of CPC's history is being included (and how it is potentially manipulated) and what is excluded on the ghost tours. This will help to answer each of the research questions and their subsections in depth.

### Interviews

Twenty-five people were interviewed over the course of both research trips in 2014 and 2015. In 2014 the interview participants consisted of tourists on the same ghost tours that were recorded, the tour guides, and locals in an effort to gain an understanding of their perceptions of the ghost tours and how they related with Savannah's heritage. City and historical society employees were interviewed in 2015 to understand how information for tours is gathered and how the city manages the tours.

Eighteen people were interviewed in 2014: three locals, seven tour guides, and eight tourists. Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained to conduct interviews during which an audio recording device would be in use (see Appendix A). As per IRB protocol, a business card with the Principle Investigator's telephone number and that of the IRB office at

North Dakota State University was given to each interview participant in case anyone interviewed had any questions or concerns regarding the interview or its use (see Appendix A).

The tour guides would often introduce me at the beginning of the tours where they would then ask if anyone would be willing to be interviewed at the conclusion of the tour. When the tours wrapped up, a few people from various tours, including the tour guides consented to be interviewed. The interviews were semi-structured in that participants were asked open-ended questions approved by the IRB as well as follow-up questions based on their responses. Thus, the questions asked varied based on the person being interviewed. The engagement with the questions and the thoroughness of the answers meant the interviews ranged in time; some took five to ten minutes, others took up to a half an hour. Three different lists of questions for tourists, locals, and tour guides were utilized, with follow up questions added later (see Appendix A). These lists of questions were created in line with previous research questions in mind, however the tour guides' questions are still useful for providing data as to how and what they narrate about CPC and how they involve the cemetery's landscape in their narratives. This also resulted in the tourist and local interview questions no longer being useful for the purposes of this thesis.

In addition to recording the interviews, notes were taken on the participants' responses and proved useful in asking follow up questions. Eight tourists were interviewed; they were asked questions regarding their activities in the city and their perceptions of the tour they just took. These lines of inquiry helped to develop a better understanding of why they wanted to learn about Savannah from the perspective of a ghost tour.

Seven tour guides were interviewed including one from a tour that was not taken. They were asked about their lives in Savannah and how they gained their employment as a ghost tour guide in an effort to better understand the draw of working in the ghost tourism industry as well

as how they came to know the stories they tell on tours. The interviews with the tour guides had the most follow up questions, especially when the guides began discussing their relationships with the City of Savannah or previous work with other tour companies. Although the tour guides consented to having their first names used in this thesis, pseudonyms were assigned to each guide to prevent any conflict or recognition in the community. The information presented in the following chapters when discussing tour guides and their tours is drawn primarily from five tours; two of the tours fall under the ownership of one tour company (the tour guides are Gloria and Stephen). The other three guides (Sandy, Patty, and Karl) are part of different tour companies or are independently owned with the owner acting as the tour guide while also periodically engaging in paranormal investigations.

Interviewing Savannah locals was different from that of the tour guides and tourists, as they and myself did not necessarily share the common activity of participating in ghost tours. Since the historic district is a large tourist attraction, there was some difficulty finding locals who were willing and had the time to be interviewed. The three who did agree to be interviewed were often working at the time of the interview and had to balance helping customers with answering the interview questions. One worked at a bookstore, another at the GSHS, and the third owned a small retail store. As I was a customer in all three places, I decided to interview these people based on brief discussions with them. They were asked about their lives in Savannah as well as how they perceive ghost tours in the city (favorable, unfavorable, indifferent, etc.). These were asked in an effort to better understand how those unaffiliated with ghost tours saw the tours' relationships with the city's representation of the past and how ghosts were perceived as a way to tell a city's history.



The interviews with the tour guides provided a wider range of information as tour guides are locals themselves and they interact with a wide range of people on a daily basis, including employees from the city government. Their interviews ranged in topics from their previous work at other ghost tour companies, how they became involved with their new company, their interactions with the city, and their interactions with tourists. In contrast, the interviews with the tourists and the locals were rather narrow in scope and only focused on the tourists' reasons for taking the ghost tour and the locals' personal views of the tours. Very few follow up questions were asked of these two groups, unlike the tour guides. Following the 2014 trip to Savannah, a shift in the direction of the research for this thesis occurred, which led to the exclusion of the tourists' and locals' interviews and more focus on tour guides' interviews.

The interviews conducted in 2015 were deemed necessary as the topic of this thesis shifted to a more specific focus on CPC. The interviews from 2014 were reexamined and more follow up interviews with the tour guides were needed as well as interviews with city and GSHS employees. An IRB amendment was made and new questions were written based on the interviewees (see Appendix A). The new questions for tour guides centered on where their information for the tours was gathered and how they determine what to include and exclude when presenting information to tour participants. Unfortunately, none of the tour guides from the previous year responded to emails or phone calls and no further information was gathered from said group.

Appointments were made with two city employees regarding the City of Savannah's management with the ghost tour companies and how much tourism, specifically ghost tours, has grown in Savannah. A third city employee with the Cemeteries Department was interviewed via email (see the end of Appendix A for questions specific to him). As with the tour guides, a

pseudonym was assigned to this employee to prevent conflict or recognition by anyone in the community. This employee, Mark, also emailed a database of every burial in CPC known by the city as of September 2015. This database includes information on where people were born, age, date and place of death, sex, where they were interred, and additional comments (Colonial Park Cemetery Internments 2015).

The interview with the GSHS employee consisted of questions regarding how the historical society obtains the materials in its collections and who primarily utilizes the collections. The interviews conducted in 2015 add to those conducted in 2014 and will help answer the research questions regarding the source material for tour guides and the city's involvement in tourism, specifically with regards to CPC.

The interviews from both 2014 and 2015 were transcribed after their conclusion. The interviews were coded based on the type of person being interviewed (e.g. tourist, tour guide, local, employee, etc.). The interviews were further coded based on the types of responses given and whether or not these responses fit into any overarching themes (e.g. tour guide-city interactions, referencing other tours, etc.).

### Georgia State Historical Society

Trips to the GSHS in Savannah were taken in both 2014 and 2015; the 2014 trip consisted of a brief walk through the facility and an interview with an employee for the "local" groups of interviewees regarding their perceptions of the ghost tours in the city. The questions asked of the GSHS employee in 2014 were therefore different from those asked of the GSHS employee in 2015. The employee in 2014 was asked questions based on their local knowledge of the ghost tours in the city. The employee in 2015 was asked questions based on their knowledge

of their collections at the historical society and their patrons. The 2015 trip to the GSHS also consisted of archival research centered on CPC.

The GSHS was contacted between the summers of 2014 and 2015 and information about CPC, including previous archaeological work in the cemetery, was obtained via mail. These materials included photographs, eighteenth and nineteenth century City Council meeting minutes and nineteenth century newspaper clippings regarding CPC's use, additions and establishment of other nearby cemeteries, and its condition after it closed to burials in 1853. The research trip in 2015 consisted of a reexamination of the documents sent via mail to see if they could yield any additional information; for example, photocopied materials about an excavation in CPC in 1957 were reexamined, but the folder was severely limited. After searching the online archives and talking to an employee, it was discovered that the GSHS did not have any additional information pertaining to the excavation. Other documents found at the GSHS included internment records, documents concerning CPC's ownership by Christ Church, information pertaining to deaths in 1820, and newspaper clippings about the space in and around CPC.

The GSHS has a collection of maps that were also inspected in an effort to better understand the development of the city and CPC over the early colonial years to the present. A search through the map records corresponding to the establishment of a Negro burying ground<sup>4</sup> near CPC unfortunately returned no more information than what was sent via mail. The colonial records and city documents from the GSHS will allow for a better understanding of the early cultural landscape of CPC, which is important when answering the second research question about the social production and construction of CPC's landscape.

---

<sup>4</sup> The Negro burying ground is referenced by this name in numerous colonial records, subsequent books, and archaeological reports. For the purposes of this thesis it will be referred to as the Negro burying ground, or NBG, unless referenced differently in a direct quote.

## CPC Revisited

A quick survey of the grounds and surrounding area of CPC, approximately a six-acre area, was performed in 2015. Photographs were taken of each entrance into CPC as well as the surrounding sidewalks, fencing, basketball court, children's playground, and a number of grave markers, tombs, memorials, and pathways leading through the cemetery. Comments were added in iPhoto based on notes written at the time they were taken to create a photo log. The comments consist of the position of the photographer in relation to the landscape including: where the photographer was standing when the pictures were taken (either inside or outside of the boundaries of CPC), the direction the photographer was facing, what was in the photograph, and any other relevant information. These photographs are a useful way to understand CPC's current layout and to visualize the changes of the cemetery over the past three centuries, especially the phases of expansion detailed by the colonial records and by Trinkley and Hacker (1999). Within the confines of the cemetery, a brief walk was conducted as a form of participant observation with the goal of engaging with the landscape of CPC through the eyes of a tourist as well as a researcher. Another goal was to potentially witness how other people, whether tourist or local, engage with the space of CPC.

Another brief walk around the area outside of CPC's boundaries was also taken to better understand how the external landscape, and especially the children's playground and western sidewalks influence remembrance and forgetting on the part of the ghost tours taken the previous year. Both surveys will speak to the research questions about memory as well as the use of landscape by tour guides. The participant observation and the pictures taken of the areas external to CPC will allow for further discussion of its current physical landscape, which will be

important in answering the second research question regarding the space of CPC. The pictures provide an additional primary source of the current landscape that can be utilized for analysis.

### **Conclusion**

Over the course of two trips in 2014 and 2015 data were collected using the methodologies described above. The data gathered in 2014 centered around ghost tourism in Savannah's historic district, how this form of tourism was perceived by different groups of people who dealt with ghost tours directly (tour guides and tourists) or indirectly (locals), and how ghost tours fit into the city's representation of the past. The majority of the data gathered in 2014 came from recorded ghost tours or recorded interviews. As this thesis topic shifted, new data were gathered to better answer the new research questions. The collected data that is analyzed in the following three chapters draws primarily from tour content and interviews with tour guides over interviews with locals and tourists.

The information gathered in 2015 consisted of additional interviews of city and GSHS employees, searching through GSHS collections, and follow up walking surveys of CPC. Both trips resulted in data that speaks directly to each of the research questions outlined at the beginning of this chapter. Specifically, the transcribed tours that stopped at CPC are crucial to help answer how memory is constructed and reconstructed on the ghost tours. They are also important in determining what information is included and what is excluded on these tours and why. The interviews with city and GSHS employees provide information as to why tour guides might not include certain information on tours as well as whether or not the tour guides or companies utilize city and/or GSHS sources for their tour content. Finally, the information collected at the GSHS and the walking surveys in and around CPC are useful to analyze the changing social and physical landscape of CPC from its establishment to the present day.

## CHAPTER FIVE: ANXIETY AND 1820

One of the most consistent discussions on the ghost tours had to do with events that occurred in 1820. It was during this year that many of Savannah's citizens perished from a yellow fever epidemic. However, many written sources as well as the tour guides' narratives presented differing accounts of what exactly happened that year and the number of deaths resulting from the epidemic and from other causes. The written sources, including both primary and secondary documents, were compared to the tour narratives in an effort to better understand the construction of memory at CPC. The differences in written sources were examined because they speak to the ways in which events are remembered in more official sources compared to oral narratives. The tour data regarding 1820 reveal a number of anxieties in modern day Savannah, which are exemplified in an analysis of one of the legends told on a ghost tour. The landscape of CPC enters in when examining physical markers in the cemetery that both support and refute the tour guides' narratives.

### **Death and Disaster in 1820**

#### Symptoms of Yellow Fever and Causes of Death in the Nineteenth Century

Yellow fever is transmitted to humans by the bite of a female *Aedes aegypti* mosquito. It is not spread through person-to-person contact and is therefore not contagious. Numerous cases in adults and a majority of cases in children are mild or even asymptomatic (Patterson 1992). However, those cases that are symptomatic present serious symptoms occurring in two phases: the first phase occurs three to six days after infection and involves fever, muscle pain, strong backache, headache, shivers, loss of appetite, and nausea and/or vomiting (World Health Organization [WHO] 2014). Often the afflicted will improve and symptoms will disappear after three to four days (WHO 2014). However, others will enter a second, more dangerous, phase

within approximately 24 hours of the initial symptom remission: in this phase the fever returns followed by jaundice, abdominal pain, vomiting, bleeding from the mouth, nose, eyes, or stomach, blood in the vomit and stool, and deteriorating kidney function (WHO 2014). People who enter the second phase also have impaired neurological function including confusion, convulsions, and coma (Patterson 1992). Half of the people who start the second phase die within a week to two weeks while the other half recover but with significant organ damage (WHO 2014). As described in Chapter 2, Savannah was hit hard by yellow fever in 1820. Table 1, shown below, compares numbers of deaths occurring in Savannah in 1820 as presented by a variety of sources. It is noteworthy that this table includes widely varying counts; a potential reason for the differing numbers could lie in the signs and symptoms of the yellow fever virus just described. Moreover, historical accounts of the yellow fever epidemic also reveal the ambiguity in discerning cause of death during this time. Specifically, “past epidemics were not recorded with modern medical knowledge and terminology, so it is not always possible to diagnose yellow fever (or any other disease) retrospectively” (Patterson 1992:855).

One source that included causes of death within the document was produced by H. Russell (GSHS 1820: pamphlet [PT] 95013257, f. 3). Aside from being the public’s “obedient servant” it is unclear who Russell was. What is clear is that Russell was hired to produce a pamphlet for the citizens of Savannah to show a “list of the deaths which have occurred” in 1820 (GSHS PT 95013257:3). Russell’s counts of deaths include other information such as: day of burial, name, age, country of origin, and disease/manner of death. Many of the manners of death are abbreviated and it is difficult to discern what they mean. Each entry in this pamphlet was reviewed for a cause of death, all of which are listed. Deaths in 1820 include: lockjaw, choleric, cramp, s. (sore) throat, suicide, intemp., debility, f. in peri. (fever in...), bo. com., s. struck, ling.,

sick/ill/illn., consump. (consumption), unknown, gout, bl. (black) vomit, dropsy, old age, child bed, casualty, inebriety, convul. (convulsions), decline, bleeding, f. (fever) and ague, worm f., teething do., jaundice, do., dysentery, accident, or the cause was simply left blank (GSHS PT 95013257:3). At least ten of these entries correspond to symptoms listed above (WHO 2014; Patterson 1992) and could potentially be related to yellow fever.

William Waring, a doctor in Savannah provides another source from 1820 describing the symptoms of yellow fever (Russell and Hines 1992). In his report titled “Report to the City Council of Savannah on the Epidemic of Disease of 1820” Dr. Waring described symptoms of the virus to be: black “emissions from the stomach, violence and consequent intercurrent of paroxysms” (fever), the neck and shoulders becoming yellow (jaundice), bile discharge, hemorrhaging from nose, mouth, ears, kidneys, stomach, intestines, uterus, and wounds, urine becoming clear or red, fur on the tongue, mental changes resulting in bouts of anger, apathy, cheerfulness, stupor, and finally black vomit before the victim died (Russell and Hines 1992). Each of these symptoms (except the fur on the tongue) corresponds to the symptoms of yellow fever described above (WHO 2014; Patterson 1992).

### Number of Deaths

The data presented in Table 1 attempts to include only the number of deaths resulting from yellow fever in 1820 as given by a variety of primary and secondary written sources. To clarify, this table is not depicting the number of yellow fever victims buried in CPC, but rather the number of yellow fever deaths in Savannah as a whole. This table does not include numbers given on the ghost tours because only two tours included numbers of deaths in 1820, which is discussed at the end of this section. The table is being used to illustrate the discrepancy amongst primary written sources during and after the epidemic, which contrasts with a common number



(the number 666) and often-associated theme in popular written sources and ghost tour narratives. These differences speak to the ways in which the dead are remembered in official sources compared to oral narratives. These memories also affect how the landscape of CPC is remembered; whether it is seen as a space overflowing with the dead and their restless spirits (see Chapter 6) or just an old graveyard, CPC is definitely known to include the graves of many yellow fever victims of 1820.

The written sources proved difficult to interpret as many have listed the number of deaths in 1820 within a discussion of the yellow fever epidemic, but do not specify whether or not their numbers are directly associated with the virus. In addition to the yellow fever epidemic, a large fire broke out the same year that destroyed a large section of the city and more than likely killed a number of people as well, adding to the difficulty of determining causes of death in 1820. Additionally, as has been shown above, the determination of yellow fever as the cause of death based on symptoms has also been problematic.

Table 1. Number of Deaths from Yellow Fever in 1820, Written Sources

<b>Source</b>	<b>Number of Deaths</b>
Russell (GSHS 1820: PT 95013257:3)	695 white, approximately 200 African/African American
Waring (1821) (in Russell and Hines 1992)	666
Gamble (1900)	516
CPC Plaque (1970)	Approximately 700
Patterson (1992)	700-729 (approximately nine percent of the total population)
Piechocinski (1999)	Between 666 and 700 (for the year, it is unclear if all were from yellow fever, however, the author stated that 40 markers in CPC list yellow fever as the cause of death)
Cashin (2001)	666
McGriff (2012)	666 (rounded up to 700 by the city)

Russell's numbers are found in a pamphlet titled "An Official Register of the Deaths which Occurred among the White Population in the City of Savannah during the Extraordinary Season of Sickness and Mortality which prevailed in the Summer and Fall Months of the Year 1820: To which is annexed a list of the persons (as far as they could be ascertained) Who died out of the City, after retreating from it; Also, the aggregate amount of deaths among the people of color." Judging from the title, it is relatively safe to say Russell included only those deaths from yellow fever. Despite its long title, the pamphlet is short. Counting the number of deaths from the months of July to November, when the virus was supposedly the deadliest, Russell separated the deaths by the deceased's place of origin using public records that were accurate to the best of his knowledge. His categories are the following: those from Georgia, from other states, foreigners, and unknown. According to his counts, more people died in September (232) and October (228) than other months (53 in July, 119 in August, and 63 in November) and more foreigners and people from other states died than those from Georgia or whose origins were unknown (GSHS 1820: PT 95013257:3).

Russell's information concerning the deaths among African Americans in and around Savannah was much less exact. He explained that the lack of information on the deaths of African Americans results from "the imperfect manner in which the deaths, among the people of colour, have been kept..." therefore "it is difficult to ascertain the true number" (GSHS 1820: PT 95013257:3). Russell estimated the number to be approximately 200. This speaks to the importance of race in Savannah before the Civil War. When white people died in and around Savannah from yellow fever, meticulous records were kept. On the other hand, when African and African American people died from the same cause, such records were either not created or did not contain as much detail. Russell does not indicate the legal status, free or enslaved, of the

African/African American people dying from the disease. Although the data came from an earlier time period, Davis noted that in 1774 when a slave died it was the other slaves, not masters or any other white person, who buried them (1976). Regardless of who buried the deceased, slaves were wealth in the eyes of their owners. The owners knew exactly how many slaves they owned and when they died. The ways in which records were kept in the early nineteenth century reflects the state of race relations in Savannah at the time. The meticulous record keeping of deaths of white citizens by the local government compared to the two-sentence description of deaths among African Americans in one season in 1820 illustrates the difference in value of the white citizens in Savannah over that of the African American citizens.

Russell and Hines' source for their estimate of 666 people having died in 1820 from yellow fever comes from Dr. Waring. Waring's report (written in 1821) was unable to be viewed at the GSHS and therefore the information is coming from a secondary source (Russell and Hines 1992). Waring recorded the deaths of citizens similar to Russell (GSHS 1820: PT 95013257:3) by tabulating the deaths based on month. Waring's numbers are: 14 dead in June, 39 in July, 111 in August, 241 in September, and 263 in October in addition to three in May (Russell and Hines 1992). Russell and Hines point out that Waring took a stab at potential causes of the disease; he came close to connecting it with mosquitoes but fell just short and associated it with water. Waring's numbers add up to 671 victims of yellow fever, however, Russell and Hines specifically state that 666 people died from the virus (1992). A potential reason for their disregard of Waring's numbers is discussed in a later section on anxiety.

Another source that listed deaths from yellow fever in 1820 was "*A History of the City Government of Savannah, GA. From 1790 to 1901*;" this book not only examines the development of the city government but the larger history of Savannah as well (Gamble 1900).

Unlike Russell (GSHS 1820: PT 95013257) and Waring (in Russell and Hines 1992), Gamble separates the deaths from yellow fever in 1820 by sex not month (1900). Based on census data taken in 1820, he lists 605 males and 191 females as dying in 1820 with 516 of those as dead from yellow fever.

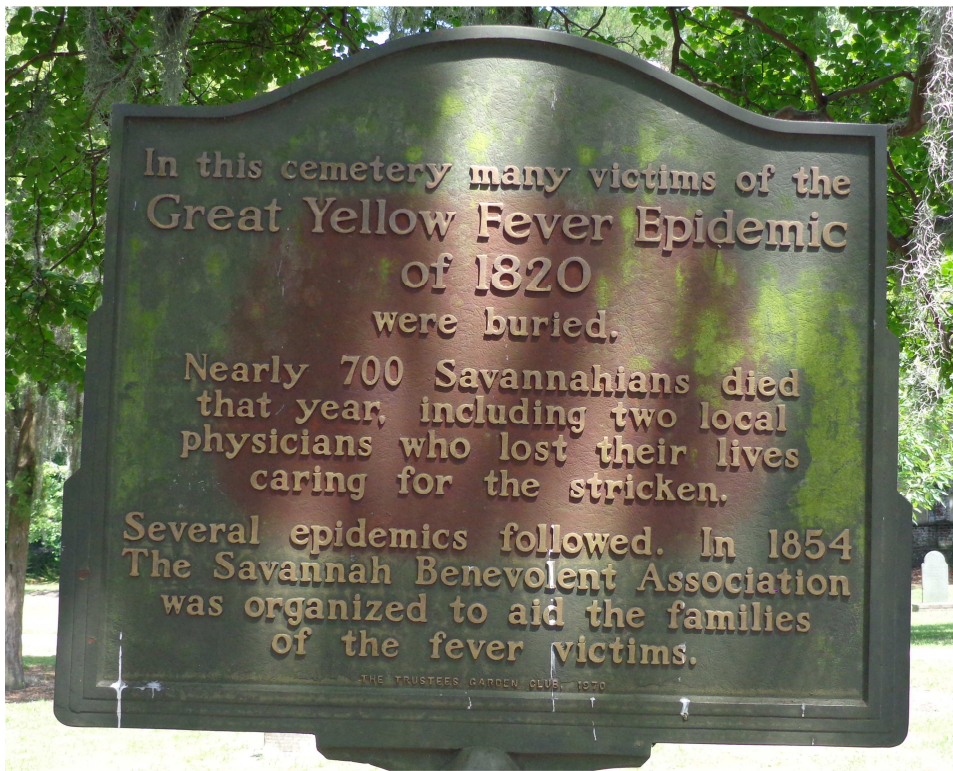


Figure 3. Plaque commemorating yellow fever victims from 1820. Photograph taken by author.

The plaque, erected by the Trustees Garden Club in 1970, is dedicated to the victims of yellow fever in 1820 and is located within the boundaries of CPC. Unfortunately, this plaque does not have source materials listed and is overall not descriptive as to how many people who died of yellow fever are actually buried in CPC. As noted above, the plaque is located in CPC, making it part of the cemetery's landscape. This makes the plaque a more authoritative source of information compared to the ghost tours due to its permanent physical presence in CPC and its length of time (46 years) on the landscape. This could make it a convenient source of

information for the tour guides when they discuss yellow fever deaths in 1820; they would be able to direct tourists to the plaque should they want proof of the guides' source.

Patterson's data includes death tolls from yellow fever in numerous American cities between 1693 and 1905 (1992). The data was compiled from contemporary medical articles, government agency commissioned reports, and "recent secondary studies" (1992:859) although no further discussion is provided as to what secondary studies were utilized. However these sources are not without their drawbacks. Contemporary articles might have attributed deaths to yellow fever that were caused by another disease and vice versa. These articles might have also underrepresented the number of deaths. Most importantly, the totals also more than likely did not account for the deaths of refugees and other transient individuals (e.g. boat workers and laborers), as they did not belong to the higher class of society (Patterson 1992). Furthermore, the transient and refugees in the community were more than likely poor and lived in "crowded, filthy conditions" (especially docks) making them more vulnerable to the disease (Patterson 1992:860). These transients did not have the immune system capable of fighting off an African-borne disease as they often came from the northern United States or Europe (commonly Ireland) (Patterson 1992).

Piechocinski stated more than 700 citizens died in the yellow fever epidemic in her book on the history of CPC (1999). However, in a separate section she stated 666 people died from yellow fever and approximately 40 of those people have markers in CPC that list yellow fever as a cause of death (1999). While she did not elaborate, there are numerous reasons as to why only 40 markers have yellow fever as a cause of death: the other victims did not have yellow fever listed as a cause of death on their grave markers, their grave markers are no longer visible on CPC's landscape, they never had grave markers to begin with, or they were buried elsewhere. It

is possible that Piechocinski's first count of more than 700 deaths in 1820 is a count of the total number of deaths rather than those resulting from yellow fever. Piechocinski does not utilize in-text citations in her work, which makes identifying her sources difficult. This resulted in her book being categorized as a popular source instead of academic in nature.

Cashin, in his book on the Bethesda Orphanage just outside of Savannah briefly mentioned a large number of deaths in 1820 from "an epidemic of fever" however he does not go into more detail (2001:160). The author states 666 people died from the epidemic but made no mention of his original source. This is similar to Piechocinski's lack of additional information and a lack of in-text citations that led to the classification of both of these sources as popular written sources. This makes the authors' information seem less academic than perhaps that of a primary source like Russell (GSHS 1820: PT 95013257:3), and it lessens their credibility.

Authority within and between sources will be discussed further below.

McGriff is a local paranormal investigator and he also owns a ghost tour company in Savannah. He owns a tour company in Savannah and his book, discussed here, is available in many popular tourist stops throughout the city. Similar to the other popular written sources, McGriff includes his references, but most of them are interviews and interactions with Savannah locals and tourists. He credited the GSHS as his source for the number of deaths from yellow fever in 1820 (2012). As a result of "sinister undertones" with the number of deaths (he provided the number 666), the city instead listed the number as "nearly 700" to avoid the "obvious symbolism" of the supernatural number on the plaque placed in CPC (McGriff 2012:84). While it is not expressly stated, this is most likely the plaque seen in Figure 3 above. McGriff did not list what or who from the GSHS is his source, especially since the numbers listed from other

sources found in the GSHS (e.g. Russell 1820 and Gamble 1900) are not 666. This justifies placement of his book in the popular written source category.

Another source of a count of the dead in CPC comes from a database from the city of Savannah, which includes every known person buried in CPC as of 2015 (Colonial Park Cemetery Internments 2015). To clarify, the numbers from this database are only a count of the number of headstones in CPC with a death date of 1820, no mention of yellow fever occurs in this database. This count is only based on the records held by the city of Savannah, which might be limited to recorded, and still legible, grave markers. Regardless, this database is useful in helping to understand why such a low number of burials are in CPC dating to 1820 when so many primary (and secondary, especially academic) sources provide much higher numbers. According to the city employee, Mark, who provided it, this database was “compiled from various cemetery records, most of which were internment records and legers” although he did not specify as to which records were included in building it. Mark did go on to point out that many people buried in CPC no longer have headstones or markers denoting their burials, therefore their records of 49 documented deaths in CPC in 1820 could have been determined from a combination of early burial records and indications on existing grave markers.

This database search produced the least amount of deaths in 1820 across all sources: 49. The search consisted of examining the columns that list date of death and date of internment in case the dates varied by a large time period (which they did not). Counting the dates, only 49 people were buried in CPC with the death and/or internment year of 1820. Once again, this is not to say that a total of 49 people died in 1820, from yellow fever or another cause.

One possibility for the large gap in numbers between the city’s database and the other sources could possibly be a result of a fewer number of people being buried in CPC who died

from yellow fever than previously thought. Gamble explains that the largest proportion of deaths were among Irish immigrants who arrived in Savannah in the early winter of 1819 and were in poor condition (1900). These immigrants could have been buried in the nearby strangers' burying ground rather than CPC. In fact, Patterson mentions that yellow fever came to be known as the "strangers' disease" in the 1800s due to the large numbers of "new residents and temporary visitors" coming from the northern United States or Europe (1992:861). Patterson analyzed the number of deaths from the 1820 epidemic in Savannah and noted that the largest number of deaths occurred amongst people from Ireland and the northern United States (144 or 23 percent and 180 or 29 percent). This is contrasted by a much lower death rate in the African/African American population in Savannah (approximately 2 percent), which he proposes is the result of an immunity gained from exposure to the disease in their home countries in Africa before coming to the United States (Patterson 1992).

Compared to the numerous written sources that quantified the deaths resulting from yellow fever in 1820, the same quantification was not evident on the ghost tours in the historic district. While four out of the five tours discussed the yellow fever epidemic of 1820 and the resulting deaths, only two gave a numerical value of the people who died from the virus. Gloria said 666 people died whereas Stephen estimated 700 people died. Interestingly, both of these tour guides work for McGriff's tour company, which is interesting since they each give the two numbers listed by McGriff before the city became involved (666) and afterwards (approximately 700). The tour guides' numbers correspond to four of the written sources (Piechocinski 1999; Russell and Hines 1992; McGriff 2012; Cashin 2001), meaning they could have used these written sources for the information on their tours, though it is likely they got their information from McGriff. It is important to note that the written sources that present 666 as the number of



deceased persons are all popular sources. Perhaps these later sources used 666 as a result of the increased attention paid to Satanism.

The fact that more written sources than tours included mortality rates (and more written sources used 666 than tours) seems to suggest that the tours are not focused specifically on counting the dead. To give a better overall experience tour guides give less numerical data and more rich narrative stories. They focus more on quality rather than quantity. It is the stories that stick with tourists more than the numbers.

Returning to the numbers given in Table 1, it is important to note that the written sources that use 666 are the same sources that, with the exception of Waring (in Russell and Hines 1992), do not include descriptive information about their sources in the body of their works (Piechocinski 1999; Cashin 2001; McGriff 2012). This leaves the reader to question where these authors found their information, which therefore decreases their authority as official sources about the history of Savannah. In contrast, the other sources (GSHS 1820: PT 95013257:3; Gamble 1900; Patterson 1992; Colonial Park Cemetery Internments 2015) describe the deaths in 1820 with much more detail, noting mortality rates by month, sex, and race. These can be considered to be more official sources of information as they are largely primary sources compared to the other sources. Although the popular sources are considered to be less than academic in nature, they are still being considered for their data. These documents do not have their source material in the body of their work, however their bibliographies seem to show that they performed some kind of research (often at the GSHS) before they published anything. These sources might not be strictly academic in nature as shown above, but they are still useful for this thesis, and for other researchers in the fields of ghost tourism and archaeology, because they can be analyzed in the same manner as the oral narratives on ghost tours. This analysis illustrates the

importance for archaeologists to not only recognize the existence of popular written and oral narrative sources regarding specific spaces but also to examine these sources to understand modern day concepts of memory and remembrance with regards to these spaces.

### **Anxiety in Savannah**

#### Supernatural Association

It is important to reiterate that the numbers in Table 1 are being used to illustrate the varying number of deaths from yellow fever amongst primary and popular written sources. These discrepancies, especially between the primary sources, provide an interesting conflict compared to all but one of the secondary sources. The secondary sources largely listed 666 as the number of dead, a number that is often recognized for its dark supernatural representation.

Four written sources (Russell and Hines 1992; Piechocinski 1999; Cashin 2001; McGriff 2012) as well as a tour guide, Gloria, all state 666 people died from yellow fever in 1820. The number 666 has had a supernatural connotation for some time as it is considered to be the number of the devil. The use of 666 by a ghost tour operator is understandable as they are often seeking to insert supernatural connections to their stories for an additional “spooky effect.” The use of the number in the written sources is an interesting point.

Piechocinski specifically mentions that there are “no documented ghosts associated with Colonial Park” and reasons, “perhaps all the moving and removing of bodies thoroughly disoriented them, and they remain safely interred” (1999:142). Piechocinski did not include this with her statement about the number of deaths from yellow fever; however, Piechocinski may have included this comment as a way to disconnect the supernatural connotation with the number 666 and ghosts in CPC. This may have been a result of early developments of ghost tourism

companies and Piechocinski wanted to convey her research (and book on CPC's history) as serious and more academic than that of ghost tourism.

The use of 666 by Gloria, the tour guide, may have been a way to elicit fear in the tourists. The number has a strong association with the devil and other supernatural occurrences, which is something that the tourists most likely had at least a passing knowledge of. Gloria's use of 666 is a way to increase her authority on the tour, particularly because she, like McGriff above, mentions that it is the GSHS who "notes that 666 people died from the first epidemic." It is important to point out that Gloria is a tour guide for the company owned by McGriff therefore it is likely that the tour guides either read McGriff's book prior to giving tours or they are all given the same information by McGriff himself, including the sources for the tours. Gloria does not state who or what document(s) in the GSHS gave her that number; this increases the possibility that she was given the information by McGriff or read his book before giving the tours, as his sources are also not listed. However, simply stating that the GSHS is her source for the number 666 Gloria's authority is increased, along with the tour's authenticity. It is a way of validating such a supernatural and anxiety-inducing number as it is attributed to an outside, and more official, source than just a tour guide.

### Mass Graves and Live Burials

Three ghost tours stated that there is a mass grave of yellow fever victims either in or around CPC. The present day fence line on the southern and western line of CPC has shifted (the southern end slightly farther north and the western side east a few feet) and was argued by one tour guide, Sandy, that the mass grave was "underneath the basketball court" where the tour group was currently standing on the southern end of CPC. Piechocinski stated "there is believed to be at least one mass grave of 1820 yellow fever victims" located in the southern section of

CPC (1999:143), which is near the areas pointed out on the tours. Piechocinski cited a newspaper account (but does not reference the author, title, or year) that more than nineteen people died in one day from the disease; this reinforces her conclusion that, due to the large number of deaths on a daily basis, the city had no other choice but to “utilize mass burial procedures” (1999:13). Piechocinski did not utilize in-text citations, making it difficult to determine which source yielded which piece of information.

Trinkley and Hacker’s survey found an “exceptional density” of graves at CPC and concluded that CPC “was not simply filled, but overflowing” (1999:33). The authors stated they were unable to identify all four sides on a large portion of graves using a penetrometer, which led them to conclude that most of the graves in CPC were intruding on one another. More importantly, Trinkley and Hacker argued that no mass graves exist in CPC; there were areas where individual grave outlines could not be determined but it is more likely that they were just crowded areas, not mass graves (1999).

Trinkley and Hacker’s conclusion regarding mass graves is important as at least four sources, including one written source, argue for the existence of a mass grave of yellow fever victims. Written sources are frequently considered to be more “official” or carry more “authority” than oral sources, especially ghost stories (Hanks 2015). An additional way that the archaeologists’ research could be considered more official would be their use of scientific instruments (e.g. a penetrometer) to perform their investigation as compared to the equipment utilized by paranormal investigators (e.g. electronic voice phenomenon [EVP] recorders, thermometers, electromagnetic field [EMF] readers). However, the tour operators either have not seen this information or they are choosing to disregard it. Unfortunately, the tour guides did not respond to requests for additional interviews and their sources for their tour narratives were

never identified. However, if they are choosing to disregard what could be considered the “official” discourse it signifies what Hanks described as their challenging of these sources and their push for redefining what is considered to be “official” or “orthodox” (2015). This is especially true if the tour guides are noting the existence of the mass graves to be outside of CPC’s present day boundaries if they knew Trinkley and Hacker’s survey was only conducted inside of the boundaries.

While Hanks’ research largely focused on ghost hunts conducted by paranormal investigators her arguments can be applied to this research on walking ghost tours and the tour guides that narrate them; these narratives are used by tour guides to critique the “authority of archaeological researchers and heritage officials” (2015:12). This is important because the existence of a mass grave of yellow fever victims has been essentially debunked by official sources, yet the tour guides continue to describe its existence. Since the official source information does not confirm this narrative told by the tour guides, it is also important to consider that this narrative is still accepted as historical reality by both the tour guides and tourists (Hanks 2015). The tourists accept this because the guides use evidence (e.g. photographs, and audio and video recordings) to supplement the ghost hunting type of experience described by Hanks (2015).

Many of the guides also mentioned a separate mass grave of orphan child victims of yellow fever. While this has not been proven, tour guides may have focused on children for their youth and vulnerability to disease, along with fears of parents losing their children. This would resonate more with the tourists than perhaps the large number of adults buried in a similar mass grave in CPC. (See the following chapter for a larger discussion on the mass grave of orphan children.)

While the tour guide, Stephen, did not spend a lot of time discussing the yellow fever epidemic, he did use it as a way to introduce fears of being buried alive. Stephen briefly listed some symptoms of yellow fever: beginning with flu-like symptoms, then gastrointestinal tract damage, jaundice, black vomit, coma, and finally death. The coma was the most important symptom for Stephen as he used it to segue into a discussion on live burials; he argued that people often buried their loved one in a family vault and when they returned to bury another family member at a later date they would often find the body of the previous family member dead on the floor. The family member would have woken up from their coma, somehow manage to break out of their coffin, and attempt to escape the vault only to perish inside. Stephen described the enduring emotional trauma that family members were left with upon realizing that they buried someone alive, which “affects a person’s conceptions of death and dying for the rest of their life.”

Despite tremendous advances in medical science, these anxieties about death and dying persist to the modern day and more than likely resonated with at least one tourist on the ghost tour. During an interview, Stephen stated that anxieties about when a person is truly dead, what happens to that person after they die, and the existence of an afterlife are often reasons why people take ghost tours. While he did not explicitly connect the two, there was an underlying current that the emotional trauma felt by families when they discovered their loved one deceased on the floor of the vault was also felt by the victim. Upon awakening in a coffin and managing to escape, only to perish inside an underground vault, the victim must also have experienced major emotional trauma. This could be one of the reasons why CPC is considered by the tour guides and paranormal investigators to have so much ghostly activity.

As a result of these fears about death and dying, Stephen and another tour guide, Sandy, discussed nineteenth-century attempts to prevent live burials, either in a mass grave or alone in a vault. One practice was to attach bells to the dead person's wrist that way, if someone was buried alive, another person might hear the bell ringing and dig the buried person up; the guides say this is what gave rise to the phrases "saved by the bell" and "dead ringer." Stephen also connected this fear of live burial to the invention of the spring-loaded coffin; this way, if someone were buried alive they would be able to escape by way of a latch inside the coffin instead of suffocating.

### **Other Disasters**

Two written sources (Gamble 1900 and Cashin 2001) discussed a massive fire that occurred in January of 1820, before the yellow fever outbreak. Gamble described the fire extending from the riverfront to Broughton Street and from Jefferson Street to Drayton Street (1900), which covered about 0.75 square miles of Savannah. Four hundred and sixty three tenements were burned, the fire perhaps having been exacerbated by the ignition of gunpowder in several stores. Interestingly, the stores were violating city laws in storing gunpowder and the resulting explosions essentially destroyed all efforts to contain the fire (Gamble 1900). Cashin also mentioned the 463 buildings destroyed by the fire, as stated by the mayor at the time (2001).

The fire is mentioned on two of the ghost tours; Gloria said 2,000 people were either dead or homeless as a result of the fire and Patty said 500 people died in the fire. Gloria also noted 463 buildings destroyed by the fire, which indicates that she potentially utilized historical documents for her tour information. Patty, on the other hand, said the fire destroyed two-thirds of the city, which, although might correspond to 463 buildings as the city was smaller then than it is today, is a more general accounting than the precise number of buildings offered by Gloria.

Finally, Gloria said a hurricane also occurred in 1820 that killed another 1,000 people. There is no written information about a hurricane in 1820, nor do any other tour guides reference the hurricane. Gloria's inclusion of the hurricane seems to be used to underscore her argument that this triad of events led historians to dub 1820 as the "year of the devil." No historical documents have been found that reference 1820 as being the "year of the devil." These three events hold a slight supernatural undertone with the rule of threes; things are more effective, more powerful, and more potent when they happen in threes. While there is no mention in any historical document of a hurricane in 1820, there was a large storm in 1854 that followed an even larger yellow fever outbreak (Gamble 1900), which could be the information Gloria was utilizing for her narrative.

### **Urban Legend and CPC**

In addition to the varying information described in both written sources and on ghost tours, the death and misery associated with 1820 can be exemplified in a legend told on Patty's ghost tour. Amidst the disasters (the fire and the yellow fever epidemic), a giant named Rene Rhondolia is said to have committed several heinous murders; however, Rene more than likely never existed. Perhaps Patty is projecting the idea of Rene to Savannah in 1820 as a destroyed city's attempt to cope with the large death tolls over a short time period.

#### The Legend

Out of seven separate ghost tours taken in 2014, only one tour detailed the legend of Rene Rhondolia (also known as Rene Rhondoliér or Rene Rhondolia Ashe). Significantly, the general background of death and misery in 1820 serves as the setting for the story of Rene Rhondolia. Patty told the following story, which has been edited for grammar, on her tour:



Rene was born sometime in the early 1800s and was a large infant, weighing 16 pounds at birth. By the time he was a teenager, Rene was 7 feet 4 inches tall and weighed approximately 300 pounds; but Rene was not a bully or a mean-hearted individual. On the contrary, Rene was a gentle giant but was often bullied by his peers, a group he often avoided by spending much of his time in Colonial Park Cemetery. He sought comfort from the company of animals and numerous dogs frequently followed him into the cemetery. However, there were instances where Rene was not so kind: he would get revenge on his bullies by luring their dogs into the cemetery, killing them, and then delivering their bodies to his tormentors.

A man was passing by the cemetery one day when he noticed a piece of cloth on the ground. Upon closer inspection, he discovered the body of a little girl, her neck snapped. The man immediately notified other townspeople and together they stormed to Rene's parents' house and demanded that they do something about their monster of a child. Rene's parents defended him: they claimed he was sick for the past few days and they kept him indoors to recuperate. The men decided to take Rene's parents at their word and gave him a second chance, however they did take precautions; they took turns standing watch around his house at night.

Unfortunately for the guard, this was the time when the massive fire [of 1820] broke out and they were forced to abandon their post to help fight it. Approximately two-thirds of the city was burned in a 36 hour time period, leaving 500 people dead and a lot of damage in its wake. While they were burying victims of the fire, they discovered the body of a little boy with his neck snapped, which reminded them of Rene.

The mob regrouped and forced their way into Rene's house where four men grabbed him and tied him up. The mob then dragged Rene out of the house and down to a nearby marsh where they hanged him from a live oak tree. Rene's parents were not told where he was taken; they

found his body the next day and had to cut him down themselves. The city of Savannah refused to let his family bury him in Colonial Park so, with no other alternative, they buried him in the woods.

A few days after the burial, someone came to visit the Rhondolia family grave in CPC [this was the grave of other Rhondolia family members, not that of Rene] and discovered the body of a third child. This was followed by the discovery of an adult female's body a few days later, both of whom exhibited the same manner of death: a broken neck. The people of Savannah thought Rene's ghost was seeking revenge and they began to think that perhaps Rene was innocent of the first two killings.

To this day, if you ask any local historian about Rene Rhondolia they will tell you that he never existed; but there is supposedly a shred of truth in every legend. A colleague was giving a similar tour around Colonial Park when one of the guests commented that a classmate saw Rene in the cemetery approximately six years ago. The classmate was with the Savannah College of Art and Design and was completing an assignment in a corner of the cemetery when a large man started bothering her; when he tried to grab her she screamed at him to leave her alone and he disappeared.

#### Alternatives to the Legend

Although the Rene legend was told on only one ghost tour, it is common in books that discuss the city's spectral history. Two books that include the Rene narrative present three different explanations for what Rene represents as well as slightly contrasting story points (Harris and Sickler 2014; McGriff 2012).

Harris and Sickler depict Rene in a slightly different manner in their book to that of the tour; one key difference being that they describe him as being mentally handicapped.

He stared at the mob with no expression, his mouth slack and drooling, his eyes empty and unfocused...despite his mental limitations, he was all too aware that he was different from everyone else...and he reveled in that difference...

(Harris and Sickler 2014:32-33)

Contrary to the gentle giant victim that the tour portrays, these authors depict Rene as being aware of his actions and enjoying killing various small animals so that they might be a part of his collection, which he strings up in nearby trees; a practice that he then transitioned to doing to humans. The Rene legend is thus used as a cautionary tale to frighten children and keep them from talking to or leaving with strangers, especially large men (Harris and Sicker 2014). This is similar to many stories told by parents to scare their children into behaving, albeit one with a darker ending.

Another alternative explanation for the endurance of the Rene legend proposed by Harris and Sickler: he is a scapegoat. In this type of storytelling, the victim is often a monster of some type or exhibits monstrous qualities and Rene is the perfect fit for such a story; allegedly weighing 500 pounds and standing 7 feet tall at just 12 years of age—Rene is what many would consider a freak. The scapegoat story functions as a way “to conceal the inherent violence in human communities by righteously, one might say, or legitimately eradicating the source of the human terror- the monster” (Harris and Sickler 2014:40). Finally, the scapegoat story reflects the tendency of some cultures to destroy, in this case by lynching, the community’s “unwanted elements” (Harris and Sickler 2014:40). Rene is blamed for the crimes due to his abnormal look and decreased mental capacity; his physical and mental deviance from what is considered normal makes it easier for the city’s residents to blame him for the alleged child murders, although there is no historical documentation confirming the murder of any children in 1820.

McGriff proposes yet another interpretation of Rene, whom he says is also known as “Savannah’s Frankenstein,” when he speculates that Rene’s ghost has become what is known in paranormal societies as a “black shadow phenomenon” (2012:119). These black shadows are large, dense, shadows that do not cast a normal angle like a shadow would; they are also more erect and darker than other shadows in their vicinity. As described in his book, a man on one of McGriff’s ghost tours a few years prior described Rene, or this black shadow, as a manifestation of death brought about by the yellow fever epidemic of 1820. McGriff argued that although “credible historians” have dismissed the Rene legend as nonsense, the black shadow continues to be seen in CPC (2012:119). As explained by the man on his tour, this manifestation of Death is not a single entity; rather it is the essence of Death manifested by its connection to the large numbers of the dead from the epidemic of 1820. This manifestation is lingering in CPC because it has unfinished business in that the dead are unable to cross over to the other side (McGriff 2012). It should be noted that Gloria did not present the Rene legend on her tour, even though McGriff owns the company she works for. By leaving the legend out of the tour content, it could be a way for McGriff to draw revenue from book sales as well as tourism. This would also mean that, either Patty used to work for McGriff’s company, that Patty read McGriff’s book and adapted the story for her tour, or the Rene legend is a larger local legend.

### Analysis

The tour and the authors propose various causes for Rene’s continued presence on CPC’s landscape. These explanations about the Rene legend, a cautionary tale, a scapegoat, a black shadow phenomenon, reveal more about the narrators than they do about Rene. The use of the legend as a cautionary tale for children reflects the society’s continued fear of the stranger luring their children away. The scapegoat possibility reflects society’s continued fear of the “other;” if

someone is not considered to be what society sees as normal, people become fearful, suspicious, and avoidant of that person. Similar to the fear and avoidance of a sick person, like the fleeing of citizens during the yellow fever epidemic (Patterson 1992), people are fearful and avoid the mentally and physically different. Finally, the black shadow, or the manifestation of death, reflects fears of the dead being unable to come to terms with their death. This relates to Stephen's statement that many people take ghost tours because they are curious about death (i.e. what happens to a person after they die or if an afterlife exists) and often are looking to allay their anxieties.

Another explanation for Rene's enduring presence on the landscape could be his association with 1820 and the yellow fever epidemic. Building on the explanations described above, it can be inferred that Rene has become the physical embodiment of something that people did not understand at the time and therefore could not control: yellow fever. Many diseases like yellow fever prey upon the very young and the very old who have weakened immune systems (WHO 2014), a practice similar to that of Rene. Rene is the embodiment of the human terror that the tour and authors say was caused by murder but instead could very well have been yellow fever; however, based on historical documents and a search through the city database, Rene more than likely never existed.

Instead of projecting their fears onto a flesh and blood human being, Savannah locals have created the legend of Rene Rhondolia as a way to explain the deaths from disease in 1820, especially since the cause of yellow fever was not known at that time. In a way, Rene has become a combination of all three authors' explanations: he is a scapegoat for what the community did not understand (yellow fever) and he is a manifestation of death due to the high mortality rate from the infection. While yellow fever is no longer prevalent in North America,

the threat of new and uncontrollable diseases continues to frighten people, especially when those diseases disproportionately affect those with lowered immune systems (i.e. children). It is for this reason that the legend of Rene Rhondolia is still relevant to this day. Unfortunately, time constraints and lack of communication from tour guides made it impossible to gather more data on the Rene Rhondolia narrative. Future research could explore in further detail the parallel between child victims of yellow fever, Rene's tendency to kill children, and their connection to CPC.

As stated previously, after searching through the city's database (which includes names of people buried in the cemetery and dates of death among other information), there is no record of a Rhondolia family buried in CPC. There is also no record of a massive grave of yellow fever victims (Trinkley and Hacker 1999) nor are dozens of orphans who died from yellow fever buried in the cemetery. Moreover, there are also no records of any children who were murdered. The ghost of Rene Rhondolia and the legend surrounding his life and death serves as a reminder to tourists and locals alike that memories of spaces, like those of CPC are influenced by the stories told about them.

### **Conclusion**

CPC is a space surrounded by death, however the stories that are often told about the cemetery do not always reflect the same causes and numbers of deaths as historical and written documents might show. In fact, the numbers vary within a given written document as often as they vary between documents. The sources presented a wide range of the number of deaths from yellow fever, some of which also included descriptive details and analyses of causes of death, while others only mentioned the numbers in passing. One potential reason for the variations

could lie in the symptoms exhibited by sufferers of the virus. Another could be inconsistent recordkeeping, or even a simple difference in the months included in the reports.

While the numbers might not always agree, what can be discerned is that 1820 was a devastating year for Savannah. CPC was the only cemetery in operation at the time and it is for that reason that stories of destruction, like the fire and the hurricane, mass burials of victims of yellow fever (both adults and children), and murder (e.g. the Rene legend) are associated with this place of death. The Rene legend is only one example of the ways in which tour guides discuss the tragic history of Savannah through entertaining narration, especially the epidemic of 1820. The guides are able to talk about unsavory events in the city's history by weaving it in with scary stories and some comical anecdotes.

Yellow fever came to be feared as a disease not only for its affect on human lives but also on the economy. When a city experienced an epidemic, its citizens, namely the wealthier individuals who had the money and the means, would flee the area, causing these formerly busy cities to come to a near halt. Therefore, this disease is argued to have shaped “the image of the South as a poor, backward part of the nation” while it also “helped to create that reality” (Patterson 1992:864).

Landscapes of death, like CPC, are influenced by more than just archaeological methodology and historical documents. CPC is merely one example of the ways in which ghost stories continue to influence the construction and remembering of these landscapes across the country. Legends can potentially tell archaeologists much about the history of an area in terms of the ways in which modern society understands it. These historical tellings, or retellings, can be especially useful with regards to topics that might be difficult to discuss, like death and dying. The reason behind this is because the truth of the story does not matter; what does matter is the

affect it has on the local community and the tourists who visit Savannah. Their memories of spaces like CPC are useful for archaeologists because they speak to how locals remember Savannah's history and how they convey those memories to others. The tourists are, more often than not, going to remember the story of Rene but they are also going to remember other events that affected Savannah's history, like the fire of 1820 and especially the yellow fever epidemic.

The local community uses the stories as a way to present the dark and often tragic history of Savannah through ghosts and legends, which can and should be utilized by archaeologists as a way to better understand both the physical and the social landscapes they are studying.

Archaeologists can examine the physical markers on the landscape (like the plaque dedicated to the yellow fever victims) through the eyes of a tourist by taking the ghost tours. One of the larger points for archaeologists to note is to simply contextualize the information presented on ghost tours; furthermore, archaeologists should recognize the presence of other background information about a location's history aside from just primary sources. The information gathered on the tours can then be examined through their more rigorous methodology to decipher truths and fabrications on these tours. Through their examination of the narrative content of ghost tours, archaeologists can engage with the local community and work together to decipher what is important to remember about these landscapes. The landscape discussed on the tours, whether it is current or historic, is especially useful for archaeologists to identify changes over time through what modern day society interacts with and reflects on during these ghost tours.



## CHAPTER SIX: THE REMEMBERED AND FORGOTTEN AT CPC

This chapter seeks to answer questions regarding the ways in which memory is constructed and reconstructed on ghost tours at CPC. More specifically, how is CPC interpreted on ghost tours, what information is included and excluded from the narratives, and why. CPC's landscape is also important in this chapter as it plays a role in the social production and, more importantly, the social construction of the cemetery in both the written record and on the ghost tours. The landscape in and around CPC directly influences the oral narratives on the ghost tours and therefore the construction of memory. This chapter will explore these questions through an examination of a variety of primary and secondary sources, including both written documents and oral narratives. Beginning with a discussion on the number of people buried in CPC, this serves as a way of understanding the contested nature of CPC's landscape between written sources and oral narratives. Following this is a brief discussion regarding the location of two different burial grounds, the Negro burying ground and the strangers' burial ground; once located near CPC, there is no physical trace of either of these burial grounds on the modern day landscape. This in turn has resulted in their disappearance from the ghost tour narratives and a collective forgetting of these sites. Finally, a discussion regarding the children's park on the southwestern boundary of CPC is important; a comparison between the remembering of children and the forgetting of the other two burying grounds reveals potential subconscious views of the racial and socioeconomic status of the inhabitants of the Negro and strangers' burying grounds.

### **Counting the Dead**

There is no doubt that a large number of people are buried within the current boundaries of CPC as well as outside of them. The proposal to close CPC in the mid-nineteenth century evolved from the inability to dig a new grave in the cemetery "without disturbing the remains of those already interred" (Gamble 1900:199). What is interesting is just how many people are

actually buried in CPC. Numbers posited by both written sources and ghost tour narratives range from 8,000 all the way up to 12,000 people in the five to seven acre area in and around CPC, which reflects one of the contested aspects of the cemetery’s landscape. Similar to the discussion of yellow fever deaths in the previous chapter, this section is important as it reflects how the landscape is viewed and remembered by tourists visiting CPC. These numbers also allow for a discussion on authority when comparing the tour guides’ information with that of the written sources. The following sections will analyze the numbers given based on the sources and discuss the type of authority (i.e. whether it is considered to be official or unofficial) behind the source material based on Hanks’ discussion in her book (2015).

Ghost Tour Burial Numbers

Table 2. Count of Persons Buried in CPC from Ghost Tours

<b>Tour Guide</b>	<b>Marked Burials (meaning those with headstones)</b>	<b>Total Burials</b>
Gloria	565	Between 9,000 and 12,000
Karl	600	Approximately 10,000
Patty	600	Approximately 10,000
Sandy	668	Between 9,000 and 10,000
Stephen	1,350 (15% of 9,000)	Approximately 9,000

As displayed above, each of the tour guides presented numbers of both the marked burials and the total number of burials in CPC. In all cases, this was done first by giving the marked burials as a way for tourists to examine the headstones and burial vaults inside CPC and to perform a cursory check of their tour guide’s information. While the guides did not clarify, it is assumed that each vault is counted as one marked burial, although there were multiple people buried in the vaults. The tour guides then gave the total number of burials as a way to shock the tourists. The guides were frequently cognizant of the theatrical elements of the tours, which is why they presented the numbers in such a way. For example, Patty said that there are “about 600

markers left but about 10,000 bodies” in CPC and “about 2,000 bodies on the outside of the [eastern] fence.” This method of giving first the marked burials followed by the total number of “bodies” is a way for tour guides to drive the point home that there are far more people buried in CPC than the headstones suggest; the tour guides do it to emphasize that there is more to CPC than initially meets the eye. Tour guides also give the two different burial numbers to underscore that “we’ve been walking on top of dead bodies all tour.” According to Patty, CPC in particular is “one of the few cemeteries in the US where you can park your car on someone’s grave.” For example, it is explained by multiple tour guides that the present day western boundary of the cemetery is a few feet east of the original boundary, therefore there are bodies underneath the sidewalks along Abercorn Street. Patty stated that areas of unevenness in the sidewalk “represents disintegrating coffins.”

It is unknown what sources the tour guides utilized for their burial numbers, however it is interesting to note that Stephen’s number of marked burials was not explicitly given. Instead of giving the marked burials outright he deviated from the pattern by saying that of the 9,000 “documented” burials in CPC, fifteen percent of the original stones are still standing. A simple calculation yields the number of marked burials in CPC as 1,350, although this is possibly more calculation than the tourists are able to do in their heads. Stephen’s deviation from giving direct numbers could be his way of emphasizing the lack of remaining marked burials; in terms of perception, 15 percent of 9,000 sounds much smaller than 1,350 of 9,000.

Additionally, Stephen used “documented” when referring to the 9,000 burials in CPC. As explained previously, CPC did not always have documented burials and the ones that were recorded certainly do not add up to 9,000. Stephen’s use of this word is important as it

legitimizes the information that he is presenting to tourists. By presenting information as being associated with a written record, it is automatically seen as being more accurate.

Burial Numbers from Written Sources

Table 3. Count of Persons Buried in CPC from Written Sources

<b>Source</b>	<b>Marked Burials</b>	<b>Unmarked Burials</b>	<b>Total Burials</b>
Piechocinski (1999)	Approximately 600	N/A	8,000-11,000
Trinkley (1999)	560	8,678	9,238
Trinkley and Hacker (1999)	557	8,665-8,678	9,222-9,235
McGriff (2012)	557	8,678	9,235 (or potentially more than 11,000)
City database (2015)	820	N/A	N/A
SAGIS Open Data (2015)	687	N/A	N/A

Unlike the information from the ghost tours, the data in this table includes an additional column for unmarked burial numbers. The inclusion of the unmarked burials column results from the survey work performed by Trinkley and Hacker (1999). While these same authors did not include a total number of burials, the counts for “marked” and “unmarked” were combined for this table.

A potential reason for the variation in these sources could be caused by the periods of enlargement and/or the relative lack of recordkeeping. As explained in Chapter 2, CPC was enlarged three times over the course of thirty years in the mid to late eighteenth century, with each enlargement allowing for more internments in the cemetery. In addition to the enlargements, burials were not recorded until 1803 when the mayor at the time passed an ordinance establishing the register (Gamble 1900). This would only have recorded approximately

the last 50 years of burials in CPC. The city's Board of Health took charge of the register in 1804 (Gamble 1900). This means there were likely far more people buried in CPC than recorded in the documentary record.

Chapter 4 described the city's database of all known burials in CPC received from an employee, Mark, via e-mail. A simple count of the database reveals 820 documented burials in CPC. However, Mark did note that the database, while compiled from "various cemetery records", does have its gaps; specifically that there are "numerous internments in Colonial Cemetery...which do not have headstone/grave marker" (Colonial Park Cemetery Internments 2015). A search through the database found 81 deaths listed between 1762 (the earliest date found) and 1804 (when the Board of Health took charge of recording deaths) with an increase between the end of the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. In the last half of CPC's use, the highest number of deaths occurred in 1820 and many of the years before and after, the number of recorded burials in the cemetery were relatively low (between 4 and 20).

The archaeological reports from the Chicora Foundation (i.e. Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999) were the only two to display counts for marked and unmarked graves in CPC. While the information was gathered at the same time for the two reports, there are seven different numbers for the amount of graves within CPC (Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999). The inconsistency in the number of burials in CPC could be attributed to a few different things including: their use of a penetrometer for their survey work, poor wording in their reports, or a lack of clarification in the reports. After interpreting their penetrometer data they came to the conclusion that there were major areas of grave overlap within CPC, often times one grave was indistinguishable from the next (Trinkley and Hacker 1999; see Chapter 2 for a longer discussion of these results). They also listed episodes of landscaping efforts to install water

sprinklers, a water meter box, and other modern features, that greatly disturbed the soil and, in many cases, existing graves (Trinkley and Hacker 1999).

McGriff, mentioned in the previous chapter, is a paranormal investigator and an owner of a ghost tour company in Savannah. It is noticeable that McGriff's burial numbers match that of Trinkley and Hacker (1999). McGriff cites archaeologists as the sources of his numbers of burials in CPC and states that the numbers are located on the "cemetery's website" (2012:116). McGriff's bibliography includes a long website address for a Cemetery Guide by the City of Savannah, however when that information was entered, the web address was no longer valid. McGriff also lists in one chapter what is considered to be the official number of about 9,235 total graves in CPC according to archaeologists on the cemetery's website (2012). However, in an earlier chapter, McGriff briefly mentions that parts of CPC "interred at least 11,000 of Savannah's citizens" in its time of use (2012:83). One reason for these differing numbers could be the exhumation of bodies in 1855, which reduced the number of burials in CPC, however McGriff does not specify.

The Savannah Area Geographic Information System, or SAGIS, is the Geographic Information Systems account for the city of Savannah. It includes various maps pertaining to Savannah as well as the larger area of Chatham County and the state of Georgia, although most of the information centers on Savannah and Chatham County. SAGIS data about CPC is freely available and was downloaded from the SAGIS website ([www.sagis.org](http://www.sagis.org)) and added into an ArcMap document in ArcGIS 10.3. The CPC attribute table was opened in ArcMap and revealed the last names of persons buried in CPC, a tomb number, a tomb type, structure of the marker (e.g. marble, brick, stucco, etc.), first name, comments, and a third name if they had one (SAGIS 2015). Compared to the city's database, the SAGIS data included more information regarding the

location and type of grave marker rather than people's burial information. A count from this information gave 687 marked burials. However, similar to the city's database, the SAGIS source information is not explicitly known therefore it is difficult to determine exactly how the number was reached. It is likely that an aboveground survey was conducted, especially since it includes the type of tomb and the material used for construction.

Trinkley and Hacker's work supports the suggestion that the differing numbers of burials result from a lack of record keeping at CPC; they explain the work done in the 1950s by Larson is perhaps the only comparative research done at CPC in terms of identifying the number of burials in the cemetery (1999). Larson, the state archaeologist at the time, argued that the northern section of CPC, that is the portion that predates the 1789 expansion, is densely filled with multiple individuals possibly in the same grave shaft or occupying overlapping grave shafts (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). Larson's field notes and associated reports were not found at the GSHS as the society was only in possession of excavation photographs and accompanying captions. Therefore, the techniques and materials used by Larson to reach his conclusion are unknown. Other agencies were contacted in an effort to obtain his accompanying notes and reports but without success.

It has been noted in a few different sources (Gamble 1900; Johnson 1996; Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999; Piechocinski 1999) that numerous burials in CPC were moved to Laurel Grove and Bonaventure cemeteries but the true number of exhumations is unknown. While the Board of Health oversaw the recording of burials in CPC, it is unknown if they oversaw the exhumations or if that responsibility fell to Christ Church since the church still owned CPC and maintained day-to-day operations. The same sources also explain that more burials were removed from the strangers' and Negro burying grounds (both adjacent to but not

part of CPC) than CPC after Laurel Grove and Bonaventure opened (Gamble 1900; Johnson 1996; Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999; Piechocinski 1999). However, no records of those numbers have been found, if they were ever recorded.

Despite all of the discrepancies, there is an overarching agreement between the oral narratives and the written sources that there are far more bodies buried in CPC than grave markers suggest. Among the ghost tour narratives, Stephen's numbers were the only outliers at double the amount of any other marked burial number; however Stephen himself did not give this number directly. Instead he gave a percentage, forcing the tourists to either perform the math in their heads or simply accept that CPC no longer has 85 percent of its original grave markers.

The city's database is the only outlier among the written sources, which is more than likely comprised from remaining physical markers on the landscape and information from internment ledgers. It is interesting to note that the written sources were much more clustered around the 9,000 to 9,250 range of unmarked burials, compared to the wide ranging numbers given by the tour guides. This specificity is similar to the primary written sources of yellow fever deaths in 1820 described in the previous chapter; the more specific and detailed the source is the more often it is considered to be official. The ghost tours tend to provide a more general count of the dead as a way to remind the tourists that there are bodies in Savannah that are not only located within CPC but outside of the cemetery's boundaries as well. The tours are less concerned with precision and accuracy perhaps due to the fact that nobody has been able to agree upon the number of burials in CPC, therefore the murkiness would simply weigh down the tourists. The focus for tour guides is on the showmanship and making an overarching argument regarding burials in and around CPC, not about overloading the tourists with a range of numbers.



This could also be the tours' way of rejecting the official information since there has been no consensus on the true number of burials.

### **The Modern Landscape and its Effect on Memory**

#### The Other Burying Grounds

The earliest mention of a Negro burying ground (NBG) in Savannah was in 1762 when a committee agreed to expand CPC as well as set aside 200 square feet of acreage on one of the boundaries of CPC for “the burial of Negroes and other Slaves” (GSHS CR 95013462). This topic was mentioned again in a statute enacted by the Royal Legislature of Georgia in 1763 that proposed another expansion of CPC (GSHS CR 95013462). The problem with this later mention is the location listed. The expansion of CPC in 1763 went westward to the Abercorn Street line and southward. CPC was already bounded by South Broad Street (today, Oglethorpe Avenue) to the north and was to be expanded southward and westward according to the 1763 statute.

Therefore the only reasonable location for the NBG that would have bordered CPC, like the statute says, would have been immediately below the southern expansion or on the eastern border. However, a map from 1770 (see Fig. 2 in Chapter 2) delineates a space for the NBG in what looks to be an area north of the cemetery on a “common” area separate from CPC (GSHS 1857: photograph B.5980.S25). This means that the earlier discussions of the creation of the NBG were not carried out right away.

A wide range of sources presented other possible locations for the NBG. These include: the corner of Taylor and Habersham Streets, the original Savannah Medical College (approximately 0.3 miles south of CPC), and Calhoun Square (GSHS 1853: Savannah Medical College Minutes 95013029; GSHS 1857: RP 95007998; McGriff 2012). Based on all of these

sources, no consensus of the original location of the NBG, before its exhumation in 1855, has been reached.

The establishment of the strangers' burying ground (SBG) was equally difficult to parse out. Efforts to establish it began as early as 1812, although nothing was actually done until 1819 when a committee gathered and passed an ordinance to set aside space immediately adjacent to CPC on the eastern side (Trinkley 1999). This space was most likely between Abercorn and Lincoln Streets and Wayne and Gaston Streets and fronted by Habersham Street, measuring approximately 500 feet north south and 100 feet east west (Trinkley 1999). Today this area would be underneath what is now the police barracks and jail.

Similar to the NBG, the SBG data came from a number of different sources, each providing a different location for the cemetery. The locations are: nearby the original Savannah Medical College, somewhere on Abercorn Street, and the Old Candler Hospital (next to Forsyth Park) (Gamble 1900; GSHS 1857: RP 95007998; McGriff 2012; St. Joseph's/Candler 2013). Like the NBG, the SBG, even though the locations varied, was relatively close to the area of CPC, less than one mile.

When CPC closed for internments in 1853, the strangers' burying ground and the Negro burying ground also closed (Gamble 1900). Both burying grounds were ordered exhumed and the bodies moved to Laurel Grove (Trinkley and Hacker 1999; Gamble 1900). There is no record of how many people were buried in either of the cemeteries therefore it is impossible to know how many people were exhumed and how thoroughly the exhumations were carried out.

These two cemeteries, the NBG and the SBG, are not described on any of the tours, even though they were supposedly located either immediately adjacent to or at least in the vicinity of CPC. The ghost tours might not have included this information due to the difficulty of

establishing where they were actually located, but their exclusions of these burying grounds could have resulted from influences of the modern landscape. The present day spaces where these burying grounds may have been located all have buildings or something built on top of them. The modern landscape effectively erases any and all presence of these former burial grounds. There are no plaques denoting their existence in any of these areas.

By comparison, the tour guides often discuss the existence of a mass grave of yellow fever victims either in or along the southern boundary of CPC (for a full discussion of this topic see Chapter 5). The existence of a mass grave has largely been debunked by archaeologists (Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999) however, that does not stop the tour guides from pointing it out on the tours. The only difference between the tour guides inclusion of the yellow fever victims and their exclusion of the strangers' or Negro burying grounds is the presence of one plaque inside CPC (see Fig. 3 in Chapter 5), which the tourists are not able to locate at the time of the tours (CPC is only open between 8:00 am and 8:00pm and the tours take place after the cemetery closes).

Even though the modern landscape does not have any mention to a mass grave and the plaque is the only object in CPC acknowledging the yellow fever epidemic of 1820, a part of CPC is still thought to be associated with yellow fever victims and not to strangers who had no family to witness their burial. None of these guides mention if these mass graves were filled with the poor and/or transient people the disease was associated with (Patterson 1992).

Both the physical erasure and the lack of inclusion in oral narratives reinforces the idea that the only history worth telling, even on ghost tours, is linked to a specific race and class of people: the middle to upper class white population of Savannah holds a privileged position in relation to the African American and poor populations in the city. There is no focal point on the

modern landscape, which results in the exclusion of these groups of people from oral narratives. This lack of physical markers on the landscape is a result of the removal of bodies and the repurposing of spaces that were once associated with burials of Savannah's African/African American and poor populations. The act of removing bodies and repurposing the spaces where they were once interred also speaks to the social statuses of the groups originally interred in those spaces; they were less important than the wealthier, white population of Savannah. This is reinforced by CPC's enduring presence on Savannah's landscape and its expansion to accommodate more of the city's high status, white citizenry. The subjects of these two cemeteries are assumed to be of a lower class and, in the case of the NBG, lower on the scale of racial hierarchy, than those in CPC; this reinforces the idea that the city's white citizens who were also relatively wealthy are the only ones who are remembered as evidenced by the endurance of CPC on Savannah's landscape.

The idea that African Americans in Savannah were deemed less important than the white population is evident in the lack of any sort of recordkeeping of deaths within this specific population at any time. A stranger, by nature, might not have a name associated with them when they die, nor will they have a family to see to or pay for their burial; this could explain the fact that no records associated with the strangers' burying ground were found. African and African Americans on the other hand, whether free or enslaved, were known in their community (Davis 1976) and often had families who would see to their burial and remember their passing; however, records of their deaths were not taken. By not at least mentioning that Savannah had burying grounds for strangers and for African Americans, the tour guides are reinforcing the classist and

racist ideologies that led to the erasure of the cemeteries from the landscape in the first place<sup>5</sup>. Perhaps tellingly, the only mention of race in and around to CPC on the tours has to do with vandalism for religious rituals or the use of certain stones carried over from West Africa to protect citizens from the dead, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

### Children and CPC: Davant Park

While the locations where strangers and African Americans are buried are not discussed on the ghost tours, the locations of child burials are a frequent narrative point. None of the written sources describe the deaths of children from the 1820 yellow fever epidemic (see Chapter 5) whereas at least two of the ghost tour operators describe ghostly activity associated with a high number of child deaths from the virus. Gloria said that of the 666 people to have died from yellow fever, one-third of them were children, many of whom were orphans. Stephen, on the other hand, said that of the 700 or so yellow fever victims, 78 of them were boys from the Bethesda Orphanage. While the definition of a child varies, for the purpose of this thesis a child will be identified as anyone under the age of 18.

At least two written sources dispute both of these narratives. A search through the city database resulted in approximately 18 children that died in 1820, although not a single entry has a cause of death listed. Regardless, numbers of 4 and 18 are a far cry from 78 and 222 child deaths, even those who perished from yellow fever. In fact, Patterson explained that “children were generally considered immune” from and frequently only contracted mild cases of the disease (1992:859), meaning the number of children who died from yellow fever would be extremely low.

---

<sup>5</sup> Additionally, there is an erasure from Native Americans from the tour narratives. Native Americans had been living on and utilizing the land for burials before the colony was established, and yet there is no mention of their burial locations on any except one of the tours.

The reference to the orphans and especially to the Bethesda Orphanage is important, as the orphanage had nowhere near 78 boys in their care in 1820 (Cashin 2001). Bethesda Orphanage was established in 1740 by George Whitefield and had upwards of 49 children in its care in 1740 (Cashin 2001). However, that number dwindled to just 6 or 7 during the 1820s, which is definitely not enough for a large section of orphan burials described on the ghost tours. Additionally, the location of Bethesda makes it less likely for burials to occur in CPC; Whitefield was allotted 500 acres and chose a plot along the backwater of the Vernon River (also known as the Back River), which was ten miles outside of Savannah (Cashin 2001). Plans of Bethesda dating to 1771 (see Fig. 4 below) show a cemetery on the grounds (Williams 1968), therefore it would not be prudent to cart the dead all the way into Savannah when they could simply be buried on-site.

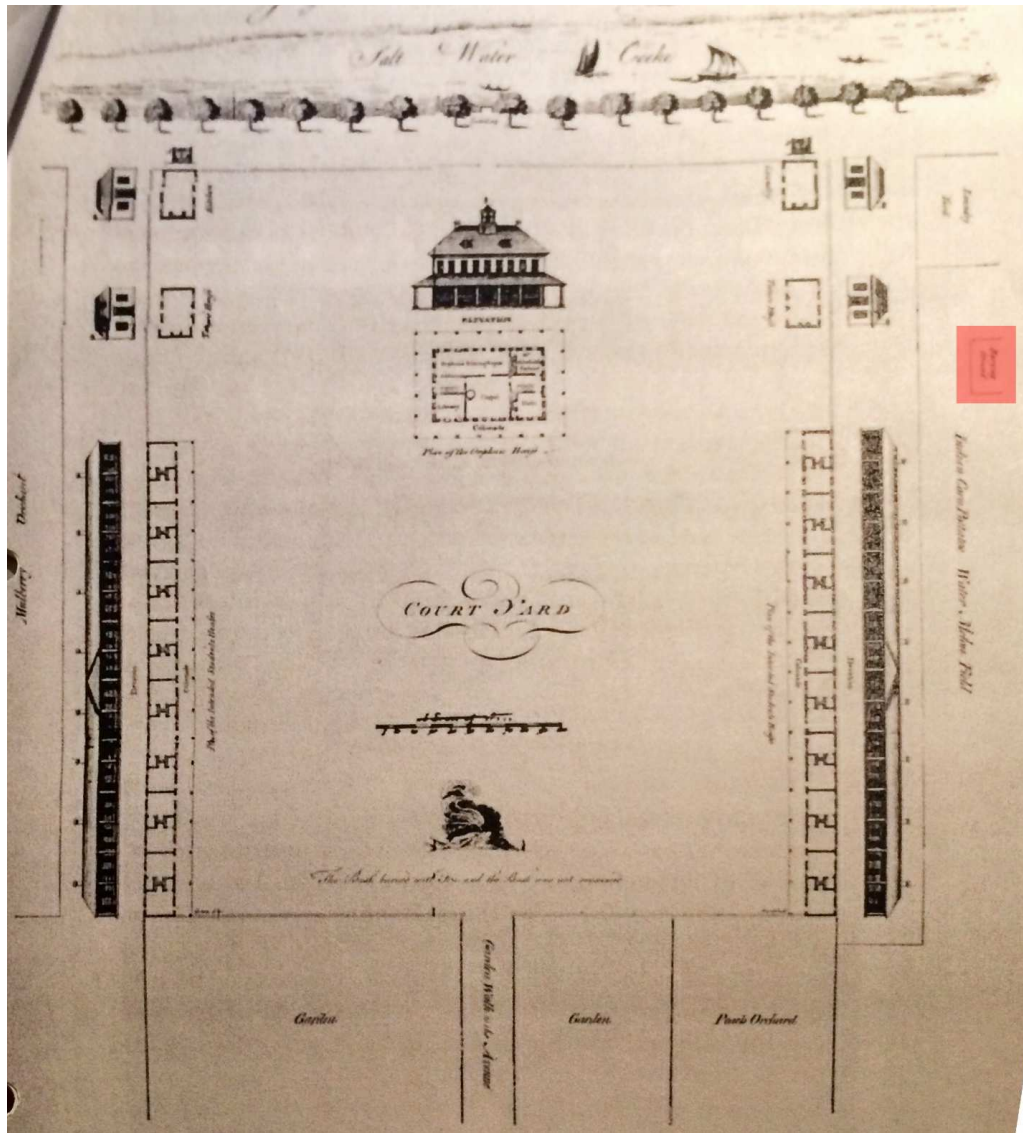


Figure 4. Plan of Bethesda Orphanage grounds. The “Burying Ground” is highlighted in red to the right, adapted from Williams (1968).

The ghost tours physically associate the large number of child deaths with a playground located just outside the fence on the southeastern corner of CPC. The park, called Davant Park is approximately 0.6 acres in size and is located on the corner of Lincoln Street and Perry Lane. Named after an early Mayor, Richard Davant, it includes a swing set, a small jungle gym, and a picnic area (City of Savannah Research Library and Municipal Archives [SRLMA] 2006; City of Savannah 2016). Gloria stated the playground was built to commemorate the numerous children who died from yellow fever in 1820 thus enabling them to “play there for all eternity.”

According to the tours, the playground is a hot spot for ghostly activity, including children's laughter, the swings moving without anyone nearby, and the kids playing tricks on people. Stephen described such a prank when a television crew filming a scene in Davant Park for a Halloween show on Savannah's ghosts when the camera man could not lift his camera off the ground no matter how hard he tried; suddenly it came free and he heard a child say "hello" in his ear, which caused him to take off running in the opposite direction. Tour guides, Sandy, Karl, and Stephen, also mention that children have been seen playing inside the fence of CPC at night, which is off limits to tourists between 8:00pm and 8:00am. To support the statement, Stephen played a short clip that was recorded by a tourist back in the early 2000s in which a boy in colonial garb is seen running through CPC, levitating, falling down, and disappearing inside a brick tomb. Sandy, who does not work for the same company as Stephen, told the same story on her tour. Stephen then told the tour group that the video has not been tampered with and was even examined by editors at a local news station in Ohio where the tourist lived. This information about the video being examined for tampering is used to further verify and authenticate his story as a true ghostly occurrence and not a fake.

The stories of children haunting Davant Park and CPC are another example of the modern landscape's influence on ghost tour narratives, but instead of influencing their erasure like the NBG and the strangers' burying ground, the landscape produces the narratives. No written documentation has been found that showed masses of children died in 1820 from yellow fever; however, tour guides nevertheless describe the presence of this playground next to CPC as a space commemorating the dead children. While it is admittedly odd to have a children's playground immediately adjacent to a cemetery, there is no plaque dedicating it to children who died from yellow fever, and the City of Savannah does not officially acknowledge its



commemorative purpose. Davant Park is also not mentioned by name on any of the tours; this makes the park something to be commemorated more for its location and association with children who died from yellow fever, not for an early twentieth century mayor of Savannah (SRLMA 2006).

The remembrance of children over strangers and African Americans is important to discuss. Children are seen as the future; it is devastating for a parent to have to bury their child, especially if they die suddenly and painfully. A discussion of children is more relatable on ghost tours and hits closer to home for many of the tourists than a discussion of strangers or African Americans. Strangers do not have names or families and there were almost no African Americans on any of the tours; in fact, there were only two on all of the tours taken. This might have related to the lack of mention of the NBG. This is mirrored by evidence presented by Hanks from her research of ghost hunts in York, England; all members of the ghost hunting or paranormal investigation groups except one were white (2015) although this is not an equal comparison as the population in the United Kingdom is primarily white while the population in the southern United States is much less so. Economically, the tours cost anywhere from \$15.00 to \$27.00, meaning that many of the people that could afford to take a trip to Savannah (as many of the tourists were not locals) and pay for the tours generally belonged to at least a middle class socioeconomic status. Narratives of dead children are likely to resonate with more people than those of strangers or African Americans. This is especially important since a major topic of discussion about the playground was its association with Savannah's *orphan* children; essentially, this means that Savannah's child strangers are more important and worthy of burial in CPC than the adult strangers or African Americans with families.

The fact that children are being remembered on these ghost tours and not those who were buried in the strangers' burying ground or the Negro burying ground signifies that the landscape has a much larger effect on memory than initially thought. While there is significant written documentation regarding the possibility of the various locations of the strangers' burying ground and the NBG, their presence is no longer visible on the modern day landscape. On the other hand, there is no documentation to prove the existence of a large number of orphan children being buried in CPC during the yellow fever epidemic. The children's playground right next to CPC in conjunction with the existing narrative of the 1820 yellow fever epidemic allows for memory making centered on child victims of the epidemic to take place. While it was only told on one tour, the Rene Rhondolia legend is known to other tour guides and could also play a role in the focus on children and Davant Park. The Rene legend is said to have taken place the same time as the yellow fever epidemic, therefore the association of child deaths to both a disease and a monstrous man could have increased the significance of the park and in the tour narratives.

Davant Park is also important, as it is the only location in the area around CPC on the tours that tourists can interact with. Tour guides encourage tourists to take pictures, swing on the swings, and otherwise engage with the park, which is something they are not allowed to do during the nightly tours around CPC. This enables the tourists to more fully connect and engage with the narratives on the ghost tours. The tourists are, in a sense, ghost hunters, if only for a few minutes. They are able to take pictures and, hopefully, capture an image of a ghostly presence that will then reinforce the tour guides' stories of interactions with the children's ghosts.

### **Conclusion**

There are a large number of people buried in CPC that much is clear. However, the exact number of the dead inside the cemetery is much more difficult to determine based on a number

of factors. CPC was expanded three different times during the 100 years of its use, making it difficult to determine who was already buried in one section before they expanded it. Additionally, burial records were not kept until 1803, meaning that approximately 50 years of burials went undocumented, including those during all three periods of expansion. The lack of solid numbers regarding the dead in CPC is important as it is reflected across both written sources and oral narratives on ghost tours. Although the numbers do not all match up, there is a general consensus across all of the sources that more people are buried in CPC than initially meets the eye. While it is unknown where the tour guides were getting their information regarding the number of dead in CPC, it is possible that they gained it from written records or from other oral narratives in the city since tour guides from different companies told the same stories. The inclusion of these discrepancies is important to this thesis for the comparison and analysis of types of authority reflected in written and oral sources. The numbers are also given to illustrate the significant amount of burials in and around CPC and how this information affects memories of the cemetery's landscape.

Needless to say, if finding out information regarding the number of burials in CPC is difficult, finding out information about the NBG and the strangers' burying ground was much more troublesome. Various written records described different locations for both cemeteries and a solid conclusion has yet to be reached about their location to this day. Many of the records mentioned the potential removal of bodies and/or the repurposing of the spaces for other uses; it is for this reason that both the NBG and the strangers' burying ground have effectively been erased from the modern landscape. While the white, wealthier, Christian burials at CPC have been documented (albeit not incredibly meticulously) the strangers and African Americans of Savannah have disappeared from history. Their burying grounds were exhumed and moved to

Laurel Grove and Bonaventure Cemeteries, however records regarding the number of individuals moved between the cemeteries have not been located. There is no plaque marking the location of either burial ground, nor is either of these burial grounds mentioned on any of the ghost tours.

The lack of records for both burying grounds signifies a combination of both poor recordkeeping as well as a lack of priority. If burial records were not kept for the relatively wealthy white population of Savannah until 1803, then records of strangers and African Americans, considered to be of both a lower class and race, would have been extremely low on the city's list of record-keeping priorities.

On the other hand, child victims of yellow fever in 1820 are mentioned on at least two of the ghost tours. Davant Park, the park adjacent to CPC, is a park that the tour guides say is dedicated to the children who perished in 1820 from the virus. However, there are no documents to support this information. The fact that the physical landscape, in this case a playground, can be used to connect the ghostly narratives to a space is important for the memory work being done for and with the tourists. Thus, the lack of any physical reminder or even a commemorative plaque would make stories about the strangers' or African Americans of Savannah not as engaging or memorable for tourists.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: LEGACIES OF THE CIVIL WAR

The Civil War had less of a direct effect on Savannah than it did on other cities in the southern United States. In late 1864, the mayor, Dr. Richard Arnold and city councilmen of Savannah received word that the Confederate troops stationed nearby were going to retreat to South Carolina. Their retreat was done without confronting General Sherman's troops who were sweeping their way south towards the city. In response to the loss of the Confederate troops, Savannah was left in a defenseless position; therefore Arnold, in an effort to save Savannah from the large-scale destruction inflicted upon other cities along Sherman's march to the sea, sought out Sherman's headquarters and met with Brigadier General John Geary (Gamble 1900). In this meeting, Arnold asked for "protection for the lives and private property of the citizens" to which Geary agreed, thus affecting the surrender of Savannah to the Union (Gamble 1900:262).

The negative effects of Union troops on CPC's landscape is discussed on three of the ghost tours in the city's historic district. The tour guides often utilize markers on CPC's landscape to underscore their arguments, which both engages tourists with the area and reinforces their memories of the cemetery. Race is not mentioned often on the tours, but when it is it frequently presents African Americans as either criminals or following backwards religions. The discussions of the damage inflicted on CPC by Sherman's troops along with the brief but telling mentions of race reflect enduring attitudes of both the narrators and the listeners on the ghost tours.

### **The Destruction of CPC by the Union**

#### Ghost Tour Narratives

Three of the ghost tours mention the Civil War and its effect on the landscape of CPC, specifically the physical and spiritual damage caused by Sherman's troops. Sandy narrated the

encampment of Sherman's troops in CPC and stated these soldiers "ensured the cemetery's haunting by disturbing the graves." According to Sandy, the troops changed names and dates on many of the headstones, used them for target practice, and broke into the family vaults for shelter during the winter months.

Another tour guide, Karl, described a similar situation: after the Confederates fled and Savannah surrendered to the Union, Sherman's troops camped in CPC and broke into the vaults for warmth during the colder months. In addition to breaking into the vaults they "threw the bodies onto the lawn to decompose" and robbed the vaults of any and all valuables. Like Sandy, Karl described the alteration of headstones but in greater detail: the troops used chisels to change death dates and ages at death. One man's headstone says he "died at 9,000 years old," another boy "died at age three but his daughter lived to be 29," and another man died in 2015. While I did not examine every grave marker in CPC, I examined many in the areas mentioned by the tour guides and did not find any alterations to any markers. Trinkley conducted a thorough examination of CPC as well as research into military records during the Civil War and found "little to no evidence" supporting what he calls the "local legends" (1999:11). CPC was also closed between the hours of 8:00 pm and 8:00 am, during which all of the ghost tours took place. This meant that the tourists had to take the tour guides' word that the damage had been done to the grave markers. This, along with the significant number of grave markers in CPC (see Chapter 6 for a full discussion) further increases the tour guides' authority, as most tourists are not going to conduct an aboveground survey of the cemetery (meaning they would have to return to CPC during the daytime) in order to verify the tour guides' information.

Stephen's description of CPC and the Civil War started with the invention of the burial-proof coffin in 1868 with an air vent, a bell, and a spring-loaded trap door in the event someone

is buried alive. In a picture of the patent design, the inventor, a southerner named Kirkbaum, drew “a dead Abraham Lincoln in the coffin”. Stephen interpreted this as a passive aggressive dig at the President from a former confederate supporter. Stephen continued his narrative about the effect of Sherman’s troops on CPC’s landscape; he explains that Sherman’s “peaceful occupation” consisted of the General leaving foot soldiers in the cemetery to “camp, hang out, drink, and sit tight” in December of 1864. Similar to the narratives above, the soldiers proceeded to desecrate CPC: they looted family vaults, changed birth and death dates on headstones, ripped some stones out of the ground, broke stones in half, and “destroyed the orphan tomb stones entirely” to which citizens of the city responded by salvaging all of the stones they could and lining them up along the eastern wall of CPC (see Fig. 5 below).



Figure 5. Broken and misplaced grave markers (also known as the orphan tombstones) placed along the eastern wall of CPC. Photograph taken by the author.

### The Civil War from a Historical Perspective

No primary written sources have been found that discuss the destruction of headstones and family vaults in CPC by Sherman’s troops. Contrary to the tours, most of the written records

describe the charitable contributions Savannah received from Sherman. Once Sherman entered the city and saw the state of its citizenry (many of whom were starving), he ordered any captured Confederate goods along with any private citizen holdings in mills and other locations to be distributed among the destitute; he also called for a steam ship to drop off provisions to the city as a gesture of good will (Gamble 1900). Russell and Hines briefly mention that some citizens complained about damages done by the Union forces, however they also clarify that those damages were rectified by the Union during their occupation (1992); unfortunately, Russell and Hines do not include the source of the complaints. To compare Savannah to other cities in the south that were hit on Sherman's march to the sea, it "showed no visible scars of war; there were no burned buildings or ravaged homes" (Bailey 2003:117).

While there are a large number of headstones along the eastern wall of CPC, written documents do not associate this as being the result of desecration by Sherman's troops. In 1895 or 1896 (approximately 30 years after the Union occupation of the city), there were numerous stones that had fallen apart due to disrepair and acts of vandalism (not by Union troops). Savannah's Park and Tree Department placed these markers along the eastern wall of CPC (Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999). Stephen and Gloria, both tour guides on different tours but who are employed for the same company, called the markers along the wall orphan tombstones, referring to stones that are separated from the burials of the children who died in 1820 from yellow fever that records cannot reunite. To reiterate from the previous chapter, Stephen associated the yellow fever deaths in 1820 with orphans from Bethesda. His connection of 1820 to the desecration of the orphans' burial site is a way for him to draw out the negative experiences of Savannah's poor children. Gloria similarly focused on the seriousness of the city's orphan children. The other two tours that discuss the damage of Sherman's troops speak



about the destruction in a more lighthearted manner, especially with the alterations of the grave markers. They would often encourage tourists to revisit CPC during the day and look around the cemetery for themselves.

Trinkley addressed the “variety of local legends” regarding the damage done to CPC by Union troops (1999:11), which indicates that memories of the destruction to the cemetery by Sherman’s troops extend beyond the realm of ghost tours. The author searched meticulously through Union military records and regimental histories and found no evidence of CPC being used for quartering men and/or horses. The only mention of CPC in the Union records was from an officer who noted the poor condition the cemetery was in. After the Civil War, there was documentation stating that during cleanup of the cemetery, tree branches and other debris were thrown into several vaults but which vaults is not known (Trinkley 1999).

Furthermore, the large-scale survey and penetrometer study conducted by Trinkley and Hacker yielded only three artifacts that date to the Civil War time period in the entire five-six acre area of CPC (1999). The authors conclude the artifacts suggest that CPC was not used during the Civil War and was abandoned in the latter half of the nineteenth century (Trinkley and Hacker 1999). It can be reasoned that if Sherman’s troops and their horses were being quartered in CPC for even a short period of time, there would be far more than three artifacts discovered that date to that time period. However, the work done by Trinkley and Hacker is mainly non-invasive and the artifacts were surface or very near surface finds. Therefore there might be more artifacts underneath the surface indicating that the Union quartered troops in CPC; though the fact that it was not mentioned in any military or regimental documents from the mid-nineteenth century makes it more likely that troops were not quartered there.

## Race and Ghost Tours at CPC

Race has been discussed in the previous chapter with regards to remembrance and forgetting of African Americans on ghost tours in the area around CPC. Because the modern landscape does not hold any physical sign of its existence, the Negro burying ground of Savannah is not discussed on numerous ghost tours in the historic district, furthering its erasure from the city's history. In fact, race was only discussed on three ghost tours, all of which centered on activities associated with religious (i.e. Voodoo) rituals or beliefs about spirits. Two of the tours that mention such rituals and beliefs are the same tours that talk about the damage inflicted on CPC by Union soldiers. It is important to point out that these ghost tours did not explicitly state that African Americans are the ones performing the activities associated with Voodoo ceremonies. However, there is a strong underlying message that the tour guides did not associate the performers of these activities with white people simply by their specific inclusion of Voodoo activities and West African beliefs. While there are a growing number of non-African Americans practicing Voodoo, the religion is still strongly associated with African Americans.

Sandy pointed out a series of bricks inset in the sidewalk along the western side of CPC with a swirl pattern on them (see Fig. 6 below).



Figure 6. Brick sidewalk along the western side of CPC. Photograph taken by author.

Sandy said the bricks were laid down on the walkway in 1897 when the city was expanding Abercorn Street. The “strange pattern” on the bricks is an “old Voodoo pattern representing the eyes of the soul.” The bricks were placed as a way to commemorate the people being paved over during the expansion. Another tour guide, Patty, pointed out the same bricks and said they “are supposed to symbolize water.” It comes from an “old West African slash Voodoo belief that spirits could not cross water so they put the bricks by the cemetery because they believed it would keep spirits from wandering around the whole city. So it keeps them in place but it doesn’t keep you from seeing them.” The mention of the symbols being a part of a West African belief is an indicator that Patty was implying that African Americans, not white people, hold the beliefs.

If CPC were strictly a cemetery for white Christians, why would bricks with Voodoo and/or West African symbols be laid out around it to appease family members? Would the bricks not better fit the nearby NBG if African American community members laid out the bricks? Unfortunately, neither Sandy nor Patty said much as to who laid out the bricks. Sandy implies that the city did it but it is unclear as to why that would be the case. Considering Patty and Sandy’s interpretations to possibly be correct, perhaps the NBG was closer than initially thought; or it had already been erased from the landscape and the only place nearby they could lay the bricks was at CPC. On the other hand, the bricks might not represent any beliefs, West African or otherwise and the narratives do not have any evidence to back up their assertions. The tour guides seem to have gotten the stories from somewhere, whether they adapted them or not remains to be discovered.

According to Sandy, the city got tired of the “shenanigans that were going on at night because those shenanigans extended to the local Voodoo community who were performing all sorts of rites and rituals...in the cemetery.” The city found out about the activities from

commuters (who take shortcuts along the pathways through CPC) who came across “a sacrificed goat wrapped in gold wire or a handful of headless chickens.” This prompted the city to close CPC between the hours of 8:00 pm and 8:00 am. Another guide, Karl, said he had personally witnessed “numerous people with a little bucket and a little pail in the cemetery.” He called these people “bone collectors” and said they come into CPC at night and have been seen on his tours “digging up bodies and digging up bones...to take for rituals and God knows what.” He also cautioned the tourists to “keep an eye out for them” as it is “pretty creepy.” This comment raises the tourists’ expectations in that they now have the possibility of seeing both a ghost (or ghosts) on their tour as well as illegal and disturbing activities like grave robbing.

During his research and survey of CPC’s landscape, Trinkley noted the discovery of charcoal, which he attributed to “activities conducted in the cemetery- perhaps periodic clearing or perhaps even bonfires associated with some graveside activity” (1999:52). This could mean Trinkley is a potential source for tour guides in which they conclude the activities are graveside fires conducted by Voodoo practitioners or perhaps that Trinkley included this explanation after hearing some of the folklore surrounding nightly activity at CPC.

Karl’s discussion of the activity in CPC was the most ambiguous. He did not explicitly tie the grave robbery in CPC with Voodoo but simply with “rituals.” He also did not denote race in his narrative. He simply said that he has seen people “digging in the cemetery in the middle of the night for sacrificial items.” This leaves tourists to make their own conclusions as to who they think is performing these activities in CPC, whether they are part of a religious organization that includes human bones in rituals, rowdy teenagers, or Voodoo practitioners.

In general Voodoo/Vodou/Vodun is closely linked to Catholicism with a pantheon of spirits that mirror many Catholic saints (Pile 2005). In fact, Vodou is highly adaptable and many

Catholic saints were incorporated into the spirit pantheon if they were seen to be powerful and useful for the practitioners. Equally important to note: Vodou does not involve human remains unless they are the practitioners' ancestors, not bones of unrelated individuals. Therefore, if someone was digging up bones of white people buried in CPC it was more than likely not someone of a local Vodou community, although the religion has become altered as it encountered other cultures in the United States and Voodoo became a variant of Vodou. The only ingredient used in Voodoo formulas would be graveyard dust (Ward 2006), which would not require digging up bones to retrieve.

The narratives included above situate race and specific religious activity (i.e. Voodoo) negatively within the social landscape in and around CPC. While the tour guides do not connect the acts of grave robbing or “shenanigans” with African Americans directly, their choice of language in these narratives reflects an association with the African American community, specifically the Voodoo community. The historical African American community is being portrayed as traditional and backwards, with their West African/Voodoo beliefs in water symbols keeping the dead from leaving the cemetery, which the tour guides are utilizing to increase their own authority as purveyors of objective observations of ghostly activity. Additionally, through the undertones in the language of their narratives, the tour guides are portraying African Americans as being criminals.

A possible reason for this could lie in the demographics of the ghost tours. Aside from two individuals, who were attending the tours as part of a larger group event, every tour participant was white. The tour guides might simply be catering their information to the demographic of their tour participants. However, this is detrimental as the city of Savannah has a larger African American population (53.2 percent or 76,144 people) than a white population

(37.6 percent or 53,761) (City-data 2013). This could mean that many of the local tourists could potentially be turned off by the content of the ghost tours.

Another possible reason that race is not discussed explicitly on the tours could be due to the highly politicized and sensitive nature of race in the United States over the past few years. It is noticeable on the tours that death and dying is easier for tour guides to discuss than race. The death that the tour guides talk about has an historic association in that the subjects of the stories are long dead or, in the case of Rene, never existed. On the other hand, discussions of race bring the tours to the present and can be more difficult to talk about. Talk about death, especially those who died in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, can sometimes give tourists a distance from the subject; however, there is no distance from race given the tense situations described by the media all over the United States.

However, although their language is not explicit and seems to be subconscious, by not addressing race on the tours, at least not thoroughly or directly, the tour guides are furthering the systemic racism that occurred both when the NBG was erased from the city's landscape and as a result of the Civil War's outcome. This can be detrimental for the city as these tours affect the tourists' memories; if a tourist leaves Savannah remembering narratives of African American Voodoo practitioners robbing graves and believing in traditional religious ideologies then that is not a particularly positive association for the city of Savannah. By helping to create memories of African Americans in Savannah as either criminals or connected to traditional beliefs, the guides are suggesting that African Americans are not progressive like the rest of the city and that they spend their time robbing cemeteries for their Voodoo rituals. The undertone that Voodoo practitioners are both African American and criminals is especially damaging as it creates one kind of memory by tourists and one that is most likely untrue.

## **Conclusion**

As the tour guides' narratives of child victims of yellow fever and the existence of a mass grave of yellow fever victims have demonstrated, documentary evidence regarding the history of CPC is often disregarded. This is especially evident with regards to the Civil War and Sherman's occupation of Savannah in 1864. Tourists are told that his troops were quartered in CPC and they proceeded to desecrate the space, often altering or destroying tombstones, looting corpses, and thoroughly ensuring that CPC will be perpetually haunted by the ghosts of the disturbed dead. These narratives are an alternate form of memory making in which the people of Savannah display their southern pride and their southern heritage through the negative portrayal of northerners.

Another form of alternative memory making, one with a potential negative effect, concerns the tour guides' discussions of race on their tours. Again, while not explicitly bringing race into the discussion, it is strongly hinted at that many of the detrimental activities (like grave robbing) and traditional belief systems (like sidewalk brick designs are placed to keep spirits inside the cemetery) are associated with African Americans. Through minor choices in language and tone, the tour guides are perpetuating the institutional racism that played a role in erasing the NBG from Savannah's landscape. This affects tourists' memories of CPC, as they will likely associate Voodoo and criminal activity with the African American population in Savannah.

Tour guides are more than likely consciously disregarding the more official types of sources (i.e. archaeological reports, historical documents) and instead either using information gained from other tour guides or from more popular books, like Piechocinski's (1999). In fact, many of the numbers and narrative information told on the ghost tours match the numbers and information that Piechocinski describes in her book (1999). Unfortunately, the tour guides

interviewed in 2014 did not respond to requests for additional interviews in 2015, therefore their sources were unable to be determined. Tour companies were also contacted but with no success.

In disregarding the official forms of history and telling their own narratives, the tour guides are subverting the historical record and creating new memories for both the tourists and locals of Savannah about the Civil War and its impact on the city. As Savannah was largely spared the destruction Sherman inflicted on other southern cities, this alternative interpretation of events could be the locals' assertion that Savannah was not truly spared. This legitimizes Savannah as a southern city that was negatively affected by the Civil War instead of one that was actually improved with the arrival of Sherman and his troops. Based on the narratives told on the ghost tours, the tourists are going to remember the Union with a darker view at the conclusion of the tour than perhaps what they might have had at the beginning of the tour. Similarly, tourists are going to remember the local Voodoo community and African American practitioners in a darker light as well. Implying that African Americans are grave robbing criminals who steal human bones and sacrifice goats and chickens for their Voodoo rituals does not leave a positive memory in most tourists' heads. However, the ghost tours allow tour guides to present an alternative explanation for the history and ghostly activity in and around CPC that might not be presented on a strictly historical tour of the city and of CPC. The endurance of southern pride and southern heritage is reflected in these narratives since, in each one of them, Sherman and the Union are presented in a negative light. President Lincoln was drawn as a corpse in a patent design for a coffin after the Civil War and it is significant as it is still remembered and discussed on tours to this day. Unfortunately, by largely excluding African Americans from the narratives, where the only discussions of them are connected to criminal activity and odd and backwards belief systems, racism has also endured.



## CHAPTER EIGHT: CONCLUSIONS AND AREAS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

While ghost stories may not be considered to fall within the official category of academic sources, their use for analysis by archaeologists has been exemplified in this thesis. By examining ghost stories, archaeologists can better understand how material culture and, especially, landscapes are remembered in today's society and how these modern landscapes affect the construction of such memories. After recognizing the existence of this kind of information and contextualizing it archaeologists can use the narratives from ghost tours, along with their own research data, to interact and begin dialogues with the local community about the history of particular spaces.

Tuan (1979) discussed how people's fear of landscapes flows from a fear of other humans (human nature), which leads to people often avoiding landscapes they associate with malevolent forces. In a similar vein, Foote described four different types of actions taken at sites of violence and tragedy, including completely erasing said sites from the landscape (1997). Taking a ghost tour can be considered as a modern mechanism for confronting death, and a fear of spaces associated with death, by raising the topic through their narratives and allowing tourists to contemplate and confront their own fears of death in an acceptable situation (Stone 2005; Garcia 2012). Ghost tours can also allow tourists to confront other fears: fears of social outcasts like Rene Rhondolia, of war and its effect on a city like the Civil War and Sherman's troops, or other religions like Voodoo. Ghost tours bring up death in the public realm by, obviously, including ghosts on their tours; in doing this they allow tourists to learn about death as well as a location's history in a less macabre way. Ghost tours, instead of avoiding the spaces that elicit fear and dread, confront them; the narratives of such spaces can either make tourists feel safe, like confronting a friendly or affirming ghost (Bell 1997) or can make them feel scared and

uncomfortable. Mixtures of these feelings are elicited from the narratives at CPC. One of the ways tour guides discussed death was with narratives of yellow fever victims, especially children. The guides presented Davant Park on the southern border of CPC as a commemorative playground for the orphan children who died in 1820 from the disease to play for all eternity. Written documents have shown that large numbers of orphan graves do not exist in CPC (Trinkley 1999; Trinkley and Hacker 1999) and that few children died from yellow fever (Patterson 1992), however the tour guides continue to narrate these stories because of their belief that they both help tourists think about fears of death and dying and because they have evidence that support their narratives. Their use of the landscape (e.g. Davant Park) along with documented ghostly occurrences (through voice recording, videos, and photographs) allows tourists to connect with what the guides are discussing. It also allows tourists to feel more connected to the landscape, especially the areas outside of CPC's boundaries where they are encouraged to interact with during the tours. When the tourists interact with the landscape they are better able to cement the memories of the tour guides' narratives in their heads.

As described in many chapters throughout this thesis, there are discrepancies between written sources and oral narratives, between oral narratives, and between written records. Identifying the reasons behind these inconsistencies ultimately boiled down to an issue of authority. Ghost tour operators narrated stories of CPC as a way to subvert the more traditional forms of history production (e.g. museums, historical documents, archaeologists, historical tours etc.) (Hanks 2015). By describing their, and others', encounters with the supernatural, the tour guides were able to create, and add to, their own versions of history. Many of the tour guides used the narratives as a way to increase their authority as producers of knowledge surrounding paranormal activity. Many of the guides included audio recordings, video recordings, or

photographs as a way to reinforce their stories. The descriptions about the orphan children on the playground around CPC were often accompanied with audio recordings and photographs as if the tour guides needed to thoroughly prove their story, since written sources disputed their statements. This display of authority is a way for the tour guides to subvert what is considered official knowledge sources (e.g. archaeological reports, historical documents, etc.) and to present their knowledge as official based on their data gathered from instruments of their trade (e.g. EVP, EMF, temperature readings, etc.). One of the reasons that the tour guides may do this could be their insistence that what they are doing is equally important to the research performed by academics, but they do not need any kind of major schooling to do their work. This might also be why ghost tours are so popular; the tour guides show evidence they collected on their tours but they also present other tourists' and locals' photographs and videos. It seems like these tour guides are using these tours to encourage other people, not necessarily academics but regular people, to document and share their paranormal experiences too, that everyone can be a purveyor of this kind of knowledge.

Tourists trust that their tour guide will convince them of the existence of, or, at the very least, the tour guide's belief in ghosts (Holloway 2010), otherwise the tourists are not going to believe anything the guides tell them. In addition to confronting difficult topics like death and dying, people also come to experience a ghostly encounter for themselves rather than hearing about it from the tour guide (Hanks 2015). Stephen said if, at the end of the tour, the tourists have not encountered any sort of ghostly activity they either leave relieved at not experiencing anything or they leave disappointed and/or often demand refunds. This increases the tour guides' need to present "authentic" information to the tourists, which might explain some of the variation in content by the guides with regards to the yellow fever stories, dead children narratives, etc.

compared to the written documents. On the other hand, mediums, paranormal investigators, etc. often stress the importance of their work; they say their experiences might not match up to more orthodox accounts of what happened in the space but they trust in their encounters (Hanks 2015). They present themselves as researchers and investigators. When asked about his work, Stephen described himself as the head researcher for the company and said he often engages in “ethnographic research” for much of the content on his company’s tours. The tours also contrast with orthodox sources because the investigators (who are often the tour guides) include narratives from other people to bolster their interpretation of the past. By including stories from other tourists, locals, etc. they encourage other people to share their stories and become “experts” themselves by nature of simply having a ghostly encounter.

The landscape, and especially the ability to interact with it, plays an important role in the authority and believability of the tours. Stephen said most people prefer to take walking tours over other forms of tours in Savannah (i.e. hearse tours or bus tours) because they are able to physically interact with the space they are hearing narratives about. Additionally, the tour guides use the landscape to illustrate points of their story, such as telling the tourists to look down at the bricks on the sidewalk that have the carved symbols in them. The operators also encourage people to interact with the structures in Davant Park, like slide on the slide or, especially, swing on the swings, because they might have a ghostly encounter in doing so. Finally, tourists are encouraged to visit CPC during the day to look at the grave markers and see the ones that were supposedly altered by Union soldiers. Tourists cannot interact with CPC during the tours, which creates a tension in their desire to interact with the cemetery’s landscape. Only by returning during the day, when the atmosphere is much less spooky, can they get the interaction they are seeking. The fact that CPC is closed at night adds to the tour guides’ authority since they are,

usually, the ones who have seen the cemetery during the daytime before the tourists get to see the space for themselves.

The ways in which the tour guides and tourists interact with the landscape of CPC is a form of what Low described as embodied space (2014). Through repeated interaction and narratives, especially at Davant Park, the area has become a space where ghostly children are thriving. While the original reason for establishing the park so close to a cemetery may no longer be remembered, many people now remember it as a space commemorating child orphan yellow fever victims. The tours have essentially populated Davant Park with ghostly children and formed the space around their untimely deaths.

As exemplified in the analysis chapters, ghost tour narratives often alter, omit, or introduce information that is not reflected in primary and academic sources. The tour guides increase the number of deaths of yellow fever victims as a way to elicit the tourists' anxiety about death, dying, and the supernatural. This was exemplified in the legend of Rene Rhondolia and his reflection of society's fears of the non-normal "other" and anxieties about new and uncontrollable diseases.

King argued the landscape influences what stories are told about a location (2012). The landscape of CPC is no different. The guides left out any information about the stranger's burying ground and the NBG that are supposedly somewhere in CPC's vicinity; however they do include legends of ghostly orphaned children who died from yellow fever in nearby Davant Park. The erasure of the NBG and the strangers' burying ground from the present day landscape more than likely play a role in their exclusion from ghost tour narratives, as do the contradicting documents regarding their previous locations. The location of Davant Park immediately adjacent to CPC makes it a perfect part of the landscape to construct narratives around; and since tourists

can engage with structures on it, it further supports the tour guides' narratives and influences the tourists' memories of the space.

The effects of Union troops on CPC's landscape are also discussed as a way to increase their legitimacy as a damaged southern city during the Civil War while, in reality, Savannah was more than likely saved by Sherman's presence in the city. This implies that Savannah has not completely moved beyond the outcome of the Civil War. Finally, race was not explicitly discussed on the tours but through tone and hints of religious practices (i.e. Voodoo) that are often associated with African Americans were brought up, frequently connecting this group of people to criminal activity and "backward" religious rituals and beliefs. The content and tone of the narratives suggest a subtle form of racism towards African Americans. This could potentially arise from the heightened political awareness of race that the United States is currently encountering which may be harder to discuss on the tours, therefore race is largely left out or only briefly and inexplicitly touched on.

The analysis of the data gathered for this thesis revealed areas in which further research would be useful, specifically interviews with tour guides and owners of ghost tour companies. Learning where they found their source material and how they gather their data for their tours would be extremely useful to understand what potential written records are consulted and whether or not that information is included on the tours. One topic for further research surrounds the legend of Rene Rhondolia. Since it was only mentioned on one tour and included in one book written by a tour company owner (McGriff 2012), finding out the source would be important to understand how and why it might not be discussed on other tours and how well known it is among other tour guides as well as locals. More information regarding the strangers' and the Negro burying grounds would also be important. Being able to at least point out the general area

of the burying grounds and, potentially, discovering how many bodies were removed to Laurel Grove and Bonaventure Cemeteries would be useful in reversing some of the erasure of their presence on Savannah's landscape. The local Voodoo community and is another area of future research. It would be interesting to find out if the tour guides consulted the Voodoo community as to their religious activities and/or whether or not the community has any knowledge of the content presented on the ghost tours.

One area during analysis that created problems centered on the types of source material and how to contextualize the information. Many of the written sources were not academic in nature but deciding whether to consider them primary or secondary sources created a dilemma, thus the use of "popular written sources" to describe the documents. These kinds of problems with contextualizing research data were frequent and the result might not be as black and white as I wanted it to be, however it is important to attempt to figure out a way to analyze these sources as they provided a wealth of information.

Ghost tourism engages in questions about "spirituality and pilgrimage, heritage and historicity, and science and death," which results in a haunted heritage that "critiques and refashions known elements of the past and historical expertise" (Hanks 2015:27). Archaeologists need to turn to cultural anthropology to better understand how a cemetery like CPC is interpreted and how the space is engaged with and remembered by tourists and locals alike.<sup>6</sup> Archaeologists, especially historical archaeologists, should examine the content presented on ghost tours as the legends often reflect communal memories that, in relaying them to tourists, are thus including tourists in the memory making. The narratives can be examined to better understand how historic spaces and landscapes are interpreted and remembered in the present day, specifically what the

---

<sup>6</sup> This is not to say that every archaeologist should do this, however archaeologists who want to incorporate modern day interpretations into landscape studies may find this particularly useful.

modern society deems important enough for remembrance and what is not. Finally, this information can help archaeologists gain a better understanding of both the physical and the social space of a site. They can use these legends and the social ideas and behaviors they signify to identify what is important to local communities, especially with regards to site preservation and interpretation.

American history is perceived as being “linear and straightforward,” which can only happen when minority groups (e.g. African Americans, women, Native Americans, etc.) are “downplayed or ignored” (Shackel 2003:194). This is the case with the strangers’ burying ground and the NBG; they are no longer present on the landscape and therefore they have been effectively erased from the area’s history; at least that is the case on the ghost tours.

Archaeologists can help by surveying, identifying, and possibly even excavating areas that have been ignored or forgotten and bring the history back to the surface to allow for new memories to be created.



## REFERENCES CITED

Anderson, Katherine Anne

2006. *Graves Matter: Urban Graveyard Preservations in Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina*. Master's thesis, School of Environmental Design, University of Georgia, Athens.

Bailey, Anne J.

2003. *War and Ruin: William T. Sherman and the Savannah Campaign*. Scholarly Resources, Wilmington.

Bell, Michael Mayerfield

1997. The Ghosts of Place. *Theory and Society* 26:813-836.

Bennett, Gillian

1996. Legend: Performance and Truth. In *Contemporary Legend: A Reader*, edited by Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith, pp. 17-39. Garland Publishing, New York.

Blom, Thomas

2000. Morbid Tourism: A Postmodern Market Niche with an Example from Althorp. *Norwegian Journal of Geography* 54:29-36.

Bourdieu, Pierre

2009. Pierre Bourdieu. In *Visions of Culture: An Annotated Reader*, edited by Jerry D. Moore, pp. 405-418. AltaMira Press, Lanham.

Bristow, Robert S. and Mirela Newman

2004. Myth Vs. Fact: An Exploration of Fright Tourism. *Proceeding of the 2004 Northeastern Recreation Research Symposium*. 215-222. Bolton Landing.

Brunvand, Jan Harold

1981. *The Vanishing Hitchhiker: American Urban Legends and Their Meanings*. W.W. Norton and Company, New York.

Candler, Allen D.

1914. Colonial Records of the State of Georgia, Compiled under Authority of the Legislature.

Cashin, Edward J.

2001. *Beloved Bethesda: A History of George Whitefield's Home for Boys*. Mercer University Press, Macon.

## City Data

2013. Races in Savannah, Georgia (GA), Detailed Stats. Electronic document, <http://www.city-data.com/races/races-Savannah-Georgia.html>, accessed April 19, 2016.

## City of Savannah

2016. Parks and Playgrounds. Electronic document, <http://www.savannahga.gov/index.aspx?nid=351>, accessed April 10, 2016.

## City of Savannah Research Library and Municipal Archives

2006. A Century of History: Savannah City Hall Centennial, 1906-2006. Electronic document, <http://www.savannahga.gov/DocumentCenter/View/273>, accessed April 10, 2016.

## Davis, Harold E.

1976. *The Fledgling Province: Social and Cultural Life in Colonial Georgia, 1733-1776*. The University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.

## de Certeau, Michel

1984. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. University of California Press, Berkeley.

## Deetz, James F. and Edwin S. Dethlefsen

1978. Death's Head, Cherub, Urn and Willow. In *Historical Archaeology: A Guide to Substantive and Theoretical Contributions*, edited by Robert L. Schuyler, pp. 83-89. Baywood Publishing Company, Farmingdale.

## Deetz, James F.

1996. *In Small Things Forgotten: An Archaeology of Early American Life*. Doubleday, New York.

## Elliott, Daniel T., J. Mark Williams, and W. Dean Wood

2014. *Dawn of the Dead: A Review of Archaeological Mortuary Research in Georgia*. LAMAR Institution Publication Series, Report Number 187. Savannah: The LAMAR Institute.

## Elliott, Rita and Daniel T. Elliott

2009. *Savannah Under Fire 1779: Identifying Savannah's Revolutionary War Battlefield*. Prepared for NPS American Battlefield Protection Program, Grant Number: GA-2255-07-007.

## Fertig, Barbara C.

2007. *The City of Savannah Tour Guide Manual*. Tourism and Film Services, Savannah.

Foote, Kenneth

1997. *Shadowed Ground: America's Landscapes of Violence and Tragedy*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

Gamble, Thomas

1900. A History of the City Government of Savannah, Ga. From 1790 to 1901. Compiled under direction of the City Council.

Garcia, Beatriz

2012. Management Issues in Dark Tourism Attractions: The Case of Ghost Tours in Edinburgh and Toledo. *Journal of Unconventional Parks, Tourism & Recreation Research (JUPTRR)* 4:14-19.

Gentry, Glenn W.

2007. Walking with the Dead: The Place of Ghost Walk Tourism in Savannah, Georgia. *Southeastern Geographer* 47:222-238.

Hanks, Michele

2015. *Haunted Heritage: The Cultural Politics of Ghost Tourism, Populism, and the Past*. Left Coast Press, Walnut Creek.

Holloway, Julian

2010. Legend-tripping in spooky places: ghost tourism and infrastructures of enchantment. *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28:618-37.

Johnson, Whittington B.

1996. *Black Savannah: 1788-1864*. University of Arkansas Press, Fayetteville.

Joseph, J.W., Theresa Hamby, and Catherine Long

2004. *Historical Archaeology in Georgia*. Georgia Archaeological Research Design (GARD) Paper #14.

Jones, Andrew

2007. *Memory and Material Culture*. Cambridge University Press, New York.

King, Julia and Alena Pirok

2015. Haunted Landscapes and Historical Archaeology. Paper presented at the 49<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference. Seattle, Washington.

King, Julia

2012. *Archaeology, Narrative, and the Politics of the Past: A View from Southern Maryland*. University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville.

Knapp, A. Bernard and Wendy Ashmore

1999. Archaeological Landscapes: Constructed, Conceptualized, Ideational. In *Archaeologies of Landscape: Contemporary Perspectives*, edited by Wendy Ashmore and Bernard Knapp, pp. 1-30. Blackwell Publishers, Malden.

Lane, Mills

1992. *The People of Georgia: An Illustrated History*. The Beehive Press, Savannah.

Lennon, John and Malcolm Foley

2000. *Dark Tourism: The Attraction of Death and Disaster*. Continuum, London.

Low, Setha M.

2014. Spatializing Culture: An Engaged Anthropological Approach to Space and Place. *People, Place, Space* 34-38.

Low, Setha M. and Denise Lawrence-Zuñiga

2003. Locating Culture. In *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*, edited by Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuñiga, pp. 1-47. Blackwell Publishing, Malden.

Low, Setha M.

2000. *On the Plaza: The Politics of Public Space and Culture*. University of Texas Press, Austin.

MacDonell, A.H.

1888. *The Code of the City of Savannah*. Savannah Times Publishing, Savannah.

Meskeel, Lynn

2008. Memory Work and Material Practices. In *Memory Work: Archaeologies of Material Practices*, edited by Barbara J. Mills and William H. Walker, pp. 233-243. School for Advanced Research Press, Santa Fe.

Mills, Barbara J. and William H. Walker

2008. Introduction: Memory, Materiality, and Depositional Practice. In *Memory Work: Archaeologies of Material Practices*, edited by Barbara J. Mills and William H. Walker, pp.3-23. School for Advanced Research Press, Santa Fe.

Moore, Jerry D.

2012. *Visions of Culture: An Introduction to Anthropological Theories and Theorists*. AltaMira Press, Lanham.

Nicholaisen, W.F.H.

1996. Legends as Narrative Response. In *Contemporary Legend: A Reader*, edited by Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith, pp. 91-101. Garland Publishing, New York.

Oring, Elliott

1996. Legend, Truth, and News. In *Contemporary Legend: A Reader*, edited by Gillian Bennett and Paul Smith, pp. 322-339. Garland Publishing, New York.

Oglethorpe, James

1733. In *General Oglethorpe's Georgia: Colonial Letters 1733-1743*, edited by Lane Mills. The Beehive Press: Savannah, Georgia 1975.

Patterson, David K.

1992. Yellow Fever Epidemics and Mortality in the United States, 1693-1905. *Soc. Sci. Med.* 34:855-865.

Piechocinski, Elizabeth Carpenter

1999. *The old burying ground: Colonial Park Cemetery, Savannah, GA, 1750-1853*. Oglethorpe Press, Savannah.

Pile, Steve

2005. *Real Cities: Modernity, Space and the Phantasmagorias of City Life*. Sage Publications, London.

Richardson, Judith

2003. *Possessions: The History and Uses of Haunting in the Hudson Valley*. Harvard University Press, Cambridge.

Rodman, Margaret

2003. Empowering Place. In *The Anthropology of Space and Place: Locating Culture*, edited by Setha M. Low and Denise Lawrence-Zuñiga, pp. 204-223. Blackwell Publishing, Malden.

Russell, Preston and Barbara Hines

1992. *Savannah: A History of Her People Since 1733*. Frederic C. Beil, Savannah.

Savannah Walking Guides

2014. City Walking Guide, Savannah Walking Guide Series. Electronic document, <https://www.citywalkingguide.com/savannah/tidbits/colonialparkcemeteryfacts>, accessed April 10, 2016.

Shackel, Paul

2010. Public Memory and the Search for Power. In *Contemporary Archaeology in Theory: A New Pragmatism*, edited by Robert Preucel and Stephen Mrozowski, pp. 385-403. Wiley-Blackwell, Malden.

Shackel, Paul

2003. *Memory in Black and White: Race, Commemoration, and the Post-Bellum Landscape*. AltaMira Press, Walnut Creek.

St. Joseph's/Candler

2013. History of the Largest Health System in Southeast Georgia, St. Joseph's/Candler. Electronic document, <http://www.sjchs.org/about-us/st-josephs-candler-history>, accessed April 12, 2016.

Stone, Philip and Richard Sharpley

2008. Consuming Dark Tourism: A Thanatological Perspective. *Annals of Tourism Research* 35:574-95.

Stone, Philip

2006. A Dark Tourism Spectrum: Towards a Typology of Death and Macabre Related Tourist Sites, Attractions and Exhibitions. *Tourism* 54:145-160.

Stone, Philip

2005. Dark Tourism: An Old Concept in a New World. Selected Works. Electronic document, [http://works.bepress.com/philip\\_stone/26](http://works.bepress.com/philip_stone/26), accessed January 15, 2016.

Tarlow, Sarah

1999. *Bereavement and Commemoration: An Archaeology of Mortality*. Wiley, Hoboken.

Thomas, David H., et. al.

1978. The Anthropology of St. Catherines Island 2: The Refuge-Deptford Mortuary Complex. *American Museum of Natural History* 56(1).

Thompson, Robert C.

2010. "Am I Going to See a Ghost Tonight?": Gettysburg Ghost Tours and the Performance of Belief. *The Journal of American Culture* 33:79-91.

Toelken, Barre

1996. *The Dynamics of Folklore*. Utah State University Press, Logan.

Trinkley, Michael

1999. *An Archaeological Examination of Four Family Tombs at Colonial Cemetery, Savannah, Georgia*. Chicora Foundation Research Series 58. Prepared for Stone Faces and Sacred Spaces.

Trinkley, Michael and Debi Hacker

1999. *Identification and Mapping of Historic Graves at Colonial Cemetery, Savannah, Georgia*. Chicora Foundation Research Series 54. Columbia: Chicora Foundation.

Veit, Richard, Sherene Baugher, and Gerard Scharfenberger

2009. Historical Archaeology of Religious Sites and Cemeteries. *Historical Archaeology* 43:1-11.

Williams, Robert V.

- 1968 George Whitfield's Bethesda: The Orphanage, The College, and The Library. From Library History Seminar No. 3 Proceedings pp 47-72 (Photograph taken from pp 49).

Williamson Samuel H. and Lawrence Officer

2016. Computing 'Real Value' Over Time with a Conversion between U.K. Pounds and U.S. Dollars, 1774 to Present. Electronic document, [https://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/exchange/result\\_exchange.php](https://www.measuringworth.com/calculators/exchange/result_exchange.php), accessed March 31, 2016.

World Health Organization

2016. Yellow Fever: Fact Sheet. Electronic document, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs100/en/>, accessed February 15, 2016.

## APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

### Interview Questions- 2014

#### Interview Questions for Tourists

1. Why did you come to Savannah?
  - a. If on vacation, why did you choose Savannah?
2. How did you hear about the tour?
3. Why did you choose this tour over others offered?
4. Are you going to take any more tours while you are here?
5. What was your favorite part of the tour?
6. What was your least favorite part of the tour?
7. What else have you done/are you planning on doing while you're in Savannah?
  - a. Why did you choose the activities?

#### Interview Questions for Tour Guides

1. How long have you lived in Savannah?
2. Why did you move to Savannah?
3. How long have you worked for the tour company?
4. How did you come to work for the tour company?
5. How many tours do you give?
6. Which tour is your favorite to give?
7. Which story/event is your favorite to tell?
8. Do you know of any events that occurred that are not on any of the tours?

#### Interview Questions for Locals

1. How long have you lived in Savannah?



2. Why did you move to Savannah?
3. Have you taken any of the ghost walk tours? If yes, which ones? If no, why not?
4. Do you know any of the haunted history of Savannah? If yes, what?
5. What do you like most about Savannah?
6. What do you like least about Savannah?

### **Interview Questions- 2015**

#### Interview Questions for City of Savannah Employees

1. What are the criteria for companies and/or people to become tour guides in the city?
2. When did ghost tours begin in Savannah? In your opinion, how popular are they?
3. What do you think of the ghost tours offered?
4. Is there a guard for Colonial Park at night? If yes, may I have their contact information?

#### *Additional Questions for Richard in the City's Cemeteries Department*

1. What do you think of the ghost tours offered in Savannah?
  - a. Have you ever taken one that stopped at Colonial Park? If yes, what did you think?
2. How do you ensure nobody trespasses or vandalizes the cemeteries at night, specifically, Colonial Park?
  - a. Is there a guard?
3. How do you determine maintenance responsibilities for all of the cemeteries you manage?
  - a. Does one take precedence over the others?
4. What does maintaining a cemetery typically entail?

5. Would you be able to tell me how much maintenance Colonial Park has had during the years it has been managed by the Cemeteries Department?
6. There is a playground on the south side of Colonial Park that the ghost tours mentioned was erected to honor dead orphans in the cemetery; do you have any information on the construction dates or, frankly, any other information about the playground?
7. I was in Colonial Park in June of this year and I noticed at least one headstone was sectioned off with a Department of Cemeteries notice on the tape; can you tell me what was going on? Was it just regular maintenance to the headstone and, if so, what does that entail?
8. Do you have a document that would have the names of every known person buried in Colonial Park? Would you be able to send it to me or know of another way I could gain access to it?

#### Interview Questions for Georgia State Historical Society Employees

1. Who comes in to do research?
2. Do you see a lot of tour companies or tour guides utilizing your collections?
3. Do you have demographic and/or affiliation information on your visitors that I could access?
4. How do you obtain your collection materials?

#### Interview Questions for Tour Guides (follow up from 2014)

1. What source material do you use when building up information for your tours?
2. What kinds of people did/do you talk to?
3. Do you use any historical documents when researching information for your tours? If yes, what?

4. Have you noticed any discrepancies between your sources? If yes, how do you address the differences?

*Questions if tour guide is part of a larger company*

1. Did your company give you any formalized training when you started giving tours or were you required to learn that information on your own? If required to learn on your own, what sources did you use? Did you talk to any other tour guides?
2. If given source material by larger company, would you/they be willing to share the training resources with me?