

**ENTOMBED VOICES:**  
**THE CONSTRUCTION OF ESTABLISHED HISTORIES AND THE**  
**IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTER-NARRATIVES WITHIN PUBLIC**  
**HISTORY**

by

Francis Mahon

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial  
fulfillment of the requirements for the degree in Anthropology with Distinction

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## **ABSTRACT**

The American history that students and tourists are exposed to today is a whitewashed and nationalistic history that has been normalized for centuries by a dominant habitus that creates public monuments and historical structures. The normative American historical narrative is one that focuses more on the struggles, accomplishments, and histories of white heterosexual cis-gender males of European descent instead of women, people of color, or non cis-gender people. The goal of this thesis is to explore the realm of public history through the anthropological framework of Pierre Bourdieu's Practice Theory and seeks to understand the structures of power involved in producing a dominant historical narrative.

By conducting both archival and ethnographic fieldwork in Savannah, Georgia and Lewes, Delaware this thesis argues that through the erasure of a person of people's public history their access to current day resource, political, social, and economic are limited. This thesis also suggests that one way to reverse this erasure of history is through the installation of counter-narratives and alternative histories meant to contest physical manifestations of the dominant historical narrative. Through the implementation of contesting alternative histories a visitor will be forced to question why some histories are valued more than others, and what kind of consequences people with erased histories face today.

## **CHAPTER 1: THE POWERS AND NARRATIVES OF PUBLIC HISTORY**

### **The Bloody Monarch**

The empress with her pale and glistening skin stands amidst the tropical greens, dark emeralds, and saturated blues of her surroundings as if she were a pearl from the Caribbean's deepest depths. Her white body is startling and eye catching against her environment, it seems to promote her as something that should be desired and calls to mind the privilege that has historically been associated with white skin. Her pallor is interrupted however by a dark maroon color that rings around her neck like a choker and then slowly cascades down onto her chest, drenching her cotton white dress in a dark blood red.

This crimson stain is the only color on her white facade, and it hints at a history that is not pure and gentile, but one that is in fact violent and blood drenched. Nonetheless, the most commanding and macabrely enticing feature of the empress is not where her bloodlike stain stops, but where it begins—for this empress has no skull for her crown to sit atop, and no head to balance on her shoulders. From the rough marks around her neck it is apparent that she has been decapitated, and by the startling cardinal red that spills from her neck, it would seem that she was guillotined fairly recently.

The monument of Empress Josephine de Beauharnais that stands in La Savane, Fort-de-France, Martinique was erected by French Imperialists in 1856 and beheaded by a group of Martiniquais citizens in 1991. Her executioners blamed her for the reinstitution of slavery within the French colonies in 1802, claiming that she, and other planter elites like her wanted the institution of slavery to exist so that they could continue making their fortunes from the lives and bodies of black men, women, and

children. The executioners never returned the monument's head and the local Martiniquais government never replaced it or cleaned the red blood like stains from the structure's surface.

Empress Josephine's monument was originally constructed to honor her as a child of the island and uphold a narrative of white supremacy, but after its beheading it has taken on a dual meaning. It still presents a dominant narrative of white gentility and authority, but its headless and bloody surface now serves as a reminder of the thousands of enslaved people whose lives were used to construct whiteness. The monument is in contestation with itself, and the Martiniquais people who took it upon themselves to alter its original form have revealed the violence that is inherent within the island's hegemonic historical narratives.

I first encountered Josephine de Beauharnais' monument two years ago while studying abroad in Martinique and the image of her headless and bloody body stayed with me until I returned to the monument this year. New alterations had been made to the memorial since I had been away; her name had been scratched out and "Brigade Anti-Nérophobie" (Brigade Against the Fear of Blackness) stickers covered a portion of her base. A few cruise ship tourists exploring the island's capital city were anxious to see the famous headless statue and clambered about it looking at the red paint stains, the etchings and stickers that cover the monument's base, and the general atmosphere of iconoclasm that radiates out from the monument.

Encountering it for a second time, two years later and realizing that the monument was still malleable and a focus of protest, I began to question how monuments act within their settings, what stories do they tell, which ones do they not, and what happens when they are confronted with the narratives they were originally

meant to keep invisible. This questioning of monuments lead me back to the United States to Savannah, Georgia, and Lewes, Delaware where I broadened the inquiry to encompass the field of public history as a whole. How are histories within the United States constructed, which narratives are told, and which ones are kept invisible? Why are some stories relegated to the back whereas others to the forefront of public discussion, and what kind of power is associated with the telling and dissemination of public history? I define public history throughout this thesis as a field of study that implements and disseminates an established historical narrative, often through museums, monuments, and historical markers for public consumption. In this project, my objective is to illustrate that the erasure of a person or people's public history limits their access to political, social, and economic resources, and that this erasure can be reversed through the implementation of counter-narratives and alternative histories.

I studied both Savannah, Georgia and Lewes, Delaware for this project, focusing on a public city space in Savannah called Wright Square and a public, state run museum in Lewes called the Zwaanendael Museum. I utilized ethnographic and archival research methods in compiling data from both of my field-sites and have interpreted and analyzed these data sets through the framework of Practice Theory. As will be discussed further throughout this thesis, Wright Square and the Zwaannendael are both fields within Practice Theory and are controlled by a dominant habitus that produces dominant historical narratives associated with white masculinity. Throughout my fieldwork in both areas I conducted unstructured and semi-structured interviews with willing and consenting participants. A majority of my data was focused on public

history, which is a subsection within the field of history that is specifically focused on creating accessible history for public engagement, discussion, and enjoyment.

While I have not been able to answer all of the questions I had at the beginning of this project, I have arrived at a suitable conclusion that will allow for further discussions on the topic of power structures within public history. Through my fieldwork in Savannah and Lewes, and by using Pierre Bourdieu's Practice Theory as a theoretical foundation, it has become apparent to me that whoever controls public history can use it to create and cement hegemonic narratives from the past that affect the present. Through the accretion of resources both material and immaterial, physical currency and prestige for instance, creators of public history are able to highlight stories that fit within the accepted history of the United States, while also erasing histories that appear to be in contestation with the established narrative.

The "official" history of the United States is taught from the perspective of a white, Anglo-Saxon, heterosexual, Anglophone, cis-gender male, and has attempted to hide the violence and oppression that male whiteness was founded on through the erasure and othering of parallel histories. Through this erasure, the histories of the marginalized are rendered invisible and to those in power, so too are their modern-day voices, for how can a person with no history possibly exist? It is therefore essential that the established historical narrative is dismantled and rebuilt with an inclusive, multi-perspective, and holistic narrative. One way to do this is through the installation and addition of counter narratives to already standing institutions and structures of public history; the dominant historical narrative often uses public history as a tool to disseminate and promote hegemonic narratives, even though the two are not the same. The counter-narrative acts as a puddle of water that expands as it freezes, it creates



large fissures and gaps within the historical timeline that then must be filled with a new, parallel and constructive narrative.

The alteration of Empress Josephine de Beauharnais' monument in Martinique is an example of a successful counter-narrative. The monument's original purpose of venerating Josephine as a product of white colonization and the plantation economy is still present, but it has also been countered by narratives of violence and colonization. Her original whiteness has been painted a deep blood red and she, nor her planter equals can hide behind the mask of white gentility; the alterations of her monument have created a dissonance that can only be equalized by the recognition of the histories of enslaved peoples within the island. The violence of white history has been exposed and through this revelation new space has been made within the Martiniquais public narrative for the stories of enslaved peoples of color.

Issues of representation and erasure within public history are much more complex than the quick analysis of the Josephine monument above. In order to understand how power structures and matters of visibility factor into public history it is essential that we first discuss Pierre Bourdieu's Practice Theory, the concept of counter-narratives and my own fieldwork. Through this discussion it will become apparent that erasure within the historical record has been used as a tool of oppression and that through the installation of contesting counter-narratives more histories will become visible and restore a legitimate platform to their descendants.

### **Bourdieu's Sandbox: Practice Theory and its Variables**

I will begin this dissection of Practice Theory with a discussion of the field, which can be defined as, "a field of forces and [a stage of] struggles for position and

legitimate authority.”<sup>1</sup> In essence Bourdieu’s field is a battleground for positions of power, or as Postone, LiPuma, and Calhoun put it, “each field is the site of struggles...there are struggles within given fields [but there are also] struggles over the power to define a field.”<sup>2</sup> Not only are there battles constantly going on within fields trying to manipulate the already established space; there are also battles going on without fields, trying to change and alter the already established space. According to Adams, Coessens and Östersjö, and Eriksen and Nielsen these battles within and without the fields are fought using capital.<sup>3</sup>

Capital legitimizes the field and the reasons for fighting, and can be separated down into economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital. Economic capital is conceptualized as a good that has some sort of profitable or monetary association immediately attached to it. Economic capital manifests itself physically either through actual currency, or through the products a currency can purchase, and can also be traded between different fields of play; its importance is in its physicality.<sup>4</sup> Cultural capital is a term that defines specific, both physical and non-physical capital

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<sup>1</sup> Cheleen Mahar, Richard Harker, and Chris Wilkes, “The Basic Theoretical Position,” in *An Introduction to the Work of Pierre Bourdieu*, ed. Richard Harker, Cheleen Mahar, and Chris Wilkes (London: Macmillan Press, 1990), 13.

<sup>2</sup> Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma, and Moishe Postone, “Introduction: Bourdieu and Social Theory,” in *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives* ed. Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma, and Moishe Postone (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 5.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew Adams in, “Hybridizing Habitus and Reflexivity: Towards an Understanding of Contemporary Identity?” 2006, Kathleen Coessens and Stefan Östersjö in, “Habitus and the Resistance of Culture,” 2014, and Thomas Hylland Eriksen and Finn Sivert Nielsen in, “Questioning Authority,” 2013.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 6.

as things that are fashionable or *culturally* desired at one moment in time; cultural capital can be anything from art, and education, to forms of language. Social capital is concerned with social standings and connections, who a person is connected to and how they utilize that relationship. Symbolic capital is conceived as more ephemeral in its design and is conceptualized as prestige, authority, status, legitimacy, and any form of power that can be derived from a material and cultural base.<sup>5</sup> While it is essential to understand the where and how the field battles are fought, it is important to highlight who wields the tools to enter and fight for control of the field.

Quite simply, everyone has access to economic, social, symbolic, and cultural capital and can therefore enter the field, and this ability to enter the field is called the habitus. The habitus has been defined as “a system of - schemes that are - inscribed in the social construction of the self [it functions] on an unconscious plane, and [takes] place within a structured space of possibilities.”<sup>6</sup> Other scholars define it as, “a set of dispositions, created and reformulated through the conjecture of objective structures and personal history [that] operate at the subconscious level.”<sup>7</sup> From both of these definitions a more detailed description can come which states that the habitus is a set of unconscious guiding structures created by a personal history and interactions with that were formed within a regulated space controlled by the intersection of materials and power. Every person has a habitus, access to capital and access to the field, however the accessibility of capital is different for everyone because of the construction of society, and how they fit into it.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>7</sup> Cheleen, 10.

In essence, the habitus is the way a person responds, “to themselves and their surroundings in specific ways to the point of [habit]”<sup>8</sup> Because the habitus is constantly changing and developing based on the person’s surroundings how they choose to internalize and envision the spaces around them is what forms their habits, posture, and interactions. The habitus is subconsciously built from personal histories, hegemonic ideals, and a person’s changing environments. Nonetheless, a person and their habitus can also affect their environment if they have enough control over their personal and social positioning within their field (capital). This positioning of the person allows individuals the ability to improvise or innovate within their field and create new structures of power.

This is the basics of Bourdieu’s Practice Theory. This theory determines that any space of conflict is a field, and the players within that field all have the ability to access and utilize the capital that is available to them through their habitus. The way they respond to certain situations based on their past history and the way they have internalized their positioning within society produces what capital is available to them and how they will use it. Lau defines this idea of habitus as having a “structured structure” and a “structuring structure,” with the “structured” part of habitus concerning a person’s past experiences and personal history, hence the past participle of structuring used in this definition of the habitus.<sup>9</sup> That is, he understands habitus as something that stems from the person’s past, as already being constructed and

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<sup>8</sup> Matthew Adams, “Hybridizing Habitus and Reflexivity: Towards and Understanding of Contemporary Identity?” in *Sociology* 40 No. 3 (2006), 514.

<sup>9</sup> Raymond K.W. Lau, “Habitus and the Practical Logic of Practice: An Interpretation,” in *Sociology*, 38, No. 2 (2004), 377.

unchangeable. Lau's definition for "structuring structure" states that this side of habitus concerns practices, and actions that are ongoing and constantly changing depending on how a person reacts and acts within their surroundings, hence the present participle of structuring.

A person's habitus requires both of these structures to be recognized and seen as legitimate by society in order for them to function and navigate everyday interactions efficiently. The habitus and its structures are sometimes hard to understand because it is such an ephemeral and theoretical concept, for this reason I find it is easier to understand it metaphorically as a brain (fig. 1). Every person has and needs a brain to live and function within society, much like the habitus, and the brain also has a left and right side that it needs in order to operate successfully. Without one or the other side of the brain it cannot function properly, and the same can be said for the habitus and how Lau envisions it. Without either a "structured structure" or "structuring structure" the habitus cannot function, and so if society does not recognize one or the other part of a person's habitus it renders it dead, just like how with only half of the brain a person cannot live.

Lau also leaves out Bourdieu's description of habitus as "schemes of action" and instead defines the concept as three different parts that all interact and build off of one another. The different parts concern a person's fundamental beliefs, their perception and understanding of the world around them, and the practical sense that is involved in decision making, i.e. if certain goals are achievable or not based on how much capital a person has access to. In this sense the habitus, as conceptualized by Lau, is how a person makes decisions within society based on their past experiences; their personal history informs what they think they can and cannot do within their

surroundings.<sup>10</sup> I will use Lau's definition of habitus instead of Bourdieu's in my analysis as it presents a clearer and more concrete definition of what the habitus is. This idea of a dual constructed habitus is also important in regards to the field of play, capital, and also the idea of symbolic violence.

I will now provide an example based on Horvat and Antonio's research that illustrates how field, habitus, and capital operate, and also introduce their concepts of dominant habitus, and symbolic violence. The two collected data over a period of eight months from the Hadley School for Girls, a school that they describe as a, "predominantly white, private, college-preparatory secondary school in California."<sup>11</sup> It was their intent to examine how race and class influenced the lives of black high school seniors within the school, and how the institution's dominant habitus was symbolically violent towards the students and othered them further from their classmates. While they based their analysis off of Bourdieu's Practice Theory they also utilized the works of other social scientists, such as Patricia McDonough and Robert Cole to refine and focus their argument within the settings of secondary educational institutions.

According to Horvat and Antonio a dominant habitus is the way in which, "organizations act in systematic and powerful ways to shape social structure and influence individual habitus."<sup>12</sup> The dominant habitus is similar to an individual

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 382.

<sup>11</sup> Erin McNamara Horvat and Anthony Lising Antonio, "'Hey, Those Shoes Are Out of Uniform': African American Girls in an Elite High School and the Importance of Habitus." In *Anthropology and Education Quarterly*, 30, No. 3 (1999), 320.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 319.

habitus in the sense that both are created in similar ways. By Lau's description, half of the habitus is constructed from a structured, past structure and the other half is built from a structuring, evolving structure. The dominant habitus in the Hadley School for Girls was one of whiteness, as seen by the ethnographers in the all-white faculty to "the dominant players in the school community- a group consisting of white, wealthy families that historically...exercised great control over the development of the school"<sup>13</sup> This dominant habitus of whiteness goes hand-in-hand with the concept of "oblivious entitlement" defined by both researchers as when, "the dominant members of [a] community fail to recognize the diversity within their midst and assume that all members of the community function in society in the same way that they do [with] a sense of privilege based on their color (white) and class."<sup>14</sup> The dominant white habitus and oblivious entitlement practiced by those in power is also what lead to the symbolic violence experienced by the black students who attended the school.

Horvat and Antonio state that a majority of the symbolic violence that affected the girls came from "the sense of not belonging [within the] environment - of being distanced [by the dominant] habitus of the school."<sup>15</sup> According to them the markers of this dominant habitus and symbolic violence could be seen by the institution's continuation in defining, "modern world history solely as the history of Europe and [making] little effort to understand and incorporate cultures and perspectives other than [its] own into [its] everyday [life]." The othering of the African American girls,

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<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 327.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 326

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 332.

because they had no form of representation within the school or the institution's curriculum was what was most hurtful and damaging to their sense of identity.<sup>16</sup>

The idea of a dominant white habitus and the lack of representation, which in turn creates symbolic violence, will be important within my analysis of Savannah and Lewes. It is essential to note, however, that the dominant habitus is not static but always changing, so while currently it is being controlled by a primarily white population, this will probably not always be the case as capital moves and is transferred from different groups and the field is made more accessible. Before diving fully into how these terms and concepts relate to my fieldwork, it is important that a more concrete approach is applied to the term symbolic violence. Beate Kraus, a German anthropologist discusses and conceptualizes a similar form of symbolic violence and oppression to the one discussed by Horvat and Antonio in her research about gender.

Kraus defines symbolic violence as, “a subtle, euphemized, invisible mode of domination that prevents domination from being recognized [and happens when] subjective structures – the habitus – and objective structures are in accord with each other.”<sup>17</sup> She goes on to state that, “the person who is confronted by acts of symbolic violence is disposed to perceive the violence in these acts, to decode the relevant signals and to understand their veiled social meaning, but without recognizing them

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 327.

<sup>17</sup> Beate Kraus, “Gender and Symbolic Violence: Female Oppression in the Light of Pierre Bourdieu’s Theory of Social Practice” in *Bourdieu: Critical Perspectives*, ed. by. Craig Calhoun, Edward LiPuma, and Moishe Postone (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 172.



consciously as what they are.”<sup>18</sup> In essence it is the recognition of the violent act as violent, but not per say consciously recognizing it as an act of domination. The habitus of a person who experiences symbolic violence is very much aware of the violence but is less aware of the violence as a tool for domination. Kraus uses many examples of women being ignored, interrupted, or flat out overlooked within university and workplace settings as examples of symbolic violence.

Combined with Horvat and Antonio’s conceptions of symbolic violence it becomes apparent that violent domination is often enacted through erasure and/or non-representation. If a person’s history, self-conception, actions, and reactions to the world around them, their habitus, are not seen as legitimate or visible by a dominant habitus then they might not see themselves within the field and are thus rendered invisible. The dominant habitus maintains its power by othering the individual habitus of people who will not or cannot reform themselves to fit within the accepted and created societal norm. The othering of a person or group of people then limits their access to specific types of capital, making it harder for them to get their footing within the field. Symbolic violence is inherently malicious and pointed for if people cannot and do not see themselves represented or reflected somehow in society, how are they to use their resources and capital to successfully affect the field around them? The answer is: they cannot. Understanding this erasure is important within the realms of Practice Theory as it lends itself to the idea of symbolic annihilation which in and of itself is a variant of symbolic violence.

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

Symbolic annihilation occurs when a marginalized figure or people's history is mentioned without wholly acknowledging it. While symbolic violence is a broad term that can be applied to all sorts of forms of violent domination, symbolic annihilation has come to be used by social scientists in focused investigations of history and heritage. For Caswell, the concept was first developed in the 1970s by a group of feminist scholars who sought to understand what happens to a marginalized group when its people and history are wiped from the history books. Caswell and her research partner Mallick applied the term to the archival realm of South Asian American history where they were astounded to find a plethora of historical information that neither of them had ever heard about before.<sup>19</sup>

Intent on preserving, maintaining, and providing the public with a sustainable and accessible resource, Caswell and Mallick set about creating their own archive entitled the South Asian American Digital Archive, or SAADA. Through their study and creation of the SAADA, both researchers discovered that most United Statesians did not know, recognize, or understand that South Asian American history existed.<sup>20</sup> Because it had been expunged from the master archive, it did not exist within the public's conception of history, and therefore rendered South Asian American people as history-less, simply existing within the present, without a past, and therefore no future. While Caswell and Mallick researched symbolic violence within the South Asian American community, the term has been applied to other groups as well, specifically African Americans, and narratives of enslaved people.

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<sup>19</sup> Michelle Caswell, "Seeing Yourself in History: Community Archives and the Fight Against Symbolic Annihilation" in *The Public Historian*, 36 No. 4 (2014), 29.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 32.

Eichstedt and Small refer to symbolic annihilation as, “[when] slavery and the enslaved are either completely absent or where mention of them is negligible, formalistic, fleeting or perfunctory.”<sup>21</sup> It is a direct form of erasure that seeks to alter the written record and mask the tangible and intangible aspects of history around us. Over a five-year period, Eichstedt and Small visited at least one hundred plantation museums within the southern United States and calculated that 55.7% of these sites symbolically annihilated the narratives of enslaved people who had lived on the properties.<sup>22</sup> At least half of the properties they visited then made no mention of the men, women, and children whose bodies were economically forced to support the plantation. As I noted previously, it seems that the master United States’ narrative would rather expunge the contributions, both forced and done freely, by people of color from “American History.”

To summarize, Bourdieu’s habitus as critiqued and conceptualized through Lau’s definition is comprised of two parts, a “structured structure” which is built from past histories, and a “structuring structure” which is continuously evolving to the happenings around a person. The habitus is not a static concept; it is always changing and transforming, reacting and acting to the society it is within. Horvat and Anthony discuss the idea of an individual habitus, *the* habitus, and a dominant habitus that is usually controlled by an organization or group and is able to establish their hegemonic ideals because they have the most access to capital and can therefore control the field.

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<sup>21</sup> Jennifer L. Eichstedt and Stephen Small, *Representations of Slavery: Race and Ideology in Southern Plantation Museums* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002) 107.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

Horvat and Anthony also discuss “oblivious entitlement” and its association with privilege and ignorance. People privileged within society by both their race and economic standing will unconsciously other people by their unwillingness to recognize their entitlement and how it might differ from those around them. The creators of the dominant habitus use “oblivious entitlement” and symbolic violence to maintain their power and intimidate other people who they consider as different and non-conforming to their history, lifestyle, and culture.

Beate Kraus defines symbolic violence as a form of domination that masks its true purpose through the violent acts it performs. She uses the example of erasure to illustrate how women’s views, ideas, and voices have been hidden and therefore rendered non-existent. Caswell and Mallick, and Eichstedt and Small both recognize symbolic annihilation as a form of symbolic violence and erasure that has happened within the archive and realm of public history.

The habitus is composed of two parts, a person’s own history and how they interact with their surroundings. If either part of a person’s habitus is erased or claimed as illegitimate by the dominant habitus then the whole structure is perceived to be not real by the individual, different, and accepted habitus. If the established dominant habitus promotes a hegemony that through symbolic violence and annihilation erases a group’s history or presence, it others them. Through this erasure and othering, the dominant habitus de-legitimizes a part of their individual habitus and therefore casts them out of accepted society, strips them of their habitus and humanity, and renders their reactions, lives, and culture as invisible.

Because their habitus is not recognized as being real by the dominant habitus, these othered people’s access to capital becomes constricted. Someone who is

perceived to be fictional does not have access to the resources they need and therefore has a harder time helping themselves and their communities. When a person has limited access to capital, they will have a more complicated experience entering the field, manipulating it, championing it, and seriously altering the dominant habitus. In terms of public history and museums, the recognition and dissemination of histories that are not white, heterosexual, male, and Anglo-Saxon will help in re-legitimizing hidden histories and recognizing previously marginalized people as people. The creation of counter-narratives and counter-histories that challenge historical accounts promoted by accepted institutions of history is one way that the field can be made more accessible to othered peoples.

### **A Remedy for Hegemony: Dissonant Spaces and Counter-Narratives**

Authors, educators, and museum professionals have used the counter-narrative as a tool to fight power structures, and deconstruct hegemonic ideas, histories, and stereotypes. It is a tool that is completely intersectional, and has been utilized to present narratives pertaining to any and all people, regardless of race, gender, or culture. Intersectionality in this case can be defined as a school of thought that examines issues of identity with a multi-faceted lens paying attention to a manifold of subjects such as race, gender, class, sexuality, etc. and how these subjects *intersect* and contribute to the formation of one's identity.<sup>23</sup> The concept of an intersectional counter-narrative has been used to legitimize and humanize people who might not

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<sup>23</sup> Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall in, "Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications and Praxis," in *Signs*, 38, No. 4, Intersectionality: Theorizing Power, Empowering Theory (2013), 787.

have been previously recognized by the dominant habitus and thus rendered invisible by the historical narratives supported and disseminated by the controllers of the field and public history.

Phillips analyzes the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Gatineau, Quebec, and specifically focuses on how the narrative of colonization within Canada has been interpreted. He asserts that the museum works toward—and succeeds in some cases—installing counter-narratives throughout the museum that raise indigenous and non-indigenous, mainly European-Canadian narratives to an equal realm of representation. The equality found within the museum between the two different narratives was a fairly recent addition to the museum at the time of his article’s publication and was spurred by the fact that historians were, and still are asking questions similar to, “What more was going on that we [historians] didn’t give the attention it needed?” and, “Who else wanted to speak, whose voice was suppressed or ignored?”<sup>24</sup>

One illustrative example that Phillips uses within his discussion of alternative histories is how the museum presents Aboriginal oral traditions next to archaeological evidence of migrations across the Bering Strait and is able to substantiate and maintain that both accounts are legitimate interpretations of history. He cites that the juxtaposition of the indigenous oral traditions alongside the Western tool of archaeology, presents a clear message that demands, “respect for equal authority of traditional knowledge and the findings of Western science.”<sup>25</sup> The exhibition is composed so that the, “main archaeological installation is surrounded by an array of

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<sup>24</sup> Mark Salber Phillips, *On Historical Distance* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2013) 207.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 219.

indigenous storytelling forms” that include paintings, sculpture, and oral storytelling, while the archaeological findings are placed beneath the viewers feet in an interpretive, “in-situ” like exhibition case.

The exhibition also has a space where the issues of climate change and human migration are discussed, both from an officially endorsed indigenous point of view and a Western scientific viewpoint. The indigenous viewpoint states that the native peoples of Canada have been in North America since before the present world was formed, while the archaeological viewpoint is more in favor of a story of trans-continental migration.<sup>26</sup> Both sides of the argument are presented on an equal plain in total juxtaposition of each other, and therefore the museum has refused to subordinate, “Aboriginal oral tradition to archaeological evidence of migrations across the Bering Strait.”<sup>27</sup>

By allowing both narratives to be present within their space, and to be in confrontation with one another, the museum has opened up a space that legitimizes both narratives. However, and according to Phillips, it has also created a space where no apparent resolution can be seen, thus requiring participation by visitors in navigating both accounts.<sup>28</sup> The museum’s installation of the counter-narrative requires visitor reflection and introspection, and most importantly, does not make the visitor choose one narrative over the other, but does make one, the indigenous narrative, visible when previously it had not been.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 220-221.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 231.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 232.

The visibility that is generated by counter-narratives is one of their most important facets, and Wendy J. Glenn discusses how exposing teachers to counter-narratives can help them negotiate race, white privilege, and understand their students of color better. Glenn conducted ethnographic work with fourteen pre-service teachers, student teachers who have not yet undertaken any teaching positions, over the course of their last year of formal teaching education. The students read two fictional counter-narrative books, one entitled, *Mexican Whiteboy*, which chronicles the life of a biracial teen named Danny trying to navigate his place within society, and the other entitled, *After Tupac and D Foster* which tells the story of two black teenage girls and the struggles and triumphs they experience throughout life.<sup>29</sup>

The students read, reflected, and discussed the books in class while Glenn was present, allowing her to discover that the, “counter-narrative texts fostered connections across cultures by exposing [the students] to the universal experience of individual identity formation.”<sup>30</sup> She also found, however, that for some students who were so engrained within their own ideals and ways of thinking, “the normalization of one culture prohibits empathy across cultures.”<sup>31</sup> This idea is congruent with the concept of “oblivious entitlement” as mentioned by Horvat and Anthony in their research about dominant habitus.

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<sup>29</sup> Wendy J. Glenn, “Developing Understandings of Race: Preservice Teachers’ Counter-Narrative (Re)Constructions of People of Color in Young Adult Literature,” in *English Education* 44, No. 4 (2012), 331-332.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 335.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid., 338.



Continuing along the lines of “oblivious entitlement,” Glenn also states that, “To really understand race, one must accept and recognize that one’s assumptions are biased [and] given the power of literature to create emphatic connection, the counter-narrative has the potential to promote overly simplified understandings of race.”<sup>32</sup> This is the dichotomy of the counter-narrative: it is meant to present its viewers and audience with a parallel story, but is not meant to sway them any one way, it is only meant to create dissonance. As Phillips stated in his discussion of the Canadian Museum of Civilization in Quebec, the exhibition about climate change and human migration merely presented the two differing narratives but did not offer a resolution. It is within this dissonant space that the participant is confronted with their own biases and their previous history and their habitus is triggered.

When a counter-narrative is presented to a person unfamiliar with the history or narrative that is being told their “structured structure” of the habitus, their personal history is called into action because the counter-narrative is directly discrediting what they previously thought they knew. The person’s “structuring structure” then is confronted with the dissonance and must somehow alleviate and mend the fissure that the counter-narrative has created, and part of this comes about by recognizing one’s own ignorance. Glenn states that the counter-narrative texts her informants read made them acknowledge their own biases. She states, “recognition of hypocrisy however uncomfortable...is a necessary precursor to intellectual and emotional growth as well as reasoned and aware acceptance of our own racial identities and what they carry.”<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid., 344-345.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid., 346.

Most importantly for Glenn however, was the way in which “counter-narrative texts heightened participants’ awareness of whiteness, the ways in which race can privilege or limit by fostering insider or outsider status, and the discomfort that can result when such dichotomies define our identities.”<sup>34</sup> As previously discussed by Phillips and Glenn the counter-narrative’s purpose is to contribute an equal addition to the already established narrative and leaving no resolution. The visitor to the counter-narrative must embrace the dissonant space and reconsider what they previously knew. A counter-narrative is successful only once it has created a fissure within the established history and made people think and reflect about what they already knew.

Godreau was witness first hand to what can happen within a community that does not accept or choose to think about any counter-narratives. Throughout the course of her fieldwork in San Antón, Puerto Rico she was struck by how the community failed to recognize its enslaved, and freed black pre-emancipation history. Although she was able to find town elders who would discuss slavery with her, most of her informants did not mention slavery directly. Instead, the informants who talked about slavery focused on family names within the community, and if they had to, referred to slavery in a matter-of-fact way.<sup>35</sup>

One of her informants, a woman named Julia illustrated what happens when a counter-narrative is never established, or never accepted by a community: “so they said slavery never happened here, so then I say, well then, some say one thing, then

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 348.

<sup>35</sup> Isar P. Godreau, *Scripts of Blackness: Race, Cultural Nationalism, and U.S. Colonialism in Puerto Rico* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2015) 117..

tomorrow another, and in the long run nobody knows anything.”<sup>36</sup> According to Julia, no one in San Antón wanted to discuss slavery and because of this its historical memory would be forgotten, but its structural memory would still exist. Godreau was not able to find any sort of information about the town’s black pre-emancipation history through her ethnographic interviews with the town’s citizens. She cites this erasure of the black Puerto Rican historical experience as why United Statesians recognize a white/Hispanic identity with Puerto Rico more than a black identity.<sup>37</sup>

While Phillips and Glenn’s research illustrates that a counter-narrative must create a space of dissonance, Godreau’s research illustrates that a counter-narrative must also be approachable. Even when there were town elders who talked about slavery, they did so concisely and not directly. The Black History of the town was not seen as something desirable within the hegemony that the United States has imposed on the island, so therefore the counter-narrative must be approachable in the way it presents its narrative. This is not to say that it must appeal to the hegemonic narrative it chooses to parallel and contest; it in fact should never do this, but it should be presented in such a way as to be easily approachable.

### **For Those Short on Time: A Summary of Theory and Action**

In summation, every person has an individual habitus which is subconscious and composed of a “structured structure,” or personal history, and a “structuring structure” which comprises a person’s actions and reactions to the world around them. Both halves of the habitus are required for a person to function. Without their personal

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 117.

history how can a person make measured actions? And without their reactions, how is a person able to live in the present? The habitus can also be influenced by a dominant habitus which is normally controlled by a corporation, or whoever holds the most amount of capital within the field.

A field is any space where an altercation and fight for power and legitimacy is taking place; it is quite frankly a battlefield. Those who wish to fight within the field must use their economic, social, cultural, and symbolic, capital and their habitus to enter and navigate it. If the participant is able to use their capital and habitus well enough they have an opportunity to win the field, thus controlling it, and depending on circumstances also controlling the dominant habitus.

Presently, and for the purposes of this study, the field is the realm of public history, specifically Wright Square within Savannah, Georgia, and the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes, Delaware. A dominant habitus that is seen as legitimate controls both fields, the Georgia Historical Society for Wright Square, and the State of Delaware for the Zwaanendael respectively. The dominant habitus in both locations disseminates a history that is told from a white, heterosexual, Anglo-Saxon male perspective, expelling almost any room for alternative narratives to be heard or made visible.

Since the fields are controlled and extoll a dominant habitus of whiteness, they in turn delegitimize any narratives that are not white or associated with whiteness. This erasure of history then affects the individual habitus of people seen as non-white, who within the eyes of the dominant habitus do not have a personal history, and therefore do not exist. Because an othered habitus does not exist within the eyes of the dominant habitus, it has a harder time accessing capital, manipulating it, and entering

the field to fight for control over it. A devaluation of habitus means a constricting of capital and therefore a lesser chance of being visible and altering the field and society.

One solution that can be used to fix, alter the field, and transform the dominant habitus is through the implementation of a counter-narrative, or a parallel history that confronts the old established white history with a previously silenced history. For the counter-narrative to be successful, however, it must create dissonance between the established and alternative narrative and force the participant to acknowledge what is being presented before them. It must also be approachable and easily accessible for the visitor to engage with and cannot be a part of the already established history; its difference from the accepted history is what causes the dissonance within the space. If the visitor is able to engage with the counter-narrative it will confront their habitus in such a way that they will have to re-evaluate their personal conception of history and react or act according to the dissonant space.

The counter-narrative's intent is to create a break between the "structured" and "structuring" sides of the habitus. The person in confrontation with the counter-narrative will then have to acknowledge their preconceived history, and either choose to neglect the parallel narrative, or accept it into their historical construction. The most successful counter-narratives will allow previously invisible stories to enter the light of day, reversing the effects of symbolic annihilation and violence, and restoring previously silenced habitus. The counter-narrative will then be added into the larger established history, legitimizing those people who were once marginalized by acknowledging their history and widening the opening for them to access capital and the field. The counter-narrative by being added to the large established history will also be absorbed by the dominant habitus, and co-opted into its hegemony; this will

broaden the historical narrative and make room for people of color within the dominant habitus. The final goal therefore of a counter-narrative is to restore what has been deemed “lost,” create a wider range for the distribution of capital and make the dominant habitus more accessible so that overtime it will reflect equally all who live within its field.

As I will explain in Chapter 2, the field of Wright Square within Savannah, Georgia is controlled by the dominant habitus of the Georgia Historical Society who have historically only told a white, cis-male, heterosexual, Anglophone Anglo-Saxon history. A counter-narrative was erected in the square in the twentieth century; however it has not been that successful because it does not create a dissonance space within the square. Instead, it recedes into the darkness of the square, is not very noticeable and therefore approachable, and is not different enough from the established and monumental history within the square. The Historical Society in the late twentieth century attempted to erect a plaque that was meant to contextualize the counter-narrative and main monument within the square, but this also failed because it was more focused on the established history than the counter-narrative.

As I will discuss in detail in Chapter 3, the field of the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes, Delaware is controlled by the dominant habitus of the State of Delaware which has historically only told white male histories. While no counter-narrative has been erected within the museum yet, docents and staff at the museum have been open to accepting them and using their capital, however limited by the state, to promote them. I have constructed a brochure for the museum about black sailors in the eighteenth century, which will act as an experimental counter-narrative for the museum. The brochure is approachable, and easily accessible, and confronts the

established history within the museum by presenting the different ways black men lived on the Atlantic during the eighteenth century. It also creates a space of dissonance within the museum's exhibition by asking questions that the visitor can reflect upon as they walk through the exhibition: "Why does the state of Delaware interpret these artifacts through a white male lens?" and, "Can you racialize an artifact?" While I will discuss my fieldwork and counter-narratives further in chapters 2 and 3 it is first essential that I note how I conducted my research and what my methods were for ascertaining information.

### **Charting Chats: The Methodology of Undergraduate Ethnography**

My first research endeavors in both Savannah and Lewes were concerned with learning their histories from primary and secondary sources. These sources, many of which I used in writing a brief history for both towns gave me a large, general picture of the first two hundred or so years of the cities. These texts introduced me to the established history of the town, the people that had been deemed important in remembering the evolution of the city, and the specific events that changed or altered the social, and sometimes physical structure of the locales. After conducting this first round of research I traveled to each location.

I spent about two and a half months in Savannah over the course of the summer of 2017, from late May to early July and then from late July to early August. During this period, I collected maps of the city handed out by tourism companies and then set about making my own map of the city so that I could understand how it was contextually laid out. Every day, I went out into my city with some maps, a small little notebook and my camera, sat down in a square and began mapping it, the monuments,

the streets, and the flow of traffic through it. This mapping of the squares allowed me to learn the city and the ways people interacted with it and its built environment.

While mapping, I often engaged with people either walking by, performing in the squares, or those admiring the monuments, and this allowed me to interview tourists, locals, and businesspeople often all in the same day. These interviews were mostly conducted on the street, although some did occur in cafes and museums, and were almost always unstructured. I tried to engage with the would-be informants on a personal level first, asking them how they were, how their day was going, and then telling them what kind of research I was doing and if they were interested in having a conversation with me about the city's public history. I was as transparent as possible in these interviews and told them my own personal opinion about the visible history within the city. This however became difficult for me when I began focusing on the confederate monument because of the growing tension around its presence.

A majority of my interviews throughout the fieldwork process were unstructured meaning that the questions I asked participants had not been written by me beforehand. Unstructured interviews attempt to establish rapport with participants and explore general topics that the informant believes are important, they are often characterized by simple, and open-ended questions. I also utilized semi-structured and structured interview formats when I wanted to pursue the issue of historical narratives and monuments more directly. Semi-structured interviews normally include questions that the interviewer has thought about and purposefully asks in order to get a direct response. These interviews are less conversational than unstructured interviews, require the interviewer to *loosely* follow a written script and still allows for the interview to proceed naturally as a conversation. Structured interviews however are



completely bounded by a script written by the interviewer, are strictly formatted to get a direct answer from the participant, and are less conversational or casual than unstructured and semi-structured interviews.<sup>38</sup>

While conducting street interviews that were typically unstructured or semi-structured I also participated in three different tours of the city, a ghost tour, a Black History tour, and a historic house tour, where I talked with and interviewed participants and guides alike. These interviews were unstructured and I kept them as informal as possible so as to put the interviewee at ease. A majority of these interviews were also conducted at the end of the tour and were primarily concerned with what the participants thought about the tour and if they felt like they had learned anything new from it.

Three of my most important semi-structured interviews were conducted with a tour guide, museum docent, and a Georgia historian. Two of these interviews, the tour guide and museum docent, were done after I had met and talked with both participants a previous time and they agreed to sit down in a more formal setting to answer some pre-written questions I had. These interviews were still conducted outside and fairly casual in the sense that once I asked my written questions, if the interviewee's answers made me think of more questions, or if the conversation took a different turn than expected I allowed it to. The semi-structured format of these interviews allowed me to hone in on what was most important to either participant in terms of representation, history, and the established historical narrative within Savannah.

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<sup>38</sup> Susan C. Weller, "Structured Interviewing and Questionnaire Construction," in *Handbook of Methods in Cultural Anthropology* ed. H. Russell Bernard and Clarence C. Gravlee, (New York: Rowan and Littlefield Press, 2014), 343-345.

The other semi-structured interview that I conducted while in Savannah, and which you will read more about in Chapter 2, along with my other interviews was with the Senior Historian of the Georgia Historical Society. I contacted his office, set up a meeting time, and prepared a set of questions that I was going to ask him; this interview was completely formal. I dressed a little more professionally than I would have if we had conducted the interview on the street and met him in his office. This interview was also less congenial and right to the point, it was less of a conversation and more interrogative on my end even though I did let the discussion wander away from my questions when I deemed the content interesting or important.

My time spent conducting research at the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes was a bit different than in Savannah. I had known most of the employees and docents at the Zwaanendael for a good three years before I began conducting interviews with them, and I consider them my friends. I made every effort to maintain as much transparency within the fieldwork process as possible and so when I asked the director of the museum if I could interview any of the employees she specifically told me whom I could and could not interview. I followed her rules and set about crafting questions for these interviews which were semi-structured.

These interviews were more formal and different from the ones I produced in Savannah in the fact that I tried to withhold my own views from swaying the conversation at all. The interviewees were told ahead of time that I would be interviewing them, and I also actively took notes in front of them, both of these differences from the way I interviewed people in Savannah took away from some of the spontaneity that can be found within my Georgian interviews. However, because I was interviewing people I am close with the content of these interviews are much

richer and show a deeper level of thought than my random street interviews in Savannah.

I spent a little more than a month and a half conducting research within and around the museum and, similar to Savannah, I drew maps of how the museum is located in regards to the rest of the town, how it operates within its own landscape and how visitors and employees navigate it. This process of cartography allowed me to see the museum in a new light. I was able to pay attention to what grabbed people's eyes first, what exhibition cases seemed to draw people in, and where docents first lead their guests on a tour of the museum. My juvenile knowledge of the ethnographic process made the activity both exhausting and exhilarating, completely disappointing and encouraging, and has endeared me to the subject of anthropology even more.

### **The Lay of the Land: A Brief Outline of What is to Come**

The two chapters that follow detail my time spent in Savannah, Georgia, specifically focusing on the research I conducted within Wright Square, and the research I compiled in Lewes, Delaware with a specific focus on the Zwaanendael Museum. Both of these chapters are styled similarly, beginning with a brief and condensed history of the two towns that provides an historical context for their cultures, people, and history, and then traverses into a discussion of my specific areas of research within either city. A brief history of both fields, Wright Square, and the Zwaanendael Museum will be given and then my analysis of either site will be reported afterwards.

My analysis will combine my theoretical framework, stemming from Pierre Bourdieu's Practice Theory, and my conceptualization of a counter-narrative onto my fieldwork. For the Savannah chapter, chapter 2, an already established counter-

narrative is analyzed, critiqued, and ultimately rendered as a failure within presenting a parallel history to the established narrative. The Lewes chapter, chapter 3, analyzes the museum, critiques what is currently on display within the museum's exhibition and offers a solution that will hopefully be a successful counter-narrative.

The counter-narrative I have constructed for the Zwaanendael, the brochure about black sailors and their lives at sea, is an experiment within the confines of this research project. The brochure is merely a rough draft and still a work in progress. It generalizes history and only focuses on the narratives of black men within the eighteenth century Atlantic world, and because it does not use a multi-faceted lens of analysis it is not intersectional. However limited, the addition of other narratives, and an integrated analysis of race, gender, and class within the brochure would add this needed layer of intersectionality to it.

Chapters 2 and 3 will end with a brief summary of my findings so as to make my arguments easier and clearer to understand without theoretical jargon. After my third chapter the thesis will then proceed to its concluding chapter which will tie up all of my ideas presented here, address my own biases and recognize my privilege in being able to conduct this research. The intent of this thesis is to not simply argue what I think is correct, it is meant for discussion, dissemination, and determining how we can make this world a better and equal place for all of its inhabitants.

## **CHAPTER 2: OBELISKS AND OPPRESSION: STRUCTURES OF POWER WITHIN THE CEMETARY CITY OF THE SOUTH, SAVANNAH, GA**

### **The Most Haunted City in America**

Savannah, Georgia is the oldest European colonial city in Georgia and, if one believes in ghosts is said to be the most haunted city in all of America. Its name as the “Cemetery City of the South” was created by me and is in reference to a ghost tour that I participated and conducted fieldwork in where the guide told us that, “their were dozens of bodies under every street throughout the city,” and that the town had, “been built on top of a mass cemetery [that was] hundreds of years old.” This ghost tour was not the only tour I took while in Savannah, I also participated in two other tours of the city and interviewed twenty people; fifteen of these interviews were unstructured whereas the other five were semi-structured.

I chose Savannah as my field-site because it is a city known for its public history and has at least one hundred different monuments and memorials spread throughout its Historic District. It is also a city that has a varied and rich history, it was founded by the British as a non-slave holding colony, but by the time of the Civil War had built its entire economic wealth on the bodies of enslaved people. It is also a diverse city where, according to the U.S. Census of 2016, 40% of the population identifies as white, and 59% identify as non-white people of color.<sup>39</sup> With its history and diverse population there are ample routes for alternative and counter-narratives to flourish within the city.

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<sup>39</sup> United States Census Bureau, “Savannah, Georgia,” United States Census Bureau, 2016, accessed April 25, 2018. <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/savannahcitygeorgia/AGE295216#viewtop>

There is one particular counter-narrative within Savannah that I spent a majority of my time focused on, and it is the Tomochichi Monument in Wright Square. I will explore this monument and the memorial structure it contests later on within this chapter, until then I will give a brief layout of the chapter and what is to come. A short retelling of the established historical narrative follows this section, then a discussion of my fieldwork, a brief discussion of Wright Square, which is then followed by my analysis of the square. This chapter ends with a short conclusion to tie the theoretical concepts previously stated in the preluding chapter to Savannah, and then chapter 3 follows whose structure resembles this chapter. Because history is so essential to my project, it makes sense to begin this chapter with the history of Savannah.

### **A Selective and Condensed History of Savannah and its Monuments**

The British colony of Georgia and its original capital of Savannah were both colonized and settled by British forces and families during the year 1733. The colony was originally meant to act as a military buffer zone between Spanish colonial Florida and the British occupied Carolinas; specifically acting as a constructed border meant to define and prove the existence of South Carolina and its capital city of Charleston from St. Augustine, Florida.<sup>40</sup> However, the British were not the first people to live and settle the high sandy bluffs of Savannah, The Yamacraw Tribe, an indigenous people of the North American Low Country had inhabited the area long before the British arrived.

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<sup>40</sup> Charles Colcock Jones Jr. *Historical Sketch of Tomochichi: Mico of the Yamacraws* (Savannah: The Oglethorpe Press Inc, 1998), 11.

Sweet in her article, “Will the Real Tomochichi Please Come Forward?” attempts to detail and trace the history of the Yamacraw Tribe through primary documents such as correspondence between British colonizers in Georgia, South Carolina, and Britain. According to Sweet, the Yamacraw Tribe was most likely made up of people from different indigenous groups such as the Creek and Yamasee people who had been displaced by the Yamasee War of 1715. The war pitted a confederation of indigenous individuals against British colonizers within present day South Carolina. Its outcome forced many Native peoples to relocate from their previously occupied towns and territories thus resulting in the creation of new independent indigenous towns such as Yamacraw. Tomochichi the Mico or “chief” of the Yamacraw people and town was one of the first Native Americans to interact with the British colonizers of Savannah.<sup>41</sup>

While little is known about Tomochichi’s early life the accepted theory is that he most likely had ties with both the Creek and Yamasee peoples and after the Yamasee War decided to leave South Carolina and settle the bluffs of what would then become Savannah. He decided to settle on the bluffs of the Savannah River because, “of its proximity to British traders, especially John and Mary Musgrove, and its spiritual significance as the resting place of his ancestors”.<sup>42</sup> At the time of British colonization it is estimated that the town of Yamacraw had around two hundred residents and had close ties with other Creek and Yamasee towns nearby.

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<sup>41</sup> Julie Ann Sweet, “Will the Real Tomochichi Please Come Forward?” in *American Indian Quarterly* 32, no. 2 (2008): 159-163.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 162.

General James Edward Oglethorpe, one of the men responsible for the colonization of Georgia and often regarded as the founder of Savannah was able to successfully convince King George II of England in 1732 to sign a charter and create the colony of Georgia.<sup>43</sup> Oglethorpe and other wealthy Englishmen intended to populate the new colony with small time merchants, unemployed laborers, families, and, refugee Protestants who would hopefully be able to transform it into, “a buyers’ market for raw materials and a seller’s market for manufactured goods”.<sup>44</sup> The colony’s original governing body was made up of twenty-one trustees who would oversee Georgia’s maintenance and construction from their positions within the British government in England.

Oglethorpe and the trustees established Georgia as a colony free of slavery; this decision was made because they believed that the implementation of slavery would lead to white settlers becoming lazy and would undermine their effectiveness as soldiers, farmers, and merchants. While Oglethorpe is often seen as an abolitionist figure it is important to note that he hired hundreds of enslaved individuals from nearby South Carolina to build the streets and squares of Savannah. The city and colony though planned as a free territory without slavery, Catholicism, lawyers and, rum was originally constructed to serve the purposes and pockets of white Protestant men and their families. Slavery was legalized in 1751 and along with it came an

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<sup>43</sup> Rebecca Ann Lapezynski, “The Beginnings of the Colony of Georgia,” *International Social Science Review* 73, no.1/2 (1998): 37.

<sup>44</sup> Mills Lane, *Savannah Revisited: A Pictorial History* (Savannah: The Beehive Press, 1977), 12.



emerging planter elite, a growth in economy, and a social diversification of the colony.<sup>45</sup>

As Savannah's economy and population began growing so did its boundaries, streets and squares. The city's original layout followed a grid pattern that was made up of squares and wards with the four-sided wards surrounding a central square. Each ward had two sides devoted to public city-owned lots and two other sides devoted to private lots owned by colonists for their own use. The original city plan in 1734 only had four squares, this number however grew exponentially to become twenty-four squares in 1855, and now the city has twenty-one squares.<sup>46</sup> In 1856 the city also began building Forsyth Park, a public municipal park similar to Central Park in New York that today is home to numerous monuments such as the Confederate Monument.

The Confederate and anti-unionist sentiments that were felt by many southern states throughout the mid-nineteenth century reached Savannah and exploded in full force in November of 1860 when news reached the city that Abraham Lincoln had been elected President. Confederate soldiers began training for war within Forsyth Park and the Savannah Cadets, a regiment composed of young boys aged twelve to fourteen also formed in preparation for the war.<sup>47</sup> As the city began preparing for war, schisms began appearing within the population as individuals began aligning themselves with the different ideologies of the Union and Confederate armies.

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<sup>45</sup> James A. McMillin, *The Transatlantic Slave Trade Comes to Georgia*, ed. Leslie M. Harris and Daina Ramey Berry (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2014), 1-9.

<sup>46</sup> Mills Lane, *Savannah Revisited: A Pictorial History*, 43.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

A majority of Savannah's white population united under the Confederate flag while the city's black population found unity under the Union banner. The white population wanted, "to preserve slavery [which was] the social, economic, and psychological foundation of their society, while African Americans hoped to see it end."<sup>48</sup> Some black individuals within Savannah did side and commit themselves to the Confederate cause; however it has been theorized that these individuals were compelled to support the Confederacy by the white Confederate population because a Secessionist victory was construed to be in their best interests. Black individuals and communities within the city who supported the Union did so, "out of conviction as there was not an intimidating Union presence to force the issue," and therefore chose to support the North in the Civil War.<sup>49</sup>

While Savannah survived the Civil War physically, its economy was heavily damaged by the war and by the mid-1870s the municipal government suffered a near-financial collapse. During this period of Reconstruction the city's population grew by only 8.7 percent as opposed to its antebellum growth rate of thirty percent a year.<sup>50</sup> The city focused on cotton farming and production in order to bolster its economy, but this was a failure because of the boll weevil, an insect that feeds on cotton plants. By the early twentieth century the city's cotton industry was on near financial collapse

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<sup>48</sup> Walter J. Fraser Jr., *Savannah in the Old South* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2003), 321.

<sup>49</sup> Whittington B. Johnson, *Black Savannah: 1788 – 1864* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1996), 162.

<sup>50</sup> Lisa L. Denmark, "'The Midnight Hour': Economic Dilemmas and Harsh Realities in Post-Civil War Savannah," *The Georgia Historical Quarterly* 90, no. 3 (2006): 351-366

and its economy appeared as if it would not be able to bounce back from the depression. Demolition of the city's historic houses, neighborhoods, and colonial plan were being carried out because the actual material of the buildings had more value than the buildings themselves. This all changed however with the birth of the preservation movement and the formation of the Historic Savannah Foundation in 1955.<sup>51</sup>

The Historic Savannah Foundation and the Georgia Historical Society, which has an office within Savannah, are two organizations within the city that have allowed it to flourish and generate a new economy within the modern day. Savannah's twenty-first century economy is diverse and growing with services being split among industries such as, manufacturing, the port, tourism, health care, the military, and real-estate development. The city's tourism sector in 2015 alone drew 13.7 million visitors to its center where tourists spent an average of 2.67 billion dollars on visiting historic places, seeing cultural attractions, and enjoying culinary experiences.<sup>52</sup> The city's long history and its ability to maintain its historic charm have added to its success as a top tourist destination within the United States of America.

This selective and abbreviated history of Savannah has shown that even from its colonial founding it would be a city unlike any other within the North American continent. It was a city originally colonized without the institution of slavery although this ban on the slave trade was lifted and the city grew largely dependent on it

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<sup>51</sup> Mills Lane, *Savannah Revisited: A Pictorial History*, 174 - 200.

<sup>52</sup> Michael J. Toma, "The Savannah Outlook: 2017," pp. 26-30 in Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce. *Savannah 2017: Economic Trends*. Savannah: Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce, 2017.

throughout its colonial and revolutionary period. The Civil War demolished the city's once thriving economy which had been produced through the enslavement of black men, women, and children and resulted in an economic decline that lasted until the mid-twentieth century. The creation of the Savannah Historic Foundation in the 1950s spurred the preservation movement in Savannah that in turn created a flourishing tourism industry; this industry has been a large factor in the city's economic welfare today. While the city's economy is diverse its tourism sector is largely dependent on advertising and creating programs that deal with identity, history, heritage, and the maintenance of its Historic District. The city's tourism industry was what drew me to it originally and so in the late days of May I decided to make the ten-hour drive from Lewes, Delaware down to hot, sticky, and sweaty Savannah, Georgia.

### **City of Graves: Witchcraft and Field-work in Savannah, GA**

I arrived in Savannah on May 29th and was greeted by a thick layer of humidity, a beating Georgian sun and a long lost cousin who graciously allowed me to live in his apartment over the course of my research. Set along Barnard St., my apartment building was within a five-minute walk to Forsyth Park, one of the city's parks that is dominated by the centrally located Confederate monument. Because of the apartment's proximity to Forsyth Park and the rest of the Historic District I began often begin each day by walking through the park towards the Savannah River at the northern end of the city. Forsyth Park became my southern border for research while the Savannah River and River Street were my northern borders; these were bounded on either side by my eastern border, Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, and my western border, East Broad Street (fig. 2). Within this rudimentary square I aimed to visit the historic squares, sites, and monuments of Savannah.

Throughout my research I used the ethnographic methods of participant observation, unstructured/semi-structured interviews and drafted maps and surveys of the city to better understand its layout and physical landscape. Of the five semi-structured interviews I conducted, I had previously interviewed four of the participants through an unstructured format.<sup>53</sup>

A figural monument here is a statue or structure that portrays an entire person's body, not just a bust or a plaque but an actual fully realized person; by focusing on figural monuments, I was able to cut back on the number of memorials I visited. Throughout my fieldwork I also saw a telling trend that monument visitors were more interested and engaged with figural monuments than abstract structures. Based on my fieldwork, visitors to figural monuments believed they could connect with the history and narrative of the monument more because it was portrayed and embodied through a person. My original city survey task, however, proved to be more complicated than I had imagined given that for two days I searched for three squares that had been demolished years before, and because I was still very unfamiliar with the layout of the city.

While I was following this original survey plan, I also visited the businesses surrounding the squares such as cafes, antique stores, and bookstores. It was on my third day of conducting my survey work in Savannah that I met a witch named Minerva in one of the Historic District's largest antique stores. We had a lengthy conversation about the history of the city wherein she shared her belief that the spirits

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<sup>53</sup> A majority of my interviews took place outside while I was surveying the city and creating a rudimentary map of all twenty-one of the city's squares and the figural monuments within each square.

and ghosts of Savannah's departed residents still walk its streets interacting with the living. This idea of an undead history that permeates every aspect of the city altered the way in which I came to view the monuments, not as static stone structures, but as active agents within the telling and maintenance of an established historical narrative.

By June 1<sup>st</sup> I had completed my initial survey of the city, visiting all of its current squares, and compiling a list of every figural monument that was in each square. Within my first three days of being in Savannah I began to notice that the squares along Bull Street, the city's main thoroughfare and one of the first streets laid out by Oglethorpe and the other British colonizers attracted the most foot traffic and street performers. Two monuments, the African American Monument and the Confederate Monument act as artificial boundaries for Bull Street's northern and southern ends within the Historic District. Both monuments are in direct juxtaposition with one another, with the African American Monument acting as a distant counter-narrative to the Confederate Monument.

According to street performer Norman, one of my informants, he performed near the African American monument because it magnified his voice and attracted tourists and tours; the ties the monument has to Black History had no significance to him. Norman, like most performers on River Street, was a singer and therefore needed a space that would project his voice and carry the noise far and wide to attract an audience. I also saw through observation that he was correct in saying the monument served as a meeting point for tourists and tours alike, as it was often where a tour would end or begin, or where tourists would wait for different members of their party to arrive.

A majority of the tourist traffic on River Street picks up around five o'clock in the evening which is when Norman would begin his performance attempting to, and normally successfully drawing in a crowd of tourists. The interviews I conducted with Norman lead me to realize that street performers used most of the squares along Bull Street because they were the most visited areas by tourists within the city. With this newly realized piece of information I shifted my focus from all of Savannah's squares to the monuments, squares, and streets that Bull Street runs through, specifically beginning with River Street and then moving to Johnson, Wright, Chippewa, Madison, and Monterey Square and finally ending at Forsyth Park.

This shift to five squares, one street and a park made time management of my research easier and also gave me a more detailed and refined area to study and engage with. I also stopped looking at just figural monuments and began refocusing on monumental memorials—primarily the central monuments that can be found within each square, because they received the most attention from tourists. This change in survey approach allowed me to explore how the city was trying to contextualize their monuments and if they were also trying to create and manipulate memorial spaces into areas of inclusive memorialization.

The change in my survey size also allowed me to become more familiar with the physical landscape of the Bull Street squares and the people who inhabited them such as Charles, an elderly Gullah-Geechee man. Charles sat in Wright Square normally from noon until six at night every day and sang songs and the phrase "Welcome to Savannah" to people as they passed by. While singing to passers-by, he also created the staple Palmetto Rose, a piece of palmetto frond that when twisted correctly and artfully can be made to resemble a flower, this material culture tradition

is associated with Gullah and Low Country culture. Charles, like Norman was more concerned with drawing attention to his art and craft than the actual monuments that inhabited the space around him. The square and the way Charles used it allowed me to see how the squares are not just green leisure spaces, they also act as theatrical stages, storefronts, and centers of social interactions. Charles's square in particular, Wright Square also gave me the perfect area to study counter-narratives, dominant habitus, and symbolic annihilation within the city.

### **A Desecrating Erection: Symbolic Violence within Wright Square**

Wright Square was one of the first squares established in Savannah and boasts an impressive and centrally located monumental obelisk to nineteenth century railroad tycoon, William Washington Gordon (fig. 3).<sup>54</sup> Another monument lies to the southeast of Gordon's and is slightly shaded and recessed from the general north-south walking path that runs through the square, this monument is dedicated to Tomochichi, Mico of the Yamacraws (fig. 4). These two monuments sit in confrontation with one another, Gordon's acts as a radio tower that transmits hegemonic ideals produced by the dominant habitus and established historical narrative whereas Tomochichi's monument acts as a failed counter-narrative sitting in the shadows (fig. 5). His monument was constructed to contest the white erection that protrudes from the earth, where he, the Mico of the Yamacraws was originally buried.

Tomochichi was given a state funeral by the British colonizers and was laid to rest in the middle of Wright Square in 1739, his tomb however was destroyed nearly one-hundred and fifty years later with the erection of Gordon's monument. This act of

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<sup>54</sup> Mills Lane, *Savannah Revisited: A Pictorial History*, 48



destruction did not sit well with a few members of the Gordon family and some citizens of Savannah and so in 1899 Nellie Kinzie Gordon, William Washington Gordon's daughter-in-law and mother of Juliette Gordon Low, the founder of the Girl Scouts, had the current monument to Tomochichi erected with the help from the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America.<sup>55</sup>

In 1958 the Georgia Historical Commission, which would be abolished in 1973 and succeeded by the Georgia Historical Society, erected a plaque in Wright Square contextualizing the center of the square as Tomochichi's original resting place.<sup>56</sup> The plaque, however, fails to mention that the construction of Gordon's monument disturbed and destroyed Tomochichi's tomb, it instead reads,

In 1739 Tomo-chi-chi, the Chief of the Yamacraw Indians who befriended the early Georgia colonists, was buried with ceremony in the center of this Square. Gen. Oglethorpe acting as one of the pallbearers. The monument to William Washington Gordon (1796-1842) commemorates the founder and first president of Georgia's earliest railroad, the Central Railroad and Banking Company -- an enterprise which greatly promoted the economy of this State. Designed by the distinguished architects, Henry Van Brunt and Frank M. Howe, the handsome monument to Gordon symbolizes the progress and prosperity of the world by means of commerce, manufacture, agriculture, and art. It was completed in 1883.

The plaque contextualizes Gordon's monument and passingly mentions that Tomochichi had originally been buried in the center of the square. None of

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<sup>55</sup> Michael Freeman, *Savannah's Monuments: The Untold Stories* (Atglen: Schiffer Publishing, 2015) 38-41.

<sup>56</sup> Joseph B. Cumming, "Georgia Historical Commission." *New Georgia Encyclopedia*. 26 April 2013. Web. 24 October 2017. "Georgia Historical Commission."

Tomochichi's accomplishments are noted and his role as a leader within his own community and the colonization of Savannah is reduced to being a friend of Oglethorpe's. Not only does Gordon's monument erase any physical remnants of Tomochichi, the plaque, a piece of public history, erases his historical presence further from the city's narrative.

Furthermore, the plaque fails to mention who funded the creation of Tomochichi's monument, Nellie Kinzie Gordon and the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames, whose membership was primarily made up of white upper class women. Tomochichi and Nellie Gordon's historical presence are not noted on the plaque because they do not fit within the established historical narrative of white masculinity that Gordon's monument enforces. And the masculinity that radiates from Gordon's monument is hard to miss as its shape, the obelisk, is startling white against the green backdrop and very phallic. Two girls, Karen and Jody, both white and in their late teens/early twenties commented on the overt masculinity that rules over Savannah and Wright Square.

Both women were vacationing on nearby Tybee Island with their family but had come into the city for a ghost tour and to wander around. I met them in Johnson Square, the northernmost square of the city, where the tour began. The tour guide called everyone over and stood in front of the central monument within the square, another phallic and monumental obelisk, this one dedicated to the Revolutionary War hero Nathanael Greene. Karen and Jody jokingly remarked that the obelisk had been appropriately constructed in the space given that its name is Johnson Square, Johnson being a common derogatory term for penis.

As we made our way south through the city we approached Wright Square and both of them burst out laughing when they saw Gordon's monument, "Jesus!" Karen said, "there are penises all over this city!" She had made the remark jokingly but as we entered into the square to hear how Tomochichi's spirit supposedly haunts the space her attitude towards the monument changed dramatically. "It is really crazy though how many dicks there are in this city. Almost everywhere we've gone I always feel like there's at least one in a square, or on a roadside somewhere, it's like they really want you to know about the rich white dudes who built this place." When our tour guide mentioned that Tomochichi's body had been destroyed and how Nellie Gordon had created a monument for him as a replacement memorial Jody shook her head with a sigh and said, "and where's her monument?" While I was not able to conduct any structured interviews with either Karen or Jody their reactions to the obelisks within the city were evidence enough to me that a strong masculine narrative exists throughout Savannah's monuments.

Gordon's monument specifically reinforces ideals that often go hand in hand with white masculinity such as United States colonialism, imperialism, and capitalism. It disrupted the burial site and land of an indigenous man, obliterated any physical memory of him, and reinforced the idea that the only foreseeable future was one built by an ever-expanding industrial economy fueled by the railroad. The plaque contextualizes all of these concepts and more by linking the terms, "progress and prosperity" to the subjects of "commerce, manufacture, [and] agriculture." Prosperity for the masses then is only reached through progress which is classified as commerce, manufacturing, and agriculture. Gordon's monument could have been interpreted as promoting these ideals symbolically in its structure and friezes, but after the

installation of the plaque it is the only way that his monument can be contextualized. And of course there is no doubt that he did find prosperity through his version of progress, but nonetheless his prosperity was built on stolen indigenous lands, and from the bodies of enslaved and black men, women, and children. By applying the theoretical framework I outlined in chapter 1 to Wright Square it becomes startlingly clear how power is constructed and controlled by the Georgia Historical Society throughout the space.

### **Megaliths and Pillars: Wright Square as a Theoretical Field**

In terms of this case study, Wright Square is the field or an arena where battles for control and legitimate power over a space occur. The physical form of Wright Square is surrounded by Bull Street, and dominated by a centrally located pillar monument dedicated to William Washington Gordon, and a smaller megalith monument dedicated to Tomochichi. The theoretical field of the square however is dominated and controlled by the Georgia Historical Society (GHS) who maintains and contextualizes the space as a white, cis-male center of capitalistic masculinity. Because the society controls the field, they also control and produce the dominant habitus, and dominant historical narrative.

The dominant habitus is normally controlled by a small group of powerful people, powerful because they control and have access to a large amount of capital, economic, social, cultural, etc. When I asked one of my informants, Alice, a middle-aged black woman and museum docent with whom I conducted both an unstructured and structured interview with about the contesting monuments in Wright Square she told me,

There's a small number of people in the city who are very much about, 'their' history - it's a group of people who are older and who come from old family values – and don't want anything changed. They'll move people out of the city, out of their apartments and then bring in big corporations that can do whatever they want because they have money and power.

Her description perfectly defines what it means to be a member of the dominant habitus, and she believed that no change would come to the city as long as this old powerful minority was still in control. Wright Square is currently a center of heavy tourist traffic and therefore has numerous opportunities to produce capital that the GHS can then reap. If the square was physically altered the production of some of these resources would falter and the society would begin losing power over the field, Alice then was correct in saying that the dominant habitus does not want any change to happen to how the city is currently being controlled. Loss of capital means loss of the field and production of the dominant habitus which equals the depletion of power that the GHS currently holds throughout the city.

### **Of Spirits and Roses: Capital within Wright Square**

How does Wright Square produce capital for the dominant habitus? In terms of economic capital the square is rich with money spending opportunities for tourists, visitors, and locals alike. The square is used by a multitude of ghost tours, similar to the one where I met Karen and Jody that exploit the dissonance space created by Tomochichi's and Gordon's monument. They claim that the desecration of Tomochichi's tomb awakened his spirit in anger and confusion and now he wanders the square looking for a place to rest in between his original burial spot and current monument. If the GHS altered either of the monuments this story would not hold its validity and the ghost tour would most likely choose a different square to highlight

within its tour. Similar to the economic capital that the square generates for the society its cultural capital is also tied to its monuments.

Savannah is known for its green squares and the monuments that inhabit them, this is one aspect of the city that makes it unique between its competitors of Charleston and New Orleans. Wright Square in particular is special within the city for two reasons, because of the dissonant space created by the two monuments, and also because Charles, the Gullah-Geechee man makes his Palmetto Roses in the square. The space is one of a few public areas in the city where the built monumental environment is in contestation with itself, and the violent destruction of Tomochichi's tomb has transformed the space into a culturally significant piece of public history. The space is also a microcosm of Low Country history and culture represented by Gordon's monument, Tomochichi's monument, and Charles's craft. The GHS is able to utilize the cultural capital of the square by advertising it as something wholly unique within Savannah, a space that is truly representative of Low-Country history and culture.

The GHS is further able to control and produce the current dominant habitus of Wright Square through their social and symbolic capital which stems from their association with the city. The city of Savannah is largely dependent on the GHS to lead programs in heritage, historic preservation, and public history, and this dependency is the crux of the society's social capital. Because the city is dependent on them for historical interpretation the organization is closely linked with city government and officials and therefore with the powerful people who run the city government. This close relationship with city officials creates a power structure that legitimizes the GHS and their work. If the city accepts and endorses the society's

dominant habitus and established historical narrative Savannahians should in theory do the same because their government is supposed to be representative of their needs and desires. The social capital that the GHS accrues from their association with the city then transforms into symbolic capital which gives them a legitimate platform to stand on and advertise that they are the keepers and builders of Savannah's public history.

Finally, Wright Square is the field, and it is controlled by the GHS who act as and produce a dominant habitus of white masculinity throughout the field. The society's economic capital stems from the ghost tours, and local businesses that utilize the square as a space for making a profit primarily from tourists. The cultural capital generated from the square is derived from its implications within Savannah's landscape as a unique green space where Low-Country history and culture can be experienced daily. Currently, the GHS's social capital stems from their relationship with the city who is dependent on them for historic interpretation, and it is this relationship that transforms social into symbolic capital because the GHS is viewed as the keepers of public history within Savannah. Through this manipulation and control of capital the GHS is able to construct an established historical narrative within Wright Square that, even with the presence of Tomochichi's monument is one of white masculinity and United States colonialism.

### **The Benign Boulder: The Failure of Tomochichi's Monument as a Counter-Narrative**

As introduced and discussed in chapter 1, a successful counter-narrative must create a space of dissonance, be approachable and accessible, and stand on its own, apart from the already established and dominant habitus. Tomochichi's monument in

Wright Square creates a space of dissonance; I saw this through observations where people walking through the square would notice the façade of the monument and realize that it faces Gordon's monument. The plaque that was installed in the 1950s also serves as a factor in creating this dissonance but could have created more if it recognized the violence that was involved with the erection of Gordon's monument and the annihilation of Tomochichi's tomb.

The monument dedicated to the Mico of the Yamacraws is smaller and set further away from the main walking path than Gordon's monument which results in a majority of visitors to the square simply ignoring it. Throughout my time observing Wright Square I noticed that a majority of people either sat away from Tomochichi's monument or found shade in the square elsewhere because of its awkward placement. When a visitor walked up to the monument they often spent a short moment reading the plaque that graces the structure and defines it as a memorial to Tomochichi and then leave. Because the plaque that is on the façade of the monument does not add any information other than stating who it was created for, and who the funding came from, it does not contest the established narrative at all; it simply slides Tomochichi's name into the mix.

Tomochichi's monument creates a small amount of dissonance within Wright Square, but because of its size, placement, and contextualization within the square it is not a successful counter-narrative. The monument as it stands currently offers no sort of resistance to the dominant historical narrative and it does not offer a parallel history that is equal in stature but not dependent from Gordon's monument. One solution that could be easily implemented is the erection of a historical plaque contextualizing Tomochichi's life and the violence that happened to his body and



memory after he had died. Another application, which would be more expensive but also help destabilize the established historical narrative would be the implementation of a new monument to Tomochichi. The erection of a new monument that is the same size and stature of Gordon's could have the potential to directly confront the dominant narrative and increase the dissonance within the space, but this solution will probably not occur anytime soon. My interview with the Senior Historian of the Georgia Historical Society illustrates why any solution to the annihilation of Tomochichi's presence within Wright Square will not be mediated soon.

### **The Historian and The Student: Fieldwork within the Georgia Historical Society**

Dr. Stan Deaton is the Senior Historian and Dr. Elaine B. Andrews Distinguished Historian of the Georgia Historical Society where he writes, teaches, and lectures about Georgia history. He is a white middle-aged man who has a doctorate degree in history and is the host and writer of the Emmy award winning TV and radio show, *Today in Georgia History*. Dr. Deaton is also a managing editor for the Georgia Historical Quarterly, has written several historical markers, and assists the society in grant writing and fundraising for their numerous enterprises. In terms of Practice Theory, his influence within producing the dominant habitus of Wright Square is very strong and he in effect has a large amount of control of what happens to the city's monuments.

The semi-structured interview that I conducted with him began with questions about monuments, power structures and public history, but soon turned into a discussion about the removal and alteration of monuments and public space. After breaking the ice with a few simple questions I asked him about the physical landscape

of Savannah and the power that is at play when these spaces are altered or changed.

He responded to my question by saying,

There's always an argument against the removal of monuments that says taking them down erases history, but that's not the case - history is written and recorded in books - monuments that were erected in the past are expressions of the people who erected them, putting them up or taking them down has always been more about a political statement and less about history. It all comes down to the Democratic process, and if the people want those structures to be in place, or if they want them removed, it's up to them.

This answer not only recognizes the power that is inherent within the process of monumentalization, it also presents a very democratic view of the processes involved with memorialization and public history. While he stated that it was up to the citizens of a place if they want a monument constructed or taken down he quickly dismissed this democratic notion when I asked him about the removal of Confederate monuments.

I don't think the city is ready for that, for the removal of the Confederate monuments. There are other issues that the city should concern itself with, like renaming the Talmadge Memorial Bridge or talking about Eugene Talmadge, the man the bridge is named after who was one of the most racist governors of Georgia ever.

Throughout all of my interviews with tourists and locals alike never once did I hear anything about the Talmadge Memorial Bridge, if we were talking about power structures and contested histories it was always about the Confederate monuments.

Dr. Deaton's second response therefore contradicts his first where he claims that the process of monumentalization is with the people when actually, and in regards to the Confederate monuments is with the GHS. The GHS controls numerous fields throughout the city and is in charge of producing a dominant historical narrative, the control they have over their capital currently is what gives them this power of

production. If their access to certain capital was changed, by the implementation of a successful counter-narrative monument in Wright Square for instance their access to different resources might be hindered, and this is why they are uncomfortable with changing the built monumental environment of Savannah. One minor change within the field of Wright Square might restrict the GHS's access to capital which could have the potential to dethrone them from their positions of power and open the field up to new players.

The GHS then is protective of their fields and wary of people who propose change to their areas of power. Dr. Deaton summed up this point perfectly himself when he told me, "Savannah is built on its monuments, they bring beauty to our city, they are our identity, and they're the city's brand; without the monument's we don't have the same identity." Annotated this quote also means that without certain monuments the GHS will have a different identity too, and would have to relinquish their power to produce the dominant habitus and dominant historical narrative. It is important to remember that the dominant habitus and therefore established historical narrative is not static, both are always changing and being retold differently based on who is producing them.

### **The Square in Savannah: Final Thoughts About Wright Square**

When Wright Square is viewed through the lens of Practice Theory it becomes apparent that the public green space within Savannah, Georgia is in fact a field. It is a space where battles are fought for power over the establishment of a dominant habitus that will have the ability to create and produce a specific and concrete historical narrative. The GHS controls the dominant habitus and therefore the dominant historical narrative within Wright Square. The society is able to maintain their power

through the accretion of economic, cultural, social, and symbolic capital, however if the GHS loses access to one of these resources their power over the field will falter and there is a chance that they could lose the authority they have to produce habitus and history within the space.

The monument erected for William Washington Gordon is centrally located in the middle of Wright Square and broadcasts a historical narrative of white, Anglo-Saxon, Anglophone, heterosexual, cis-gender masculinity through its form and maintenance. It stands on the grave of Tomochichi Mico of the Yamacraws and inherently annihilates any physical or ephemeral memory of Tomochichi that once existed within the square. Because Tomochichi's historical narrative does not fit within the white, Anglo-Saxon, narrative perpetuated by the Gordon monument, it has been shunned.

Tomochichi's monument erected some years after Gordon's attempted to pay tribute to the memory of the Mico but fails in doing so because it does not create a space of dissonance that makes people acknowledge it. The monument does not contextualize or even discuss the life, or afterlife of Tomochichi and is diminutive in scale to Gordon's monument furthering it from public recognition. Because of its placement within the square, awkwardly off to the side, visitors rarely see it or visit the site and therefore it does not contest Gordon's monument loudly enough.

Through an alteration of Gordon or Tomochichi's monument, or the implementation of a new monument to the Mico were to happen a greater chance of dissonance might occur and people would have to acknowledge the violent history involved with the dominant narrative. This change will not happen by the hand of the GHS because any alteration to the fields they control could result in a loss of access to

capital and therefore a loss of power and control. A more confrontational and contextual monument dedicated to Tomochichi would open resources up to other players, and individual habitus within the field, rendering more opportunity for different voices to be heard and produce their own established and legitimate histories. Within the case of Wright Square any successful counter-narrative must come from outside of the organization because the GHS will not relinquish their control of capital or the dominant habitus freely. In terms of the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes, Delaware, a similar set of problems arises where an outsider who does not have the dominant habitus's interests in mind must implement the counter-narrative.

### **CHAPTER 3: SHIPWRECKS AND SAILORS: STRUCTURES OF POWER WITHIN THE FIRST TOWN IN THE FIRST STATE, LEWES, DE.**

Lewes, Delaware is the oldest European colonial town in Delaware and, appropriately advertises itself as the “First Town, in the First State.” The land and surrounding areas that the town sits on today was the home of many different indigenous people and societies who fished in the waters of Cape Henlopen, the access point to the Delaware River, and grew different crops in the sandy soil. This all changed when colonization of the area began in the late seventeenth century and the Dutch pushed Siconese, Lenni Lenape, and other people from their ancestral homes. Today Lewes is a small beach town that is quickly growing in size and prices as realtors have begun marketing the quaint town to politicians, celebrities, and Wall Street brokers. While focusing on the gentrification of the town would be a fascinating study, I instead focused on the presentation of the town’s history within the state controlled Zwaanendael Museum (fig. 6).

I worked with the Zwaanendael Museum three years ago as a docent and researcher, helping to contextualize a set of quartz crystals they have on display and how a man of African descent might have used them spiritually. As the years have gone by since that first summer I conducted research for them, the staff and director have been eager to engage with the public and tell different stories based on their artifact collections. Seeing as the museum was almost like a second home to me, and that I am friends with a majority of the staff who work there I decided it would be an intriguing case study to look at power structures within the museum and analyze them through the lens of Practice Theory.

I conducted four semi-structured interviews while in Lewes, they were all done in pairs according to the director’s wishes, and this allowed a more natural

conversation to occur, although I think some interviewee responses were affected by who they were sitting with during their interview. I also used the ethnographic method of participant observation to watch and record how docents highlighted certain historical narratives to visitors, and what histories they decided to leave out of conversation. Lastly I simply observed traffic patterns and visitors responses to different artifacts and exhibition cases.

I chose Lewes as my field-site because it is a town with a plethora of imaginaries, it is known for its public history and is currently on an economic rise because of gentrification. It is also a town that has a varied and rich history, it was founded by the Dutch as a whaling colony, was attacked numerous times by pirates, and has a rich tradition of piloting boats through the dangerous waters of Cape Henlopen, a skill taught to the colonizers by the Native Americans who lived there. The town, like Savannah, is a tourist city that attracts a wide and diverse array of visitors from the eastern seaboard, United States and a plethora of foreign nations.

While the town attracts a wide array of visitors and has a diverse history its population in 2016 was 86.5% white with the remaining 13.5% of the population identifying within non-white racial categories, this is almost the complete opposite of Savannah's population.<sup>57</sup> The Zwaanendael Museum was a natural choice for my case study because it is a free museum and thus has the potential to attract and engage with all citizens of Lewes and a diverse clientele. I also already had a good rapport with the employees of the museum and was able to see how the docents and supervisors

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<sup>57</sup> United States Census Bureau, "Lewes city, Delaware," United States Census Bureau, 2016, accessed April 25, 2018.  
<https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF>.

negotiate with the state of Delaware about what changes they would like to make within the museum.

While there is no current counter-narrative within the Zwaanendael I spent a majority of my time focused on how the museum could implement a successful alternative history. I will explore this experiment and its possible outcome later on within this chapter, but until then I will give a brief layout of the chapter and what is to come. A short retelling of the established historical narrative follows this section, then a discussion of my fieldwork, a brief discussion of the *De Braak* exhibition, which is then followed by my analysis of the museum. This chapter ends with a short conclusion to tie the theoretical concepts previously stated in the first and second chapters to Lewes. Because history is so essential to the power structures within the Zwaanendael Museum, it essential that this chapter begins with a short history of Lewes.

### **A Selective and Condensed History of Lewes, Delaware**

The town of Lewes, Delaware is considered to be the “First Town in the First State” and was first colonized by the Dutch in 1631. However, prior to Dutch colonization the land now was inhabited by indigenous people whom all belonged to and ascribed to specific and different ethnic identities. Although pre-contact history is hard to trace in Lewes and its surrounding environs because of the violence of colonialism and the dispersion and destruction of history it causes, the names of indigenous ethnic groups that strongly remain associated with Lewes are, Siconese, Nanticoke, Assateague, Pocomoke, Choptank, and Lenni Lenape. There were also about thirty or forty independent indigenous villages and communities on either side of the Delaware Bay and River at the time of European colonization. The native



people that lived in Lewes and interacted with first the Dutch and then British colonizers came to be known as the Lenni Lenape, a blanket term used to refer to most Native Americans in Delaware's Sussex County.<sup>58</sup>

While the Lenni Lenape name has been used to generalize the history and cultures of native people who lived on the western shores of the Delaware Bay, the Siconese and Nanticoke people are two ethnic groups that inhabited the coast of the Delaware and had early interactions with Europeans. Both of these groups were mobile in how they lived their lives, following the ecology of their environment and responding in unison with it. In the warmer seasons of Spring and Summer they would grow crops such as corn, beans, pumpkins, and squash whereas in the colder seasons of Fall and Winter they would move away from agricultural endeavors and turn to a tradition of hunting and gathering as well as eating food reserves too.<sup>59</sup> This mobility and diversification of food specifically within the Siconese lifestyle allowed them to inhabit coastal and interior waterways and have a wide reaching network of communication between different tribes and ethnic groups of Native Americans within the area. The Siconese people and their mobile lifestyle also put them into contact with colonizing Europeans in the early seventeenth century.

A land transaction between twelve Lenape representatives from different tribes and two Dutch brokers ceded the land from what is now known as

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<sup>58</sup> William J. Cohen, *Swanendael in New Netherland: The Early History of Delaware's Oldest Settlement at Lewes*, (Lewes: The Lewes Historical Society, 2004), 20-21.

<sup>59</sup> C. A. Weslager, *The Siconese Indians of Lewes, Delaware: A Historical Account of a "Great" Bayside Lenape Tribe*, (Lewes: The Lewes Historical Society, 1991), 17.

Cape Henlopen to Bombay Hook on June 1<sup>st</sup>, 1629 to the Dutch West India Company. This company was a newly formed Dutch coalition that served two primary goals for the merchants of the Netherlands, first to, “open avenues for trade, and, secondly promote the establishment of colonies in the Americas”<sup>60</sup> Recent scholarship concerning this land agreement has come to the conclusion that within Siconese culture private ownership of land, water and other natural resources was almost nonexistent, everyone took care of and shared the resources they had, “to the Indians this meant they were giving the Dutch the right to use the land with them.” The trade goods that they received from the Dutch were also interpreted as, “gifts tendered to them as a token of appreciation for their generosity.” The Dutch West India men, however, did not interpret the land agreement as such and believed the land to be used as their own private property, and so it was this misunderstanding that would prove to be fatal for the would be colonizers. <sup>61</sup>

Two years passed from when the Dutch first cemented their contract for land use with the Siconese people and it was not until 1631 when the Dutch ship *Walvis* sailed into Cape Henlopen carrying twenty-eight men intent on settling the already inhabited land. The group built a palisaded fort and began farming the land and tending to the animals they had brought with them, calling their settlement, *Swaanendael* or, translated into English as, *The Valley of the Swans*. This period of cultivation and expansion however soon ended sometime in the fall of 1631 or the

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<sup>60</sup> William J. Cohen, *Swanendael in New Netherland: The Early History of Delaware's Oldest Settlement at Lewes*, 33-34.

<sup>61</sup> C. A. Weslager, *The Siconese Indians of Lewes, Delaware*, 9.

spring of 1632 when news reached Captain David Pietersen de Vries a partner in the Dutch West India Co. that the Swaanendael settlement was no more.

Captain de Vries set sail for the Swaanendael colony on May 24, 1632 with fifty men and a yacht, the *Teencoortgen* in tow. They reached the remnants of the colony on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 1632 and found the burned ruins of the fort the first Dutch men had erected along with the skulls and bones of their perceived brethren. While taking inventory of the scene before them they encountered some Siconese people who they invited onboard their ship and proceeded to ask what had happened. The oft-repeated story goes that the Company men had erected a pole outside their fort with a tin coat of arms on it that was taken by an indigenous man and used to make tobacco pipes. When the Dutch complained about the theft to the Siconese leaders they killed the man responsible and gave the Dutch a “token” from his corpse, this however displeased the Dutch who turned away the token and Siconese. Insulted at the Dutch denial of their gift the Siconese attacked them a few days later, destroying the fort and killing everyone within it.<sup>62</sup> De Vries himself recorded this story in his journal and it is the only *detailed* account of what many have called the, “Swaanendael Colony Massacre.”

C.A. Weslager a History Professor Emeritus of Brandywine College of Widener University in his *The Siconese Indians of Lewes, Delaware* book questions this narrative stating, “Taking the life of one of their people for a capitol offense was not a custom among the [Lenape people and] the violent action by the Indians would

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<sup>62</sup> William J. Cohen, *Swanendael in New Netherland: The Early History of Delaware's Oldest Settlement at Lewes*, 19-23.

seem to have had a greater provocation”<sup>63</sup> It should be noted that de Vries’ account comes from his published book, *Korte Historiael, ende Journaels Aenteyckeninge, etc* or *Short Historical and Journal Notes, etc.* which he published in 1655 for the general public.

Justice Randy J. Holland, a judge within the Delaware Supreme Court, does not question de Vries’ story in his book, *Lewes: Delaware’s Destiny Determined by Lewes* but instead pairs it alongside a testimonial from Kiliaen Van Rensselaer who presented his account to the Dutch West India Company on November 25, 1633. Van Rensselaer was a partner within the Company and its Swaanendael Colony, and his account details that the leader of the colony, Gillis Housset (Hossitt) made some sort of “error” in his relationship with the Siconese which resulted in their violent attack against the Dutch men. It seems far more probable that the Dutch colonizers offended the Siconese in a greater way than rejecting their gift and that they felt an attack on the Dutch fort was the only way to remedy the situation. As for de Vries’ published journals, it is important to remember that he could have embellished or edited any number of the stories he chose to write in them to make the stories more exciting and entertaining for his audience.

While the original dispute between the Siconese and Swaanendael settlers will probably never be known the outcome had a long lasting effect on the West India Company’s desire to colonize the Cape Henlopen area. While there is evidence that the Dutch were using the Swaanendael settlement after its destruction as a “rest stop”, no space was re-settled with an intent of permanent colonialism until 1659 when the

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<sup>63</sup> <sup>63</sup> C. A. Weslager, 16.

Dutch signed another land deed with the indigenous people of the area. This new land deal established the old Swaanendael settlement as the new colony of Hoerenkill and refortified the area with garrisons and blockhouses funded by the Dutch. This period of Dutch ownership did not last that long considering that from 1664 until 1674 the area was contested land with the Dutch and the British, who called it Whorekill, laying claim to it. After 1674 the Dutch relinquished control and the town of Whorekill became a British colony.<sup>64</sup>

The town's name was soon changed to Lewes and became a prosperous area full of river pilots who knew how to navigate the dangerous waters of the Delaware Bay. The first pilots were the indigenous peoples who lived in the area, who then taught the colonizing Europeans how to, "avoid dangerous shoals and maneuver their large vessels."<sup>65</sup> While many indigenous people in seventeenth and eighteenth century Lewes lived freely alongside European colonizers and indentured servants a number were enslaved by the Dutch and British and forced to work on plantations. Because of the intimate knowledge and understanding of the topography of their home many native people were able to escape the grips of European bondage and live freely elsewhere, however this led to a forceful transformation of their original livelihood in response to the effects of colonization. The Dutch and British then turned to the

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<sup>64</sup> Randy J. Hollan, *Lewes: Delaware's Destiny Determined by Lewes*, (Dover: Delaware Heritage Press, 2013), 35-42.

<sup>65</sup> William J. Cohen, *Swanendael in New Netherland: The Early History of Delaware's Oldest Settlement at Lewes*, 128.

African Slave Trade in search for bonded labor that they could use to cultivate the land they had taken from the Siconese.<sup>66</sup>

The enslavement of black people within Delaware was largely enforced beginning in the mid-seventeenth century with the arrival of the Swedish in the northern part of the state; this is not to say that the Dutch did not enslave people of African descent in the seventeenth century. The Dutch in fact were responsible for bringing the institution to the shores of Delaware through their colonial endeavors; the practice, however, did not gain momentum until the mid-seventeenth century. While early European colonists of the Lewes area attempted to cultivate grain on their plantations they changed their cash crop to that of tobacco in the 1680's after coming under British control. Growing tobacco requires a high amount of labor and so when the Delaware colonists began cultivating it more their reliance on slavery also grew, resulting in a higher amount of enslaved people within Delaware than previously recorded.<sup>67</sup>

The three counties of Delaware, which were throughout most of the eighteenth century considered a part of Pennsylvania had by the year 1741 enacted two different laws regarding enslaved people, "An Act for the Tryal of Negroes" and "An Act for the better Regulation of Servants and Slaves within this Government." Both laws directly dealt with issues regarding "Negro" or "Mulatto" people, both enslaved and freed and discussed certain punishable crimes as well as what those punishments

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<sup>66</sup> William H. Williams, *Slavery and Freedom in Delaware, 1639-1865*, (Dover: Scholarly Resources Inc., 1996) 2-4.

<sup>67</sup> Patience Essah, *A House Divided: Slavery and Emancipation in Delaware, 1638-1865*, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1996), 27-29.

would be. While some of the laws were in relation to crimes such as murder, burglary, and rape there were also specific crimes related to the institution of slavery.

Delaware's eighteenth century law code clearly defined a difference between enslaved men who committed rape and enslaved men who committed rape against white women, in comparison there are no laws regarding rape against black women by white men. There is one law that punishes white men for "fornicating" with black or mulatto women however rape against women of color was never specifically outlawed or stated.<sup>68 69</sup>

There are also laws criminalizing the birth of a mixed race child if the mother was white and the father was black or mulatto. If the child was born the mother would be publicly whipped and charged ten pounds whereas the child would be bound in service to the county court until they reached the age of thirty-one.<sup>70</sup> Another law criminalizes the gathering of more than six enslaved people who do not all belong to the same master, if found together, "upon no lawful Business of their Master or Owners" they were to be whipped publicly.<sup>71</sup> The laws pertaining to enslaved men, women, and children within eighteenth century Delaware are somewhat different and separated from the laws referring to free black men, women, and children.

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<sup>68</sup> Benjamin Franklin, *The Earliest Printed Laws of Delaware 1704-1741*, ed. John D. Cushing (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, Inc. 1978), 73-75.

<sup>69</sup> While this might seem like a minor differentiation between words it is important to understand that words in the eighteenth century, as they do now, have power. A word can be used to give an inanimate object life and at the same time dehumanize a human being until they are thought of as an object, or a piece of property.

<sup>70</sup> Benjamin Franklin, *The Earliest Printed Laws of Delaware 1704-1741*, ed. John D. Cushing, 72.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, 76.

Free people of color within Delaware and within Delaware legal papers of the time are often referred to as, “idle and slothful, and often prove burdensome to the Neighborhood wherein they live, and are of evil Examples to slaves”<sup>72</sup> A majority of the laws created to inhibit these people’s lives comprise their relationships and interactions with enslaved people. Free people of color were not allowed to trade, barter, or house enslaved individuals unless the enslaved person had written proof and permission from their master, if none was present the enslaved person and free person could both face often-times violent consequences.<sup>73</sup>

The economic benefits that accompanied slavery, a growth in labor produced goods and raw materials saw Lewes’s standard of living rise throughout the eighteenth century. By the time of the 1790 U.S. census Sussex county had an enslaved population of 4,025 people while the county’s “All Other Free Persons” which disregarded white men and women was counted at 690 people. Both of these populations added together equal 4,715 people and when compared with the overall population of the county as 20,488 people that means people of color within Sussex County in 1790 were about 23 percent of the whole population. The enslaved population of Sussex County at that time when compared to the county whole weighs in at nineteen percent of the whole county.<sup>74</sup> The town grew and played small roles within both the American Revolutionary War and the War of 1812, and it is between

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<sup>72</sup> Ibid., 144.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 140-146.

<sup>74</sup> Patience Essah, *A House Divided: Slavery and Emancipation in Delaware, 1638-1865* 7.



these two wars that a ship sank off the coast in 1798 supposedly carrying a fortune in Spanish treasure.

### **The Life of a King's Ship: The Sinking of the *H.M.S. De Braak***

The *De Braak* had been traded back and forth between the French and Dutch before making its final voyage as a British ship. Originally it was a single masted cutter but after British capture was outfitted with a second mast, re-rigged as a brig, and outfitted with twelve carronade canons, these additions to the ship's design would prove fatal for it and a majority of her crew. The *De Braak* set out on its final journey as part of a convoy destined for the Virginia capes, but at some point during the voyage it was separated from the other ships, captured the Spanish ship, *Don Francisco Xavier* and entered the Delaware Bay on May 25<sup>th</sup>.

A sudden northwest squall tipped the ship over and sunk it, dragging its captain and a majority of its crew into the dark Delaware waters. Three of the survivors claimed they were Spaniards from the *Don Francisco Xavier* and that the *De Braak* had been carrying treasure from the Spanish ship. A local pilot from Lewes, Gilbert McCracken recorded their story of treasure and then in 1805 created a map of where the ship had sunk. This map entered the hands of treasure hunter Harry Harrington who raised enough money and petitioned the state of Delaware to salvage the ship in the 1980's.

Harrington formed his own salvaging corporation called Sub-Sal Inc. in order to begin the process of looting the site, however he ran into legal trouble when Worldwide Inc., another salvaging company, accused him of breaking a joint legal agreement. According to Worldwide Inc. they helped Sub-Sal locate the shipwreck in return for a share of treasure, however after the wreck was found Harrington

supposedly broke their original deal and Sub-Sal Inc. in order to reap a majority of the benefits. While the court found the accusations invalid Sub-Sal did later run into trouble with state archaeologists who accused the corporation's salvagers of needlessly endangering the excavation of the ship.

The state of Delaware received about twenty percent of the recovered artifacts of the *De Braak* some of these artifacts include a ketchup bottle, coat buttons, dining plates, quartz crystals, and the actual remaining hull of the ship. The salvagers raised a seventy foot section of the hull on August 11, 1986 but were accused by state archaeologists of endangering the ship remains by precariously dangling them over the ocean and going against the already planned hull recovery method. Dozens of artifacts fell back into the ocean because the salvagers did not follow the appropriate plan, but of the artifacts recovered by the state archaeologists, a small fraction of them are on display within the Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes.

### **The Zwaanendael Museum, or Dutch Colonization Immortalized**

Built in 1931 in order to commemorate the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the original Dutch Swaanendael colony, and European presence in Lewes, the Zwaanendael Museum is a large Dutch Renaissance structure. Architect E. William Martin constructed and drafted the museum; he based its design on the town hall of Hoorn in the Netherlands, where a majority of the first Swaanendael colonizers came from. Crowning the peak of the structure's roof stands a statue of David Pietersen de Vries, the man who wrote and published his account about the Swaanendael colony and its destruction.

The first floor of the museum exhibits artifacts from the *H.M.S. De Braak*, it chronicles the history of the ship and what life was like for a white sailor of British

descent in the eighteenth century. A short video summarizes eighteenth century seafaring life, touching upon the important topic of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and its influence within the Atlantic world during the eighteenth century. This and three quartz crystals found onboard the ship during excavation, and a mannequin of a black man dressed as if he were a sailor onboard the *De Braak* are the only facets of Black History discussed by the museum.

The opportunities that the *De Braak* exhibition has to construct a counter-narrative and create a space of dissonance are present, the movie, mannequin, and crystals can form the basis for such a narrative. The docents of the museum have a hard time implementing counter-narratives however because of the dominant habitus and the established historical narrative produced by the state of Delaware. The state's established history within the Zwaanendael highlights the narratives of white, Anglo-Saxon, Anglophone, heterosexual cis-gender men and ignores or erases any other history. This white male narrative is writ large throughout the museum and one aspect of its historical narrative that I noticed when I began conducting fieldwork.

### **An Anglophile in Delaware: Field Work within the Zwaanendael Museum**

Altogether I spent about a month and a half conducting fieldwork at the Zwaanendael, spending time in the museum in May, July, August and through to September. My work began by observing visitors and tracking how they moved throughout the museum, and what exhibitions, cases, and artifacts they engaged with the most. There is only one way in and out of the museum through the front door, and after this initial step inside the visitor is greeted to the main floor and exhibition space of the museum by a docent who sits at the front desk. This first-floor exhibition space

is entirely devoted to the *De Braak* and hosts a number of artifacts pulled from its hull as well as some recreation artifacts, and a scale model of the ship.

The museum offers visitors two different tours, the first is a guided experience lead by one of their docents, while the second is a self-guided tour.<sup>75</sup> The docent lead tour is unscripted meaning that it is up to the docent about what histories they tell the guest and what histories they do not. While the docent's information is unscripted they do have a binder that highlights specific speaking points that can and should be talked about according to state protocol, these include the original Swaanendael settlement, early relations with the Lenni Lenape, the "Swaanendael Massacre," DeVries' journey to the colony, and the subsequent battles that occurred throughout the town's history for control of the land. Nowhere within this guidebook is black or indigenous history mentioned; its main narrative is told from a white-Anglo colonial perspective, and so the docent's tours are normally focused on white male histories.

When I brought this up in one of my interviews with a docent she mentioned that the Dutch and indigenous histories of Lewes are intertwined, and then proceeded to tell me about the Native American societies that existed in Lewes before colonization. On the matter of Black History she was less knowledgeable but still well versed enough in it that she talked to me about it for a good while, but when I asked her why those histories are not some of the first ones docents talk about she answered, "the museum was built to resemble Dutch architecture and so I believe that the first history that we tell should be about the Dutch because of how tied their story is to the

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<sup>75</sup> The museum also offers guests a plethora of free informative brochures about local history that allows the visitor to fill in any historical gaps not touched upon by the building's exhibitions.

building itself,” While this is an understandable response, it is also a response to history that has come from the production of a white dominant habitus that wishes to reinforce a cis-male European narrative. Because of the museum’s odd design as a replica of a Dutch Renaissance building one possible counter-narrative could be the inversion of this plainly colonial landscape by highlighting how the museum’s form is so closely tied with the violence of colonialism. The museum’s form is symbolically violent towards its surroundings because it deftly reinforces and values the Dutch colonial narrative more than an indigenous one. Laura, another employee and docent at the museum told me that the structure was built as a very deliberate monument to the European colonization of the area.

In regards to why such a monument would be constructed she said, “Delaware, and really every state on the east coast feels very compelled about stamping sites and towns with this early European ‘history stamp.’ Its an obsession with our European origin story because I guess it makes us seem older and more important.” “What do you mean when you say having an old European origin story makes us more important?” I asked her to which she responded, “It’s this idea, this very subconscious idea that Europe equals civilization, and that the closer we are to Europe, the closer we are to whiteness, and therefore the more civilized we are.” These subconscious ideals that link Europe and civilization together are telling signs of what the dominant habitus’ goals are in constructing an established historical narrative. By focusing on Europe and white history it is easier to connect the two to this idea of “civilization” because no other contesting narratives are being represented or disseminated, and therefore no other alternative histories are seen as legitimate.

When other histories are delegitimized by the dominant habitus it is easier to align oneself with the established history and stay within the comfortable confines of what is perceived to be normal and legitimate. William, a white docent in his mid-twenties claims that he is an Anglophile or, “a lover of all things British,” and is very much invested in the established historical narrative. His oblivious entitlement and acceptance of the recognized history became utterly apparent to me as soon as we began talking about the museum as a monument to Dutch colonization and history within the area.

The Dutch history we supposedly represent here is just a way to draw people in, it's really a stretch – and - we really don't even talk about the Dutch history inside. This building really should have been a 1660's British colonial building instead of what it is, and by having it be Dutch we're really erasing the British history from Lewes.

The topic of “British erasure” fueled our conversation and I felt it was the right time to talk about black and indigenous erasure within Lewes's history and the Zwaanendael's covering of these histories. I asked William if he thought the museum did a good job of portraying a multi-narrative history, he shook his head with a no and said, “We struggle with any narrative in this museum that is not European, but we really don't have those artifacts to tell the other stories, to tell the African American or Native American stories, they don't exist at least in relation to us within the state archive which is where we get our artifacts from.” I was quietly shocked at how lazy this answer was.

William as an Anglophile has been wholeheartedly accepted by the dominant habitus and is on a small scale a producer of dominant habitus and established history. While his gender, sexuality, economic status and race have made it easier for him to access specific capital and negotiate with the dominant habitus, he has also been

enculturated by the dominant historical narrative. His disregard for other histories comes from this enculturation with the established history. A main proponent of museum studies is the idea that artifacts are microcosms of different stories, that one artifact can tell one hundred different narratives is a widely accepted belief within museums. Just because the museum does not have artifacts that are directly related to black and indigenous histories does not mean that it can't tell those stories, exactly the opposite is true; the absence of these artifacts can raise many different questions regarding what histories are valued and which ones are not.

William's answer was produced by the dominant habitus to maintain its access to capital and implement an established history that is deemed "easier" to investigate than other, erased or covered histories. The state of Delaware as a producer of the Zwaanendael's established history has made other histories inaccessible through their production of a white history. While William is unnerved by the supposed erasure of British history within the museum he is still comfortable with how the museum promotes certain histories over others. Laura too is comfortable within her role as a producer of the established history and this is in part because she and William see themselves within the history they talk about. They can identify with a plethora of historical actors within the state's production of history and therefore see no reason for change to the interpretation of the *De Braak's* artifacts. The interviews I conducted with William, Laura, and other docents of the Zwaanendael allowed me to further analyze the museum through the lens of Practice Theory.

### **The Museum as the Field: An Analysis Utilizing Practice Theory**

The Zwaanendael Museum is the field, which is a space where battles for legitimacy and the power to construct establishing historical narratives take place. The

current producer of the dominant habitus who controls the museum is the state of Delaware, and in regards to the *De Braak* exhibition state officials enforce a dominant historical narrative that is about white-Anglo-Saxon eighteenth century sailors. Docents of the museum must navigate the bureaucracy of the state if they want to change the artifacts on display, the interpretation of said artifacts, or what kind of historical narrative the museum portrays. The museum's staff only consists of a museum director, a lead historical site interpreter and four-five site docents/interpreters. Any curators, exhibition designers, and conservators are located either in the state capital of Dover, or throughout Delaware within different state offices.

The state's decision to separate the Zwaanendael Museum's officials in this way limits the employees who work within the museum to actually change or alter its interpretations. Employees and interpreters of the museum can use their available capital to somewhat alter the field and bring in new perspectives on history, although no employees were doing this at the time of my interviews with them. The state is also responsible for funding and promoting any projects or exhibitions the museum wishes to make, meaning any kind of funding is left in the hands of state officials who are not present day after day within the Zwaanendael. Given the lack of power the Zwaanendael employees have over what they exhibit and interpret, and the state's monopoly over this information and economic funding it is apparent why docents find it more comfortable not to challenge the dominant habitus through alternative histories and counter-narratives.

Because the state of Delaware has an enormous amount of control over the field that is the Zwaanendael Museum, the avenues for easily accessing capital to



anyone they deem illegitimate or not visible have been cut-off. This means that any counter-narrative implementation must come from someone outside of the dominant habitus. While no official or concrete counter-narrative exists within the museum presently, I am experimenting in the creation of one which will be implemented into the museum when it is finished.

### **An Ode to Neptune: An Experiment in Creating a Counter-Narrative**

I have created a brochure that offers a counter-narrative to hopefully create a space of dissonance, be easily accessible to the public, and stand without the established dominant narrative. The brochure is four paneled and seeks to disseminate general information about what life might have been like for an eighteenth century cis-gender male sailor of African descent. It is in contestation with the *De Braak* exhibition which contextualizes the shipwreck as a piece of white history even when the racial make-up of the crew was not recorded and is therefore unknown (Fig. 7).

The brochure seeks to take visitors by the hand and guide them through a brief history of experiences that black sailors in the eighteenth century Atlantic world might have had. It begins with pre-colonial sailing traditions on the coast of West-Africa, then moves to the Middle Passage, Runaway and Enslaved Sailors, and finally free sailors. Each of these panels is meant to serve as a historical vignette for what life might have looked like for sailors. For instance, the pre-colonial panel focuses on black sailors who navigated the rivers, streams, and coasts around their countries on the West-Coast of Africa before colonial encounters. This panel is meant to illustrate that eighteenth century sailors have a sailing tradition in their ancestral societies, and that nautical navigation was not something they were given by Europeans.

Both the Middle Passage and Runaway/Enslaved Sailors panels are image heavy and include illustrations that speak directly to sailors and how they interacted with the institution of slavery. The Runaway panel also has a poem by Phillis Wheatley, a prominent American eighteenth century black female poet, that she titled, “An Ode to Neptune.” This poem is used within the brochure as an example of how one black woman in the eighteenth century viewed and perceived the ocean. The poem’s inclusion is meant to broaden the scope of discussion that the brochure will hopefully start.

The Free Sailors panel discusses free black sailors in the eighteenth century in textual form. The reason why this and the Pre-Colonial panels are text heavy is because they are aspects of Black History that the general public is not very aware of. The Free Sailors panel is also meant to widen the scope and complicate the idea of what it meant to be a free sailor in the eighteenth century as many black men became whalers, merchants, pirates, some even captains, but also slavers. There is historical evidence that suggests some Black American sailors took on active roles within the enslavement of African peoples throughout the eighteenth century, what does this mean in terms of the black enslavers identity and motives?

The brochure also includes a small handout that has guiding and reflective questions that visitors will be able to ponder about while they interact with the exhibition. The handout asks a varied amount of questions that cover a large scope of topics such as, “Why do you think the museum has chosen to interpret these artifacts through a white racial and historical lens?” but also, “How do you think a black sailor in the eighteenth century who either heard or directly experienced the Middle Passage would react to becoming a sailor?” These questions are meant to contest the

established historical narrative that the dominant habitus of the state of Delaware has instituted within the museum, but are also meant to humanize the experience of an eighteenth century black sailor. Because of the organization of the brochure it will act differently as a counter-narrative than Tomochichi's monument and for this reason will be more successful.

### **Of Rocks and Paper: Tomochichi's Monument and the Zwaanendael Brochure**

Tomochichi's monument in Wright Square fails as a counter-narrative because it does not create a confrontational space of dissonance, complies and is only contextualized within the dominant historical narrative, and is in no way physically equal to the Gordon monument. The Zwaanendael brochure is successful as a counter-narrative because it is easily transportable throughout the museum exhibition and can travel with guests, it is a true alternative history that can stand on its own two feet, and directly contests the established interpretation of artifacts through a set of guiding questions. The Zwaanendael brochure is also easy to reproduce and can be changed and altered by the museum at any time whereas the Tomochichi monument would require a great deal of money to alter, or change its shape, façade, and placement.

While the brochure is not physically equal to the state's set of textual interpretation it utilizes similar mediums. Through the implementation of images, written text, and direct quotes from primary sources the brochure is in essence a miniature textual panel from the museum that can be folded up and taken home. Because the brochure can be taken out of the museum the dissonant space it creates can also be removed from the museum and applied to other different forms of public history. The mobility of the brochure and its guiding questions are its greatest assets

because even outside of the Zwaanendael they present a cohesive counter-narrative and challenge the dominant historical narrative.

Because of this reason the brochure is meant to change, and as a counter-narrative it is meant to make people think about history and power structures within public historical narratives. It is meant to evolve over time and altered by the different people who interact with it. As I come to the concluding section of this chapter, it is important to reiterate that this research should be discussed, disseminated, and challenged so as to make room for broader discussions of public history and representation.

### **The Museum in Lewes: Final Thoughts on the Zwaanendael Museum**

The Zwaanendael Museum in Lewes, Delaware is a field that is controlled by the dominant habitus that is the state of Delaware. The established historical narrative that is produced by the state of Delaware and implemented within the museum is one of a white, Anglo-Saxon, Anglophone cis-gender male sailor within the eighteenth century. This interpretation by the state of the *De Braak* artifacts erases and annihilates a black eighteenth century seafaring history that is just as expansive, interesting, and important as the already interpreted white history. Through my access to capital and acceptance within the dominant habitus I have been able to create an experimental counter-narrative brochure.

The goal of the brochure is to disseminate information about black eighteenth century Atlantic World sailors and to contest the already established interpretation of the material historical record of the *H.M.S. De Braak*. The brochure presents general historical information that stands on its own outside of the accepted historical narrative, is easily accessible as a brochure, and asks specific questions meant to

directly oppose the dominant habitus's historical interpretations. The brochure will be implemented by the museum beginning in June, a month after this thesis will be done and submitted to the University therefore making this project an important ongoing experiment in what creates a successful counter-narrative. The concluding chapter that follows this one will tie loose conceptual ends, connect my theoretical analysis of Savannah and Lewes reassert my main argument that through the erasure of a person or people's public history their access to present day resources, political, social, and economic, are limited.

## **CHAPTER 4: THE OPENING AT THE CLOSE: A CONCLUSION AND CALL TO ARMS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF COUNTER-NARRATIVES**

### **A Tapestry of History: Weaving Together What Has Been Stated Thus Far**

Just like the humans that write, record, and romanticize it, history is cluttered and chaotic and public history is similarly tumultuous because it must interact with the public on a first name basis. Public history is meant to engage, explain, and educate the public about specific historical narratives, and has been used by many different dominant habitus as a vessel for disseminating their established historical narratives. The infrastructures of public history within Wright Square in Savannah, Georgia, the square's monuments, and within Lewes, Delaware's Zwaanendael Museum, the museum's exhibitions, are controlled by a dominant habitus that values white male history higher than any other. The dominant habitus that controls these institutions, the Georgia Historical Society and the state of Delaware specifically produce, and frame their dominant historical narrative as one pertaining to a white, Anglo-Saxon, Anglophone, heterosexual, cis-gender male. This dominant narrative is congruent with the established historical record often told by other United States institutions.

The dominant habitus' focus on white masculinity is damaging to other histories because it excludes people who are not white men from history and renders their voices invisible. Because of how Bourdieu and Lau envision the habitus, a person's past experiences and history are needed to inform their current decisions and help them navigate society. If a person's history is not allowed to or is simply not represented publicly then they have no access to it and have no historical base or information on how to navigate within society. The erasure of a group's history also renders them invisible to present day communities for a person with no history cannot exist, and therefore cannot access the important resources they need. Furthermore, if a

person or people's history is not seen as legitimate enough to be represented publicly, then their historical memory has no garden to lay its roots in.

The installation of counter-narratives and alternative histories that are meant to contest established and public representations of history are meant to broaden the historical narrative and diversify the garden of public memory. The counter-narrative in Savannah failed because it was not of an equal stature to the established narrative and therefore was not taken as an equal addition to the historical record. It also did not create a space of dissonance and was tucked away from the crowds and flow of traffic, and was not a history that stood on its own. Whiteness in Wright Square is everywhere and the counter-narrative monument to Tomochichi Mico of the Yamacraws is infested with it from the plaque on its façade that highlights the white women who funded its building to the plaque that contextualizes Tomochichi's tomb in relation to British colonization. I should add, however, that the plaque on the monument's façade does disrupt the masculinity within the square by calling attention to the important contributions Nellie Kinzie Gordon and the Georgia Society of the Colonial Dames of America made in having the monument constructed.

While the Zwaanendael Museum does not have a counter-narrative as of yet, I am currently creating one for them that will contest the established history and interpretation of their artifacts. The brochure counter-narrative I am constructing for the Zwaanendael is an ongoing experiment and a project that I intend to explore further past the completion of this thesis. While the brochure is small the questions it poses will hopefully create a space of dissonance that makes visitors to the museum question the state's interpretative stance on the artifacts of the *H.M.S. De Braak*. The brochure also presents a standalone narrative of African sailors in the eighteenth

century engaging with pre-colonial watercrafts through to African-American free sailors. My hope is that the brochure will spark discussions of the state's dominant narrative and why culturally America tends to value white male histories over others. Throughout the creation of the brochure I interrogated myself and confronted the different roles I played within the Zwaanendael Museum and assessed what kind of capital I had access to.

### **A Soldier within the Field: My Role and Position within Bourdieu's Field**

My access to social and symbolic capital stems from the fact that I am a white, Anglophone, cis-gender male who is associated with the University of Delaware and therefore seen as legitimate by the state. Because I fit into the dominant habitus' historical narrative I am able to easily maneuver and access both the University of Delaware's and the state's resources. In terms of my economic capital I come from a middle-class family and have been able to use my father's G.I. Bill to pay for collegiate tuition. This has alleviated stress for me in terms of loans and therefore I have had been able to devote more time to my research than others. And I am able to access cultural capital because the research of counter-narratives is starting to be seen as "in vogue" and therefore culturally desirable by academics and lay people alike.

As a white cis-gender male I believe it is only right to recognize that the privilege I have from my skin color, gender, and economic upbringing have allowed me to conduct and write this thesis. I am still growing and learning each and every day what it means to exist in a world that will give me a higher amount of access to capital simply because of how I look. While conducting this research I was confronted by the fact that I was able to simply dip in and out of Savannah and Lewes without having to fully engage with the symbolic violence found within each place. I also confronted



myself continuously over the fact that the histories I explored are not necessarily my own and wrestled with whether I should be exploring other peoples' histories or not.

When this project first started it was called, "Set in Stone: Hidden Histories within Savannah, Georgia" and I promoted myself as an archaeologist of these hidden histories, excavating and interpreting them for the public. Exploring other peoples' histories is essential for understanding and appreciating people but taking credit for their histories by interpreting them is not. The further along this project progressed, the more I grappled with my feelings of ownership over histories that had been silenced, and I became uneasy with the symbolic violence I was committing against these uncovered histories. In terms of history about enslaved African-Americans and black people, it is especially violent for a white man to claim ownership over these narratives and is frighteningly similar to the actual institution of slavery. "Because I *gave* this history a voice, it now belongs to me," is a very paternalistic way to think about histories, especially when all narratives have their own voices.

While it is essential that these people's narratives be uncovered, it is also essential that their own voices are heard. How do you let a history tell its own story? And use its own voice in the process? These questions are hard to answer and have no real solutions.<sup>76</sup> At this moment in time the best suggestion I have for these questions is to combine fields of research, and take the written historical record, the oral record, archaeological record, and material culture record and leave them in a room together. All of these records together have the ability to tell a multi-faceted and rounded story, one that has the ability to physically, and conceptually portray a specific narrative

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<sup>76</sup> Also seeing as I am a studying anthropologist I have no place to make such solutions; instead, I have the ability to make suggestions.

from many different vantage points. These different vantage points also create new avenues for people to access historical narratives, and do not make academics or museum officials the only people allowed to engage with history. History itself should be discussed, accessible, and contested so that erasure and symbolic violence cannot fester themselves within the halls of museums or the bodies of monuments.

### **The Consequences of Non-Confrontation**

Public history is important, it is everywhere, and is influential in all aspects of life from politics to economics, to the construction of one's identity. History is not static and given how diverse the world is and how each person has their own perspective there are dozens of ways to tell a single story. Diversity in public history is essential to its continuation because history is so closely tied to the present. Public history operates in the same way as the habitus for without history we can't negotiate and understand the present, and if we can't navigate the present then we don't have a history. The power that is imbued in seeing oneself represented in history is astounding, it serves as a comfort to know that two hundred, or three hundred years ago there were people going through similar struggles and triumphs as us today.

Monuments, memorials, and museums must be confronted and contested if they choose to omit or erase someone else's history. The consequences for not challenging these forms of public history can and will result in further erasure of historical community's, people's history, and their present day voices. A person with no history has little to no power in our present day. Many might think that the questioning of pieces of public history is unnecessary, that monuments and artifacts pose no risk to people's voices and lives today, this is wrong.

With regards to monuments specifically Dr. Stan Deaton from GHS told me that, “There’s always an argument against the removal of monuments that says taking them down erases history, but that’s not the case - history is written and recorded in books,” and this is very true. Monuments are not historical facts, instead they are a biased and pointed portrayal of history that was created by people with specific motivations. By removing monuments belonging to the dominant historical narrative the power structures that the memorials were founded on are, in a very minute way, deconstructed, and any history associated with them can be accessed through another medium. Therefore the monument is simply a physical interpretation of history and the lives of those it once immortalized will live on in books, films, music, this is not quite the same experience for alternative histories.

A majority of alternative histories have not been recorded in books, films, or songs because they have been hidden and silenced. Sometimes a counter-narrative monument or memorial is the only way to connect with a community’s alternative history, and these are the pieces of public history that must remain and should be cared for as lovingly as confederate, white supremacist, and white monuments are cared for today in the United States. White history has its monuments, its films, and its books, often times alternative histories only have one of these forms of history, or none of them at all and thus kept hidden. Thus, the only harm that will come in dismantling white historical, confederate, colonial, imperialist, etc. monuments will be in the deconstruction of white supremacy.

Creating monuments and forms of public history that focus on alternative histories will not only give the communities associated with those histories an audible voice, but will also inspire future scholars to explore those historical narratives.

Counter-narratives are important because they allows previously muted voices a chance to be heard, but also because they can lead to further scholarly exploration into areas of overlooked portions of history. Diversifying United Statian public history to reflect the United Statian's diverse population will lead to an equalizing of representation and a constant conversation about how historical narratives are appreciated, hidden, and disseminated to the public.

### **A View of Things to Come: The Future of Counter-Narratives**

The concept that the erasure of a person or people's public history limits their access to present day resources, political, social, and economic seems like a very reasonable statement the longer one thinks about it. It is in no way a groundbreaking theory, but it is an important one that should shape the way historians, anthropologists, and storytellers think about and produce histories. The past is powerful and affects the present every day, and even though the physical structures of the past might be taken down or altered, their conceptual frames still linger and shape society.

The research and theoretical framework laid out here will hopefully start discussions that have an end goal of equality. The equality to tell different stories, the equality to feel a connection with other people both from the past and present, and the equality to freely express and engage with your ancestors unashamedly and without fear. Equality is a concept of interdisciplinary and intersectional proportions, it cannot be achieved simply through historical or ethnographic research, it must be found through a plethora of different avenues, music, science, mathematics, and even economics. This thesis is not the beginning conversation of equal representation within public history, and it should not be the end either, it is merely a piece in the

puzzle that will bring us closer to conceptualizing, discussing, and reaching equality for all.

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## Appendix A

### FIGURES

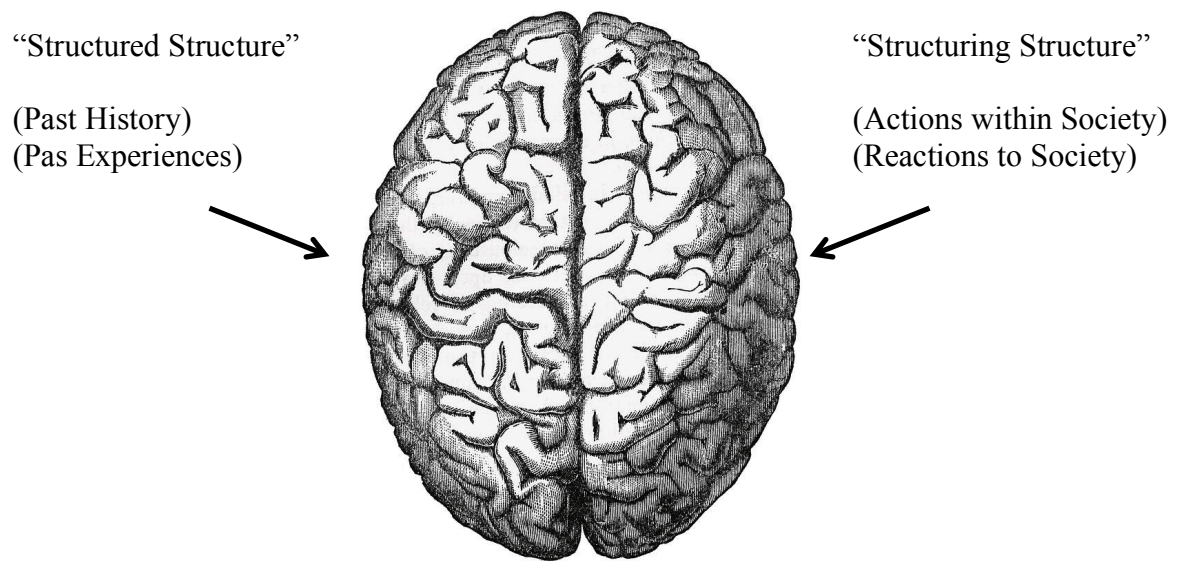


Figure 1 Craig McCausland, *Human Brain Isolated on White Engraved Illustration*, circa 1880, engraving, PDF. Fine Art America.  
< <https://fineartamerica.com/featured/human-brain-isolated-on-white-engraved-illustration-circa-1880-craig-mccausland.html> > (edits are those Francis Mahon)





Figure 3 Henry Van Brunt and Frank M. Howe, *William Washington Gordon Monument*. 1883, granite and limestone. Reproduced by Francis Mahon, July, 2017.





Figure 4      Nellie Kinzie Gordon, Georgia Society of Colonial Dames, and Stone Mountain Company, *Tomochichi Monument*. 1899, granite. Reproduced by Francis Mahon, July 2017.

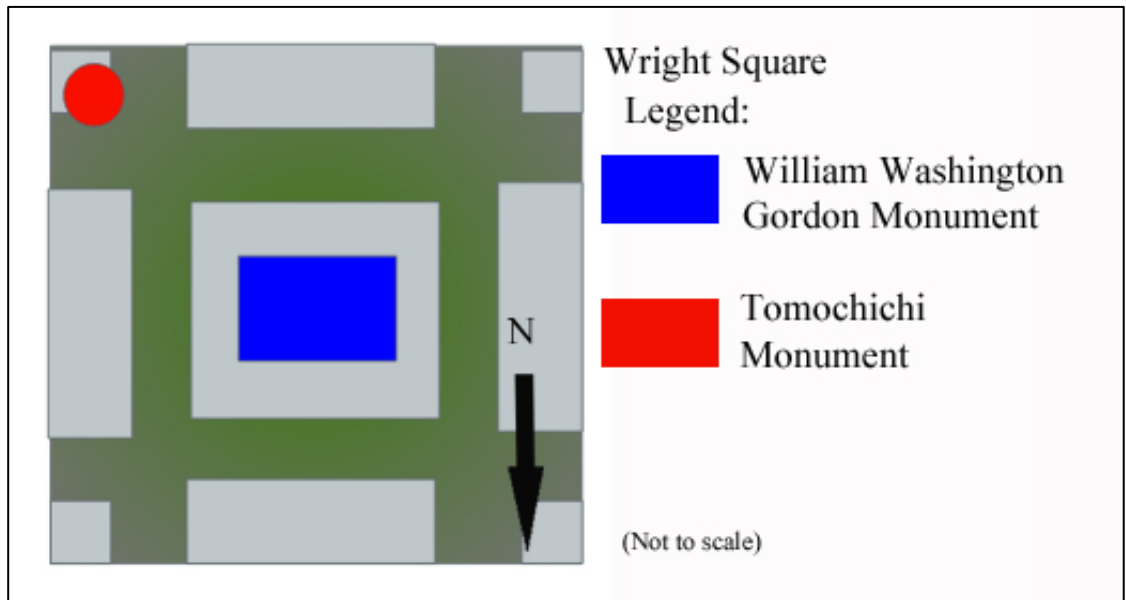
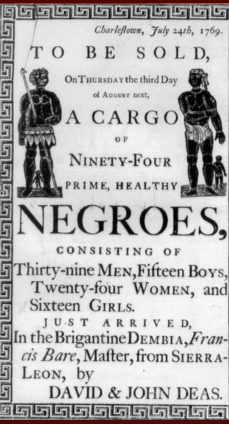



Figure 5 Francis Mahon, *Wright Square Map*. 2018, JPEG.



Figure 6 E. William Martin, *Zwaanendael Museum*, 1931. Reproduced from State of Delaware, [https://history.delaware.gov/museums/zm/zm\\_history.shtml](https://history.delaware.gov/museums/zm/zm_history.shtml) (accessed May 18, 2018).



Guiding Questions	The Middle Passage	Further Information:	The Zwaanendael Museum
<p>1) How diverse do you think the 18th century Atlantic world was?</p> <p>2) How has the state of Delaware chosen to interpret the artifacts from the DeBraak?</p> <p>3) What seafaring histories are missing from this exhibition?</p> <p>4) What roles did women play onboard ships?</p> <p>5) How did the ocean shape people's lives in the 18th century?</p> <p>6) What would life on the sea mean to an enslaved person? Or a free person of color?</p> <p>7) How do you think a man of African descent who had experienced or heard about the Middle Passage would feel about becoming a sailor?</p>		<p>Bibliography:</p> <p>Cover Image: Image 1</p>	 <p>Seafarers of Salt</p> <p>Black Sailors, the Sea, and Their Lives</p>




West-African Sailors	Enslaved & Runaway Sailors	Free Sailors
 <p>Pre-colonial sailing traditions varied throughout the West coast of Africa. Some communities and cultures used canoes to navigate the ocean currents near the shore, while others turned their vessels inward and navigated rivers, streams, and lagoons. These sailors used the water as a highway, a source of navigation, food, resources, and trade.</p> <p>The ocean and its freshwater counterparts also held spiritual meaning for some people. In Benin, the Kongo, and Dahomey the ocean was viewed as an entrance to the afterlife and home of the ancestors.</p> 	<p>To be SOLD, for no Fault, Likely NEGRO MAN, about 22 years of age, is a very good Cook, and used to the sea. He speaks French fluently, and is a feber, honest fellow. The above have belongs to the Master of a Ship, who is now find of carrying him to Europe. Enquire of the Printer.</p> <p>I.</p> <p>WHILE raging tempests shake the shore, While Æolus' thunders round us roar, And sweep impetuous o'er the plain Be still, O tyrant of the main; Nor let thy brow contracted frowns betray, While my Susannah skims the wat'ry way.</p> <p>II.</p> <p>The Pow'r propitious hears the lay, The blue-ey'd daughters of the sea With sweeter cadence glide along, And Thames responsive joins the song Pleas'd with their notes Sol sheds benign his ray, And double radiance decks the face of day.</p> <p>Ode to Neptune Phillis Wheatley Poems on Various Subjects, (1773)</p> <p>RUN-away, about 2 Weeks since, from Sir William Johnson, of Fort Johnson, a Negro Man named Jay, 4 Feet 3 Inches high, of a yellow Cast, speaks good English, and is a very active Fellow. He was bought at public sale from Capt. Thomas Spotswood, near in May 1759, and 'tis supposed is now in New-York, and will endeavour to make his Escape by Sea. Whoever takes up and secures the said Fellow, so that his Master may have him again, shall receive Three Pound Reward, and all reasonable Charges, in New-York, paid by</p> <p>WILLIAM KELLY.</p>	 <p>Black sailors in the eighteenth century Atlantic world used ships as ways to maintain their freedom and to reclaim their identity. Some men entered the general merchant service, while others joined the navies of Britain and America. Still other Black sailors at this time became whalers, privateers, and even pirates, one man named Abraham Samuels was a pirate quartermaster onboard the ship, <i>John and Rebecca</i>.</p> <p>Cpt. Paul Cuffee was a sea captain helped resettle, but also colonize Sierra Leone in an early "Back-to-Africa" campaign. Other sailors of African descent also found employ onboard slave ships that enslaved and transported men, women, and children from Africa to the Caribbean and North America.</p>

Figure 7 Francis Mahon, *Zwaanendael Brochure*, PDF, 2018.