Public Memory, Race, and Heritage Tourism of Early America

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First published 2022

ISBN: 978-0-367-60998-6 (hbk)
ISBN: 978-0-367-61000-5 (pbk)
ISBN: 978-1-003-10283-0 (ebk)

New directions for research

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DOI: 10.4324/9781003102830-1

The funder of the Open Access version of this chapter is University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire.

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group
LONDON AND NEW YORK

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Introduction

Outside of academic specialists and self-anointed history buffs, Americans don't know very much about early America, a period spanning roughly from Indigenous beginnings to the early 1800s. A 2019 national survey of Americans' knowledge of U.S. history by the Woodrow Wilson Foundation found that only four in ten Americans could pass a multiple-choice citizenship test, which asks about the Constitution, colonial America, and the Revolutionary War, among other things (see also Lewer). Academics have long bemoaned the troubling fact that the American public claims to learn more about U.S. history and heritage from "unofficial" outlets such as popular culture and leisure travel than from well-researched books, subject experts, or history classes (De Groot; Loewen). With more than half of adult Americans reporting travel to cultural or historical sites each year, and that number growing steadily (Patkose et al.), heritage tourism seems worryingly implicated in the disjointed understanding of America's earliest years.

Making tourism suspect are, in part, the tourists themselves, a perennially unloved lot. They are seen by more sophisticated travelers and most academics as "shallow, gullible seekers of entertainment, banal, loud, naïve, and most damning of all, uncultured" (Smith, "Cultural Work" 210). In American culture, negative views of tourists as socially ambitious and culturally superficial go back to the 1820s (Mackintosh), and the rise of mass tourism since the 1960s has only made tourists seem more manufactured and vulgar. Tourists are perceived as boorish consumers whose unbridled appetites and demands drive the commodification, appropriation, and cheapening of culture. In relation to heritage travel especially, tourists are interlopers; their very presence diminishes the historical or cultural authenticity of the places they visit.[1] Moreover, the tawdriness of tourism spills over to the study of tourism itself, outrightly dismissed in some academic circles (Urry) and "hemmed in by disciplinary limitations" in others. As Steve Watson, Emma Waterton, and Laurajane Smith observe, "the most valuable contributions to this area of research [cultural tourism] over the past two decades … have all occurred in isolation … whether they are based in anthropology, sociology, cultural geography, cultural studies, [and] heritage studies," not to mention history, public history, hospitality management, and communication (1). The result of all

DOI: 10.4324/9781003102830-1
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this, these scholars feel, is the prevalence of reductive analytical frameworks and lack of interdisciplinary perspectives on this very popular form of travel, which upon closer inspection, appears not tawdry but rather quite complex and far reaching in its impacts on individuals, communities, and societies. Smith, Waterton, and Watson's *The Cultural Uses of Tourism*, and Staiff, Bushell, and Watson's *Heritage and Tourism* begin to make important inroads to deepen cross-disciplinary understandings of heritage tourists and their complicated engagements with the past.

In the growing body of diverse scholarship on tourism, and heritage tourism specifically, there remains a deep chasm between social science and hospitality management research on the one hand and humanities perspectives on the other. There is simply a relative dearth of humanities-focused research on cultural, historical, and heritage forms of travel. This volume contributes this kind of needed scholarship to ongoing conversations about cultural heritage and related tourism phenomena. Rather than just writing in parallel with (or in isolation from) social scientists, the authors here build on existing tourism literature, especially from critical and reflexive theoretical perspectives, to bridge the chasm, inviting more humanities scholars to examine tourism and more tourism researchers to engage essential humanities perspectives. We do so by bringing together public memory, race, and early America through the prism of heritage travel, offering a unique and constructive combination of issues and frameworks for humanities and social science scholars alike. Together, these chapters explore the ways in which historical tourism shapes collective understandings of America's earliest engagements with race. To foster and contextualize diverse readers' understanding of the new, interdisciplinary scholarship within these chapters of *Public Memory, Race, and Heritage Tourism of Early America*, we unpack and define each term within our title. In doing so, we assume that most readers of this volume may be somewhat unfamiliar with the most current scholarship in one or more of these areas.

Early America

"Early America," or "colonial America," is an era that, traditionally defined, roughly covers

> from indigenous beginnings … from European contact with peoples of the Americas, to the time of United States nation making, that is to about 1812, when the United States finalized its political separation from Great Britain (though not from British culture).
>
> (Mulford 1–4)

While some definitions of early America reach further into the nineteenth century—as the Society of Early Americanists defines the era until 1830, and as it is often defined in college literature and history survey courses until the end of the American Civil War—early America is most broadly conceived as the period of European colonization of the Americas, concluding in the nineteenth century.

Although sometimes misinterpreted as encompassing only the United States and Anglo-British traditions in particular, the geographic scope of early America spans from Africa to both North and South America and the Caribbean, from Canada down to the nation-states of South America, and encompasses cultures and traditions that range from the many Indigenous societies who originally inhabited the region, to African, Scandinavian, German, Spanish, Portuguese, Russian, French, British, and other European groups who settled the continents. Each of these groups brought a wide range of religious, social, cultural, and economic practices with them and a variety of methods for establishing settlements, interacting with their Native neighbors, and engaging in enslavement.

As a result, the idea of "early America" or an "early American" person was not a concrete or stable concept during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. It was a heterogeneous mix of cultures, identities, and settler-colonial policies and practices. Prior to the American Revolution, most Anglo-European settlers in the Americas would have considered themselves as subjects of their imperial government; they would have viewed themselves as colonists who were acting on behalf of their government and still "British" or "French" or "Spanish" in terms of their own identities and practices. For most of these settlers—particularly British ones—that imperial, European identity was carefully patrolled and anxiously maintained in the uncertainty of "New World" settlement. Because of the widely held fear of degeneration—the belief that one would become "savage" or "uncivilized" by living in a different climate and eating different foods—most Anglo-European settlers in the Americas actively and aggressively maintained the customs, mores, and social systems from their homelands and resisted hybridized or Indigenous ideas, even if they were more practical for their settler-colonialist purposes. Although some European settlers, like the French and Spanish, sometimes intermarried with and adapted practices of Indigenous groups to create kinship alliances and for practicality (and so that disenfranchisement of Indigenous groups could proceed more smoothly), they still would have maintained a sense of their identities as Christian, civilized, and European, and not "American" or Indigenous.

However, because of this variegated environment and cultural mosaic of identities, many scholars speak of the "early Americas" and the "literatures" and "histories" of these regions to underscore the multiplicity and variation within them. So, while many early American scholars may focus on a singular, nationalist, or cultural thread of this heterogenous mix of identities and cultures in their research and teaching—and this was, indeed, the primary approach to the literature and history of this era in the past—scholars now also foreground the broadness and interconnectedness of the early Americas through an updated understanding of the Atlantic World, including Africa. Beginning as early as the 1970s and 1980s with a handful of books and articles about the Atlantic World and then burgeoning into a field of its own in the 1990s and early 2000s with works such as *The Black Atlantic* by literary scholar Paul Gilroy, "The Idea of Atlantic History" and *Atlantic History* by historian Bernard Bailyn, and *The Atlantic World* by historians Douglas Egerton, Alison Games, Jane G. Landers, Kris Lane, and Donald R.

Wright, the idea of the Atlantic World worked to transcend the idea of "nation/nationality" as the central unit of identification and instead examine the Atlantic Ocean and the regions surrounding it as a single, yet complex and multifaceted, body. Scholars assert that the Atlantic and the cultures touched by it are an integrated system, joined rather than separated by the Atlantic Ocean. As historian Alison Games notes, "Atlantic perspectives deepen our understanding of transformations over a period of several centuries, cast old problems in an entirely new light, and illuminate connections hitherto obscured" (741).

Within this Atlantic framework, interdisciplinary themes that transcend political, national, and even field or discipline-specific boundaries, such as exploration, imperialism and settlement, the African slave trade and slavery capitalism, and migration and diasporas, to name just a few, are used to examine the intercultural contact, exchange, and conflicts that occurred within the Atlantic World and early Americas, revealing a richer, more interconnected web of human interactions, commonalities, and convergences. This focus on the transnational nature of early America emphasizes how the settlement and conquest of the Americas reshaped Africa and Europe rather than solely on how Europe reshaped the rest of the world. It also differs from traditional approaches to colonial literature and history in that it steps away from examining events and trends through the lens of the dominant group/s (for the most part Anglo-European, Christian, educated, upper-class males) to understand the experiences of the enslaved, indentured servants, women, workers, and others from underrepresented groups along the axes of transmission, migration, and exchange. Alison Games notes,

> Atlantic history, then, is a *slice* of world history. It is a way of looking at global *and* regional processes within a contained unit, although that region was not, of course, hermetically sealed off from the rest of the world, and thus was simultaneously involved in transformations unique to the Atlantic and those derived from global processes.
>
> (748)

These more expansive, transnational perspectives point to the need for more capacious and multidimensional understandings of American heritage, especially at tourist sites.

Race in early America

Just as "American" and "early America" were fluctuating and evolving terms, so race in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Americas was a shifting and complex idea understood in terms of multiplicity rather than binary thought. Today, race is viewed as a more concrete concept, defined as the use of physical markers deemed by society as distinct and significant, such as skin tone, facial features, and bone structure, to categorize people into groups. Race today is also largely viewed by contemporary scholars and scientists as a social construct that is loosely and often discriminatively based on phenotypical similarities within groups which have no

inherent biological qualities. Prior to the nineteenth century in Western Europe and the Americas, though, race was not tied solely to bodily traits, physical appearance, and skin color in the way that it is today. Instead, it was conceived of as “a heterogeneous compound of physical, intellectual, and moral characteristics passed on from one generation to another” (Harvey). Qualities such as appearance, the enactment of gender roles, physical strength, material culture, methods of subsistence, literacy, and language were often factored into the understanding of race, with the categories of “Christian” and “heathen” being the most prominent and widely used designations to signify similarity or difference. These early Western European understandings of race were based in natural philosophies about the “humors” and theories about how geographical location and climate affected human traits and behavior (Wheeler).

During the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, scientific thought additionally foregrounded the theory of “monogenesis,” which posited that all people, based on Judeo-Christian traditions, descended from a single pair of humans, but after migration and dispersal, habits, appearances, and cultures changed based on locale and climate. So, while there was an understanding of the tapestry of differences among various cultures, racial categories based on skin color or bodily traits only did not exist with any consensus in early America or Europe. Any physical or cultural differences, as Ezra Tawil argues in his *The Making of Racial Sentiment*, were viewed as the result of “degeneration” caused by such factors as climate, geographical location, and diet. Such differences were not “permanent or immutable,” and even features “such as skin color or cranial shape” were believed “to be alterable” at this time (44–5). Sharon Block similarly argues in *Colonial Complexions* that eighteenth-century British colonists would have understood complexion—the most common term used at the time—to be non-racial, and more closely tied to the framework of humoral medicine. Block posits, “Rather than being a shorthand for categorical skin color, complexion signaled individual health, character, and behavior” (11). Other early American scholars, such as Roxann Wheeler in *The Complexion of Race*, Ralph Bauer’s *The Cultural Geography of Colonial American Literatures*, and Katy Chiles’s *Transformable Race*, among many others, also suggest that prior to the nineteenth century race was understood as a complex and often creolized set of sociocultural symbols and that the body was changeable rather than set in an inherent biological category.

Beginning in the late eighteenth century, the growth of natural history, with its emphasis on physical attributes, began to underscore the primacy of skin color as a category of difference. The theory of “polygenesis” also began to grow in popularity, replacing earlier ideas of monogenesis and positing instead that each “race” of man developed from distinctively different forebears, a turning point in thought that, as Tawil asserts, postulated “a new kind of human body,” one that is permanently and essentially “endowed with ‘race’” (Tawil 48). Sharon Block notes, “By the beginning of the nineteenth century, skin color began to consistently be privileged as *the* sign of racial identity in literary, legal, and public arenas” (2). It is no coincidence that this new emphasis on skin tone and bodily characteristics as inherent and fixed came into sharper focus simultaneously

with the growth of European imperial pursuits and the increasing economic power of already established colonies. Earlier constructions of Natives and Africans as "savage heathens," which served as a foil for European "civility," now worked to provide legal and moral justifications for the violent, aggressive dispossession of Native Americans and the continued trafficking and enslavement of Africans. Visual and ethnographic representations that reinscribed these savage notions of non-Anglo peoples proliferated during this time, further solidifying the connection of darker complexions and savagery, heathenism and utter otherness. These characterizations and the new science of polygenesis worked together to mitigate Anglo-European fears concerning their earlier beliefs about their own malleable identities. As Sean Harvey states, "Theories of Native inferiority in mind and body provided Europeans, simultaneously, a compelling claim to the land and reassurance that colonists would not degenerate in an alien environment" (5).

As the eighteenth century progressed, racial identities were further codified and "white" became a significant social category. Initially, non-English European immigrants were not viewed as "white." With the increase of chattel slavery, especially in the Caribbean and Chesapeake areas, and the decrease of bonded servitude of white immigrants, "whiteness" became an identity that was able to join elite planters and lower-class indentured servants under a single, united front. Ultimately, "white" became a label that excluded the enslaved, Natives, and free people of color and worked to closely patrol social boundaries, reserve privileges for a select group, and deny citizenship to all others, a system that basically remains intact today.

In sum, race as a codified concept emerged from preexisting prejudices of Anglo-Europeans, backed by ethnographic and philosophical speculation. Although racial ideas were broadly debated and morphed over time from a myriad of sociocultural traits and habits to being specifically tied to skin color and physical traits with biological fixity, race did become a stable, uniform idea carrying with it a host of social and legal significances.

It is worth noting here the unique challenges to addressing race at early American visitor sites. Tourists tend not to expect or desire treatments of race and racism during visits to heritage sites, especially at ones that don't seem obviously to pertain to such issues, which is often the case at colonial and Revolutionary sites that are assumed not to be tied to some form of oppression. Further, the ends of leisure travel are often at odds with honest appraisals of the past. There is discomfort in the latter activity that is not easily accommodated by motives of relaxation or entertainment. Moreover, if tourists are in fact open to hearing about race, the average traveler is unaware that it functioned in these very different ways in early American culture than today, leading to anachronistic assumptions about race relations and racism which do as much harm as good for public understanding and communal remembering. Early American heritage sites deserve more critical attention because, in harkening back to a more distant and less familiar era, they actually hold greater potential to shift visitors' understandings of America's imperialist past in more profound ways. It may very well be the case that tourists of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century sites are more open to challenge and

change than those of sites representing more recent, visceral racial strife. The investigations here suggest that some tourists want to learn more about early American history on their travels and may be amenable to more candid treatments of colonialism, genocide, and systematic oppression during this time period.

Public memory

Public memory scholars ask not, *Is this true? Did it really happen this way?* or *Is this an authentic representation of the past?*, but instead, *Whose memories are represented here*? *What has been collectively forgotten, and why?* and *How are shared memories being leveraged for political or ideological purposes?* Also referred to as "collective memory," "cultural memory," and "social memory,"[2] public memory is the consolidation and circulation, and sometimes the revision, of perceptions of a shared past. Public memory scholars examine the social construction, mediation, and diffusion of communal remembrances. All groups—whether regional, national, political, religious, ethnic, linguistic, or otherwise—are formed or inhabited by people who have a collective awareness of sharing some past together. "We are a public, one might say, to the extent that we share memories," explain Matthew Houdek and Kendall Phillips (1–2). Public memory is different from history in that it accounts for more of the informal, unofficial, unsettled, or changeable ways in which communities create, maintain, and alter a sense of the past that is held in common, whereas history collects and conveys more formal, official, "singular and stable" explanations and descriptions of the past (Houdek and Phillips 1). While historical accounts and public memories are both gleaned from a similarly diverse array of archival materials and cultural texts, these are used and conceived of differently by the two groups of scholars. Historians mine artifacts from the past for facts and evidence to determine the greatest degree of probable accuracy about events, phenomena, and people, whereas public memory scholars analyze the ways that cultural artifacts and practices are used by various groups to strategically remember parts of the past that are deemed important for the collective to share and pass on. In this way, public memory is much more openly rhetorical than history, which is to say that public memory research foregrounds the vicissitudes of memory itself, and the vagaries of memories as they are purposively and suasively circulated across time and media.

Memory began to develop into a discrete area of study as early as the 1920s and 1930s, but it burgeoned in the 1990s with the work of French sociologists Pierre Nora and Maurice Halbwachs. Memory studies has animated research across social science and humanities disciplines since then, which is one reason it serves as such a useful cross-disciplinary framework featured in this collection. Some of this early scholarship was taken up by Americanists. Michael Kammen's 1991 *Mystic Chords of Memory* and John Bodnar's 1992 *Remaking America* are considered foundational texts for any scholar working on issues of American memory. These works elucidate how America became a place deeply interested in its own past, and how and why Americans' perceptions of the past shift from generation to generation. Since then, some early Americanists have used memory

as an interpretative framework in several ways: to understand the lasting significance of the country's early history, to expose old and new contestations over the meaning of America's past, and to uncover cultural memory practices that shaped early America (e.g., Nash; Purcell; Seelye; Stabile; Schocket; Stoltz). It is worth noting, however, that public memory as such—which asks not how memory functioned in the past but rather how the past should be remembered now and to what ends—has not yet stimulated a great amount of research in early American studies. Thus far, some public historians notwithstanding (e.g., Devlin), the valuable perspectives of those trained as early Americanists specifically are missing from discussions about public memory of the time period in which they specialize. This points to another scholarly gap we seek to amend with the work presented here.

From another disciplinary perspective, building on Nora's and Halbwachs's insights about the processual and dialogic means by which memories are made to be collectively shared and disputed, rhetoric and communication scholars have made major inroads in public memory research of late "because it opens up avenues for exploring public meaning-making practices and contests over the past" (Houdek and Phillips 3). To name just a few key studies in this area, Barbie Zelizer examines the problems with mass-produced memories of the Holocaust; Stephen Browne explores the textuality of commemorative practices; Greg Dickinson, Carole Blair, and Brian Ott draw critical attention to places of shared memory, such as memorials, museums, and monuments; Bradford Vivian takes up the possibilities of productive forms of collective forgetting; and Katherine Mack documents the wide circulation of memories of trauma and reconciliation in South Africa.

Among the most recent and groundbreaking treatments of rhetoric and public memory is Dave Tell's *Remembering Emmett Till*, which offers an ecological and geographical understanding of memory and commemoration. Tell draws much needed attention to the "delicate balance between commerce and commemoration" facing many rural communities dying for development, but he provides his most critical insights by illustrating the many ways in which memory is "entangled" with the natural environment (103). In the case of Emmett Till, Tell argues that the Mississippi Delta is not just a place or a setting where something happened that should be remembered, but instead that the ecology and topography of the place actually play key roles in shaping the commemorative processes and practices surrounding Till. Tell's work offers new understandings of the complicated relationships between race, heritage sites, and public memory by examining the national and regional contestations over Till's commemoration, particularly as the tragic event reverberated through the Jim Crow and Civil Rights eras.

Another recent development in public memory scholarship has been attention to tourism as a significant mechanism for the circulation and consolidation of collective memory. Historical tourist destinations use narrative, landscape, built environments, and material artifacts to construct places laden with palpable and consumable memories of a shared past. Because so many of these sites are imbricated in the country's sordid history of enslavement and colonialism, the focus on tourism as a major public-memory purveyor in American culture has

also entailed vital critiques of treatments of race and ethnicity at heritage destinations (Applegate and Rex; Cox; Dickinson, Ott and Aoki; Helmbrecht; Kytle and Roberts; Poirot and Watson). These researchers are raising important concerns about how the traveling public is encouraged to remember or forget the roles that race and racism played in historical events and how they animate contemporary memory practices.

Heritage tourism

Tourism as an academic field is traditionally associated with business, hospitality management, and social science researchers investigating commerce, transportation, advertising, consumer experience, tourist behavior, cross-cultural communication, regional planning, conservation, preservation, sustainability, labor, and globalization, among many other issues, as they pertain to locales all over the world and every type of travel imaginable. To keep pace with the exponential growth of leisure travel in its many and constantly proliferating forms, this body of research has exploded into a vibrant scholarly area.[3] Much of this field is built on the work of Dean MacCannell whose 1976 classic *The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class* posits tourism as a reaction to modernism, an attempt to subvert the alienation of modern consciousness, but one that ultimately succeeds in confirming it. The modern world is one large tourist attraction where "staged authenticity" draws in consumers looking for new experiences and pleasure in cultural differences. Another formative text in tourism studies is John Urry's *The Tourist Gaze*, which draws out the relationship between postindustrial capitalism and tourism, namely the commercialization of tourist destinations and the consumption of something "out of the ordinary" through visual culture and processes. Arguing that visuality is absolutely central to tourism, Urry explains that tourists mistake seeing other places and people as their own individual, autonomous acts, when in actuality these are socially organized and commercially manufactured visual experiences that establish tourists' expectations about what to see and what is worth seeing in the first place.[4] More recently, tourism studies has been (re) shaped by a "new mobilities paradigm" and the "mobility turn" in the social sciences (Sheller and Urry). Upending "sedentarist," static, territorial, and spatially fixed approaches to social phenomena, the concept of mobilities (and immobilities) directs attention to complex, interacting flows and movements of people, processes, and practices across times and spaces, of which leisure travel is only a part.

Within the field of heritage tourism more specifically, scholars from geography, anthropology, archaeology, history, and public history have joined management specialists and social theorists in helping to articulate and understand the significance of leisure travel to historic and cultural sites. These researchers offer critical perspectives on space and place; human interaction with the natural world and built environments; diasporic communities and Indigenous cultures; environmental impacts and sustainability; architecture, museums, and material culture; language and translation; and the politics of interpreting the past for diverse

visiting publics (Timothy 3–4). Heritage tourists can have little interest in the culture or history of a destination, or a deep and abiding commitment to absorb information and participate in heritage displays. Dallen Timothy explains that

> Heritage tourism refers to travelers seeing or experiencing built heritage, living culture, or contemporary arts [and that] visits are motived by a desire to enhance one's own cultural self, to learn something new … to satisfy curiosity, or simply to use up excess time.
>
> (4)

Regardless of this range of desires and aims, heritage is an engine of tourism worldwide.

> The past and its resources lie at the core of much of global tourism today, and people by the hundreds of millions travel worldwide each year to seek out and experience places of historical significance … Heritage tourism is big business, and demand for it continues to grow.
>
> (Timothy 4–5; see also World Travel; World Tourism Organization)

Travel to heritage sites is among the most salient forms of contemporary tourism as global appetite for cultural experiences expands, and the enormous volume of these tourists presents an array of vexing development, management, and preservation issues for heritage destinations. Perhaps most important, at least for our explorations here, heritage tourism plays an integral role in shaping people's understandings of shared culture and collective pasts.

The "heritage" part of heritage tourism is the source of much ongoing debate, conflicting definitions, and blurry disciplinary boundaries. In his formative critique of "heritage," historian David Lowenthal argues that

> heritage is not history at all; while it borrows from and enlivens historical study, heritage is not an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it, not an effort to know what actually happened but a profession of faith in the past tailored to present-day purposes.

Whether one agrees with Lowenthal or not, his criticism points to the way in which heritage pertains as much or more to the needs and contexts of contemporary people and situations than to the past per se. Timothy concurs by embracing a straightforward distinction that "History is the past, whereas heritage is the modern-day use of the past" (3–4).

In this vein, heritage is a resource, not unlike other "natural" resources, to be leveraged and now regularly monetized for a wide range of purposes, including cultural travel, education, artistic preservation, community development, and expression of unique cultural identities. Anthropologist Celeste Ray suggests a more nuanced understanding, defining heritage as "the continually evolving and

creative selection and generalization of memory that blends historical 'truths' with idealized simulacra on the individual and collective levels." She continues, "Though we may celebrate heritage as an unchanging 'thing,' it is really a process of renegotiating a past or cultural inheritance to be meaningful in the ever-changing present" (3). Ray draws out the more mutable, rhetorical, and ideological aspects of heritage. The past, or more specifically the deliberate construction of what people come to believe about a shared past, is a powerful argument for actions in the present. Along similar lines, historian Jerome De Groot in *Consuming History* confronts the growth of heritage as he grapples with the expansion of history in public domains and historians' role in mediating those historical representations. He argues that our relationship to the past has fundamentally changed from relying solely on traditional hierarchies of knowledge (in the form of academic history) to much more democratized, performative, and commodified processes and products (as in heritage). Importantly, De Groot emphasizes that popular, public engagement with history as heritage is a complex affair, neither good nor bad, but a distinct contemporary cultural phenomenon requiring much more attention.

Heritage, then, is nearly indistinguishable from cultural memory practices. As Paul Shackel notes in his Foreword to *Excavating Memory*, "Memory work is about heritage development," and the promotion of specific heritage destinations as the most highly valued sites of collective memory is essentially a "political act of remembering and forgetting" (xiii–xv). From this vantage point, analysis of heritage sites, such as those we've collected here, highlights the social construction of memory and the political stakes therein, as destinations big and small blend historical fact with negotiated meanings of cultural inheritance. Such blending and negotiation are fundamentally rhetorical processes, acts of selection and arts of presentation inevitably rooted in advocacy for a particular point of view. Some worry about the tourists' difficulty in seeing these rhetorical dimensions of heritage and memory, obfuscated as they are by the lure of entertainment, the appeal of elegance, or the gravitas of "official" history. However, other scholars like Laurajane Smith, Emma Waterton, Russell Staiff, Robyn Bushell, and Steve Watson argue that tourists are not mindless consumers of pre-packaged heritage but are active and complex co-producers of the heritage they seek to interact with and understand. As Smith explains,

> The interconnection between heritage and tourism does not reside in the macro or institutional scale with the interchange between the creation of economic resources and marketable cultural meanings. Rather, it also exists at the level of individual visits. Each visit is constitutive of the meaning of a heritage site. Heritage sites are not simply "found," nor do they simply "exist," but rather they are constituted at one level by the management and conservation processes, and at another by the visiting of visiting and engagement that people perform at them.
>
> ("Cultural Work" 213)

Such viewpoints only increase the salience of discussions about heritage, tourism, and memory among more scholars.

Overview of chapters

Shifting and more complex understandings of race and early America are combined in these chapters with deepening critical engagements of heritage tourism. Though each author focuses on a different cultural moment and set of interanimating issues, all point to ways that tourists can be rhetorically invited to understand (and possibly co-construct) more complicated dimensions of American heritage and more unsettling memories of an imperfect union. This work begins with "Revisiting the Gateway to Bondage," by preservation scholar Barry Stiefel. He examines contrasting levels of historical interpretation and tourist interest at America's three most important human entrepôts, Ellis, Angel, and Sullivan's islands. He argues that Sullivan's Island in South Carolina, which marks the point of entry and initial confinement for 40–60 percent of slaves brought to North America, is woefully underdeveloped for the millions who visit Charleston each year. Next, Matthew Duqués, early Americanist, and Brian Murphy, museum curator, explore the representation of Indigenous cultures in Alabama in "Remembrance and mourning in the Native mid-South: Florence Indian Mound Museum's past, present, and future." They illustrate how this museum shapes visitors' conceptions of Indigenous early America in this part of North America. In particular, they explain why the museum has struggled to make this a site of Indigenous-centered learning for heritage tourists and help chart a possible way forward to do so.

Building on the transatlantic focus in early American studies, literary scholar Cathy Rex moves our attention to slavery tourism in the Caribbean. In "Remembering and forgetting plantation history in Jamaica: Rose Hall and Greenwood Great House," Rex analyzes two Jamaican "great houses" and the different ways they appeal to and educate tourists. She argues that Rose Hall, the more popular of the two sites, portrays the legacies of enslavement in Jamaica in ways that sanitize and romanticize the historic spectacles of violence that occurred there, while the much less visited Greenwood Great House attempts to confront the postcolonial realities of enslavement and Anglo supremacy directly. Rex invites readers to contemplate the relationship between tourist appeal, historical accuracy, and contested memories. Returning to the continental U.S., Kathryn Florence, Executive Director of the Canadian Latin American Archaeology Society, tackles the politics of racialized reenactments in her chapter, "At the table or on the menu at Indiana's Feast of the Hunter's Moon." She critiques the historical representation of exchanges between French fur traders and the Wea Miami at an annual event hosted by the Tippecanoe County Historical Association for visitors to Fort Ouiatenon, Indiana. In striving to create an authentic experience of the past, this event ultimately undermines the historic presence of Indigenous people, it functions as a form of ongoing settler colonialism, and it dramatically skews local public memory.

We move from reenactments to apps, and from the rural Midwest to one of America's most popular tourist destinations, in Ella Howard's "Slavery in the Big Easy: Digital interventions in the tourist landscape of New Orleans." Howard,

a historian, considers the New Orleans Slave Trade Marker and App Project, a digital public history initiative created for tourists to amplify the presence of slavery in the city. She analyzes the portrayal of enslavement in the eight markers developed for the app so far and finds a relatively rich and multifaceted presentation for visitors. Shifting from tourist apps to websites, Mark Ward Sr.'s "Don't mess with (Anglo) Texas: Dominant cultural values in heritage sites of the Texas Revolution" investigates the portrayal of Texas heritage for tourists. A communication scholar, Ward analyzes the collective construction of historical memory across ten websites for state-supported heritage tourism sites of the Texas Revolution (1835–6). Using a typology for cultural values, Ward asserts that these sites not only collapse a complex history into a romanticized narrative of Texan pioneer freedom fighters, but they also implicitly evoke the Anglo-American creation myth through copious analogs to the American Revolutionary War.

Next is early Americanist Sara Harwood's "Bulloch Hall and the movement towards a well-rounded interpretation of antebellum life in Roswell, Georgia." Using Eichstedt and Small's study of plantation museums, MacCannell's theory of staged authenticity, and Modlin's theory of production myths as frameworks, this chapter evaluates the interpretation of slavery at Bulloch Hall. Formerly a docent at this plantation house, Harwood explores the interplay between docents' and visitors' biases, or shared public memories, and concludes that, despite some positive changes, the overarching narrative still falls short of presenting a well-rounded understanding of enslavement. Finally, we end at a tourist destination in the northern reaches of the Minnesota–Canada border. David Tschida, an environmental communication scholar, takes readers to Grand Portage National Monument in his essay, "Rendezvous with history." Using cultural discourse analysis, he finds the heritage tourism experience at this site reflects intercultural expressions of the Anishinaabeg, European fur traders, national, state, and local governments, and the natural environment. As a result, tourists are invited to question their understandings of and relationship with Indigenous communities. The collection closes with a brief Afterword by rhetoric scholar Shevaun E. Watson that addresses how all of these collective memories shape treatments of race and racism today. She argues that heritage travel and memory need to play a more prominent and productive role in the work of racial justice.

In closing, we would like to make a final observation, brought to the fore by these case studies. Many of the colonial and Revolutionary-era heritage sites dotting the landscape are smaller places commemorating less well-known people and events. The essays presented here invite readers to contemplate the large-scale public memory impact of these more "minor" early American heritage destinations. Not only is more scholarly attention paid to the nation's biggest historical tourist draws, such as Mount Vernon, Colonial Williamsburg, and Historic Jamestown, but these major sites are relatively well-resourced with archivists, preservationists, archaeologists, historians, and deep-pocketed philanthropists who can, in theory, offer visitors higher quality public memory experiences (Lee; Handler and Gable; Devlin; Schnee). Relative to the millions who visit these principal early American history destinations each year, as many or more opt to

explore the thousands of other seventeenth- and eighteen-century historical attractions along our roads and byways, such as small museums, historical markers, roadside stops, monuments, forts, houses, and parks of more local significance. These visits tend to be more affordable, spontaneous, and convenient, requiring much less commitment of travelers' time, resources, and aims. Yet these ancillary sites are no less influential in crafting shared memories of America's complicated origins and vexed racial relations.

Another way to frame the significance of these smaller sites is to consider that while top American heritage destinations garner the financial resources and scholarly expertise to offer visitors a more immersive and multifaceted experience of America's early exploits, it is also the case that these visitors' experiences are thereby more carefully curated and predetermined. The heritage encounters at the country's most developed and expensive sites are so well groomed and tightly crafted that visitors have little room for true exploration or interpretive alternatives. Ambiguity may not be well tolerated at these places, and what might that mean for changing public memories? Sites of supposedly less historical significance may hold more interpretive possibilities in their very lack of development and resources. These sites may have less control, one might say, over their historical narratives precisely because they're not all-encompassing destinations or "tourism imaginaries." There might be more slippage, more memorial "leaking," at places like Grand Portage, Minnesota and Florence, Alabama than Colonial Williamsburg, which raises interesting questions about how memories are constructed and reconstructed at the thousands of such places dotting our maps. The eight case studies presented here uncover the rhetorical and ideological power these seemingly inconsequential heritage stops and sites have.

Notes

1 Only recently have a few scholars sought to rehabilitate the conception of tourists into something more complex and significant (e.g., Sather-Wagstaff; Smith; Watson, Waterton, and Smith). It is important to note that the quote from Smith above does not represent her own view of tourists but others'.

2 See Ana Lucia Araujo's *Slavery in the Age of Memory*, especially pages 4–5, for useful distinctions of these terms.

3 See journals such as *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Research*, *Tourism Management*, *Tourist Studies*, and *International Journal of Tourism Sciences*, among others. See also Kirilenko, Andrei P., and Svetlana Stepchenkova for a historiographic overview of the development of the field.

4 Other key texts explicating the relationship between tourism and capitalism, and tourism and (middle) class, especially in the American context, include Aron; Chambers; Cocks; Gassan; Mackintosh; Sterngass.

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