To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a dissertation written by Melissa Denise Hargrove entitled "Reinventing the Plantation: Gated Communities as Spatial Segregation in the Gullah Sea Islands." I have examined the final paper copy of this dissertation for form and content and recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, with a major in Anthropology.

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REINVENTING THE PLANTATION:
GATED COMMUNITIES AS SPATIAL SEGREGATION IN THE GULLAH SEA ISLANDS

A Dissertation

Presented for the

Doctor of Philosophy Degree

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MELISSA DENISE HARGROVE

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DEDICATION

To my sweet husband, Rex, and my baby girls, Passley and Katie.
You will never know what your love and support mean to me. Thank
you so much for standing by me through this process. Your
encouragement has, more times than not, been the only
thing that kept me moving forward. I love you with all
my heart. No words could touch how blessed
I feel to be married to the best man alive,
and the sweetest, most beautiful, most
intelligent, compassionate young souls
as my daughters, to remind me
everyday that life is so sweet.

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ABSTRACT

Gated communities throughout the Sea Islands of South Carolina, Georgia, and northern Florida represent a postcolonial attempt at reinventing the plantation of the white imagination. Upon these contested landscapes, incompatible, historically transmitted epistemologies result in an ongoing power struggle between money and memory. Gullah/Geechee communities, descended from enslaved West and Central Africans whose exploited labor made world capitalism a social reality, inherited these islands at Emancipation and became self sufficient, isolated communities. A century later, the development of Sea Pines on Hilton Head Island, South Carolina would begin a trend of encroachment that has steadily gained momentum into the twenty first century. Within this cultural and political economy of racism, the Gullah have experienced overwhelming exploitation of their sociocultural institutions, resulting in land loss, economic and political marginalization, and forced acculturation that violate their universal human rights. This ongoing struggle against coloniality connects the Gullah to other diasporic communities encountering varying predicaments of white racism, couched in rhetorics of difference. Their response embodies an African spirit of resistance and survival that has brought them thus far.

The spatial segregation of the Sea Islands has been accompanied by a romanticized reinterpretation of the "Old South" and the Lowcountry plantation. For the Gullah, this practice has translated into a reinvention of history that denies the collective memories intimately linking them to these recently appropriated spaces. This type of power-mediated use of space for purposes of exclusion reinforces a system of white privilege, thereby mapping racialized social inequalities onto the physical and cultural landscape.

This critical ethnographic analysis is a contribution to African Diaspora studies, framed within a reflexive political economy. Theoretically and methodologically, the findings of this research seek to contribute to five specific areas of anthropological inquiry: the anthropology of racism and race making as sites of cultural and political-economic struggle; the anthropology of space and place; critical interrogations of power, particularly as power relates to the production of knowledge and inventions of history; whiteness as the contemporary manifestation of coloniality; and experimental methods of ethnographic inquiry.

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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

"Darlin, thirty years ago you could drive from Jacksonville, Florida to Georgetown, South Carolina on Highway 17, and NEVER see a white face. We owned it all Baby!!"

MaVynee Betch, affectionately known as the Beach Lady and the unofficial mayor of American Beach, sat gloriously orating her history to me, on her sun porch overlooking the only beach in the area accessible to blacks during segregation. Her grandfather, Abraham Lincoln Lewis, is heralded as the person whose business insight and commitment to community empowerment made it possible, even today, for blacks with moderate income to own property in a beach community along the coast of Fernandina, Florida.

The abandoned buildings and deserted home-places along Highway 17 (to which the Beach Lady is referring to) signify the devastating, wholesale disenfranchisement of the communities of color that once inhabited these "remembered" landscapes of ethnic pride and solidarity. These coastal areas, along with the adjacent Sea Islands of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, represent an important historic moment in our nation's development— or at least they once did. It was in these areas that many emancipated African Americans were given plots of land and "a good working mule"[1] to start them on their way toward self-sufficient citizenship. Those who had to buy property, due to Confederate land claims and "good ole' boy" handshake deals, worked as tenant farmers and pooled their resources. As a general rule, the newly freed chose plots of land where they had been enslaved (Rose 1964), thereby transitioning from "owned" to "owner" virtually overnight. Between 1865 and the 1950s, these communities survived as self-sufficient rural farmers supplementing their diets with what they obtained from the waterways. Those on the Sea Islands, cut off from the mainland by tidal creeks and river inlets, did the same. These descendants of enslaved Africans are known today as the Gullahs and the Geechees,[2] and this is just a momentary glimpse into the postcolonial predicament of their contemporary lives.

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[1] Elders of St. Helena Island have asked me: "why would somebody give you forty acres and no animal to work it?" This is how the Gullah conceptualize the origins of the saying "forty acres and a mule."

[2] Gullah refers to the language, and is often used to identify the entire cultural group, whereas Geechee is used only in reference to Gullah people in Georgia.

Situating the Predicament: "Reinventing the Plantation"

Within the Sea Islands, residents are facing simultaneous dilemmas that intersect around issues of culture, power, and history. In the past fifty years, these groups have experienced overwhelming encroachment and economic restructuring in the form of gated communities and private resort areas (economically fueled by the tourism market), resulting in land loss, political and economic marginalization, attempts at forced cultural assimilation, and spatial segregation. This reinvestment in race-based physical disconnection illuminates the ostentatious affluence of those who reside on the other side of the guard gate, while the very names of these communities further underscore their role as status symbols and instruments of social separation. A large percentage of the gated communities are named after pre-existing colonial plantations, landscapes where Gullah ancestors endured the commodification of their "production and reproduction" (Mintz 1974) under the oppressive system of chattel slavery. Equally important, however, are those exclusive residential localities bearing names of never-existent plantations, and therefore, "imagined" spaces of white domination. Such "ideoscapes" (Appadurai 2002) form the building blocks of a cultural and political economy of racism (Harrison 1995) reinforced by reconstructed notions of history. I refer to this phenomenon as "the reinvention of the plantation."

Situating The Research

Primarily, this dissertation seeks to explore the social, cultural, political, and economic impacts of the growing phenomenon of private residential apartheid across contested landscapes of differentially defined notions of space, place and history. A secondary objective centers on the construction of an alternative history capable of adequately positioning the Gullah/Geechee within the larger African Diaspora. The final objective, which is foundational to the situation under investigation, is to expose current reconfigurations of racism, couched in more subtle rhetorics of difference (Harrison 1995, 2002) that perpetuate racial and spatial inequality. My particular anthropological perspective is grounded within a critical, yet reflexive, political economy, loosely guided by valuable epistemological contributions from feminist, Marxist, cultural studies, and emancipatory approaches to qualitative research. Ultimately, this analysis is part of a larger commitment to reinventing and decolonizing anthropology (Hymes 1969; Harrison 1991).

My efforts to make anthropological sense of the complex social fields I have observed, documented, analyzed and participated in, lead me to suggest that the seemingly irreconcilable difference between Gullah/Geechee communities and gated newcomers on issues of space and place represents the collision of two wholly contradictory ethnic epistemologies. Gullah/Geechees inherited a West African epistemology, evident still today in many areas of their cultural lives. Gated residents inherited an epistemology of European "coloniality."[3] On many levels, therefore, these two groups have trouble making sense of one another, which in itself does not pose a problem. The conflict arises when that one epistemology seeks to dominate and force itself upon the other, and that is precisely what is occurring in these communities.

Gullah Culture as a Research Area

Gullah culture has been an "object" of academic study for more than a century. Anthropologists,[4] from a variety of subdisciplines, have produced a body of literature dominated by research on Gullah language, verbal arts, and folklore (Bascom 1941; Carawan 1989; Jones-Jackson 1987; Montgomery 1994; Mufwene 1993; Parsons 1923; Turner 1949). Scholarly attention has also been devoted to African cultural retentions in Gullah culture (see Moore 1980; Thompson 1990; Twining & Baird 1991), spirituality and religion (Creel 1988; Guthrie 1996), Gullah arts and crafts (Vlach 1978), and health and healing (Mitchell 1978). There are various notable archaeological contributions (see Brown 1994; Ferguson 1992; Singleton 1985) as well as studies within physical anthropology documenting the low percentage of genetic admixture among the Gullah (Pollitzer 1999), and tracing their genetic ancestry directly to present-day populations in West Africa (Rogers 2000). Several monographs have been published that are also of interest to Gullah scholars, particularly a comparative analysis[5] of Gullah Sea Islands and the Caribbean (Montgomery 1994), Creole contributions to American culture and life (see Holloway 1990), and a recent collection edited by a native scholar/activist (Goodwine 1998).

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[3] Within the context of the present discussion, "coloniality" is best understood as the historical connections between "race," modernity, and capitalism-- as combined with chattel slavery and its legacies (see Quijano 1992; Santiago-Valles 2003).

[4] Some of the references listed here may not be anthropological, yet they are important contributions from alternative social science disciplines. This brief summary does not survey all previous work. It is presented here as an overview.

[5] The *Crucible of Carolina* (1994) is an edited volume that offers linguistics and cultural analysis.

Qualitative Research Background

Beginning in 1997 and continuing to present, I have spend a portion of the summer months conducting ethnographic fieldwork within various Sea Island communities of South Carolina. My initial research focused on the effects of tourism and economic modernization on the Gullah sweetgrass basket industry; however, during the third field season, I began to notice the strategic ways in which Gullah representations was being commodified by the tourism industry of coastal South Carolina, particularly in connection to sweetgrass basket imagery as an iconic representation of Lowcountry culture and history. I became increasingly involved with grassroots organizations struggling for power over cultural representation and identity construction as surviving Gullah communities approaching the twenty first century. These experiences led to my masters thesis "Marketing Gullah: Identity, Cultural Politics, and Tourism" (Hargrove 2000).

Shortly thereafter, I revisited my field notes in an effort to uncover unexcavated themes of importance concerning the ongoing struggles for Gullah cultural conservation. Overwhelmingly, even while in the field conducting research on sweetgrass basketry, my notes made constant mention of the increasingly devastating impact of the real estate phenomenon of "private, gated areas." In initial interviews during the summer of 2001 and 2002, I obtained community feedback regarding emic issues of importance. Responses confirmed that this was a crucial issue to be investigated anthropologically. In June of 2003 I moved my family to St. Helena Island, South Carolina to begin a full year of ethnographic research, funded by a Wenner-Gren dissertation grant.

From the beginning, my research interests have grown out of interactions with community members engaged in everyday forms of resistance against common sense notions of culture and history that incarcerate Gullah/Geechees within a misunderstood and denigrated past. My affiliation with The Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition, established by Marquetta "Queen Quet"[6] Goodwine in 1997 as an umbrella grassroots organization, has served an interlocutory role between my anthropological project and the larger research community. Due to past negotiations between

[6] The designation "Queen Quet" represents her role as a community leader and political liaison between outsiders and the larger cultural community. The process by which she became Queen Quet will be adequately discussed in subsequent chapters. Suffice it to say that the designation is based on a West African model of the Asante Queen Mothers, women of great personal strength and ability whose personal qualities contributed to their effectiveness in public life (see Aidoo 1981).

scholars and Sea Island residents, establishing rapport would have proven extremely difficult, if not impossible, without the construction of a working relationship among myself, Goodwine, and the rapidly emerging network of Sea Island activists.

Ethnographic methods of data collection included a variety of strategies,[7] such as the standard participant observation, formal and informal interviews, community mapping, photography, and archival research. I also wanted to hear from as many people as possible in a short amount of time. Therefore, with assistance from local organizations in various communities, I embarked on focus group interviews with Gullah/Geechees to elicit feedback concerning the cultural, social, and economic impacts of the rapid increase of enclave communities. In an effort to promote understanding on both sides of the debate, as well as to interrogate the structures of power, I also engaged in focus group interviews and informal conversations with residents of gated areas. I entered into an ongoing dialogue with various stakeholders across the broader landscape to discuss issues of history, racism, social and structural inequality, belongingness, gated community development, the proliferation of the term "plantation," and the ways in which these concepts are utilized within the mainstream common sense version of Sea Island history. I also developed a multi-sited ethnographic research design that, when carried out, helped to reveal the parallel conflicts across varied power-mediated landscapes along the Lowcountry coast.

Mapping the Landscape of Terminology

Disciplinary terms, otherwise referred to as jargon, can often become an obstacle to sharing knowledge; therefore I feel it necessary to briefly define and contextualize several important and highly useful concepts that will appear throughout the dissertation.

"Culture" as Knowledge

> The concept of "culture" I find most suitable recognizes that humans employ specific bodies of **knowledge** "to interpret and act on the world" (Barth 1995:66). Fredrik Barth's suggestion, re-imagining culture as knowledge, expands the term to include feelings, attitudes, and embodied skills that are **known** through experience. Therefore, culture is not immediately exotic and deterministic, nor is it always a shared framework within a particular group. Operating under this new elaboration, ethnographers are compelled to analyze the various ways people make sense of their world (which Barth terms "cosmology") in more respectful ways (Barth 2002).

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[7] Ethnographic methods are detailed in Chapter 2, and Appendix A.

Postcolonial Predicament

The situation created by the gating phenomenon in the Sea Islands represents a "postcolonial predicament" because the dynamics of inequality mimic those established during colonial slavery. The term, therefore, is used to symbolize the racialized power imbalance within Gullah/Geechee communities (similar to colonial times but occurring after) resulting in the social, political, and economic marginalization of those descended from the historical victims of colonialism in these same areas. The "postcolonial" is particularly apropos, also, within the context of trying to illustrate contemporary ideological attempts at "reinventing the plantation."

Gullah/Geechee

The term "Gullah/Geechee" refers to the entire cultural group recognized as inhabiting (or formerly inhabiting) the South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Sea Islands, including the populations on the mainland up to thirty miles inland. "Gullah" can also be used to denote the same, and it is the defining term used to describe the language. "Geechee" makes specific reference to Gullah people in Georgia, although all such people do not identify as Geechee. In some communities it is viewed as a derogatory term. I should also make clear that decades of cultural shame have altered the way Sea Islanders and their mainland kin self-identify, therefore all persons who are categorized as "Gullah" do not identify as such.

Mapping the Landscape of Change

The Gullah/Geechee represent an important piece within the African Diaspora puzzle. They symbolize a cultural hybrid created out of the various West and Central African groups enslaved and brought to the Sea Islands in bondage to harvest rice, cotton and indigo. The romantic port cities of Charleston and Savannah were built on their backs, often utilizing their indigenous knowledge. Their true place in history, however, remains buried under the historic cobblestone streets and in the walls of the antebellum castles utilized in the historic fabrications of "southern charm" often responsible for initially luring many present gated residents to the Lowcountry area. During their enslavement, diverse groups created a common language and common cultural ground on which to build a future. From Emancipation to the 1950s, physical isolation nurtured a cultural continuity and an autonomous identity. But the 1950s brought bridges, and the bridges brought change in the form of "destructionment"[8] land loss, and cultural endangerment. Beginning with Sea Pines Plantation on Hilton Head Island in the 1950s, planned unit developments (PUDs) gobbled up island property at an alarming rate, displacing Gullah

[8] "Destructionment" is a term devised by activist Marquetta "Queen Quet" Goodwine to accurately define how Gullahs view the process outsiders see as "development."

residents from long held ancestral lands. Unethical lawyers and developers joined forces to locate and exploit loop-holes in the Gullah ownership practice of "heirs' property," which has effectively stripped these communities of the most crucial element of their cultural survival--LAND. The land acquired by newly emancipated slaves and subsequently passed down through the generations has continually been a foundational part of their collective identity. The resources provided by the land, and the shared social memory of their cultural relationship with the land, serves to remind these communities of the hardships they have survived. However, the rapid changes in recent decades have many Gullahs concerned: "Gullah is about land. If you can't hold onto the land, you can't hold on to the culture" (Jabari Moketsi, *Coastal Heritage* 2000).

At the present time, as many Sea Islanders eke out a living in service to gated residents and tourism businesses as minimum wage laborers (Faulkenberry et al. 2000), gated communities are a symbol of the "underlying tensions" (Blakely and Snyder 1999) and economic disjuncture within American life. For Gullah/Geechees, reinvented landscapes take on particular importance, as so many of the physical spaces once bound by collective cultural memories no longer exist in a recognizable state. The landscape, as they have experienced it and therefore have come to "know", cannot be reconciled with the newly created environment, within which the violent truths of plantation slavery are hidden behind façades. This increasingly popular practice of mapping social inequality onto space (Moore 1997) represents the transformation of traditional spaces into representations of capital accumulation. The accompanying romanticized versions of history that accompany these private paradises is symptomatic of a broader national disorder I refer to as "forced amnesia."

Contesting Power: Grassroots Mobilization in the Gullah/Geechee Nation[9]

In response, grassroots organizations are joining forces; challenging racist notions of historical production that repress and deny a collective past that intimately connects the Gullah and their ancestors to these recently appropriated spaces. These struggles, as I have watched them unfold, have resulted in simultaneous internal and external battles concerning identity and cultural politics. Gullah/Geechees seek validation concerning their claim of belongingness to the Sea

[9] The defined "Gullah/Geechee" area designated by the National Park Service in the Special Resource Study was creatively appropriated by the community to establish an emic, but also publicly legitimate, distinct geographic area recognized in association with their culture and historical presence.

Islands, firmly established nearly a full century before the reinventions began. In spite of public outcry, local level authorities have been slow to respond to the escalating dilemmas facing Sea Islanders, leading local activists to explore alternative solutions for assistance. In a bold effort aimed at international recognition, the Gullah have joined forces with the International Human Rights Association for American Minorities (IHRAAM), an international NGO in consultative status with the United Nations. In 1999, Marquetta L. Goodwine, now known as "Queen Quet," Chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation, traveled to Geneva, Switzerland to attend the United Nations' 55th Session of the Commission on Human Rights. Queen Quet's moving petition for international assistance outlined the collective concerns facing the broader Gullah community within a human rights framework, thereby sparking some much needed attention back on the home front.

In 2000, just after the Lowcountry presses had cooled from Goodwine's visit to the U.N., South Carolina Congressman, James E. Clyburn, initiated the study of Lowcountry Gullah/Geechee Culture. The Gullah Culture Special Resource Study, as it was officially titled, was facilitated by the National Park Service "to analyze the multi-faceted components of this living, breathing culture" in an effort toward "outlining a set of management options for consideration by Congress."[10] After years of research that culminated in a range of suggestions from the National Park Service, Congressman Clyburn designed and introduced the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Preservation Act, calling for $20 million dollars over a period of 10 years aimed at addressing the plethora of issues impacting Gullah cultural survival. The bill, now officially recorded as H.R. 694, passed the U.S. House in March 2005.

Positioning the Self: Reflexivity as a Tool for Change

Critical ethnography, as a qualitative methodology, requires that we talk about our own identities, as well as questioning why we choose to interrogate what we do in chosen ways (Fine et al. 2003). Ironically, I was born in Lowcountry Georgia, to a matrilineal line of racist mountain folk, and a patrilineal line from a German immigrant farmer who was prejudiced against people of color yet they were the only people who worked with and for him in rural Georgia. As an Appalachian woman deeply committed to destabilizing my own whiteness, which came ready made with a heavy dose of unfounded racial prejudice, I recognize that knowledge about a particular situation is

[10] http://.www.nps.gov.sero/ggsrs/gg_process.htm#overview

a critical tool in dismantling it. Perhaps since it was anthropology that flipped that liberating switch in my consciousness, it may do the same for someone else. It certainly cannot hurt to try.

Therefore, I interrogate the current predicament facing Sea Island communities as a postcolonial attempt at reinventing the plantation because I perceive it to be just that. According to the ethics of emancipatory politics, to which I subscribe, I have a responsibility to work toward the reduction or elimination of human exploitation, inequality and oppression (Giddens 1991). Therefore, I position myself **for** measures that will empower Gullah/Geechees in their ultimate struggle for cultural respect and **against** a continuation of their political disenfranchisement and economic marginalization under the current system of structural racism. In these situations of blatant and unacknowledged human inequality, my work will either serve the interests of the oppressors, or the interest of the oppressed (Gordon 1991). It is my sincerest wish that this piece of work will be of extensive use to Gullah/Geechee people in their current struggle for self-determination, and their lifelong struggle for true equality.

Charting a Course

Chapter two, *Methodology: Making Peace with the Ethnographic Past*, situates this critical project upon the broader landscape of qualitative research. Paying particular attention to the current dilemmas regarding ethnography as a legitimate tool of inquiry, I demonstrate the lessons I have learned from postmodern,[11] poststructural,[12] and feminist critiques regarding issues of authority, voice, textual representations, and reflexivity -- along with some valuable lessons I have learned on my own. In discussing the various aspects of my research agenda and implementation, I evaluate successful and failed attempts at cultivating research partnerships, while clearly outlining the essential steps to making peace with the ethnographic past, which is essential in building a more useful ethnographic future. Finally, I situate the role of reflexivity within my work as well as my emotions, politics, and views of the self in relation to whiteness; all crucial elements for establishing my own situated knowledge (Haraway 1991) and strategic location (Said 1978).

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[11] Postmodern critiques called attention to the crisis of representation within anthropology, and the exclusionary nature of Western grand narratives.

[12] Poststructural critiques, concerning the role of language and textuality in constructions of history and reality, have heightened my awareness of each in the write up of this research.

Within chapter three, *Multiple Realities of Space and Place*, I develop a framework for making sense of the multiple and highly diverse ways humans interpret their physical landscape. In a discussion of the anthropology of space and place, I reveal how cultural experience links groups to the landscape, thereby creating places out of space. Oral accounts from Gullah residents serve to demonstrate this point. By adding theoretical insights from cultural studies and cultural geography approaches to space and place, I construct a framework for discussing the contending epistemologies of native Sea Islanders and gated newcomers.

Chapter four is devoted to *Spacemaking: Mapping Power and Privilege*, as the practice of mapping power and privilege onto the physical landscape. Within this discussion, I situate the national statistics of the gating phenomenon and give a brief typology of gated communities. This trend, which represents white America's separation mentality, is discussed as a response to increased contact with racialized ethnic "others." As I analyze spacemaking within the Sea Islands, it becomes clear that landscapes are often differentially defined by groups who associate them with a particular version of history (be it real or invented). I employ Hilton Head Island as a case study to illustrate spacemaking, offering explanations of exclusion from those who have experienced it. In discussing the conflicts gates create between insiders and outsiders, I focus on the issue of Gullah/Geechee cemeteries presently gated off on "private property." This escalating problem is yet another illustration of what happens when competing cosmologies are forced to interact within a power mediated social field.

Chapter five, *Landscape Multivocality: Expanding the Discussion "Upward,"* acknowledges the multiple voices that speak within, about, and for Sea Island settings. This "landscape multivocality" offers a space for gated residents to discuss their ideas about the gates and their belongingness to the Lowcountry, while openly addressing their collective disagreement that gates represent exclusion. In focus group narratives, gated residents within Beaufort County discuss who they are and where they are from, while paying particular attention to documenting the ways they "give back" to the community. Within their elaborately structured habitus[13] of neo-racism, they have constructed a subtle logic of meritocracy that reinforces white privilege. This chapter captures several of the obstacles to "studying up,"(Nader 1969) yet these encounters situate whiteness as a

[13] Habitus is a system that functions to produce schemes for generating and perceiving practices within a "self-correcting" and "adaptable" process (see Bourdieu 1993).

powerful source of influence within the political and economic structures of the area. Ultimately, the addition of gated voices further clarifies the lack of fit between Gullah and gated perceptions of space and place, while exposing everyday manifestations of white privilege.

Chapter six, *The Complex Quandary of Land*, chronicles the historical relationship Gullah/Geechees have created with their ancestral lands, and the heartbreaking realities of black land loss both in the Sea Islands and throughout the American South. Land ownership has played a foundational role in the creation of Gullah identity; therefore, the losses are more than simply property. Land loss ultimately represents a disconnection between a group of people and an integral component of their culture. Chapter six defines and discusses the major structural mechanisms of disinvestments through which the gating phenomenon is normalized.

Chapter seven, *The Origins and Longevity of a Political Economy of Racism*, maps the social realities of Gullah/Geechees in the urban areas of Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina within the social field of whiteness. Current structures of inequality are presented as creative, adaptive strategies used to perpetuate the racial inequality born of colonialism and plantation slavery. This chapter also devotes significant attention to constructing an accurate portrayal of black history between Emancipation and the 1960s, in an effort to fill the void left by a national collective amnesia with respect to white responses to black struggles for human equality. Chapter seven concludes with an in-depth look at the reinvention of the urban landscapes of the aforementioned sister cities, and the historical and contemporary role heritage tourism has played in sanitizing a history of cruelty and racist disempowerment.

Chapter eight, *Reinventing the "Old South" Plantation in the "New South,"* positions the realities of plantation slavery against the reinvented, romanticized version of the Antebellum South. In problematizing history as a power-mediated construct, the reinvention of the "New South" also comes into sharper focus. Through documentary analysis of tourism and real estate literature, it becomes clear that the idea of "plantation" has been transformed into a space of luxury and wonderment. These images saturate the public sphere of the Lowcountry, but it is the use of plantation in naming gated communities that makes the solid connection between past and present attempts at reinforcing white supremacy. This chapter offers an in-depth look into the ways Gullah/Geechees struggle to negotiate such insensitivity, yet clearly expressing their collective offense to being forced to encounter the term on a daily basis. The simultaneous historical

reinvention of slavery, the South, and the plantation suggests that either Southern whites have unresolved issues about exposing the connection, or real estate developers have discovered the secret clubs of active hate groups from the North[14] who delight in white fantasies of the most devastating human tragedy in the history of the United States.

Chapter nine, *Responding to the Postcolonial Predicament*, presents an overview of Gullah responses to the predicaments discussed throughout the dissertation. When they grew tired of waiting for local support and assistance, Gullah community leaders stepped out of the local context and directly into the international human rights arena. In the years between 2000 and 2005, the Gullah have enstooled a leader, written a constitution, developed and designed a flag, and assembled a body of representatives. These steps are part of a larger dual agenda: the struggle for recognition as a linguistic minority and the plea for rights of self-determination. Following in the footsteps of their ancestors, the Gullah/Geechee are carrying on a legacy of resistance that delivered them through the middle passage, plantation slavery, Jim Crow segregation, and the Civil Rights Movement. The current battle is extremely important, as communities throughout the African Diaspora also struggle to retain any semblance of their collective cultural self in the ongoing encounter with whiteness.

Chapter 10 offers concluding remarks on methodological successes and failures, unexpected lessons of reflexivity both in and out of the field, and the desired contributions of this personal and anthropological project. I also present the major conclusions of my research question in this final chapter of nearly a decade of my life. I conclude with a few final thoughts on my future with the Gullah, and my future with anthropology.

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[14] The Southern Poverty Law Center recently released the findings of the 2003 Intelligence Project, which identified active hate groups state by state. Statistics from the North suggest neo-Nazi skinhead groups are on the rise.

CHAPTER 2
METHODOLOGY: MAKING PEACE WITH THE ETHNOGRAPHIC PAST

Introduction

This ethnographic analysis represents a critical approach to qualitative research, sufficiently influenced by epistemological[1] contributions from Marxist, feminist, poststructuralist and cultural studies[2] paradigms. The academic record concerning the Gullah represents a local manifestation of the global "crisis of representation" (Moore 1999) within anthropology. Therefore, my ongoing research is an attempt at making peace with the ethnographic past, as a minimum requirement for the production of shared knowledge concerning the persistent effects of gated community development in the Sea Islands. This chapter will chronicle the methods I have employed thus far, and the resulting progress toward a more equitable ethnographic exchange capable of illustrating contemporary subaltern tactics of Gullah resistance against the "infrastructures of oppression"[3] (Lincoln and Guba 2003: 273) securing the racialized power imbalance.

There is abundant historical evidence of anthropology's role as a tool of colonialism and domination (Asad 2002; Behar 2003; Metcalf 2000; Moore 1999; Said 1978; Smith 1999; Vincent 2002). The ethnographic past is littered with exemplars of racist, sexist, ethnocentric and androcentric accounts of the exotic other, so often used to bolster academic credentials while casting informants as destined for cultural extinction. Much of what has come to be accepted as knowledge about cultural others has been an academic production of sorts, as ethnographic texts written by arrogant intellectuals drown out emic realities and versions of truth based on lived experience (Lemert 1999). Anthropologists have built a discipline and countless careers on the maintenance of otherness through a discourse of "subjects" and/ or "informants," which has created (what many suggest is) a true crisis[4] regarding the legitimacy of this methodological

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[1] Epistemology is defined as the study of knowledge. When used in qualitative research, it is defined as how you know what you know.

[2] Cultural studies is a complex, interdisciplinary field that merges critical theory, feminism, and poststructuralism (Denzin and Lincoln 2003).

[3] This term is used to refer to the multiple, yet namable specific foundations responsible for defining what is accepted as "truth" and "knowledge." The present use refers to the many structures responsible for maintaining racialized social inequality.

[4] The ethnographic "crisis" being discussed here should not be taken as the only such crisis within the discipline of anthropology. As early as 1969, anthropologists proposed "reinventing" the discipline for reasons that were obvious even then (see Reinventing Anthropology, Edited by Dell Hymes 1969).

cornerstone of our discipline (see Mintz 2000; Moore 1999).

Topping the list of problems regarding qualitative research we find voice, textual representation and reflexivity (Denzin and Lincoln 2003; Lincoln and Guba 2003). Anthropological responses have come in a variety of forms, often creating further conflict and debate, yet solutions appear to intersect at distinct points of recognition. Among practitioners of ethnographic research, there appears to be a consensus of acknowledgment regarding: (1) the need to acknowledge and ethically navigate the inherent power dynamics of the research process (Jordan 1991; Fine et al. 2003); (2) the reality that there is no single, obtainable version of "truth" (Buck 2001; Ferguson 1999; Lincoln and Guba 2003; Ong 1999), only multiple interpretations often more appropriately conceptualized as "situated knowledges" (Haraway 1991); (3) the importance of collaboration with those whose knowledge shapes our anthropological sensibilities in an effort to decenter previous constructions of the "other" (see Cantwell et al. 2000; Christians 2003; Harrison 1991; Murdock 1997; Nader 2002; Schensul 1987; Willis 2000); and (4) the importance of revealing ourselves as vulnerable and impacted by our involvement in qualitative research (Behar 1996), resulting in a clear articulation of our own positionality and "strategic location" (Said 1978) within the ethnographic text (Willis 2000; Fine et al. 2003). This is particularly important in terms of whiteness (see Hurtado and Stewart 1997). Taken to logical conclusions, some further suggest we have the distinct responsibility of empowering our research communities (Bourgois 1990; Harrison 1991; Hurtado and Stewart 1997) utilizing accessible language (Appadurai 2002; MacClancy 2002; Gordon 1991), engaging in shared knowledge production (Christians 2003; Harrison 1991; Willis 2000), and being actively involved in challenging public policies that perpetuate human inequality and suffering (Barth 2000; Denzin and Lincoln 2003). In a real sense, we are being drawn into an arena where our politics can become integrated into our professional praxis (i.e. "emancipatory politics" Giddens 1991; "anthropology of liberation" Gordon 1991; "decolonized anthropology" Harrison 1991; to name only a few available models). If anthropology is truly about taking people seriously, as MacClancy suggests (2002), these are the essential elements of challenging the ethnographic past and building a solid foundation for the future.

Designing a Methodological Roadmap

The collective and constant remodeling of qualitative methods currently calls for solutions to the paramount issues that jeopardize ethnographic legitimacy: voice, textual representation, and reflexivity. The following are constructive guidelines I have struggled to honor as methodological parameters throughout the various phases of my dissertation research: (1) a thorough interrogation of the terms traditionally used to categorize our sources of knowledge (i.e. informant and subject) which recognizes the power of language in identity formation; (2) a commitment to shared knowledge production which identifies organic cultural knowledges as an authorizing force in our research; (3) a reformulation of ethnographic methodology capable of incorporating multiple subjectivities and agendas into a mutually beneficial research design; and (4) a commitment to more collaborative relationships at all stages of the process. I will speak to each issue briefly here, followed by subsequent illustrations of practical application.

The Language of Othering

The ethnographic landscape has long been a site for subject making and *othering*, resulting in a heavy, albeit necessary, burden for those of us committed to negotiating an egalitarian approach to qualitative research. The first step toward reconciling past mistakes is a thorough interrogation of the terms used to identify our sources of cultural knowledge. I have always been uncomfortable with the term "informant"- it reminds me of a brightly-lit legal interrogation. More importantly, it provides no real indication of the relationships we have with whom we work (Metcalf 2000) Exploring definitions of informant was a task I undertook many years ago--and it proved to be a worthwhile exercise. Informant is defined as "one who supplies information."[5] Is that a true representation of those who usher us into their cultural world? For me, it was never even close. If I want information, such as how to get to a particular place, I can ask just about anyone. But, if I want knowledge pertaining to a specific cultural issue or lived experience, I must ask someone who has that. If I want to understand the legacy of sweetgrass basketry in the Sea Islands, for example, I could not just approach anyone and expect them to know--therefore the term informant denies persons their cultural capital, as well as ignores their role as cultural knowledge bearers. "Subject" also proves problematic. When used to refer to an

[5] The following definitions were obtained at http://www.dictionary.com

individual as the object of scientific study, the term is ultimately depersonalizing, thus denying the wide-ranging possibilities of human agency.

Relationships in the field can take many forms. Human interaction, even beyond ethical constraints, produces various levels of connection and rapport between the anthropologist and the participant on the other end. Each is, in the initial stages of relations, gauging the intent and positionality of the other, and assessing the risks and rewards of investing in subsequent exchanges. In some instances, the research question plays a definite role, as it did within this critical ethnography. The lines have been drawn between the native[6] islanders and newcomer residents residing in (segre) gated areas, therefore my inquiry alone was enough to turn many potential participants away. There were a few, however, who had something important to say on the subject, and their participation helped to somewhat balance the varied perspectives. Due to the limited nature of this ethnographic relationship, confined within our exchanges during the focus group, I often refer to these persons as research participants.

In other instances, anthropologists make connections that go beyond an interview, and toward a type of collaboration. This term is overused, yet the act of working together on an issue of mutual interest carves out a niche that cannot be neatly categorized as either friendships or partnerships. The most obvious relationship of this nature exists between myself and Marquetta L. "Queen Quet" Goodwine, who has served as my interlocutor[7] in the field for eight years. Our relationship clearly illustrates the power struggles often encountered within the ethnographic realm (see also Straight 2002); yet over the years I, like so many others (see Ulysse 2002), have come to realize the ways in which my academic arrogance played an integral role in the conflict. Relinquishing the position of the all-knowing scientist made it possible to position emic and etic knowledge side by side, thereby cultivated a working relationship that embodies the art of collaboration. Therefore, I appropriately situate Queen Quet as an important interlocutor, but also as my primary consultant.[8] There are other Gullah activists whom I designate as consultants;

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[6] I openly acknowledge that "native" is a term that has been identified within anthropology as ethnocentric, however, the Sea Island Gullah often refer to themselves using this term. The annual cultural festival celebrating the heritage of the Gullah on Hilton Head Island, for example, is referred to as the *Native Islander Celebration*.

[7] Interlocutor serves as an excellent term to describe Queen Quet's role because she has worked diligently over the years to promote a healthy dialogue between the broader community and me.

[8] Over the years I have referred to Queen Quet as my colleague in the field, yet I have been advised that this is an inappropriate term. At the request of established members of my committee, I have replaced this term with consultant throughout this dissertation, to conform to acceptable terminology sanctioned by the discipline.

however, my extensive history with Queen Quet is the product of much deeper roots.

It is necessary that I preface the following with a clear acknowledgment regarding the feasibility, as well as the possibility, of establishing collaborative research relationships. Not all research sites are amenable to collaboration, and not all ethnographic relationships have the potential to evolve into such. In light of the struggles for research funding, as well as the amount of time one must invest to build the foundation for such relationships, I recognize that all anthropologists are not able, and some are not interested, in developing relationships of this nature. I feel fortunate to have had the opportunities afforded by my ongoing research in several key areas of the Sea Islands, and look forward to the fruits of this collective labor.

Shared Knowledge Production

As those often referred to as 'informants' are cast in a more equitable and collaborative light, new priorities for field projects must naturally follow (see Nader 2002). Primarily, we must commit ourselves to a process of shared knowledge production that recognizes organic cultural knowledge as an authorizing force in our research (see Gordon 1991). It is their experiences we seek to understand, their stories we record, and their worlds we enter and engage. The results of our engagements, both positive and negative, depend very heavily on the amount of respect and control we are willing to share both as researchers and within the wider arena of academia. Linda Smith, an important Maori indigenous scholar, is quick to remind us that indigenous knowledge is often reduced to a "nativist" discourse, dismissed by academics as naïve, contradictory, and illogical" (1999:14). Yet we, after reading lots of books and spending years in a classroom, turn right around and claim to KNOW what they may be experiencing and why. Unfortunately, this is a historical building block of our discipline that must be addressed and contested by those of us who believe it is time to put it to bed, along with the countless racist, ethnocentric "classic" ethnographies still being used to poison the minds of introductory students.

Shared knowledge production requires that we involve our field consultants in the epistemological and methodological planning and action phases of our research. So often we come to the field with a preconceived notion of what is taking place, yet remaining open to the possibilities of "being surprised" (which Paul Willis suggests is crucial to encouraging an "ethnographic imagination" 2000) might well result in the acquisition of critical (and previously

undetected) knowledge capable of advancing our theoretical positions regarding human culture. The commitment to shared knowledge production, however, must be extended well beyond the research phase, as this is only one step in the right direction. When we begin to write about, and subsequently author publications about, our research encounters we have an obligation to follow through with Murdock's egalitarian promise of "laboring together to bring in a crop everyone can share" (1997:185). Ethnography is, after all, about anthropologists gaining deeper insight into other ways of knowing; yet at times we fail to realize (of which I have been guilty) we are now mediating knowledge that our field associates already KNOW (see Hymes 1969). The practice of "sharing" in the process of knowledge production requires that we reroute the flow back to our research communities in ways that seek to expand their critical sense-making with regard to their particular social reality. Such practices may, as Hymes suggested more than thirty years ago as a remedy toward reinventing anthropology, empower these communities to be in greater rational control of their own destinies (1969).[9]

Another crucial aspect of shared knowledge production requires that anthropologists acknowledge the disciplinary practice of disseminating our "truth" in ways that make it of little or no use to our colleagues in the field (see Appadurai 2002; Barth 2000; Gordon 1991; McClancey 2002). Writing strictly within the confines of anthropological publications while adhering to structures of academic jargon, for example, limits the possibility that our work can be employed as a tool against the inequality and oppression critical ethnography seeks to expose. Yet I would like to raise an important issue I feel we often overlook. In many cases, the "controlling processes"[10] (Nader 1997) used to reinforce dominance and structural discrimination utilize a similar vocabulary. Therefore, at times it is appropriate and necessary to familiarize our research communities with the broader discourse of power. I often think we incarcerate our field colleagues into an identity of primitivism, making the mistake of thinking them incapable of comprehending social theory.

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[9] Hymes' suggestion relates to a broader manifestation of C. Wright Mills "sociological imagination" (1959).

[10] "Controlling processes" are defined as social and cultural modes invented to keep certain people acting in predicable ways and engaging in predictable behaviors. An example of a controlling process is credit card companies that offer credit to college students with no evidence they are a worthy credit risk, simply because they know they will accept them (see Nader 2005).

Regardless of their educational accomplishments by "mainstream" academic standards, many marginalized, globalized, segregated, and/or oppressed groups are actively seeking ways to "speak back to power." Perhaps we have significant contributions to make towards that goal.

Incorporating Multiple Subjectivities and Agendas

As we move toward a more egalitarian praxis, we need to develop innovative ways to incorporate the multiple subjectivities and agendas that emerge upon any ethnographic landscape, into a mutually beneficial research design. Involving a variety of colleagues in the planning stages of data collection is often beneficial because social actors know their world better than we could ever hope to; "the expert is the one that has lived it" (Queen Quet, personal communication 2002). For example, my research consultants suggested that I attach a series of focus groups to already scheduled cultural and civic events. I was apprehensive at first, about attempting to discuss *gated community segregation* and the *reinvention of the landscape* at a heritage festival, or a planning board meeting-- yet what I experienced was an immediate receptiveness from the community. Gullah communities are always suspicious when it comes to researchers for precisely the reasons I have outlined here. Historically, they have been represented as backward and destined for cultural extinction by social scientists, and they have engaged in research never to receive a single transcript or copy of the works produced. Connecting my work to events that have importance to the community opened doors that would have otherwise remained closed, especially with regard to the elderly.

The ability to develop a mutually beneficial research design requires that we ask the right questions concerning both community and individual agendas. Within the Gullah/Geechee Nation, activists from a variety of grassroots organizations articulated distinct (often collective) agendas, which may or may not have influenced their decisions to assist me. At this historic moment, as the National Park Service pushes for federal dollars to advance its own agenda regarding Gullah cultural preservation and the International Human Rights Association of American Minorities (IHRAAM),[11] continues to work toward international recognition of Gullah/Geechee as an American minority group, Gullah/Geechee communities seek exposure and legitimacy concerning their specific predicaments (i.e. gated communities, land loss, property taxes, zoning laws, limited

[11] An African-American launched international NGO in consultative status with the United Nations.

employment options, tourism, black business ownership, racialized social inequality, political marginalization, etc.). Consequently, our anthropological contributions may offer some assistance. The following is but one instance of a field colleague clearly articulating an agenda for participation. This passage served as a response to participants of a focus group in Savannah, Georgia who were questioning the purpose of the meeting:

> QQ: What I, as Chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation, intend to do not just with her work (but there are lots of other academics fooling around doing other aspects of work) is when these things are [Quote/Unquote] "documented" (to coin a phrase) in America and they are documented by "Not us" but people who are considered part of the establishment, that gives legitimacy to what has been said. That is because that's the way they set up the game; that's their rules for the game. So, now, when it's documented by someone else and I take it before the High Commissioner of the United Nations on Human Rights, and I say, "look, this is documented, and this is not a person who is Gullah/Geechee by any stretch of the imagination. And this is a person who's a University Professor and this is what they found out." That says a lot to them already and it also says well wait a minute. Here's all these charters, here's all these laws, here's all these things that ya'll have just violated in terms of these people's human rights and --are you telling me this person has a two hundred something odd page document with footnotes and citing and actual interviews behind it --to say that this is not what's going on over there? Because see when they're in these-- outside of this American arena-- they make the world feel they have done so many programs to benefit people and that everyone in America wants to be part of a melting pot. And that we've accepted it, so when you have something else, it's not just up to her- (It IS just up to her morally to see what she's gonna do as an individual)-- but from our end of it, I'm like you. OK, ultimately how is this going to benefit us because if there is no benefit for us (if we're just being used to garner somebody else's, help them out with something- I'm not interested. I don't have that kind of time). But if it's going to benefit my people...(Savannah Focus Group, September 2003).

Being cognizant of these multiple agendas, including the ways in which they intersect, compete and/or complement that of the researcher makes a beneficial research design more possible.

Critical ethnographic research is ultimately aimed at confronting the injustice within a particular field site (Kincheloe and McLaren 2003); therefore it is important to extend our analysis across the social field to include structural practitioners of power. The idea, known as "studying up" (Nader 1969), acknowledges that anthropologists could make more sense of the predicaments we seek to understand by shifting (up) our perspective. At the very least, incorporating these voices (through both interrogation and conversation) into our broader dialogue could expose mechanisms of oppression; however, on a more optimistic note, such conversations may result in increased

accountability and critical thinking as it pertains to policies and procedures impacting human communities. In my attempt to answer the need for more representations of "fine-grained and systemic analyses of power and privilege" (Farmer 2002:435), I extended my ethnographic gaze to include political offices, law enforcement, development firms, local, state and national agencies, and wealthy elites whose social life in and of itself is a locus of structural power.

Collaboration

Collaborative research methods are currently being billed as new within many disciplines that rely heavily on qualitative data; however, applied anthropologists have played a foundational role in articulating the inseparability of knowledge production and praxis (see also Harrison 1991). Giving credit where credit is due, Stephen Schensul outlined the benefits of collaborative work in the 1980s, citing the following as important benefits to both researcher and research community: (1) collaboration brings together people of diverse skills and knowledge; (2) it demystifies the research process, allowing those who will utilize the results to actually understand and shape the data collection process; (3) it builds a research capability in the community; and (4) it increases the likelihood that the research will actually be used (Schensul 1987). When we enter into relationships with our consultants in the field, it is an acknowledgement that their agency matters, and that the meaning making in which they participate, which shapes their social and cultural world, are valid and crucial to the representation of their situation (also see Nash 1997). Being sensitive to the cultural politics of the ethnographic environment, most importantly, allows those with whom we work to directly participate in the knowledge being created about them (see Willis 2000).

A New Ethnographic Moment: Feelings, Emotions, and the Politics of Love[12]

It is an exciting time to be an anthropologist. We are witnessing a shift in consciousness in which many scholars are working toward reconciling our bitter past; or perhaps it is but a shift in the "possibility" of giving voice to such a consciousness. Anthropologists ushering in this shift are willing to express the human emotions and urgency often experienced as we engage as the "vulnerable," reflexive witness (see Behar 1996, 2003; Dominguez 2000; Lincoln and Denzin 2003); and some suggest that the disciplinary taboos against these practices are subsiding

[12] "A Politics of Love and Rescue" was articulated first by Virginia Dominguez (see Dominguez 2000).

(Harrison n.d.) thus allowing us to escape the habit of camouflaging them within our ethnographic texts (Lincoln and Denzin 2003). As much as I wish this were true, I feel we still have a long road ahead in this regard, and I base my stance on two important factors. First, I was present in the meeting room at the American Anthropological Association (AAA) meetings in 2000 when a panel of intellectual powerhouses (i.e. brilliant scholars) invited others into the discourse they were crafting on the politics of love and rescue (see Dominguez 2000)--as the session was appropriately named. The room was wall-to-wall women, and someone made light of the fact that no men (for the sake of accuracy we might suppose there were possibly one or two that I missed) were in attendance, which brought about a collective laugh, but truly it is not a laughing matter. Second, intimately linked to the first, it was white men who created the "science" and "theory" that devalue such efforts, yet they are plentiful as department heads and tenured faculty in universities across the country. The ways in which women's contributions have been consistently marked as "less competent, less rational, and more emotional" (Lutz 1995: 250), suggest those of us only now beginning to seek a faculty position might be smart to keep quiet— does that make us less committed? It is a troubling question I leave in the air for the moment. Perhaps as more of us choose "not to remove the thorns from 'our' stories" (Behar 2003: 25) the balance will begin to shift.

The AAA panel ignited a fire of possibility and hope for those of us in attendance. The questions under consideration haunted me: *What happens when we love the people we study? What do we do with that emotion?* In print, Dominguez later pushed even further in asking, "What would happen if we were all free, better yet, encouraged to embrace the emotions evoked by the work we do; to feel the human emotions we suppress in the field and our writings?" (2000). I began taking these questions seriously and have experienced a great deal of growth over these few short years, which makes emotional honesty possible and necessary. This project has become devoted to much more than exposing the impact of gated community development and tourism on the Sea Island communities of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. It is a story of personal transformation and painful realization leading to a deeper understanding of the self; a self that can only be revealed in pieces as it has been, and continues to be, revealed to me. As it has been told to me, it is a story of human agency, chronicling a wide variety of struggles in various communities striving to be heard and validated. It is a story of power, historical reinventions and alterations, altercations,

and structural violence. It is a story of identity, from a variety of sites both real and imagined. In the end it is truly the only story I can tell[13]— it is my own (see also Whitehead 1986).

Redefining the Academic: Interpreting and Negotiating Resistance

It is important to note that being emotionally honest and morally committed does not automatically translate into widespread trust from the broader research community. The history of exploitation within anthropology runs deep; therefore it will take decades of diligent maintenance to create a more comfortable climate for our ethnographic exchanges. This was particularly hard for me to accept. In past years, I have conducted research in many Gullah communities throughout coastal South Carolina. I have worked extremely hard to establish rapport and portray myself as something other than "another jackleg educated fool" (Gwaltney 1980:xxiv), while also responding through praxis to charges that white anthropologists have not done effective work in black communities (see Gwaltney 1980). In light of history, I have learned to accept the charge as legitimate, but nothing could have prepared me for the blatant assaults I encountered in the field. I share two specific experiences here, in an attempt to remind both the larger academic audience and myself that we have a long way to go, particularly in research communities that have been largely defined from the outside looking in. Researchers entering heavily studied field sites should be prepared to pay for the mistakes of the ethnographic past; I know I certainly have.

In July of 2002 the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition held the first "Gullah Conference" organized and orchestrated by Gullah/Geechee community members. The conference was titled "Gwine Bak" to symbolize the importance of digging down to the root of Gullah culture and finding the foundation on which the future survival of the culture must be built (Goodwine 2002, personal communication). In attendance were many of the academics actively engaged in fieldwork and/or research concerning such communities, as well as community activists from all over what is now considered the Gullah/Geechee Nation. Queen Quet and I decided this would be an excellent forum for soliciting community input concerning prospective dissertation topics. It would also give community members a chance to discuss any concerns about project design and implementation. As I sat in the midst of these twenty or so community members (some I had met, others who were

[13] I am resting on the poststructuralist foundation of representation: my observations will always be tainted by my role within their creation (see Denzin and Lincoln 2003).

strangers to me and I to them), I became extremely nervous about discussing my work and the prospects of upcoming research.

Directly across from me sat a young man who simply could not conceal his distrust, which I had detected through his physical mannerisms and tone in our brief vocal exchanges. I was chosen to speak first and began discussing my master's research, the general findings included in my thesis, and my excitement concerning upcoming dissertation possibilities. Recounting those years of trying to establish myself as an honest and trustworthy scholar (and feeling that I was again being cast as a representative for all researchers who had come before me), I began to cry--although I had promised myself I wouldn't-- and had a difficult time articulating my point. My ego began to rebel, as I noticed the other academics in the room looking at me with what I interpreted as embarrassment. The gentleman sizing me up was David Pleasant, a Gullah music griot and master drummer (who would later become a collaborator in designing the musical section of the Gullah course I developed). At that moment he served as my interrogator. I recall him boldly inquiring why anyone should trust me. His disdain was strong and heavy, and I remember feeling a bit spaced out as he narrated his theories on academics.

He had tried the intellectual route, he said, only to find those within the academy to be self-serving (and a host of other things I couldn't hear over my heartbeat). I remember meekly asking that the community only give me a chance, and reminding them that all people should be given a chance on their own merit. It was one of the most intense interactions of my fieldwork experience, but Pleasant's confidence that I would betray his community inspired me to work harder to prove him wrong. In the fall of 2002 I initiated e-mail communication with Pleasant, soliciting his advice regarding course material for the musical component of "Gullah Culture of the Southeastern U.S."[14] We had extensive e-mail communications; I purchased his music CD for class use, and learned a lot about music theory and the origins of southern black musical traditions. In an attempt to show my appreciation and ethics, I sent him a copy of the entire reading packet for the course, which included important canonical works concerning African American anthropology. In the spring of 2003, I arranged for Pleasant and Queen Quet to join me in a roundtable session on collaborative research methods, as well as perform the main event for the "Cultures in Motion: The African Connections Conference" at the University of Tennessee. After picking him up at the airport, on the

[14] This is an anthropology course I designed and taught at the University of Tennessee in 2003 and 2005.

walk to my car, he turned and thanked me for the reading packet. That small exchange in the parking garage of McGhee Tyson Airport, although he probably never realized it, marked an important personal and professional achievement regarding my ongoing efforts at making peace with the ethnographic past

On September 21· 2003 I traveled to Savannah, Georgia for a focus group interview. The location, date and agenda were coordinated by Jamal Touré, J.D., whom I first met in 2002 at the Gullah Conference on St. Helena Island, South Carolina. Touré founded the organization "Day Clean: The African Soul" in an effort to preserve the history and culture of African peoples at home and abroad (http://www.dayclean.net/). The organization specializes in living history presentations, seminars, lectures and tours dedicated to an accurate representation of the history and traditions of Gullah/Geechee people. All who participated in the focus group had been personally invited by Touré, in an effort to put me in contact with activists from the area whom he felt might be particularly aware of the problems posed by gated community development and the larger issues of interest to my research. YS, whose comments below led to many nights of personal and anthropological contemplation, keenly illustrated the historical residue of resentment Gullah/Geechees feel toward anthropologists. I will never forget the anxiety creeping all over my body as he entered the room and sat down directly across from me. YS is supported by a commanding frame and a serious disposition. The large fist centered on a black t-shirt, reading **Black Power** across the back, simply added to my feeling of being overwhelmingly intimidated. Others were talking, some only commenting on what was being said yet not speaking directly to the issues, but I immediately felt him staring at me; granted it could have, by that point, been completely due to my imagination and discomfort. Every now and then he would look over to Touré, then to Queen Quet, but always resting his gaze back in my direction. I smiled an uncomfortable smile as our eyes met, instantly reminded of our first meeting earlier in the summer. He was the gentleman with the great restaurant in Savannah, the one who had catered our tour and presentation hosted by (then political candidate) Pat Gunn. He was the gentleman I had "left behind"!

Two months earlier we had met briefly, and his first impression of me was based on the following events. I signed up for a three-day excursion coordinated by the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition and Day Clean. We began on Friday evening with libations at the home of a local

African American clothing designer who runs a retail shop out of her home. After libations had been poured and everyone was introduced we began loading up for our water tribute to the Africans (Gullah/Geechee ancestors) who died in the pest houses on Lazarettos Creek, accessible from Tybee Island, Georgia. Seeing that I drive a VW Van, with lots of room, many people opted to ride with me. Toure' jumped in as we were departing, and began giving me directions. We would be the car everyone else would follow. Somehow, in my focusing on the directions coming from the backseat, I "left" the last vehicle behind. That vehicle was the one carrying YS; and he seemed convinced it was deliberate on my part. He openly confronted me about it once he boarded the boat. I informed him that I was following directions being shouted by Toure' from the back seat and laughed it off, but sitting in that focus group was the first notion I had of the reality of his first impression of me. By then, it was too late to explain. I am not sure it would have mattered.

> YS: What's the purpose of the meeting?
> QQ: Go ahead, you want to re-explain...
> YS: I mean what do we wish to accomplish?
> JT: If you came on time (laughter)...
> YS: What's the purpose of the meeting?
> MH: No, the purpose of the meeting is for me to do my work in a way that I'm not in it; because I don't have a stake in what the plantation means and what family land loss means and what gated communities mean. Because from a critical eye of an anthropologist I can say many things about what I think, social inequality, whatever, but having this year in the field allows me to come and let you all say what you want to be in these academic writings that come out.
> YS: So this is your idea?
> MH: Yes, this is an idea that we came up with together, to go from Amelia Island Florida to Georgetown South Carolina and have these meetings and let people dialogue and free flow about what these places mean. So people don't say "Melissa Hargrove suggests Gullah Geechee FEEL..." it will say "in interviews in Savannah Georgia, in interviews in Hilton Head, or Squire Pope Community, Gullah/Geechee people or residents of this area SAID THIS." So that's really to let people -- because academics throughout history have always put their own ideas in people's mouths and chosen distinct passages that come out that are shocking to represent people. And I, as someone who's worked with the Coalition for six years, am not that kind of person. I came here as that kind of person, and quickly realized I don't want to be. I want to make academics from every—sociology, anthropology, we all have a job to do and that's to SHARE knowledge. It's not to covet it and be the authority. And so I'm trying to repair the past as an academic but also look at this thing and allow you all...
> YS: Here's why I ask, is that-- I've conditioned myself. I feel comfortable around my own people. When I come to ANY meeting and I see other than my people, I'm just kinda reluctant to open my mouth.

MH: Absolutely. I understand that.
YS: I'm very distrustful of other people-- some of my own I'm distrustful of. But I'm especially distrustful of other people.
MH: Sure.
YS: And that's what I want to know.

It was at this moment that several participants came to my defense, giving examples of the ways in which our relationship has been one of equality and reciprocity. Another informed those at the table that I had authored the "Synthetic Overview of Scholarly Literature" (2001) as part of the National Park Service *Gullah/Geechee Special Resource Study*, a study few see as anything more than another step toward "reinventing the plantation," and which may have put me at a disadvantage at that moment in the discussion. I include the following narrative in its entirety because it is extremely important in situating the broader question of representation and authority being (indirectly) debated here (as well as within the broader social field of everyday Gullah life).

PG: Let me ask you something. We're always studied by anyone (I apologize for being late) I'm Pat Gunn-- always a warrior till I die. Ain't scared of nothing-- but the creator—nothing or nobody! Early come dayclean this morning I was out putting signs out. This man- Maybe a block away from his house. He came out the door, came down the street, came up to me. He said, "So you're that Pat Gunn." I said Yes, Good morning, sir. Shook his hand. He said, "Well I just wanna let you know, you ain't welcomed in this neighborhood." I said, since when do you own the neighborhood? And you got a shirt on that got " Jesus is everything to me." **Ownership- who speak for we? We speak for we!** I've been studied and studied and I'm sick and tired of being studied-- but the thing that disturbs me the most is this National Park thing should never have occurred this way.[15] Even if the results... when they came back, we invited them in, Marquetta and me called the Georgia Coastline. We organized brothers and sisters at First African Baptist Church. They came in (first time out) and interviewed us, and heard wonderful oral traditions about our community. And then they came back two years later they didn't even invite us. We had to find out in the newspaper. And then when they came back to that, they already had their ideas of what they wanted on the board. These are federal dollars! These are federal... representatives. These are congressman who we thought were going to protect us. At this point, we basically don't have any protection. The brilliance of this generation of people sitting at the table and with respect to the elder, we really have to start doing some things for ourselves so everybody will count. And I'm not talking about the color line- Du Bois talked about the problem with the next century would be the color line. A hundred years later it's the same situation. But I realize now, just getting out here politically, that it's not about color, it's about information. Cause so many people that look into your eyes look just like you do. It's sick. Savannah was only one night of the study but Savannah is a

[15] Pat Gunn clearly articulated the frustration expressed by several Gullah/Geechees regarding the paternalistic way the National Park Service study had been carried out.

study in itself. Somebody in this city needs to tell Africans in Savannah that slavery is over and we ARE Free, free to think for ourselves. I would love to see you guys come in and document this entire city in terms of the minds of people who buck dance everybody else's situation. The last thing I'll say is I heard on the radio last night something really profound and I thought Wow- that's interesting. If you drive around Savannah, Georgia right now you'll see a political race going on, and I'm not here to politic—cause I'm going to run to the end ANYHOW. You will ride around and you'll see African American communities with white folks' signs. But when you ride around White folks neighborhoods you don't see no Black folks' signs. So that's the education of who speak for we. We are so comfortable that we keep getting left out and keep getting studied, that we're studying ourselves into hating our own selves over and over again. So, we gotta start making sure that the documentation is created through us. We need an African American renaissance of writers and publishers and editors to do this thing ourselves. I don't have any respect for the United Nations either. I don't care about any of them, because we speak for our own selves. I don't need documentation from them; they know what they did to us. If it was a Jewish plantation scenario, this would never happen. When I get a call from the Ford Plantation to come and tell stories, I don't buck dance with them-- I make them CRY, about the history of our people. And then I say to them, when you come back again, don't call me in February cause we're black all year round!! So the bottom line is we gotta be real creative and try to do some things to challenge the minds of our editors and writers to continue to write. We gotta really intensify it because we can't continue to seek validation from the government cause the government isn't even thinking about African American people. The Hispanic population has far surpassed us economically, culturally-- and you better not say anything about their culture! So we gotta start respecting, and we gotta start holding some black folks accountable and we gotta talk to people who can help us get our story out the right way. And it's not personal that we're asking you these questions- [speaking to Melissa]
MH: Absolutely! I don't take it personally.
PG: They have a right to ask them, and if you weren't this color, if you were somebody like us I still might ask you because we have cultural parasites everywhere. And then some of them are just like us and have the biggest dreadlocks in the world but they're the biggest cultural parasites that can be. And they come through here all the time. So, I just want to say we really have to challenge ourselves to be more forceful in writing and speaking out and talking about situations and by all means have the facts because the wrong thing is to put the information out there the wrong way and be challenged and be a disgrace to ourselves.

The importance of sharing such confrontations is an attempt to rectify the hierarchy of ethnographic texts, within which voices have traditionally been quoted yet do not "converse with or challenge that of the author" (see Jordan 1991). It is only through such critical dialogue that we (my research colleagues and I) can aspire to demystify our understandings of who we are and arrive at a common ground (see Harrison 1991).

Over the years, I have had a plethora of conversations which represent a partial Gullah 'common sense' notion of academics; most of which has been informed by first hand experience with social science researchers. Below is one such exchange, which truly encapsulates the ways in which they make sense of "our" world. This dialogue resulted from a conversation regarding Queen Quet's participation in a cultural preservation roundtable while attending a National Park Service conference. After a presentation in which she blasted "academics," a colleague on the roundtable discussion had jokingly responded "Quet, you're no academic lightweight yourself!" which brought the entire room to roaring laughter.

> QQ: So, see I have to always laugh when people say that to me, because I'm like "yes, that's true. Yes I am a scholar and an academic! Ok. In that regard- but when I say "an academic" I'm talking about a person who that is their entire world-they work at the campus, they live at the campus, they eat at the campus, they got five years of degrees! They just keep going back for more degrees or whatever. Because it's easier to live in there than it is to be out here. Because everything in there is theoretical so all I have to do is debate my latest hypothesis with you. There is no real right/wrong; it's finished it's not! You always can keep changing that hypothesis and just keep going. Wherein out here, somebody gonna tell you "you don't know what the hell you talking about! You need to quit with that"- whatever it is; you will have to face it.
> MH: And you don't there.
> QQ: And you don't there. Especially when you're in the ivory tower- that's why they call it that; because you can sit on high and hear all these little people and they come in and they look at you while you talk to them for an hour or two. You write things; and if they don't regurgitate to you what you said to them, they won't get a degree. So most naturally they are going to regurgitate what you said! But now what you need to do is come to terms with that; that because somebody can repeat back to you what you said, doesn't mean they have respect for you! Doesn't mean they agree with you, and definitely doesn't mean that you're right!
> QQ: And they don't apply it to their lives.
> MH: And I had never planned on it! But when it hits your soul—
> QQ: Then you're put—right! Exactly!
> MH: You have to figure out where you are, and why you're doing what you're doing and that's where I'm at.
> QQ: And most of the people the Creator has had surrounding me, that's where they are (whether they know it or not at the time that they first encounter me). But *like I keep telling them, well as much as you all tell me of your traumas when you first met me, and all of this, I can't get rid of ya'll!! And then they all just laugh.*

The conversation progressed into what I consider a definitive moment between Queen Quet and me, in which she articulated her perceived role between the academic community and her cultural

community; while also serving to remind me that all social beings, not just academics, create social theory (Lemert 1999).

> QQ: I had to give up any resistance I may have had to being sort of the 'guide light' for these folks; to get them down the pathway wherever they are supposed to be from there. So, what I found is, that they actually, even though they all might be going down this path here and this one might need to have to be off here, and this one here, and this one here and that one there, what ends up happening is all those pathways end up in a clearing and they all end up in the exact same clearing. The reason they all veered off is because it takes longer for some of them to get to the clearing than it takes others; because there's something they gotta each pick up along those "veer off points" that they all took. It's just like this fork right here-- [referring to the fork in the road right outside Hunnuh Home] you can go down Land's End, or you can end up going this way and going further into the community-- or you could just run completely out of it! So, and some people going to each different parts of the road, and that's their destiny. So when I realized that-- OK, they all meet in the clearing- I'm always there! Even if they're late, even when they get to the clearing and they go "oh no, I don't wanna go! I don't wanna be in here!" --and they try to run back down some other road! They're right back in the clearing!!! We're right here. Because once you get in there, that's the place of meeting. That's the place where you have to discuss that which you may not have wanted to discuss. That's the place where, there's a fire burning in the middle, and there's some crap you're gonna have to throw in it! Because you ain't supposed to keep it! You're finished with it! Throw it away! So, whether that's you, whether that's _; (blanks indicate other researchers who have not given consent to being named); whether that's _, whether that's _-- any of you all, have not come into this realm, into MY life personally, and into the Gullah Geechee Nation as a whole for no reason. The Creator put ya'll here! But that means that when you leave from that clearing, all the different roads you all are going to take are going to send you all now to places where you are going to have to disseminate information. -- Because you have a message to spread after that. To affect all these different minds that you come in contact with. I come in contact with 1,000 people a week probably, at a minimum- physically; not even talking about who's on the Internet. So now if I come in contact with that amount, moving around, imagine how many (if you stay at an institution and you're a professor there for twenty years) how many people will have come through your courses? How many conferences would you have delivered papers at? How many books would you have been asked to contribute a paper to? How many journals would you have written articles for? Again, affecting minds!!

This creatively appropriate metaphor of "the clearing" represents the place at which academics surrender their respect to the knowers, a space in which a true relationship can begin; a site of understanding that recognizes the crucial significance of subaltern stories—as powerful "counter-stories" representing a conscious resistance to being objectively defined (see Smith 1999). So many of us have to symbolically burn our white privilege there, as others try to find a

shortcut around it. Some scholars, and I have met my fair share, will never find the path to mutual respect. They are the reason, even now, that we must continually negotiate and redefine ourselves ethically. They continue to create an ethnographic past in need of resolution. They refuse to step into the clearing.

Politics and Ethics of Whiteness

As a white anthropologist committed to revealing and combating the "racial dysfunction" (Mayor Joseph P. Riley of Charleston, South Carolina; personal communication, 2004) which has become "habitus"[16] (Bourdieu 1984) throughout the communities in which I live and work, it is essential that I interrogate my own whiteness as a political factor. In our own recent history, anthropologists committed to engaged scholarship have run the risk of being labeled as operating "outside the realm of anthropology" (Bourgois 1990:48). Yet, I would argue that the manifestations of the broader political economy of racism under surveillance in coastal South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida have everything to do with us as anthropologists and citizens of a global world. The "situated knowledge" (Haraway 1991) I have accumulated concerning existing manifestations of racism and human inequality has the potential to "speak to and for this historical moment as a political reflection" (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:622), as a "political intervention" (Murdock 1997). Therefore, it is a moral[17] obligation to seek understanding concerning the implications of whiteness operating at every level, principally my own.

Coming to personal terms with my own whiteness was a project I began several years ago, after encountering Mab Segrest at the 2000 Women and Power Conference at Middle Tennessee State University. Segrest was the featured speaker and shared excerpts of *Memoirs of a Race Traitor* (1994). That experience incited an endless journey that continues to inform my politics and reflexivity regarding the ethics of whiteness, particularly as a white anthropologist engaged in research with black communities. The unsettling reality that I was raised a racist, who continues to live in a racist society, and will therefore continue to battle my own enculturation was a denial game

[16] The term "habitus" designates a system of durable dispositions that enforce the will of the larger structure of power because it seems normal. The habitus produces behaviors that reinforce the necessary conditions to reproduce structure [a practical example of habitus is the white practice of hating blacks on welfare].
[17] Moral values are defined as "a universal human ethic emphasizing the sacredness of life, human dignity, truth telling and nonviolence" (Christians 1997 cited in Lincoln and Denzin 2003).

I played on and off for years. Many never relinquish, for fear of having to excavate the artifacts of their past. It is a painful yet necessary part of realizing the power of privilege, which has its own challenges relating to ethnographic research.

Ironically, we are beginning to realize that whiteness, as a structural privilege, can be manipulated in ways that empower our research communities, particularly those experiencing racial oppression (see Hurtado 1997; Rasmussen 2001). Repeatedly while in the field I heard "they will tell you things they won't tell us" (referring to those in positions of power which translates most often to practitioners of white privilege). In many instances, they were right. This dynamic operates so well because white privilege depends upon that unspoken agreement that the members will not betray the power dynamic (Hurtado 1997). In the everyday business of living in this particular field, opportunities to exercise white privilege were revealed at every turn. My reluctance to indulge them eventually marked me as a race traitor. From that moment on, there was a general attitude that I had "chosen sides."

As researchers of any ethnic category, it remains important to recognize that we wield a distinct brand of power: the power of acknowledgment. In the daily activities of fieldwork, whether shopping at the grocery stores or attending festivals, we should take the opportunity to introduce our research interests to multiple actors on the social landscape (specifically outside the realm of the research community- in my case I am referring to white tourists, white bank tellers, white real estate agents, white tour guides, white businessmen, etc.). This forces an acknowledgement of the importance of the marginalized group we are working to empower. When we share our theoretical notions with those residing on the periphery (and even suggesting that is the case), it increases awareness and helps to decenter common sense ideologies that denigrate and delegitimize claims made by the cultural community of interest. It is one way we can use our illusions of prestige to empower our research colleagues, while openly contesting the unspoken agreement that translates whiteness into power.

Methodological Triangulation[18]

There are two very important factors that directly influenced my methodology: previous experiences, accumulated while conducting masters research in the same region, and research

[18] For a detailed breakdown of the methods used to collect, organize and analyze the data, please see Appendix A.

funding, in the form of a Wenner Gren Dissertation Grant. The grant covered an entire year of research, from June 2003 to June 2004. Therefore, I entered the field in the summer of 2003 as a six-year research veteran[19] with a few methodological mistakes and valuable lessons under my belt, as well as an extensive list of research fantasies I had amassed in the event I was ever able to pursue them. Research funding changed the range of possibilities with regard to the extent of my inquiry into the gated community phenomenon. I expanded the design parameter to include the entire designated Gullah/Geechee cultural area,[20] and visited the few remaining isolated islands with Gullah/Geechee populations struggling to remain on their ancestral land (Sapelo Island, Georgia and Daufuskie Island, South Carolina. In prior years, without research funding, I could not afford to take extensive trips, not to mention the ferry fee to get from the mainland to the island. Therefore, the grant was essential to conducting a multi-sited ethnography capable of illustrating the parallel predicaments created by gated communities across the Gullah landscape.

Over the course of my research, I have utilized a variety of methodological strategies to gain insight into the everyday lives of Gullah/ Geechee people, because there is no single method that captures the "subtle variations" of the human experience (Denzin and Lincoln 2003). It became clear, however, that the new possibilities created by funding required new methods of inquiry, capable of engaging in dialogue with multiple participants in a single site. Thus, I added focus groups to my methodological toolkit.[21] The triangulation achieved by combining focus groups with individual interviews produced seventy-seven hours of transcript data.

The broader objective of the research design sought to expose the multiple voices within these controversies, in ways that reveal the various strategies of meaning making. An emphasis was placed on recovering the "silences" (see Trouillot 1995) of Gullah voices concerning the reinvention of Sea Island history, and empowering the "explanation of exclusion from the point of view of the excluded" deemed so necessary in the anthropological discourse of space and place

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[19] I began conducting anthropological research on the South Carolina Sea Islands in Summer of 1998. I returned for the Summer of 1999 and continued my research concerning the commodification of Gullah culture within the tourism industry. I began designing the dissertation research in Fall 2000, after acquiring a Masters degree.

[20] The National Park Service Gullah/Geechee Special Resource Study defined the area as stretching from North Carolina to Northern Florida, including all the Sea Islands, and thirty miles inland.

[21] In the Wenner Gren grant proposal I explored using focus group interviews to expand my research in ways that would offer a more holistic representation. In hindsight, I recognize that focus groups had always seemed "not anthropological enough to consider. But I know now that the oversight was a self-imposed barrier used to reinforce my own purist notions of *classic* fieldwork.

(see Sibley 1995). In the project design phase, I worked closely with grassroots preservation organizations to determine geographic areas of ethnographic interest. Sites were chosen in a collective effort to situate the communities along a broader continuum of the wide- ranging impacts of the gating phenomenon. Community and organizational leaders were involved in developing, organizing, and facilitating focus group discussions and community events to which I was an invited guest. Focus groups were conducted in Savannah, Georgia (September 2003); Charleston, South Carolina (September 2003); Fernandina and American Beach, Florida (November 2003, with a follow up in February 2004); St. Helena Island (January 2004) and Georgetown, South Carolina (Community Meeting sponsored by Family Tyes and The Gullah Ooman Shop, May 15, 2004).

Focus group interviews have often been positioned as illegitimate within anthropology, on the grounds that the data gathered "in few focus groups—a couple of hours each with maybe six or ten people—" does not qualify as ethnographic (Agar 1996). This criticism, however, is only partially accurate. There are definite limitations to focus groups, yet when employed to complement a wide range of qualitative methods, these exchanges offer particular advantages and disadvantages. In my attempts to privilege the "ethnic epistemology" (Ladson-Billings 2003) of Gullah identity, focus group interviews proved invaluable. In *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues* (2003), Ladson-Billings utilized the following sayings to illustrate the importance of accounting for well developed systems of knowledge often cast in opposition to Euro-American epistemology: "I think, therefore I am." (Descartes)/ "Ubuntu [I am because we are.]" (African saying). Gullah epistemology more closely resembles an African cosmology than that of mainstream American (i.e. white) culture. Therefore, it makes logical sense that these communities of the African Diaspora prefer group dialogue when discussing issues of importance to the community. Gullah consultants, as well as acquaintances, have informed me through words and actions that community involvement is a civic duty, due to the connection between the personal and the political (perhaps not in these exact words). Community members, on the whole, preferred to speak with me in the company of their peers and friends.

In light of the current predicament regarding the legitimacy of ethnographic research, my experiences with focus groups produced a range of advantageous outcomes that suggest it should be more widely utilized to help remedy the problems of voice and power imbalance. Focus groups "tilt the balance of power to the group" (Madriz 2000) while also minimizing the amount of direct

interaction the researcher has with group participants (encourages participants to guide the dialogue as opposed to the researcher controlling the flow of conversation). This aspect of focus groups validates participants' voices and empowers their experiences in the process of knowledge production (Mardiz 2000). One of the unanticipated outcomes of my participation in focus groups has been the vast amount of consciousness-raising and knowledge sharing I was able to witness and take part in. At the least, there are hundreds of people between Fernandina, Florida and Georgetown, South Carolina who think more critically about the terms 'plantation' and 'spatial segregation;' who have an increased awareness concerning their cultural significance to the United States and the African Diaspora; who made connections to other grassroots activists working on similar issues; and who have experiences which counter their previous notions of academics as unwilling to work with the community in an egalitarian relationship.

Focus groups are extremely useful as a method of qualitative research, when positioned as one component of a more comprehensive research design. I do not advocate relying exclusively on focus group data, yet they clearly offer alternatives to "top-heavy positivism," and open up possibilities for "ethnographic listening" (Agar 1996). After seven years of established research, I felt that adding this method would offer insight not possible in individual interviews. After careful, critical evaluation of my ethnographic data, I stand by that assertion.

In addition, I attended cultural festivals and organizational fundraisers, various cultural and social events, and community meetings. I conducted a wide variety of ethnographic interviews, along with participant and structured observations in Brunswick, St. Simon's, Sapelo Island, and Sea Island, Georgia; Beaufort, St. Helena Island, Fripp Island, Dataw Island, Bluffton, Charleston, Johns Island, James Island, Wadmalaw Island, Daufuskie Island, Hilton Head Island, and Pawley's Island, South Carolina; and Fernandina and American Beach in Florida. I conducted textual analysis of the major area newspapers, and tourism and real estate literature. Archival research, including plantation and land records, crime statistics, census data, Slave Narratives, and Works Progress Administration (WPA) research files, supplied various forms of knowledge that proved vital in establishing an intellectual context for *the reinvention of the plantation.* I also read *across* several novels within the Low Country literary genre to glimpse the pop cultural perspective.

Studying Across: The View from the Other Side

During all my summers spent conducting ethnographic research (1998-present) one factor has remained constant—my bewilderment concerning the strategies of sense making employed by the gated community residents I have encountered. Many non-Gullah residents organize their cosmology in ways that perpetuate a fictional history (of the area) denying a collective Gullah voice. The proliferation of gated areas has transformed Gullah places defined by collective cultural memories into segregated spaces of exclusion, often restricting Gullah people from paying respect to their ancestors buried in graveyards now off limits. These white wealthy settlers, which I have heard referred to as "the second coming of the Northern Carpetbaggers," have developed a complex ideology of justification and entitlement. Through interviews and focus groups conducted with representatives of two such communities, along with several present and former gated residents, I am committed to deconstructing the dominant ideology held by those behind the gates. Such a process is intended as a contribution to the ongoing conversations around the important practices of "studying up" (Nader 1969) and interrogating power. The emerging story will also reveal important clues about the maintenance of whiteness and the political economy of racism in coastal South Carolina, Georgia and Florida.

Remaining true to practice regarding emotional honesty, I must admit that I have struggled to remain objective with regard to this aspect of the research. I can say with no hesitation that some gated residents were kind, hospitable, and extremely courteous in accommodating my requests for interviews. I can say that others were nasty, vicious intimidators hell-bent on protecting their rights to segregate, stereotype, and reinvent—and even some of those did it with a smile. Gated voices within the text are engaged in conversation occurring across the Lowcountry landscape, which directly refutes the charges of racism, segregation, exclusion, political marginalization, misappropriation, exploitation, disinvestment, and paternalism being hurled from the margins (or, more appropriately, from outside the gate).

Multi-sited Ethnography

Multi-sited ethnography, as defined by Marcus (1995) is an ethnographic strategy of literally following connections, associations, and supposed relationships, acknowledging the connectedness of cultural and societal factors to the larger system. Therefore, multi-sited research

is designed around "chains, paths, threads, conjunctions, or juxtapositions of locations in which the ethnographer establishes some form of literal, physical presence, with an explicit, posited logic of association or connection among sites that in fact defines the argument of the ethnography" (Marcus 1995: 105). The multi-sited project carried out within this research exposed the paths of connection to a broader political economy of racism in coastal areas of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida. The chains and paths connect development, tourism, land loss, segregation, cultural commodification, reinventions of history and landscape, political disempowerment and disenfranchisement into a power-mediated social field in which Gullah/Geechee communities are at risk (culturally, economically, and politically).

Within the multi-site model, Marcus suggests several insightful "modes of construction" (1995) to shape the design of the ethnographic project. The following "modes" illustrate how this project was structured and carried out.

1. *Follow the people- follow and stay with the movements of a particular group of initial subjects* (108). I followed members of the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition and the Wisdom Circle Council of Elders[22] up and down the coast from South Carolina to Florida as they engaged in raising cultural awareness and promoting cultural preservation].

2. *Follow the metaphor: when what is being followed is within the realm of discourse and modes of thought, then the circulation of signs, symbols, and metaphors guides the design of the ethnography* (108). I followed the metaphor of "reinventing the plantation" (and the literal word 'plantation') to determine the salience of my theory that gated communities deploy the ideologically charged metaphor to represent their "return to the Old South of their imagination." I also followed the Confederate Flag as a metaphor for expressions of racism.

3. *Follow the plot, story, or allegory* – Marcus makes clear that one of the most influential applications of this mode can be seen in anthropological investigations of "social memory" reminding us that "the processes of remembering and forgetting produce precisely those kinds of narratives, plots, and allegories that threaten to reconfigure in often disturbing ways versions that serve state and institutional orders" (109). I followed several plots/ stories/ allegories, including slavery, Reconstruction in the South, and the Civil War.

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[22] It is important to note that the persons who comprise the Wisdom Circle Council of Elders represent the coming together of different organizations and activists within the Gullah/Geechee Nation. These relationships were established over several years, based on the mutual agendas of previously unconnected individuals.

4. *Follow the conflict: contested issues in contemporary society* (109). In each and every site where I conducted research, I was following a conflict related to the ways in which the broader political economy of racism is being combated by Gullah/Geechee communities: In each community there exists the triple conflicts of the National Park Service Study, reinventions of history and increasing gated community development (resulting in reinventions of the landscape); on St. Helena Island the conflicts include the expansion of Highway 21 across the island and the battle to retain control of the elementary school; on Sapelo Island the small indigenous Geechee community is battling the State of Georgia for self-determination and survival, as well as power struggles over ferry access to the island now that the State Park conducts island tours (in direct competition with of the few remaining ways that Geechee residents make a living); in Fernandina and American Beach the conflict involves the use of a language of 'blight' and 'imminent domain' being employed by Nassau County officials to gain access to land, particularly the land on historic American Beach; in Brunswick, the conflict concerns environmental racism and access to employment; in Savannah, the conflict involves political (downtown rezoning) and economic marginalization (business contracts, black-owned businesses); and in Charleston the conflict centers around the politics of cultural representation with regard to the tourism industry and the future International African American Culture and History Museum, as well as marginalization issues similar to those being experienced in Savannah.

The methodology of multi-sited research encourages anthropologists to expand our notions of the field to include multiple sites of observation and participation, in an attempt at more holistic representations of a complex object of study. It also allows us to discuss parallel phenomena without contextualizing the ethnographic area as homogeneous, particularly with respect to the ways in which communities in various sites react to and against the processes being investigated. One definite benefit gleaned from my multi-sited experiences was the "triangulation" (see also Hannerz 2003) of different grassroots activists who are connected by their dedication to Gullah/Geechee cultural preservation. When conversations connect you to others known for their contributions to the struggle, it translates into personal and professional credentials that make establishing rapport a bit easier. Another benefit, although you don't realize it until the research is over, is the movement associated with multi-sited research. Driving to and from a site allowed me time to think about what I was feeling, witnessing and learning. The journeys gave me a moment to

step back and look at the larger picture developing over the course of the research phase. Plus, if I expand the definition of sites to include my home and family in Tennessee, those long drives back and forth have allowed me to redefine myself in terms of the importance of my work to my life, often realized through enduring debilitating bouts of depression and sadness as a result of being away from those I love the most.

During the summer of 2003, I combined my research trip to American Beach with a respite from St. Helena Island. My husband and our two daughters spent four days being alone together (after two solid months of my being buried in research and away from the house) at one of the last black-owned small motor courts in American Beach. One night as we sat out in the courtyard just looking at the moon and enjoying a beer, the resident retired Marine came to join us in conversation. Ronnie is an intense military man with a wicked sense of humor. He's a self-described music man, who flew helicopters at Beaufort Air Station and lived and played music in the area for over twenty years. He cut straight to the point of asking what the hell we were doing in American Beach! [He was particularly concerned about Rex surfing in the water where he swore he saw a 15 foot shark just days before!!] I began to tell him about my research but didn't get too far before he interjected, "Listen sweetheart, you don't know shit about Frogmore! [St. Helena Island] Shit! You don't know shit about Gullah either! Have you talked to Billy Barnwell?" I tried to say I hadn't ever met him but I couldn't get a word in, which is an experience unfamiliar to me. My husband was shaking all over with laughter; looking back it must have been quite an exchange to witness. Ronnie reeled off fifteen names before I could open my mouth, shaking his head and laughing at my even suggesting I knew anything about Gullah if I did not know the people he was naming. I said, "Well, why don't you get me in touch with these people? Do you have contact information for them?" The next morning there were several sheets of paper stuck to my door with a thumbtack listing addresses, phone numbers and even e-mails for some of the people he had recommended [out beside Billy's name was "Bad Ass Jazz Man"]. Although neither Ronnie nor Billy Barnwell are grassroots activists, that connection turned into a treasured friendship which has produced immeasurable knowledge, much needed support, and occasional advice; yet Billy once admitted that he would never have spoken with me if I had sought him out because of past experiences with researchers. Triangulations such as this enrich our field experiences, our work, and our lives. Plus they make for delightful memories.

The Queen and I: Ties that Bind

As a feminist ethnographer, I realize the importance and influence of relationships and attachments that have grown from the seeds of my research interests. By far, the most involved ethnographic engagement has evolved between myself and the Queen. It was the summer of 1998, six short years ago, when I first made the acquaintance of Marquetta L. Goodwine (now known as Queen Quet, Chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation). At that time, she had refurbished a few cottages on family property to serve as research facilities for the ever-growing wave of researchers interested in topics concerning Gullah/Geechee culture. She began the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition in 1996; the first grassroots organization solely dedicated to the preservation of Gullah culture and history.[23] Queen Quet began as my principal 'informant' in 1998; I now refer to (and recognize her as) my main collaborative partner in the field. Queen Quet has proven an invaluable asset to my research, as well as to the struggles facing the broader Gullah/Geechee community.

Throughout the years I have searched, with little success, for a way to conceptualize and articulate this ethnographic relationship. Just as the final year transitioned into the final days in the field, insomnia revealed the perfect concept through which I could do just that. I offer the following in recognition of the powerful assertion that "sometimes our writings need metaphors, figures, literary turns, connotations, and allusions... because no words describe what we want to say" (Willis 2000). As all cultures do, Gullah/Geechee people employ powerful ancestral sayings in daily interactions to constantly reiterate to themselves and others how they make sense of their world. The saying "Mus tek cyear a de root fa heal de tree" [Must take care of the root to heal the tree], has become a mantra to many within the Gullah/Geechee nation and symbolizes an ongoing effort to reach down deep inside to reclaim the core remnants (in this case of their cultural legacy) and build on that for the future. It is also a recognition that "you can't know where you're going if you don't know where you've been"—another widely heard saying which often follows.

This visually stimulating quote allows me to envision a tree representative of the larger implications of the work I am engaged in with both Queen Quet and the various communities of the

[23] Goodwine defines the parameters of the Coalition as an organization that "promotes and participates in the preservation of Gullah and Geechee history, heritage, culture, and language; works toward Sea Island land re-acquisition and maintenance; and celebrates Gullah/Geechee culture through artistic and educational means electronically and via 'grassroots scholarship.'"

Gullah/Geechee nation. At the root is Queen Quet (as the "surrogate" [Marcus 1995]) for her cultural community) and myself (as the anthropologist). At a more abstract level, the root work has been devoted to (and is symbolic of) the deeper issue of repairing the core of research relationships between studied populations and social science researchers. It is, I feel confident in suggesting, our combined personal and professional attempts to reconcile larger problems relating to our own experiences—the collective Gullah/Geechee experience of anthropological "othering" and academic (mis)representation and my inheritance of anthropological dis-ease concerning the position of ethnographic research.

What has broken ground and bloomed from this root are many entangled branches of communication up and down the coast of South Carolina, Georgia and Florida; as well as the various contributions I am attempting to share with the broader anthropological research community and the world in general. This tree will bear fruit as long as the root continues to be nurtured by myself and all those located upon its many branches, and the lessons we all learn will continue to spark new growths in places we might not have even considered possible.

Such a romantic notion, unfortunately, is only part of the story. At times, as any good gardener knows, success follows far behind failure. The realization is, for most of us, a trial and error process that leaves the ego bruised and battered. My research, over the years, has often been very thorny and painful. There were times that it seemed the root was beyond salvage, as if the ground had been poisoned and no amount of time and attention would renew the root system; no amount of respect, reflexive ethics, or hard work, on my part, would reassure Gullah/Geechee community members that an anthropologist could engage in collaborative work, shared knowledge production, or any relationship of benefit to them. It has taken seven years of learning and application to see the fruits of the labor, and I recognize the lifelong commitment required to keep it growing. More importantly, I openly acknowledge my debt of gratitude to the Queen for assisting me in this effort.

Ethnographic Possibilities

As we struggle to situate ourselves as practitioners of ethnography, anthropologists are facing a world of possibilities regarding the contributions we can make to a greater understanding of humanity encountering a rapidly changing world. Each of us should take this opportunity

seriously as both a personal and professional exercise, paying close attention to the demands of an ethical, critically engaged scholarship. We should remind one another with our thoughts and actions that our work has the potential "to extend knowledge or promote ignorance" (Smith 1999). Such steps will take us far in our efforts to make peace with the collective ethnographic past.

This work may be taken to represent an ethnography of decline by some, and an ethnography of resilience by others. From where I am standing, it represents a critical ethnography capable of exposing the local structures of domination, thereby "liberating the truth" (Barth 2000). It is also an attempt at constructing an alternative history, capable of decentering previous scientific claims that Gullah culture is headed for extinction. Gullah was born of fire, survived enslavement, and has continued to persist against all odds. A gentleman in Charleston said it best:

> AF: Not only did we survive it, we overcame it and we have constantly been in the process of changing for the better. I would say it's our strength that will change people's minds.

This is, therefore, also an ethnography designed to reorient the scholarly world to this important diasporic community in terms that they find acceptable and "truthful," as they battle the forces of coloniality hidden amidst attempts at recreating a nostalgic, romanticized, and imaginary Old South. It is an ethnography of possibility, as one cultural group negotiates its survival through activism and collective knowledge production aimed at demanding recognition of its international human rights as an African American linguistic and cultural minority of the United States of America.

CHAPTER 3
MULTIPLE REALITIES OF SPACE AND PLACE

Introduction

There are multiple realties attached to Sea Island landscapes, primarily based on the inheritance of conflicting epistemologies. While Gullah/Geechees interpret the landscape as it is experienced, gated newcomers often view it as a form of consumption and investment. Therefore, the concepts of space and place are employed here to draw clear lines between the meanings each group associates with the physical environment. I will first contextualize the anthropological approach to space and place, followed by explanations of useful concepts borrowed from cultural studies and cultural geography. Out of these complementary bodies of knowledge, I have designed a hybrid model capable of articulating the competing strategies of sense-making responsible for the conflict under investigation. Using Gullah narratives from consultants who possess a lifelong relationship with these surroundings, I will discuss how alterations in the landscape result in a cultural disconnect for Sea Islanders.

Across the various landscapes of the United States, minority communities are directly impacted by neoliberal housing policies, such as *Hope VI* (see Houston-Thomas n.d.), which alter the cultural and social meanings attached to space and place. Therefore, it should not come as a shock that the places long familiar and culturally relevant to Gullah/Geechees are being targeted for takeover. In Harlem, "the black Mecca," the "capital of black America," and "the queen of all black belts" (Johnson 2001:19), rich whites are also displacing the natives. In Atlanta, Georgia, race remains the paramount feature of the landscape, with interstates and highways built for this specific purpose of serving as a racial buffer between black and white (Rutheiser 1996). These manipulations of space seem to represent a deliberate "strategy of power and social control" (Low and Lawrence-Zuniga 2003:30) that grafts social inequality onto the physical landscape. Upon the contested Sea Island landscapes of South Carolina, Georgia and Northern Florida, the manipulation of physical space operates as a necessary component of a political economy of racism with a long and painful history. Sea Island natives have become the civilian casualties of a racialized war waged in the name of progress.

Over the past five decades, Gullah communities have transitioned from self-sufficient, cohesive

farming societies to largely marginalized wage laborers trapped in a system that serves the needs of twenty-first century neocolonials. The incoming "carpetbaggers" from the North are staging a reinvention of an Old South of the imagination, where their new plantations provide spatial segregation and their wealth translates into political power. This combination of physical, economic, and political marginalization serves to detach these Diasporic communities from the self-determination emancipation promised. Anthropologically speaking, I have ventured into this tumultuous space of colliding cosmologies seeking answers to my multitude of questions. What follows are the most significant results.

The Anthropology of Space and Place

In recent years, cultural anthropologists have acknowledged the collective practice of representing location as merely a geographic backdrop, or even worse, as somewhat meaningless beyond a designation as "our" ethnographic sites (see Low and Zuniga 2003). The intricacies of landscape have been anthropologically neglected (Hirsch 1995), leaving space and place heavily under-theorized. This glaring oversight is being corrected, as anthropologists take various positions to see, hear, feel, record, and further understand how people make sense of their cultural, physical and ideological surroundings. Interrogations of the spatial dimensions of culture and society reveal crucial connections and disjuncture within social fields encompassing different groups of people with different strategies for sense-making. For those of us committed to revealing injustice and inequality, the anthropology of space and place offers distinct pathways for articulating the numerous means of integrating racism and oppression into the multiple dimensions of the physical and ideological landscape. We may not be able to deconstruct the master's house with his own tools, (see Lourde 1993) but sneaking a peak at the cultural and ideological blueprints will go a long way toward expanding anthropological notions concerning varied (and often racialized and class based constructs molded into common sense) expressions of power.

The seemingly simple definitions of space and place prove insufficient for understanding the varied physical landscapes of capitalist U.S. society. When space and place are contextualized as static concepts, as they often are in development terms, they become problematic (see Moore 1997). Anthropological contributions, striving to remain conscious of the importance of culture as a

way of knowing[1] (Barth 1995), reveal the multiple conflicts that arise when people of differing cultural backgrounds, class positions, racialized identities, and cosmological frameworks enter a shared social field. Various theories about the realities of space and place have emerged to help one make anthropological sense of these escalating disputes.

Personal attempts at making sense of the gating trend, within the context of the Sea Islands, are informed by a hybrid paradigm shaped by current discussions on landscape philosophy. In particular, Raymond Williams' notion of the insider/outsider dichotomy (1973) offers one way to situate the often opposing viewpoints of Sea Islanders and gated "transplantees" (XX, personal communication 2003). Within Williams' framework, insiders are represented as "living" their landscape, while outsiders entertain an objectified concept of it (Williams 1973). *Country and the City* (1973) is focused on transitional experiences of English peasants as they struggled against the Industrial Revolution, but at the most basic level it is a discussion about differences in perspective regarding space and place. Peasants encounter and experience their landscapes in different ways and, therefore, have a different ideological relationship with their rural homelands than those invested in creating the City. Similarly, Gullah/Geechees interpret their environment in mutually organic ways, while newcomers seek to mold their surroundings to fit their desires. Although I do believe many gated residents have a passionate ideological love affair with the Lowcountry environment, they appear more concerned that it is their property. Some critics of Williams' analysis express discomfort with the implicit assumption that insiders (being used here to represent Gullah residents) are rooted in nature, while outsiders (representing gated residents) are connected only by commercial/possession values (see Berger 1972). Meanwhile, others suggest the analysis represents insiders and outsiders as mutually exclusive categories (Hirsch 1995). With regard to the analysis I am presenting here, however, Williams' key assertions about the nature of perspective gain relevance. From where I am standing anthropologically, the insider/outsider model holds its own and will, therefore, be employed sporadically to make sense of the dichotomous nature of native and newcomer perspectives.

As a means to sharpen the focus of spatial analysis, Hirsch recommends taking it a step further to foreground place against a background of space (1995). When we position the binary concepts of insider/outsider, place/space, foreground/background, and (the additional categories

1 Fredrik Barth's framework for understanding culture as a way of knowing.

suggested by Hirsch) tradition/modern, and image/representation we realize there is no absolute landscape to speak of. Landscape, therefore, is best understood as "a process" created through the interactions and conflicts between and among these variables present in any social field. What is even more important, many suggest, is the ways in which these variables encounter culture, power, and history (Dirks et al. 1997; Hirsch 1995). Therefore, space acquires meaning through the practices and experiences of these encounters (Allen 1990; Bourdieu 1977), thereby transforming space into place (Hufford 1994; Low 1994; Low and Zuniga 2003). After years of investigation, I am suggesting that Gullah/Geechees (as insiders) are employing an attachment to place as a weapon against the capitalist perspective of space as property (held by outsiders) increasingly privileged as common sense throughout the Lowcountry. Throughout this analysis various spaces and places, whether real or imagined, must be situated within the context of history, current predicaments, and the future. Yet regardless of location, there is much at stake in these contestations over cultural and social meaning.

Defining Space

The anthropological study of space reveals the multiple meanings different groups assign to a single physical location. In the early years, beginning with the development of Hilton Head Island in the 1950s, newcomers had little to no sensitivity about what had existed before their arrival. They were, as many remain today, "largely oblivious" to the distinctive culture and heritage of Gullah/Geechees (see Danielson 1995: 76). These spaces of lush (almost tropical) vegetation with the ocean out the back door were merely areas to be altered to suit the tastes of developers, whose primary goals were turning a hefty profit through the sale of spaces of luxury and exclusion. Those who bought into the idea of gated community life made no distinction between space and place. Taking a retrospective gaze back over the last half of the twentieth century, with respect to development throughout the Sea Islands, it is safe to say there has been a wholesale devaluation of these landscapes from places embodying cultural meaning and ethnic pride to spaces of white privilege and native marginalization.

When tinkering with space using anthropological tools, we clearly see the various ways space represents hegemonic power (Keith and Pile 1993, Soja and Hooper 1993). This power can and does transform, invent, reconfigure, erase, reveal, segregate, include, exclude, commodify,

peripheralize, ameliorate, consolidate, and/ or construct "space"; therefore each and every study of space must attempt to specify the ways in which power is being utilized within the particular "microgeographies" (Low 2000) under examination.

Defining Place

Anthropologists interrogating place as a cultural concept recognize it as a "multiplicity of histories, voices, and peoples" (Low 1994). Perhaps the reality of such a complex social field explains Hayden's designation of place as "a suitcase so overfilled one can never shut the lid" (1995:15). Making sense of place requires that we pay close attention to the variety of ways in which humans interact with and experience their surroundings. The landscapes of the Sea Islands have been crafted into places of cultural significance by Gullah/Geechee communities living in self-sufficient isolation from emancipation to the 1950s. Through everyday activities of farming, fishing, and community fellowship, they created a world of their own. And having the freedom to roam entire islands resulted in a transformation of ordinary spaces into places of rich cultural attachment. As real estate development engulfed island after island, natives were forced to deal with the economic pressure of possessing a tenaciously sought after commodity—land. But the biggest conflict was based on fundamental differences in perspective regarding place.

The significance of people's relationship with and cultural attachment to place cannot be overemphasized (Allen 1990; Hufford 1994). From the tidal creeks where they have cast nets for shrimp and crab, to the fields they have worked for generations, over toward the cemeteries they still visit to pay respect to the elders, Gullah/Geechees have imbued these places with their souls. Their memories are "impressed upon the contours of 'this' natural environment" (Hayden 1995:15), and their histories are "woven into the fabric" of the Lowcountry landscape (see Moore 1997). This is more than land for resorts and golf courses. This is the place where their African ancestors were brought in bondage hundreds of years ago. They were bought and sold in the nearby port cities of Charleston, Savannah, and Beaufort. Upon these landscapes the ancestors were forced to work the cotton, rice, and indigo that produced the wealthiest plantations in the South. Yet, it was here that they also forged one culture and one language out of many, and endured the hardships of enslavement with elements of their cultural homeland in their heads and their hearts. This is no ordinary place.

In the past fifty years, all Gullah/Geechee communities have been touched by change resulting from the gating trend. The force with which this phenomenon has shaken community after community makes it easy to understand why space and place theorists, such as Margaret Rodman, emphasize that places are politicized social constructions (2003). Each person who engages these spaces employs his or her own cosmological orientation, thereby often creating conflict and contestation. As I have watched this process unfold over the years, I can identify how power privileges some histories over others. All too often, change deemed "progress" has erased or reshaped many of the places connecting Gullah/Geechee identity with the surrounding environment. Yet they exist as always in the collective memory; and they can be recounted and "heard" with senses other than speech and hearing (Rodman 2003:215). These places take shape as people relive them right before our eyes, even if they are replacement representations for that which no longer exists in the physical realm. What is required, however, is a willingness to acknowledge these experiences as equally or more important than those of the islands' rich, white newcomers.

Narratives of Change: Empowering Place[2]

Place is a site of social and cultural reproduction, with landscapes acting as a stage upon which daily activity takes place (Low 1994). Charles Joyner, as one of few academics who has spent his career promoting respect for Gullah culture, captures the paramount issue in one breath: "In order to pass on the cultural heritage to the young, the elders need the living context in which that expressive culture arises" (1999: 281). It is becoming increasingly more difficult to do in the current predicament, thereby putting a strain on the cultural continuity that survived enslavement, mass lynching, Jim Crow segregation, and the Civil Rights Era. But in present day U.S. society, and arguably in similar situations across the globe, it comes down to the disheartening reality that culture can compete with oppression, hatred, and separation; but culture finds it difficult to compete with money. As Sea Islands are carved up by the outsider concept of ownership, the waterways, as well as a variety of other landscapes, become inaccessible to islanders whose identity is forged out

[2] The Afro-Nicaraguan and indigenous peoples of Nicaragua's Atlantic Coast utilized community mapping (through a World Bank project to determine land rights administered by Ted Gordon) to establish a collective narrative that clearly documented the legitimacy of their claim to land. By developing a shared narrative of the past, these groups (by working together) made a case for land rights as ultimately tied to their identity and shared social memory of struggle (see Gordon et al. 2003).

of their interaction with this natural environment. But many remember a time before "things change up."

Acie Johnson

For many Sea Islanders, the communities that existed before the changes is a distant memory they have only "heard about." But the elders, such as Acie Johnson, have a history created through a lifetime of experience. Mr. Johnson is a retired elder of St. Helena Island, but the rest he might have anticipated is far from the reality he lives today. It took months to finally sit down with Mr. Johnson for an interview,[3] due to his commitment to community preservation. He tries to attend every meeting and hearing that might impact his island home, which is quickly becoming nearly impossible.

> AJ: When I moved back from Atlanta, I swore that I wasn't gonna do anything anymore. I go to a meeting everyday, one last night, one now, and I got one in the morning. And I'm getting to a place in life where I feel like this is what I'm supposed to do.

Mr. Johnson remembers that which is no more, and I was able to go back into the past with him, if only for a moment, as he recounted the way things were. His recollections beautifully illustrate how the bonds between the Gullah and their surroundings were forged through experience.

> MH: So, when's the first time you remember hearing they were going to put an island out there and it was going to be gated? Or going to Hilton Head and finding out?
> AJ: Oh, I don't know. I left here in 55' and I left here when all this stuff was woods and we could meander wherever we wanted to. There was no such thing as gated or private communities, back then.
> MH: Do you remember coming home and thinking about it?
> AJ: When I came home, for almost 20 years, I came home with a purpose! That was to visit the elderly, my folks, and go. All the packinghouses right here, I worked at the packinghouses. In the summertime, after school, were the months that you could make some money. But it was very little then. And I guess it's still, comparatively, the same. See, the culture of this island when I grew up—it was free! If you want pecans you go to the tree and get you a bucket full of pecans and you go. Nobody cares. You didn't have something somebody had. It's yours. It was like a family. I read a book, and I still have it, it's called *All My Kins*. And it depicts how, particularly, how black lower middle-income people and how their family grew. In my case, I'm the second boy. My oldest brother, he stayed home. He did the work there. It was my job, because I was the next boy, to take care of my elderly. But I still had my work to do at home. I didn't get away from that. My daddy would come and get me and I'd do that, because he still supported me. And if there was any dispute in

[3] These conversations are from a focus group held on St. Helena Island in January 2004.

> the family where grandma Peggy lived, she was the one that settled it. And what she said GOES! When my grandfather, no matter how bad it is, when you go to Sampson Johnson house what he says is OK. Or he tell you what to do, that's what you do. And nobody says anything about it. That's it! And that's the way I grew up. After harvest there was always the canning season. Everybody in the family canned. My mother used to can, my mother and aunt Rosie, Cousin Eleanor, it was five or six of 'em. They would do 600 jars, easy. And it goes everywhere! You have yours; we'll pack the little boxes and send them to relatives in New York, New Jersey, wherever you are. What they do, they send the money home for the jar. And you fill the jar. Whatever it is that grows: tomatoes, watermelon rinds, okra, okra and tomatoes, pears, peaches, com, all that stuff. Everything. That's how you survived, in the wintertime. You basically lived from the field to the river, and that's what (excuse me) pisses me off about the people blocking the river. I have to think about that.
> MH: So gated communities block your access to the river?
> AJ: Not only gated communities, people that buys the land on the water. The first thing they do is block the access to the river. That's how we lived in this area! We lived from the field to the river. You can your stuff in the summer, and in the wintertime you go to the river to get the fish. Oysters, your fish, the clams, and in the summertime you get your crabs; and they had a way of preserving crabs.

Within Mr. Johnson's "narrative of change" the conflict created by outsider's epistemology of land as ownership is immediately visible. The places that are blocked off have been infused with cultural meaning crafted out of experience, and, in this case, survival. This powerful recollection also conveys a passionate resistance to being forced into conforming to an entirely contradictory worldview.

Bill Barnwell: "Bad Ass Jazz Man"

Over the seven years I have been conducting ethnographic fieldwork on and around St. Helena Island, I have developed a fondness to particular points on the landscape. There are magnetic scenes, such as the vast tomato field on Lands End Road that has the solitary live oak sitting dead in the center; sites that conjure reflection, such as the cottages at Wiggins Curb where I spent the first three summers—a portion of which I spent sitting outside on the picnic table wondering if my experiences were living up to those "ethnographic moments" I dreamingly envisioned before it all began; and places that provoked my imagination, like the last house on Lady's Island, nestled back from the road right on the tidal creek, on the side of Highway 21. There was never a year that I didn't strain my neck trying to see something about the house that I had never before noticed. I would imagine who lived there, and for how long, and what it has been like

having a front row seat to the vast changes taking place all around. I could just picture all my over-generalized mental pictures of Gullah life being played out on that front porch, or on the dock in the back. Little did I know it belonged to the notorious "Bad Ass Jazz Man" I had heard so much about from my crazy friend Ronnie in American Beach.

Highway 21 is the only way to get to St. Helena Island by car. Before reaching the island, it winds through historic Beaufort, and across Lady's Island. I believe my fondness for the house represents its position as a marker in my psyche-- it's the first thing I see that makes me feel at home in the area, and the last thing I see that resembles St. Helena as I am leaving. Perhaps it took on deeper meaning in that last year[4] (2003-2004), when so much of my time was spent without my family. As I passed the house when coming and going to and from Tennessee, it became the switch point: switch into "the anthropologist who can survive the agony of being away from my husband and daughters" mode when coming into the field, and over to "relieved Mommy and wife who will drive eight straight hours only stopping for gas to get home" mode. For whatever reason, Bill Barnwell's family home holds a special significance for me.

When I finally met Bill and he agreed to an interview, it was the fall of 2003. Bill suggested we meet for lunch at the Dataw Island Marina Restaurant. I was hesitant, but he assured me the restaurant was open to the public. We both learned the hard way that he had been mistaken. It was the perfect scenario for an anthropologist studying gated communities as spatial segregation because the guards harassed me and would not let me in, all the while making sure I understood they were NOT denying me access. The husky guard, who looks more like a nightclub bouncer, kept saying that over and over. "Mrs. Hargrove, we want to make sure you understand we are not denying you access, but you can't have lunch at the restaurant unless someone who resides here on Dataw calls you in a pass." I just laughed, and pulled to the side as instructed. Ten or so minutes later, the guard brought me a portable phone and whispered softly as if not to startle me, "It's Mr. Barnwell." I put the phone to my ear and we both began to laugh; how could this scenario have been more perfect? Bill then suggested we do the interview at his house, if that was acceptable to me, and I wrote down the directions. I could have passed out when I realized where it was that he lived.

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[4] June 2003- June 2004 was funded by a Wenner Gren dissertation grant, which was beyond incredible for the anthropologist in me, but a depressing hell as a mother and wife.

Bill is an area jazz legend. He has taught music in Jamaica, and played music all over the world. It's hard to find someone in the Beaufort area who doesn't know and like him. He was born in that house, and was just beginning renovations to restore it as we became acquainted. From that house, Bill and his family had witnessed the changes just as I thought, but through a child's eyes he experienced it as a subconscious, prolonged blur.

BB: This house was built in '28 I think.
MH: It's beautiful.
BB: Yeah. And it's basically, it's not a panel by panel structure. It turns out it was one of the earliest pre-fab because they had to bring in sections by boat to construct it. But it's just as though it was like plank by plank. I think they built it elsewhere, built parts of it elsewhere and then brought it, in lieu of the pre-fab materials, because the wood in this place is phenomenal. I mean, the 2x4's actually measure out to be 2x4s and it's made out of good solid stuff. So... there were five of us.
MH: What did your father do?
BB: My father was an agricultural agent.
MH: Extension agent?
BB: Extension service, yeah. And he was the second black man appointed to that kind of thing, you know, that was a federal job.
MH: Right.
BB: And he was appointed by Roosevelt. I think the first guy was in Alabama and his name was Blanton and my father was the second.
MH: And your father's name was...
BB: Benjamin. And he went to Hampton, which is not the Hampton University. This would be Hampton Institute.
MH: So you grew up here when there wasn't a bridge? [I am referring to the bridge connecting Beaufort to Lady's Island]
BB: Yeah but it wasn't long after, you know when I was very young the bridge was there. I mean, what do I know, and all of a sudden there was a bridge and I have no transitional memory or recall when it was and when it wasn't. It was like BOOM! It was there! But the highway, in particular, the paved road used to stop further west, but we used to count maybe five, six cars in a whole day.
MH: To come down this road? [Highway 21]
BB: That would pass this road. And one of them was my Dad's! (laughter!) But the bridge is as far back as I can remember. There was always a bridge.
MH: From Beaufort to Lady's Island?
BB: Well there wasn't one in Hilton Head. We used to go to Hilton Head quite a bit. Of course that was part of the territory he had to cover also.
MH: For his job?
BB: As an AG agent.
MH: So what do you remember about Hilton Head early?
BB: Oh, it was practically, it was like St. Helena was pretty much. Most of the people from Hilton Head came to school here. There were a few who went to Savannah. But I'd say

> 80% came here. And there's some, I have some really good friends, they're older than I am, but we're kinda close in the sense that we've always known one another. Even when I go over there now, on Hilton Head, there are certain places I can stop and for sure I will see some of these guys and we get together and talk. So everybody managed; in spite of things, to achieve a certain balance with happiness and doing what they wanted to do. And, of course, that's not possible without those typical, or not so typical pressures from the outside. And those guys that I know that are on Hilton Head now, their parents had quite a bit of property on Hilton Head that's put them in quite a position to be very concerned. So that is part of the normal conversation these days and it's more than a conversation. It's a matter of trying to come up with a lot of solutions as to how to handle things or what kind of connections can be made to sorta withstand the takeover any further. But the typical slam dunk takeover that I've heard of mostly on Hilton Head has been a matter of a structure being constructed right next to your property and then the value of that property goes up and you're forced out. I'm sure you've heard a lot about that development.

Bill's description of the gated phenomenon as a "slam dunk takeover" offers a situated perspective based on his interpretation of the process, as his friends on Hilton Head must have conveyed it, but also as he experienced and witnessed it as the "game," which is how he referred to it throughout the rest of our interview, intensified.

As a well respected and sought after musician, Mr. Barnwell has played in most, if not all, of the elite gated areas of Beaufort County, which includes Hilton Head Island. He suggested I go visit Bray's Island, which is one of the more recent gated developments in and around Beaufort. From what I've been told, that particular gated community is extremely exclusive, meaning it is reserved for the actual upper class, and not those gated residents who live well beyond their means. As Bill began to describe Brays Island, however, the mental picture of extravagance I anticipated was displaced by images of Bill as a child, playing in the woods without a care in the world:

> BB: [Bray's Island] It's beautiful back there. And there are areas back there that I used to go with my Dad as a kid. We used to have, my parents used to have friends up in that area and we used to go on Sundays, you know, for dinner and all. And it was nothing but just as far as you could see, plain old woods and water, and they found out about those places.

I detected a twinge of anger in Bill's voice as he acknowledged, "they found out about those places." Yet, somehow it was mixed with humor, as if Bill found the determination of gated community developers almost laughable. As I would come to understand, Bill had already traveled the long road of frustration concerning the whole disastrous process. That trip came to rest on the

realization that it was far more complex than anyone realized, and totally impervious to personal anger. Our frequent pep talks about my "unscientific" level of frustration were often all I had to pull my "self" away from the experiences of the witness, and push me back into the role of anthropologist. I am forever grateful to Bill for that.

Louise Cohen

Another Gullah elder who has been of crucial importance to my understanding of change is Louise Cohen. She and I met at the 2002 Gullah Conference on St. Helena Island, which was sponsored by the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition. She had come to share her inspirational history detailing how she got involved in preserving her culture and promoting cultural pride. Louise's story is similar to that of many Gullah elders: they have been the victims of cultural shame resulting from decades of Eurocentric indoctrination. They have watched and listened as their rich language and culture have been devalued and misrepresented. And, as is the case with many of my elder acquaintances, they have been deeply inspired by Queen Quet's commitment to uplifting Gullah/Geechee people. Louise recounted the first time she heard Gullah pouring from Queen Quet's mouth, and the initial shame that was quickly replaced by an overwhelming sense of dignity. She referred to it as "coming out of her Gullah closet" and she has since been very active in her community on Hilton Head in an effort to preserve her culture and share it with others. As she spoke I took note of the many things she shared that day, but it was not until weeks later (in taking a second look at my reflections from the Conference) that I realized what had been said. As I began engaging the native participants about the impact of gated communities, Louise commented on a recent community meeting during which a gated resident of Hilton Head Plantation stood up and expressed his dissatisfaction with "*having to see all those run-down trailers on Squire Pope Road*" (the main road through the Gullah community on Hilton Head Island that leads to Hilton Head Plantation). It would take an entire year to arrange an interview that fit both our busy schedules, but her cultural memories of growing up on Hilton Head vastly expanded my insight into the Gullah's deep, historical connections to the physical landscape.

> LC: Ok. When my growing up here, there wasn't cars and stuff wasn't in abundance at all. Ok? It was people with horses and wagons. Ok. Now, I was born in 1943. So they actually took me to Savannah but they brought me back in 1944 at 9 months old. So then I was here, from then on! And so going to school back in the 1940s or early 1950s, we walk. And

then there was Mr. Charlie Simmons, whose wife used to drive the school bus, but Mr. Charlie had the transportation. His bus was the school bus. And Mrs. Patterson, they had the school bus. So then we watch that change and then there was schools in the community. There was a school down on Squire Pope Rd. and that was Pope, Squire Pope School. Then there was a school in Jonesville, and that's on Jonesville Rd. back up in there. And every community had one, but the children from Spanish Well, they walk to Jonesville School. I think they had it in the Church of Christ building there for a minute too. And then the one in Marshland area, that was the school. They had a school there. Then Cherry Hill School, that's the one that's still up in Mitchellville. That's the one that's still there. They preserved that one. Ok? And I think the kids from Chaplin walk, they walk to the school in Marshland area. But every little area had its school. Yeah. Cause that one went from, they used to say it was soft back primer, hardback primer and, to the first grade. Where I went was through 6th grade. Then you're 7th grade you went to Junior High. Now where the Junior High School was right across from, I forgot the name of it but it's right there where the Hilton Head Hospital is. Where that road is. That school was right across from there. That was the Junior High School. So 8th and 9th grade went there. Then anything over that you went off the island. So I went to Pope School, I went to Jr. High and then they built the school right there on [Highway] 278. That was, then, the elementary school. And then you could see, as the years changed, that the improvements and the difference came where the building was no more wooded structure but brick.

Louise recalled all the schools that had come and gone between her childhood and that day, then eloquently veered off into the economic and subsistence history of her "remembered" Hilton Head Island.

MH: Now, do you remember this [island] being people mostly farming?
LC: Oh, let me tell you something. We farmed on this island until William Hilton, that hotel came. It was William Hilton Inn, and then it was another one. Seacrest, I think, was the name of that one. So until those buildings came in... see that was the beginning of development. But farming and oystering, the farm and the creek! That was their main economics for this area, for Hilton Head.
MH: So, what were your parents like? What did they do?
LC: My parents, my biological parents did not raise me, I was raised by an aunt. She farm! It was farming and musk picking! And musk is a plant and I guess the substance that is extracted from it, [I did not understand what Louise was saying, so I gently interrupted her]
MH: Now, how would you spell that?
LC: I think it's m,u,s,k, so I don't know whether they, and I need, I got so much stuff I need to research. I need to really research to find out whether the substance from that plant was used in the musk for cologne and stuff. But I know they also use that for tobacco. So then this was our way of life here on Hilton Head, it was farming, or you pick musk, and of course raising animals and stuff like that to sell. When the tomato farm came, of course it was still farming, but then it was actually some farmers came in from Ft. Pierce Florida, Bill Taylor. I don't know really if he was from Ft. Pierce but I know a lot of the migrant workers were from Ft. Pierce, Florida. And these people would travel around. And it was tomato

> farm, it was cucumber and squash. Those were the main three. And they did that here on the island for years. I don't know how they made the decision to just plant tomatoes, squash and cucumbers. I don't know how that decision was made. But I know a lot of places, like down Jenkin Island, all that was farmland and out there, Seabrook, the nursing home is back up in there, but when you go through that gate, by Mt. Calvary Church, yeah, like when you go meet Lavon, if you go through that gate, all back up in there was farmland [the area Louise is referring to is the present day gated community of Hilton Head Plantation]. You know? So, that's what we did. But you could have seen it... almost like the change was coming then. You know what I'm saying? Because it was just gradual, right! It was gradually changing then.

What seemed so gradual then has produced a Hilton Head Island that is foreign to native islanders, and paradise to visitors from all over the world. It is a trend evident in every Sea Island landscape, and documenting it from place to place often became overwhelming. I suspect it would become a heavy emotional burden for any person with a heart. In the field journal used to document the personal aspects of fieldwork, I wrote extensively about my position as "the vulnerable observer" (Behar 1986). I include one of those entries here because I believe it **will** "take the reader somewhere they couldn't otherwise get to"[5] (Behar 1986:14), as a essential component of the truth I seek to expose regarding the devastation of Gullah communities resulting from the gating phenomenon:

> *Driving island to island to make my own interpretations begins to run together into a deja vu -esque experience. Traveling a small narrow road alongside a massive steel or concrete structure, as if it were a welcome mat being laid down for the anticipated masses on their way, has became a common experience* (see Figure 3.1). *Abandoned representations of Gullah homes are often still standing in a field of weeds, often so close to the new architectural giant I was sure I could reach out and touch it, that it spoke to me as I passed. Once you come to know people as people, and not simply as "a group being displaced," once you know what makes them happy, sad, what they believe in, you can picture the lived experiences that occurred. You can see the shadows of previous owners before the small changes became so forceful they were just too much to defeat.*

[5] One of the foundational messages conveyed within *The Vulnerable Observer: Anthropology that Breaks Your Heart* (1996) is that the "self as a witness" should only be exposed if it can accomplish this task, while also being an essential aspect of the argument being made.

Figure 3.1: An Image of Change (Bridge Construction on Highway 278, Beaufort Co. SC)

The narratives included here represent only a small slice of what has been shared with me over the years. The specific narratives were chosen as representative of the ways in which a lifetime of experience transforms the space of the physical environment into places of cultural and social significance. Ownership is not, therefore, the only experience that validates claims for exclusive rights over Sea Island landscapes. It is but one epistemology, which whites have inherited from a legacy of the colonial past. It sits in direct conflict with the Gullah epistemology that views land as a member of the family,[6] and thus as incapable of being bought or sold.

For some groups of people, "the link between nature and culture is inextricably bound together" (Wagner 2002:127). Land ties them to their ancestors, and to the work that has taken place building family and community. By foregrounding[7] "place" (as Sea Island landscapes imprinted with cultural memory) against a background of "space" (as a physical space that becomes void of prior history through the American dream of ownership) one begins to catch a

[6] For a comparative example of land being compared to a member of the family see Wagner 2002.
[7] The concepts of foreground/background as related to space and place were introduced by Hirsch 1995.

glimpse of the severity of what's at stake in this conflict. As insiders, Gullah/Geechees have lived and struggled to continue to "live" the landscape (Williams 1973), while the outsider reinvents it as a private utopia that came into existence upon his or her arrival. These places throughout the Sea Islands are so much more than land to build resorts upon or waterways to be jet-skied across. They represent the roots of African cultural expression in the United States. These places deserve be cherished by all Americans for the strength and character they represent. More importantly, American southerners, both white and black, need to collectively recognize the multiple African contributions within their shared regional culture (see Phillips1991). Best of luck sharing this news with any white person within 100 miles of the Sea Island coast!

CHAPTER 4
SPACEMAKING: MAPPING POWER AND PRIVILEGE

Introduction

The gated communities of the South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Sea Islands represent what power and privilege look like, literally, when mapped onto the landscape. The development of these areas reinvents all the spaces both within and around the community, in an effort to create what residents believe paradise to be. This practice of space-making has disastrous cultural, social and environmental implications not wholly drawn into the original site plans. This chapter seeks to expose how such changes are experienced, contested, and sometimes understood from the outside. I will begin by contextualizing the gating phenomenon in the United States, and quickly move into specific impacts documented in various Gullah/Geechee communities.

Since the abolition of slavery, privileged whites, in all areas of the United States, have been diligently struggling to invent new and covert strategies for spatial control, as well as social and economic oppression under direct paternalistic control. Slavery was quickly replaced with Jim Crow,[1] followed by the development of the ghetto system in northern cities (for a discussion of the 'peculiar institutions' of racism see Rajadurai 2001). But, as blacks have succeeded in infiltrating the middle and upper middle class, middle class whites have been forced to get even more creative. Their solution? Gated communities—what I believe Maori scholar Linda T. Smith could be referring to as "sovereign reservations for the elite" in her analysis of the reemerging signs of imperialism:

> The very wealthy have always been able to escape, while the middle classes have been able to move out of suburbia or go on holiday from time to time. The middle classes, however, are also shifting more permanently into their own security zones with privatized police forces and self-contained social services. The possibility of disengaging themselves from the "other" through the establishment of sovereign reserves is not too far-fetched (Smith 1999:103).

Within such reserves, whites employ a complex collection of ideological strategies—a "habitus of racism"-- that legitimizes and necessitates racial apartheid. The creation of gating in America, according to Setha Low (2003:17) is "a strategy for regulating and patrolling an urban poor comprised predominantly of Latino and black minorities living in ghettos and other deteriorating

[1] Slavery was actually followed by Reconstruction, which offered an alternative to the racial inequality standard. This period, however, was short lived.

residential areas." The ability to afford this gated lifestyle, in addition to insulating one from the "others," ultimately translates into social status via white privilege, a quality of living that whites feel they are entitled to (and diligently remind one another to expect).

As we come closer to dissecting the separation mentalities of the more than sixteen million. U.S. citizens gated off from the rest of us,[2] the picture becomes much more complex than simple narrow-mindedness. It is not wholly based on racism either, though we can't discount the obvious facts of where gated areas are located across the American landscape.[3] Gating, among other things, is an ideology, and living in a gated community creates an identity being sought after by a growing number of U.S. citizens. As Low articulates in her ethnographic analysis of gated life, *Behind the Gates: Life, Security, and the Pursuit of Happiness in Fortress America*, living in a gated community represents a new version of the middle-class American dream (2003). What is even more disturbing, however, is that the dreams they are seeking are ideological inventions of a mythic, uncomplicated past that probably never truly existed (Low 2003). On the basis of my ethnographic exchanges, this invention encourages gated residents to believe they can create a utopian community if only allowed to live in peace with like-minded persons who possess similar values and mutual interests. As I intend to illustrate, such rationalizations bear no resemblance to reality.

Contextualizing the Gating Phenomenon in the United States: Macro Level

Gated residential communities, defined as "areas with restricted access in which normally public spaces are privatized" (Blakely and Snyder 1999: 2) first appeared in California, Texas, and Arizona (Low 2003). The development of such communities has become a national trend, with no signs of slowing anywhere on the horizon. In 2002, about 40% of new homes built in California were behind walls (USA Today 2002 http://www. usatoday.com/news/nation/2002-12-15-gated-usat_x.htm). In the early stages, people who chose to live in gated areas were characterized as retirees who migrated to warm weather areas (Low 2003). As the trend has progressed, however, distinct patterns have emerged which have those of us on the outside a bit alarmed. It is no secret that, for the most part, homeowners, who reside in gated communities, whether in South Carolina

[2] Statistics found in Low 2003.
[3] Gated areas exist in areas that bring middle and upper class whites into contact with growing populations of ethnic minorities, such as California, Arizona, Texas, and New York, in addition to the states discussed here.

or Arizona, live in a secluded, private, white world (see El Nasser 2002). Critics of the social impact of gated areas are quick to point out the ways in which they reinforce social separation based on class and ethnic differences, as well as the more obvious representations of fortressed spaces as exclusionary and elitist. Yet such criticism doesn't seem to be raising any eyebrows in the development and real estate industries. The latest American Housing Survey for the United States: 2003, issued by the US Census Bureau in September 2004, indicate that more than 7 million households are considered "secured communities" (meaning walled off from the rest of us). Nearly 700,000 of those homes have been built within the past four years (US Census Current Housing Reports, Series H150/03).

The academic study of gated communities within the United States is a relatively recent undertaking. The first recognized analysis of the gated phenomenon, *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States* (Blakely and Snyder 1999), is focused on addressing the fragmentation and polarization resulting from these imposed boundaries. This analysis also offers a useful typology of gated communities, in an effort to make sense out of the growing number of people who call them home. According to Blakely and Snyder (1999), there are three distinct types of gated communities: (1) lifestyle communities, (2) prestige communities, and (3) security zone communities. Lifestyle communities provide security and separation for the leisure activities and amenities offered within. These types often target retirees, golf fanatics, and those who can afford to live a life of leisure. Prestige communities symbolize the distinction and prestige of those who reside within, motivated by the desire to project an image of status and social distinction. These communities become enclaves of rich and famous, often classifying as "good enough" to house the top fifth percent of the wealthy class, as well as millionaire executives (Blakely and Snyder 1999). The third type, security zone communities, offers defensive fortification motivated by fear of crime and outsiders (Blakely and Snyder 1999). Within the Sea Islands of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, we find an abundance of lifestyle communities, yet my research experiences suggest that many of these gated areas represent elements of all three.

Spatial Segregation of Sea Island "Microgeographies"

To comprehend issues relating to space and place on the scale of "microgeographies" (Low 2000) (loosely designated as Sea Island communities, Sea Islands, and/or Gullah/Geechee

communities), there are critical questions that must be asked and answered about the landscapes under investigation. For example, how do spaces become places? Who (meaning what group) possesses the power to bring about that transition? What conflicts arise over particular places? And, what is at stake for the multiple groups involved? (see Pred and Watts 1992). After all, it is often the historical context of such questions that necessitates our critical gaze toward space and place as more complex cultural factors than once presumed (see also Kaplan 1994). The journey begins on the South end of Hilton Head Island in the 1950s, where the ideology of gated community development was born. If we cling tight to the designations of space and place established thus far, our analysis will require exclusively separate interpretations. I constructed the following competingnnarratives utilizing seven years of research in these areas, which has been further substantiated by a handful of published works devoted to this issue.

Gullah/ Geechee "Place" vs. Charles Fraser's "Space"

In 1950, the North end of Hilton Head remained much as it had for almost 100 years. The Gullah population lived in isolation with no bridge to the mainland, and they were dependent on the waterways and the earth for sustenance. Charles Joyner, personally familiar with the Gullah rhythm, envisioned the calm before the storm in the following way: "the life of the land and the people seemed fixed in an invisible circle, enclosed by the waters and the passage of time" (1999: 278). At "dayclean" (meaning early morning right before sun up), Island residents went to the field or the crik (meaning creek, which is a term used to refer to a variety of water sources where fish, shrimp, crab and oysters can be gathered) to procure what was needed. They lived in communities (based on "common unity" Goodwine 1998), and although they didn't have financial wealth, they had God, the Land, and each other... so they viewed themselves as rich. It was as close to paradise as many would think to hope for, but the change was on its way. Before they even knew what hit them, the places long associated with everyday life became Sea Pines Plantation. Charles Fraser made Hilton Head Island into a space of exclusion and racism, and the accompanying rise in property taxes made it impossible for native islanders to afford to stay. Some sold their land, some were stripped of it through illegal and unethical means, and a handful remain there today, still holding on for dear life. So much for paradise!

In 1956, Charles Fraser acquired a large tract of land at the South end of Hilton Head Island and turned his dream into the reality known as Sea Pines Plantation; thus" transforming an almost forgotten barrier island into one of the nation's premier resorts" (Danielson 1995: 1). The creation of this private resort has become the model for similar endeavors on this and other barrier islands off the coasts of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida. These spaces of luxury quickly changed from resort spaces to home spaces for affluent retirees. They spent their days golfing and enjoying their private access to the beaches, until the development machine raged out of control and ruined it for everybody (including a few black families on the North end that are from Jamaica or somewhere like that). Now there is no more land to build on (except the land on the North end, but unless it could all be acquired at once it couldn't be developed, due to the population density and lack of water and sewage services), the traffic congestion is unimaginable, and working class families from all over the country are beginning to be able to afford a week's vacation there. So much for paradise!

As many scholars of space and place agree, there are always multiple versions of history associated with any landscape, particularly those categorized as "contested." Differing perspectives reveal the varied subject positions of Gullah/Geechees and gated newcomers, as well as what each group feels they have at stake. The version I subscribe to was constructed utilizing seven years of ongoing research within various Sea Island communities up and down the coast, supported by a growing body of literature on the subject. The current analysis of space-making, based on knowledge acquired through my ethnographic encounters with the gated residents who participated in this research, cannot be taken to represent all residents who choose life behind the gates, nor am I suggesting that all such newcomers to the Lowcountry share a deep-seeded hatred of persons of color whom they intentionally set out to re-enslave. My anthropological position is that gated communities intensify social segregation and perpetuate new, more subtle forms of racism (see also Low 1993). The version of history that continues to be written upon the pages and the landscapes, as suggested by Foucault (1980), ultimately comes down to a parallel version of the history of powers.

The realities of the gated phenomenon did indeed begin with Charles Fraser's 1956 development of Sea Pines Plantation, although the community did not officially become gated until 1967. Sea Pines was designed to cater to rich retirees and vacationers, and the first lot was sold in 1958. By 1964, there were 32 millionaires who owned property in Sea Pines (Danielson 1995). The majority of newcomers to Hilton Head had little respect for the Gullah islanders, which established a trend that continues today (see Hawkins 1990). In 1961, Port Royal Plantation was developed, followed by Shipyard Plantation in 1970. During this fourteen-year period, Gullahs of the North end experienced only minimal impact. But that would change in 1971, when Sea Pines developed Hilton Head Plantation right at their back door. As the population of moneyed whites increased, so too did their ideas of Hilton Head as "their" island (Danielson 1995). It did not take long for the new owners of the island to cast the Gullah community as an obstacle to progress.

Pressures mounted over these next few years, and Gullah residents experienced racism, economic and political marginalization, and strong pressure to sell off their cultural land inheritance acquired by their enslaved ancestors. Many felt forced to throw in the towel, and by 1975 (in a brief period of twenty-five years) the Gullah population of Hilton Head was diminished from 90% to 15%

(Danielson 1995). Those who stayed have battled what amounts to a (re) colonization effort on the part of developers and plantation residents. Their historical ties to the land were dismantled by land use restrictions soon after the incorporation of The Town of Hilton Head as a municipality in 1983. The Gullah of Hilton Head, assisted by the local branch of the NAACP, strongly contested the vote to incorporate. They collectively asserted that the proposed land use restrictions, higher taxes, and the nullification of the Town's municipal obligation to bring water and sewer to this part of the island would further disenfranchise Gullah natives (R/UDAT[4] 1995), yet it passed by an overwhelming majority. Since the developed "plantation" communities were private, with private service facilities, this blatant "neglect of simple justice" (R/UDAT 1995:5) effectively made Gullah designed development impossible. Losing their primary means of survival, and with no way to make the development machine work in their favor, Gullahs had to make a tough choice: join the ranks of the "culture of servitude"[5] in service to the very communities responsible for their demise, or leave (Faulkenberry et al. 2000; see also Danielson 1995). Many chose the latter.

The wholesale development and takeover of Hilton Head Island represents the blueprint that has been employed on island after island from Georgetown to Fernandina. It was, in essence, a sign of what was to follow (Joyner 1999). It has been more than fifty years since the development of Sea Pines, yet gated communities continue to be built, native island communities continue to be economically and politically marginalized, and gated newcomers continue to translate white privilege into the implementation of their own selfish agendas. The complex boundaries imposed by gated community segregation illuminate a conscious execution of white privilege aimed at preserving de facto apartheid, rationalized as Everyman's God-given right to pursue the American dream.

"Explanations of Exclusion From the Point of View of the Excluded"[6]

Throughout my years of field research I have engaged in conversations with various Gullah/Geechee residents about the gated community situation in their particular area. Each place seems to be at a different point along the continuum toward wholesale takeover, while some

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[4] The Hilton Head Island Regional/ Urban Design Assistance Team (Report). American Institute of Architects 1995.
[5] The "culture of servitude" concept was introduced by Faulkenberry et al. 2000.
[6] Sibley (1995) suggested that what is missing within the broader interrogation of exclusion is the explanation of such from the point of view of the excluded.

communities choose not to acknowledge it. With the Hilton Head Island model of exclusionary expansion still fresh in our minds, it seems more than appropriate to begin the discussion of the excluded viewpoint with a resident who experienced it first hand. Louise Cohen witnessed the reinvention of the island landscape, and her insight suggests she has devoted some critical thought to the process:

> MH: Now when is the first recollection you have of a gated community; of hearing about something being built that was going to exclude other people?
> LC: Let me see which community that had the first gate, I think it was Sea Pines, I think, that had the first gate.
> MH: Do you remember the community talking about that?
> LC: I'll tell you my reaction about it---my reaction about it was: How in the name of God can these people put up a wall to keep other people from coming on their property, unless you get permission or buy a pass- but yet, they can roam around on yours; drive through any time they want to? You know what I'm saying? So, that's the part that used to tee me off-- Because I see so much disrespect.

The frustration Louise expressed here is the most common criticism of the gated situation from the Gullah perspective: how gated residents restrict Gullah/Geechee access to "their" spaces, which are places that were accessible prior to the arrival of the subdivision, while they can roam around outside the gate in Gullah/Geechee communities without restriction. Time after time, Islanders expressed outrage concerning what they viewed as blatant disrespect. I devoted much thought to the obvious nature of their complaint, and tried to imagine how insulting that might be. Then one day I had the opportunity to glimpse it for myself. My home on St. Helena was directly across the water from Dataw Island. I could sit in my front yard and gaze across to their secluded paradise, yet I rarely saw individuals unless it was the many near misses on my daily jogs. It must have been in late September that I settled into a rhythm of solitude, after my husband and girls returned to Tennessee for school. I began each day with a strong cup of coffee on the front steps, and it wasn't long before I got a taste of the disrespect Gullah/Geechees contend with on a daily basis.

The gated residents of Dataw were constantly coming over to the road I lived on to test the speed of their new convertibles, ride their bikes, and take leisurely morning and late evening walks. It was a long, dead end road, with only three residents including me. It was very peaceful and quiet for the most part. I wasn't all that bothered at first, and I would normally say hello or wave as they passed. But more than half never even acknowledged the gesture. They surveyed the trailer and surrounding landscape with obvious disapproval as they passed, and their use of the road as a

dragstrip resulted in the death of three stray dogs within five months. In the summer months, it was obvious there were grandchildren visiting, because there were kids on mopeds racing up and down the street. One day I decided to engage in a conversation with a morning walk regular. He always seemed extremely nice, and we would usually exchanged greetings and a wave as he made his first pass down the road. I was in the field picking blackberries as he walked back by, so I decided to strike up a conversation. He made a reference to how beautiful the morning was, and how much he loved the scenery on this side of the island. I responded with a comment about how beautiful I had heard Dataw Island was inside, but said it was a shame that it was only for residents. "I sure would appreciate being able to take my daily runs in your community! Hey, maybe you could arrange that for me, since you walk over here everyday! God knows I am going to get killed running on this road with the way people drive." He just smiled uncomfortably and pretended I hadn't said it. He truly seemed offended by my comment. He half-heartedly wished me a good day and off he went. From then on, he barely even acknowledged me as he passed, and I recognized his sensitivity to my naming his white privilege for what it was.

This situation is viewed as a double standard by Gullah/Geechees who are now restricted from so many of the places they used to fish from, hunt in, or visit to collect pecans, sweetgrass or other items the natural environments once provided. In November of 2003 I traveled with Queen Quet to Fernandina to conduct a focus group, orchestrated and arranged with the assistance of Glenda Simmons-Jenkins. Participants who attended the meeting in Fernandina, known to whites and tourists as Amelia Island (named for the gated community, Amelia Island Plantation, developed by none other than Charles Fraser), had a lot to add to the point of view of exclusion being constructed here. I began the meeting with a short introduction to the parallel issues I see Gullah/Geechees facing up and down the coast, then asked folks to begin a dialogue to situate their particular position. The first person to speak shared his discomfort with native blacks that leave the area as young adults and return to Fernandina years later—only to take up residence in gated communities. That created a bit of confusion, but William Jefferson's candid input brought the discussion back on track.

> WJ: Well, I'm trying to get a perspective on the exactness of the conversation so I don't get lost. The majority of the gated communities are White people from the North!!
> MH and Crowd: Exactly.

WJ: That's what we, I don't even know any black people that stay on the plantation, inside the gates, but most of the gated communities I work at or go to are mostly white people from the North who have a house down here in the South on what's supposed to be OUR property. To them this is just a resort. And they don't even live here. They think this is just a resort.
MH: How do you feel about that? Do you remember when they started developing that?
WJ: I remember in the seventies when we was cleaning off the property for... when we were killing the rattlesnakes. That was the first thing you gotta do when they move in. We were killing the rattlesnakes, and it was, then it was jobs coming in I guess people thought it would be good for the community. But once you come in, you see that the people come in with the money and they build up their own world and your world is pushed... it's pushed back. And really from Amelia Island, when they first started to now, to not building any more low income housing but the objective is to take people out. If you don't have a certain income you probably won't be able to live in the area say within a few years time. So, really, you hate to see your ancestor land gone and the history gone because they don't even cooperate.
LH: Well, here's where we really need to go. I grew up here and I left here in '61 and spent 35 years in the city. Ok? Those people, when the white people decided to build, what is now called main beach, we just always called it the White Beach, when they developed THAT beach, because of segregation, they sent us miles and miles out of the city. We had a long way to go to get to American Beach. American Beach was not then prime property! It was woods and rattlesnakes, like he said. But that was land OWNED by black people. All back there where all you got all those developments and all those things, they're where Black people lived! I grew up down on the waterfront in Fernandina, which is always been the pulse of the city. Industry came through the railroad and the dock but not many people wanted to live down there by those smelly stinkin' fishin' boats, shrimp boats. So, Black folks lived down there. When you got off the dock all of that was Black property. Now we got the river being developed! We got the port, and all that! In all those Black people there are three Black landowners left down there.

These candid responses to my research question illustrate the parallel impacts of the gating phenomenon upon Gullah/Geechee from Fernandina, Florida to Georgetown, South Carolina: racism and class based inequality resulting in disrespect, feelings of great cultural loss pertaining to ancestral lands sacrificed to resort development, and the deliberate efforts to push them out of the way of progress.[7] Making these types of connections between different communities represents one of the advantages of multi-sited ethnography, which situates the struggles of one minority

[7] The lack of low income housing in Gullah/Geechee areas is also under review in Beaufort County, South Carolina. An external firm hired to research the issue and offer suggestions went so far as to suggest that gated residents want to be served, yet their actions clearly illustrate a desire for an invisible service class (Beaufort County Council Meeting, April 2004).

group in a comparative position with that same group in other locations, but also within a broader matrix of social inequality in the United States.

The Fernandina focus group took place in conjunction with a seminar aimed at connecting the black community of Florida to their Gullah ancestral kin in South Carolina. Among those who made this trip were Elder Carlie Towne and Elder Halim Gullah Beemie of Charleston, and Elder Lesa Wineglass Smalls of Edisto Island. The Florida community was hungry for knowledge concerning the connection, but anyone could see they were a bit puzzled at the initial workshop on Friday night. When Queen Quet began educating the crowd about their shared heritage, and encouraging them to reach back to retrieve that strength from the ancestors, it was uncomfortably quiet in that small historic church. But as she gradually began to engage them in Gullah, the energy level in the room literally made the hairs on my arm stand up.

One of the issues Gullah/Geechees often recognize and critically assess is the power of their community's collective dollars. During that afternoon in Florida, a woman who had not yet uttered a sound ingested the scattered sentiments I have heard over the years, and offered it up in a way that acknowledged the longevity of the economic contributions of the collective black community:

> DJ: My feeling about that is, I was born here in Fernandina and lived here most of my life, with the exception of 19 years ago I moved to Jacksonville. But my classmate, whose father ran the biggest liquor business, now is a developer on Oyster Bay[8]. And he had a bar, called Island Bar, in the black community. So we really are part owners. It kinda bothers me that our money went into something that we can't even partake of. And we spent our money, not knowing that it's leaving our hands, and it's not gonna ever come back again, because somebody else is going to use it. And I think, from that perspective, when I think about that gated community down there, I think we own it and can't even go in it. Because we are responsible for him being able to own it. And those homes are $200,000+. You can't even get back there to see what they look like-- you can see the big mansion on the sign but you can't see it. You can't get in there. It disturbs me, from that perspective that our money went in that development.

This transcript is particularly significant for two reasons: first, the comments represent the "ethnic epistemology" of Gullah culture operating on the premise that relationships should be reciprocal. DJ is making the point that the community put money into this person's pocket; therefore they are now connected to that investment and the economic returns. Second, it touches on the postcolonial

[8] Oyster Bay is one of the more recent gated community developments in the Fernandina area.

nature of economic inequality within white/black exchanges that originated during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. If we step back just one more level of abstraction, the Gullah/Geechee have even more invested in this ongoing process of exploitation than the Florida respondents may even realize. The plantations of the Lowcountry were among the wealthiest in the nation. They built the majestic antebellum homes that continue to generate mass amounts of revenue as tourists flock to Savannah, Beaufort, and Charleston for walking tours, ghost tours, and open house opportunities throughout the year. Their indigenous knowledge made rice cultivation possible, thereby creating the capital to reinvest in purchasing more and more of their kin across the Sea. At the height of production around 1850, South Carolina alone recorded 160 million pounds of rice harvested. They subsequently worked the fields that produced 'King Cotton;' the product Marx suggested was the fuel behind the Industrial Revolution:

> Direct slavery is as much the pivot point upon which our present day industrialization turns as are machinery and credit. Without slavery there would be not cotton, without cotton there would be no modern industry. It is slavery which has given value to the colonies, it is the colonies which have created world trade, and world trade is the necessary condition for large scale machine industry (Marx cited in Rajadurai 2001).

Robin Blackburn, the contemporary Marxist who further elaborates this important realization in *The Making of New World Slavery* (2000), makes clear that the cotton production of plantation slavery played the dominant role in early capitalism:[9]

> The growth of towns and forces of production, factories and tools were dependent on an international system. Without the constant supply of raw material, in this case cotton, the mills on Lancashire would have come to a standstill. Early capitalism was more dependent on materials produced in the colonies that at any other time in its history (Blackburn 2000 cited in Rajadurai 2001).

These are the types of knowledge I try to share with my field consultants, often suggesting particular readings they might find useful in their struggles for exposure and equality. And some already realize, which helps them make sense of why white people choose to gate themselves off (whenever possible, and particularly those considered wealthy). Elder Lesa Wineglass Smalls and I spent some time together in Savannah while attending the Tybee Island tribute in the summer of

[9] DJ's statement about the Island Bar ,in the context of black communities spending money on alcohol in white owned establishments, suggests an opportunity for future analysis regarding the various ways profits from alcohol sales in the Sea Islands areas may be connected to actions that reinforce racial inequality.

2003. I was fascinated by her well-developed theory on white people, and her faith in the fact that karma[10] will eventually strike a balance for the white sins of the past. Within this elaborate conceptual construction, Smalls suggests that paranoia is the real reason behind the gates. The context of the following passage was our conversation about how Gullah/Geechees deal with the history of their interactions with whites. Smalls finds humor in the fact that whites think blacks are wasting brainpower thinking about them with regard to current situations of inequality. She established the fact that people of color (at least those that surround her) try to concentrate on themselves and what they can do as a people to change things for themselves.

> LWS: Not in that way, we're not studying you. We're just trying to make sure ya'll aren't trying to fuck us again. But see, I think what it is, white folks want to say, "well we didn't have anything to do with slavery and most of us didn't own slaves" but in reality you know that you had a lot to do with it. That's why you keep worrying; they keep wondering "well, when are these people going to get us back?" That's the biggest problem. On the one hand (like I said) they want to say that 'we had nothing to do with it' but in your heart of hearts you know that what you did was wrong, and you cannot understand "why are these people not attacking us?" That's what they're worried about.

This might explain a comment from the Sapelo Island ferry captain, who had worked at Harbor Towne's marina (located on Hilton Head) for the first fifteen years of its operations. The comment was not his own, but one that had been made to him (regarding the offensiveness of gating) with deep enough sincerity that he remembered it word for word: "When the revolution comes, we will already have them in camps!" He repeated it a second time with the exact intonation as before, as if he had said it over and over to himself in a search for the meaning.

On the issue of gating, there seems to be a consensus among Gullah/Geechees regarding its inherently exclusionary nature. Perhaps this has to do with the "ethnic epistemology" that privileges the community over the individual. A number of them suggested the practice is in direct opposition to island life, particularly because it prohibits them from access to places where certain resources (such as pecans, shrimp, oysters, and sweetgrass to name a few) have been obtained for centuries. Blocking access to resources traditionally used for subsistence and craft production is obviously a problem. However, the issue that defies the human imagination is the preponderance of gated communities that enclose and gate off a particular Gullah/Geechee cemetery. Although gated residents try to suggest the issue is exaggerated, I have traveled time

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[10] Karma is used here to represent the view that "what goes around eventually comes back around."

and time again to cemetery after cemetery locked away behind these gated areas. The first time I had an opportunity to see this for myself was in July of 2002, on a trip with Elder Jamal Toure. He invited me to come along, as he traveled to Hilton Head Plantation to pay respects to his ancestors. At the guard gate, he told the guard he was visiting Talbird and Elliot cemeteries and we went through.

> MH: So, now if I had driven up and told that guy I was going to Talbird cemetery would he have let me go?
> JT: Yea. He'll let you go.

I did return on three separate occasions, in an attempt to document the progress of the condo project, the residents possibly relaxing on their balconies overlooking hundred of Gullah graves, and to measure the distance between the actual structure and the nearest grave, however the harassment was so intense I gave up after the third try, on which occasion the head of security, Sergeant Haupt, came to the front gate to interrogate me. She informed me that her only allegiance was to the residents of Hilton Head Plantation "who live here." This was after they had informed me a month prior that I would need to have Jamal contact them and document my identity and purpose for visiting the cemeteries. He did that two days later, but it became obvious I was not getting back in there without Jamal (who resides, works, and has a family in Savannah). We couldn't ever find another time to coordinate that trip, so I guess I should feel fortunate to have gotten the pictures and video footage from our one and only trip. The conversation below takes place as we are driving through Hilton Head Plantation toward the cemeteries.

> MH: So, in the midst of this is your family cemetery? [We had driven through a sea of houses that were all identical in color and design, into an area where multi-story condos were under construction].
> JT: Oh yes.
> MH: So, can you remember when they started this development? Does your family talk about how Hilton Head Plantation [has changed].

Jamal enthusiastically interrupted, anticipating the ending to my question.

> JT: They was like [pointing out his window], "**That was a tomato field!!**" You could go down there and get tomatoes. So this is what you need to see.

As we pulled into the entrance for the cemetery, there was a small road wedged between a very high construction fence and the cemetery itself, leaving just enough space for a small car. Jamal drives a Saturn, and the rear view mirrors barely cleared the fence. The noise of construction

equipment rang out with such volume we were literally SCREAMING to continue our conversation. The auditory stimuli, in the midst of this place where hundreds of Gullah/Geechee ancestors had been laid to rest, was emotionally overwhelming.

> JT: See this fence [referring to the chain-link construction fence], they actually had this thing blocked where you couldn't even come it. You had about this much room [extending his arms out to the side]. Tom Barnwell was the one who sound the alarm about it because he brought some of his grandchildren down here and couldn't get it. And so that spearhead this meeting. Yep, so you see, you've got your condo development. This is it! [pointing over to it, as the construction crews stopped momentarily to figure out what we were looking at].
> MH: RIGHT HERE!! [I couldn't disguise my amazement]. This is a condo development and this is a Gullah graveyard! [One on each side of the car]
> JT: That's right!!! That's right! That's right.
> JT: And as you see, Talbird is indicative of other Gullah cemeteries where it's right on the waterways. That's what makes it so valuable to those folks.

Gullah/Geechees have traditionally buried their dead along the waterways, believing that the Sea will safely deliver them back home to Africa: "the sea brought us, the sea shall take us back" is a phrase linking the Gullah/Geechee to Kongo[11] belief systems, documented throughout the Sea Islands from the era of enslavement to the present (see Creel 1988). Within this single trip, I was able to see, with my own eyes, many practices included within the complex of traits identified as originating in Africa pertaining to burial customs: shells on the graves, everyday items from around the house that belonged to the deceased, and broken glass and mirror pieces.

> MH: What's the oldest gravestone in here? Is there any way to know?
> JT: I'm gonna tell you. One of my concerns is that, in some areas, we won't necessarily know. You just can't go based on the present. So some of it could actually be all along here (pointing to space where the condo is being developed so close to actual marked graves).

As I began to apply my archaeological knowledge to this situation, I realized it would make very little sense for Gullahs to begin burying their ancestors here only at the time headstones were available. It seems only logical that this was the chosen resting place of many more who were interred prior to that time, beginning during plantation slavery. I contacted Dr. Charles Faulkner, a historical archaeologist back at the University of Tennessee, to ask him about the legal procedures in place to protect cemeteries. He assured me a survey would have been conducted, but as so

[11] For a detailed analysis of Kongo belief systems, see Thompson 1990.

many things in this area seem to operate in spite of the law, I still suspect there are ancestors there without markers.[12]

This was the first such trip in a long line of similarly disturbing experiences, documenting evidence of forbidden or restricted access to Gullah/Geechee burial sites. I traveled to St. Simon's to glimpse the place long believed to be "Ibo Landing," where a group of enslaved Ibos locked arms and walked into the water to escape the impending doom of being sold as human chattel. The actual site is inaccessible, locked away behind a privacy gate. Each year, beginning in 2002, a group of Chicago based Nigerian Ibos meet at the site (or near it) to acknowledge those brave ancestral souls. I feel honored to have met a member of that group in 2002 during his visit to St. Helena Island to meet with Queen Quet.

I ventured to Sea Island, Georgia (ironically this was the day this private island was announced as the chosen site for the 2004 G8 Summit) for a tribute to Neptune Smalls,[13] who is buried in large cemetery locked behind the gates of the resort. During this passionate ceremony, I could not help but be distracted by the golf carts zooming by (no more than ten feet away), pausing momentarily to gawk on their journey to the next hole. Next was the trip to Mary Fields Cemetery, and several more on Daufuskie Island, before I felt sure I just could not visit any more. But there were one hundred or more graves in all these places, and they remain there today.[14] No amount of double talk will ever change that.

Perhaps those not convinced of the severity of the cemetery situation have not yet gotten a copy of the Rural/Urban Design Assistance Team (R/UDAT) report, published in 1995. This report, conducted by a group of volunteer professionals from the American Institute of Architects to "provide an objective, politics-free process for the Island's northwest quadrant with the goal of bringing that area's development into the Island's economic mainstream" (2), clearly indicates that the cemetery situation exacerbates the inequality wrought by gated community development:

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[12] Unmarked graves were recently documented among marked graves of the African Burial Ground Project in New York City (see Blakey 2001).

[13] Neptune Smalls is a local hero, yet for wholly different reasons for blacks than whites. Neptune Smalls was an enslaved African, believed to be loyal by his master. When the master's son went off to fight in the Civil War, Neptune was sent along as his body servant. The white version of the story is that Neptune loved his master's son so much, he carried his body the long distance home upon finding he had been shot. Gullah/Geechees tell a different version, in which Neptune worked undercover for the Union, and when an opportunity arose, he shot master's son numerous times. Neptune was deeded a plot of land on St. Simon's for his bravery and loyalty, which his descendants rightly inherited. However, when the resort boom came, the Smalls were somehow relieved of the property.

[14] All the cemeteries I visited were documented on film and video.

> An island which once belonged to the Native Islanders has slipped away from them. The greater part of the Island is off limits, behind locked gates. Islanders whose ancestors are buried in the Harbor Town cemetery must obtain permission from Sea Pines security guards to visit their graves. The islanders have become virtually invisible to the new residents, who are largely ignorant or indifferent to their traditions, practices, and interests (9).

There is even the accusation, always dismissed as rumors yet recounted to me by unrelated Gullah/Geechees over space and time, that one developer in the Beaufort County area removed headstones to avoid the conflict.

There have not been, to date, any legislative efforts toward remedying this situation of blatant disregard for Gullah/Geechee access to ancestral cemeteries; nor have they addressed the more recent practice of putting in fences on individual home lots which make it nearly impossible for families to continue burying at present. This was the case when Jamal and I left Talbird and visited Eliot. The roadway they had always used to drive the casket back to the cemetery was no longer accessible. The homeowners, being so considerate, agreed that they could cross their property on the golf cart trail that remains, but that would mean carrying the casket a bit over 500 feet. In an attempt to get a practical idea how much of an inconvenience this might be, I contacted a local cemetery in Knoxville, Tennessee, Woodlawn Cemetery, to ask a few questions. The cemetery manager, Steve Lyle, informed me that there are many different styles of coffins, and there is a wide range of possibilities concerning how much each type can weigh. A safe estimate, according to Lyle, is somewhere between 300 and 400 pounds, not counting the human remains. Our conversation about my research in the Sea Islands revealed an even bigger obstacle, suggested Lyle, and that is the size and weight of extraction tools necessary for the grave digging process. It seems likely that Gullah families whose ancestors are laid to rest in Eliot will have to take this into consideration, and possibly begin exploring alternative options in the future.

Situated Knowledge as Legitimate: Visiting Sea Pines Plantation

Spending time being "in the field," simply doing the things one would do at home, offers possibilities for nuanced quasi-participant observation, but it is often hard to discern what qualifies

as relevant for analysis.[15] Therefore, what most of us end up with are "journals" full of scribbled entries that represent our frustration about the situations we encounter, and "field notes" that situate each event within an anthropological context, void of subjectivity. Both collections, unfortunately, often end up on our office shelves or in a box in the attic, which I am suggesting is a very serious mistake, because it is one of the few arenas where our position of power doesn't influence the outcome. Let me be very clear: I am not advocating any kind of covert research tactics, nor am I implying that the power dynamic will ever be balanced between "researcher" and "researched." I am simply suggesting that anthropologists, especially graduate students in the early stages of qualitative research, miss opportunities for analysis for fear of being labeled as biased or unethical. In June of 2003, my husband and I were invited to hear Lavon Stevens[16] perform at Sea Pines Plantation. He was aware of my research, and contacted Queen Quet to suggest she come and bring us along. It would be an opportunity to conduct informal participation and also meet Mr. Stevens. Our experiences that evening were extremely frustrating, and thinking about it had me up until the wee hours of the night. I decided I would calm down and try to write about it, while it was all still fresh in my mind. It is a lengthy entry, but every word is necessary in recounting the events that unfolded during my first experience of being on the other side of the gate as an unidentified visitor.

> *Tonight was a rare experience. We were invited to accompany Queen Quet to enjoy the sounds of her friend Lavon Stevens (from Hilton Head) at the Sea Pines Plantation Beach Club. It was an opportunity that I am glad I didn't pass on. We all piled in the van together (My husband and I, Queen Quet and a family member home from college, and a film student making a documentary). All but the film student were along for a nice, relaxing evening, and had no idea of what we were about to walk into. We arrived at the gate, where we had to go to the visitor's center to pick up our pass to the Beach Club. The lady working inside was very kind to Queen and handled it expediently- Queen asked "Sister, how long have you been working here?" She replied "Sixteen years."*
>
> *Sixteen years is a long time, and each and every day was evident in her eyes at that moment. Queen shared a story of how she had been invited to speak at the "Heritage Golf Classic" for this same place and the turmoil she endured at that same office trying to get her pass. The two women inside at that time (both white) had a very hard time locating her pass, understanding her name, spelling her name, etc. These are the types of stories you get to hear when you hang out with black folks from the islands for any length of time.*

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[15] I believe all our experiences are worthy of serious analysis, however, the discipline has strict guidelines concerning the criteria for inclusion, as I have learned through this process.

[16] Lavon is a musician from Georgia, the minister of music at the Gullah church on Hilton Head and active in community politics.

We drove around for quite a while, because everything looks identical and it is very hard to figure out where you are going. My theory is that such strategies make it very uninviting for outsiders, and you really get a sense of being an invader when you are lost inside the gates. The layout of Sea Pines is designed around "round-abouts" which I also believe are symbolic of another phenomenon- that of trying to emulate Europe (also goes along with the recent use of stickers with HH on them, which look identical to those in Europe "GB" for Great Britain, etc.). We drove straight through the community and right past the Beach Club at first try. When we began to see houses with color (all the houses inside the gates are neutral colors- brown, tan, grey- all the same color scheme) we knew we had driven right out!! It's amazing how easy it is to drive out in comparison to how hard it is to drive in. On re-entry Queen Quet opened her window and said "Brother, could you please direct us to the Beach Club" (the gentleman at the gate was black, as was the lady at the front gate, and most often every gate in these communities) and he directed us right to it. His respect for her was evident as he replied to his sister, his comrade in combat against the racism and injustice blacks experience in this part of the South on a daily basis.

We reached the Beach Club and joined the sea of Sport Utility Vehicles, with the occasional convertible import. We parked and began to walk toward the restaurant, located directly on the ocean. It was a multi-deck facility with a nice bar, gift shop, and restaurant. I could hear the music from the parking lot, and looked very forward to meeting Lavon. He is a native of Hilton Head Island and is part of the Gullah Connection. As we walked through the establishment I walked in back to observe how others received us. It was beyond description. We wouldn't have gotten stranger looks if we were wearing crowns of fire. Queen Quet walked in front, then her family member and the film student (wielding a professional video camera, boom microphone, tripod, etc.), then my husband, then me [both of the visitors with us were women of color as well]. People stopped eating, nudged one another, and whispered as we walked by. There was a table of young ladies who actually laughed out loud as we passed. My imagination could barely grasp what I was experiencing. Lavon, upon sighting us, was very happy we were there. Quet commented she couldn't believe he was playing this kind of music. At the end of the song they were playing (he and his bassist whose name I didn't catch) he stopped and we all walked over. They hugged, and then she introduced us all. All the while this is going on people are looking at us like we have two heads. It was absolutely bizarre! He was glad to see us, and we all exchanged handshakes and such. Quet commented on the music he was playing, to which he replied, "When in Rome" with a big smile--that summed it up.

The entire evening was quite bizarre. I hunted down the manager (an obviously Indian man who was among us as one of a handful of non-Hilton Headers) to ask if we could get a server. We were sitting at some picnic tables to the right of the make shift stage (which was on the other side of a large sand pit where kids were playing). He said we couldn't be served food there, only drinks, although there was food on the sand underneath the table. I didn't argue and just asked that we be seated where we could order food. "There is at least a 30 minute wait ma'am" he replied. " No problem" I said. "The name is Hargrove." He spelled it back to me and disappeared. We sat there listening to them playing as they resumed their set and I watched as others looked at us like security had been breached. It was this look like "how did they get in here?"

After a while we were seated and greeted by our server. As soon as we ordered drinks Lavon invited Queen up to the stage to sing with him (Bob Marley's "I Don't Wanna Wait in Vein for Your Love") and she went. When she reached the stage Lavon gave a little bio of Queen and asked for the crowd to help him welcome her. The only people who acknowledged him speaking (just like they were doing when he was playing) were us, and a few confused folks in the crowd who half-heartedly clapped out of obligation. Others never even batted an eye. The food was expensive and substandard, and the service was even worse. I get the feeling most of these people who come to Hilton Head and stay in these places haven't really ever had good cuisine or good service! Having worked for the Ritz Carlton, and the Hyatt Regency I have witnessed culinary masterpieces, sauces, desserts, and food presentation! It's as if these folks are buying into something they don't really understand. At $2000 a week for a one-bedroom "villa" on some street named "plantation" and 18 holes of golf going for $118 they appear to be living in an altered state of reality.

After a terrible meal, during which the waiter poured a glass of iced tea all over us, Quet and the student had walked down the beach a ways to get an interview in with the beach club as a backdrop, and my husband and I watched these people. It was very evident that the connections made in this world of white privilege go way beyond the gates. They go back to wherever these people are from. This is the good-ole-boy network that holds together the racist inequality that permeates US society. It is made, remade, and reinforced on these trips to the coast.

Upon reflection, the only part I now realize I left out was how five or six women came to the foot showers (as we were waiting) and kept shoving their kids in front of us with a forced, insincere purse of the lips and a arrogant apology. One woman stood waiting on her child, scanning us from head to toe. It was so obvious, and it made me terribly uncomfortable. It was my first true encounter with class bias delivered by people who are not middle or upper class anywhere but within their own minds.

I feel it necessary to include this experience because it typifies the arrogance and disrespect I have experienced over the years, and Gullah/Geechees continue to experience, on a daily basis. The gated residents pretend to recognize one another, even if they are not acquainted. At any time, I could have used my whiteness, along with a nice black suit and maybe a muzzle, and easily infiltrated their little club. I have had many invitations from people who wrongly assumed I was a tourist. One man even approached me to ask if I would be interested in meeting his nephew, who he described as "single, handsome, and rich," just moments after informing me that he owned "half of Bluffton." I had never met this person before, and this exchange occurred at a community meeting! I had offers to bring my children swimming at the Dataw Island Club, from the

ladies who volunteer at the Franciscan Center,[17] whose grandchildren were visiting, and even found out I have a cousin (by marriage) who is the tennis pro at one of the most exclusive gated areas in the Sea Islands. All of these represent missed opportunities for experiences that might have added to the qualitative flair of my research, but I could not have entered into their world without the situated knowledge I have built up over seven years of witnessing the racial inequality reinforced by so many, and the blatant disregard for Gullah culture. I have been indirectly (and on numerous occasions) accused of harboring a personal bias against these wealthy whites,[18] however my research, teaching, and praxis must remain constant; committed not to the Gullah/Geechee but to social justice and human equality, especially in the face of intimidation and guarded white privilege.

Lavon Stevens: Mediating Two Worlds From a Middle Ground

I caught up with Lavon Stevens, almost a year after the Sea Pines excursion, and we discussed that night. I asked if the social dynamics were always that strained, because I felt the crowd at Sea Pines went beyond disrespectful. Our conversation about that night led to Lavon sharing his feelings on the gate, and his many experiences with going in and out of these gated areas. Our interview took place at Calvary Baptist Church, in the heart of the Gullah community on Hilton Head Island, where Lavon is the Minister of Music.

> LS: Uh, well. Fortunately I've been here long enough and (for what I do) I do have a great deal of appreciation (I guess) on the island. And just as an entertainer I think a lot of times we are afforded certain liberties I think that maybe other people would not have—just because we are entertainers and that seems to be something special. Or people regard it as something special. My experiences have been that people receive me very well, I think on the surface and that is usually the case. I don't think that they feel like I'm really one of the gang there because I don't have 10 or 15 million dollars so they know that. But for the most part, I can say that the majority of people have always received me well. A lot of nice people that do some great things in the community that LIVE in gated communities. I think there is a perception of the gate and there have been times when I have experienced a negative response from trying to go into a gated community for one reason or another-
> MH: Like what?

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[17] This is a non-profit charitable establishment affiliated with the Catholic Church, where donations are sold very cheap to islanders and the rising population of Hispanics moving onto St. Helena Island, and anyone else who comes in. Many things are given to the immigrant work force at no cost as a charitable gift, and my daughters and I have become regulars over the years.

[18] Such accusations are reminiscent of those delivered against many engaged intellectuals who expose white privilege and racial injustice.

LS: For one reason or another, well if it was to work especially! You know.
MH: Really?
LS: Well, you gotta get a pass to get in. if you don't have the pass you got to go through getting the pass. Or if I'm going to somebody's house and they've forgotten to call the pass in, it's pretty much a hassle getting in. I have been into situations where I said that I was going to play at (like the Country Club) and was working like through an agency because somebody had hired me. We were questioned because they felt like the agency should have a yearly pass (or something) for their entertainers or something like that. It's just a small hassle. But being an African American, I do think that there are times when the gate means a little something different for us. Now I don't... I know because I can't speak for the other side but I do have the opportunity to compare notes with some of my buddies and competitors.
MH: And so what do they say?
LS: Well just in situations where they may not have had a problem then for some unknown reason, I'll have a problem.
MH: Well, I think we all know what the unknown reason is.
LS: Yea, and you can draw your own conclusions from that.
MH: Sure, go ahead.
LS: And sometimes, you know, it has worked the other way around. Where potentially I might have a problem because I am well known or because somebody's on the gate that I know- they'll go ahead and let me in. And I think that my existence is unique in such that I move around in all the communities and I'm accepted in both and all the communities... just about everywhere I go. Mainly because of the entertainment thing, but because of my involvement in the community as well, because I do a lot of things for the Gullah celebration. I do a lot of things for the Presbyterian Church; I do a lot of things for the March of Dimes; I do a lot of things for the Cancer Society! I do a lot of work in the schools working with kids. So I did have an opportunity to move around quite a bit in a lot of different circles. And the one main idea, if I could give you one main thought, it would be that there are good people in all those circles.

We continued to discuss his many experiences with gated communities, which reflected both positive and negative interactions regarding the gate. From his multitude of experiences, after years and years of playing music in these places, Lavon has a particularly unique perspective I had never heard before. I had just finished telling him about my unsuccessful experiments of driving up to the guard gates of (at least) ten gated communities and asking if I could just go in and look around.

LS: Now that's really where the gate comes in. That's what the gate is for. But the gate really doesn't mean a whole lot. I think that the gate probably serves a purpose as far as security or if the residents need assistance. My philosophy is that the gates are only designed to keep honest people out.
MH: Oh really? Would you elaborate on that?

> LS: If there was someone who said, "look you know, I just want to come in here and look around, maybe I want to buy a house in here." Or "I think I have a friend in here. I'd like to look around to see if I could find his house." Or "I'm a family member and I know my family lives in here but I don't know where." There's a problem getting in. Now if you are a mugger or a thief or somebody with a bomb, and you get somebody inside to call you in a pass, or you got your story together you can pass right through. So, to me, that's why I say the gates are designed to keep honest people out. The person that really wants to get in can get in.

Securing the interview with Lavon Stevens was important on many levels. He interacts with residents of the gated areas, and depends on those places for his livelihood. I do not want to suggest he could not play anywhere else; he most certainly could get entertainment jobs anywhere, but his reputation has grown out of all the jobs he acquires in these spaces. That doesn't mean, however, that he doesn't recognize their exclusionary nature. As a resident of Hilton Head who lives very close to Hilton Head Plantation, Lavon (along with Reverend Williams of Mt. Calvary), has proposed a way to even the score. I had been present at a small community meeting during which a sociologist, Charles Jarrett, was conducting preliminary research regarding an impact assessment of the Squire Pope Community (the Gullah community at the North end). The research was focused around the "not yet but certainly coming" road expansion of Squire Pope Road. That was the first time I heard about the "national pass."[19] Now that we were discussing these issues, I could ask him to elaborate.

> MH: And I think that you had said something about a "national pass" (was it you that said that?) I had in my notes it was you). Was it you that said, "if we have to pay to go in, then you're going to come into our communities"?
> LS: That was Reverend Williams. That's one of his philosophies. And that reminds me of something else I was going to say too. One of the concerns I think I have with the gated communities is that it does continue to perpetuate segregation and also what happens is [like in Hilton Head] that's what everybody wants to do now. And Reverend Williams says this too and I can reiterate, now every gated community is its own township. So you gotta go from this town to that town and everybody's got their own sheriff, and their own set of security. So, now the areas out here we call the free spaces (and I believe that's what Reverend Williams is saying) is that those areas, if we can't go into your gated community,

[19] The idea of a "national pass" came out of several community meetings among the Squire Pope landowners, who feel their rights are being sacrificed to the desires of gated community residents. The fact that gated residents can roam throughout the island, yet Gullahs cannot travel inside their gated areas. The national pass would be required by gated residents, and I have heard several suggestions about where the fees might be directed, such as toward a land tax fee for those who have trouble keeping up with the rising taxes or for community improvement projects. Either way, the national pass is, to my knowledge, still just an idea that has not been addressed by Town Council.

> you shouldn't be allowed to come into ours without getting a pass from Beaufort County. Well, that's always been a very sore issue.
> MH: To have to pay and ask permission to visit your ancestors would be a real turnoff.
> LS: And those are the kinds of things, there again, that it's tough to legislate. You have to be dealing with individuals that have some compassion and some human kindness in their hearts that would not block a cemetery because "this is my property". And say "you can't come through here because this is my property." That's tough to legislate. Because now you have to fight to make him let you come through there! Where it should just be an individual that would say "no problem."

Lavon's comments concerning the kind of person who would block access to a cemetery is crucial to the proclamation made earlier concerning my own positionality. Anyone who has nothing to lose, I feel sure, would agree that people should never be cut off from their ancestral burial sites, particularly a cultural group with such a strong history of funerary practices. Therefore, my advocacy on the issue simply acknowledges a need for cultural respect for all people. I would advocate the same rights for gated residents, with the same compassion and intensity, if the situation were reversed. To my knowledge, there have been no binding agreements made between Gullah/Geechee communities and gated residents on this sensitive issue, but I think most would agree it is long overdue. I suspect the recent passage of the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Preservation Act will be particularly attentive to addressing solutions, once the project initiatives are put into place.

The power-mediated spaces scattered across the Gullah/Geechee landscape represent a parallel minority struggle for equality, in an arena where money and white privilege are positioned above cultural sensitivity and political correctness. The "explanations of exclusion from the point of view of the excluded" (Sibley 1995) suggest that the true conflict is about much more than the spatial segregation of the gates. It is about the ideology of entitlement that disregards all that existed prior to the arrival of the newcomers, including the history and collective cultural memories attached to specific spaces responsible for transforming them into places of significance to Gullah/Geechees. In light of the predicted "majority minority transition"[20] taking place within the United States (see Sanjek 2001), enclave communities of whites seeking separation from "others" will likely increase. The present study, therefore, represents an important preliminary exercise in understanding and naming the deeper social and cultural issues.

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[20] Within the United States we are experiencing a majority minority transition, in which the white majority is projected to fall below 50% in the second half of the current century (Sanjek 2001).

CHAPTER 5
LANDSCAPE MULTIVOCALITY:[1] EXPANDING THE DISCUSSION "UPWARD"

Introduction

Within the broader discussion of space and place, anthropologists now recognize that landscapes encompass multiple realities created by many, often competing, voices (Rodman 1994). Consequently, such "multivocal" spaces result in a single landscape with as many embedded meanings as there are groups residing upon it. The tensions created within these polysemic[2] spaces are the result of the different ways people make sense of the world around them. On the Sea Island landscapes, gated residents "speak" of economic security, individual leisure, and entitlement; while Gullah voices simultaneously "discuss" self-sufficiency in isolation, and a time when paradise meant you could venture anywhere because nobody really "owned" anything. The competing versions of history being voiced across these landscapes represents a struggle over power: the power to name the past, to name the surroundings, and ultimately to name the future. This chapter is devoted to isolating the gated voice, in an attempt to expand the discussion upward.[3]

Upon the contested landscapes of the various Sea Islands in which I have conducted research, there are varying positions regarding the impact of gated community development. In an effort toward achieving a more balanced and multivocal picture, I expanded the discussion to include gated community residents willing to engage in dialogue. This turned out to be fewer than I had anticipated at the outset, yet I am confident I achieved some level of representation regarding the gated perspective. Focus group interviews were conducted with residents and stakeholders of Fripp Island and Dataw Island of Beaufort County, while one-on-one interviews were utilized with a resident of Moss Creek Plantation of Hilton Head, and former gated residents who had "escaped[4]" Fripp Island and Kiawah Island of Charleston County.

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[1] The use of "multivocality" being employed here refers strictly to its use as an anthropological term in discussing the multiple meanings attached to particular spaces and places (see Rodman 1994), however it is also used to discuss multiple meanings, voices, and interests.

[2] Polysemic is defined as "having multiple meanings" (Webster's New Millennium Dictionary 2004).

[3] This reference to "upward" refers to techniques of interrogating power by "studying those occupying the social, political and economic "top" (see Nader 1969).

[4] One day while shopping I got into a conversation with a woman who (prior to being informed of my research interests) proclaimed proudly that she had recently "escaped" from Fripp Island, a gated community in Beaufort County. Due to connections and legal matters, she asked that she not be named but accepted an invitation to be interviewed.

My dialogues with those behind the gates was also an effort at striking a balance against the lack of anthropological inquiry directed "upward."[5] In order to construct a picture of the predicaments facing Sea Island communities, it seemed logical to allow gated residents to respond to common accusations about the devastating effects their communities have introduced. It is important to include, however, that the barriers in place between the elite and the researcher inhibited me from truly interacting with them. There were no opportunities to engage in casual conversations or see how they live their daily lives. This suggests that Nader was correct in warning anthropologists engaging this research method that the powerful are often out of reach and don't want to be studied (1969). Gated residents situate their presence in a variety of ways, some of which were accompanied by an elaborate sense of meaning-making which conveniently doubled as neoliberal rationalization. What I found particularly odd were the frequent claims of "belongingness," or references to "coming home" from people whose family ties WERE in the South, but not the Lowcountry. In a study released in 1990, South Carolina as a Retirement State: Issues Worth Considering, Hawkins also reports this peculiar trend: "retirees often choose to return to a place they consider home, which can be where they grew up, spent most of their adult lives, or where their children live."

The Gated Resident: Who's Behind the Walls?

Only one book in print offers an assessment of gated community residents of this area. It is titled *Profits and Politics in Paradise: The Development of Hilton Head Island* (Danielson 1995), and I hear it caused quite a stir. In this book, Danielson reveals all the infighting and (what he characterized as) tribal warfare between the different 'plantations' on Hilton Head: they "*created a set of tribes, the Sea Pines Tribe, the Port Royal tribe, with each thinking their tribe was best*" (115). Growth of the gated community industry on Hilton Head later brought "*corporate types from wealthy Northern suburbs who had little experience with blacks either at work or in their neighborhoods. Their views were often shaped by urban stereotypes, and they largely ignored their [native islanders] concerns*" (1995: 118). But it was his blatant "accusation" of them as racist and anti-Semitic that I would guess is the reason none of the Property Owner's Associations (POAs) I tried to contact or left information with (on Hilton Head Island) would return my calls.

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[5] For methodological orientation referred to as "studying up" see initial writing by Nader 1969.

> Most who settled on plantations were conservative socially; they had lived in exclusionary neighborhoods and towns, belonged to country clubs that excluded Jews and blacks, spent their careers in organizations that had few if any Jews in top positions and no African Americans in command of anything. Some wanted Sea Pines to excluded Jews and opposed Fraser's policy of accommodating blacks at plantation facilities (Danielson 1995: 118-119).

Danielson's book made me curious about how non-Gullah natives of the Lowcountry perceive the gated residents, so I began routinely raising such questions as the opportunity arose. I heard lots of complaints about how fast they drive, and several people didn't like the fact that they are always referring to the way things were in ____(wherever they lived before they moved to the Sea Islands). A man in Charleston once asked me, "*If it was so damn nice where they were, then why the hell didn't they stay there*?" The response I got most, however, was summed up in one word: **Entitled.** I had been looking at the gated areas as a factor impacting only Gullah/Geechees, but local residents don't appreciate their entitled nature either. I was once talking to a research participant who works as a nurse and we happened onto the subject of gated residents, which she refers to as "transplantees" (which is quite appropriate since they are from another place trying to function the same as they did in their previous location). She and I were talking about how gated residents interact with those outside the gates and sharing stories about weird encounters we had witnessed or experienced:

> XX: Oh yes, listen. You are entitled if you have money. You're ENTITLED. And it's—the funniest thing is not the local (born and raised in the south) cause they know- they're not oblivious. But the transplants have the nastiest attitudes! It's so Oh we are so superior! Thank God we were not raised in the South. Thank God we do not come from the South! It's ok to live here, it's ok. But we live here because we have the money and we could choose to move here and grace you with our presence and it's like— Do you get that you're just really obnoxious as hell and we don't want you? NO you don't! You really don't because you have that entitlement mentality. And by the same token, obviously there are lots and lots of people who live here who are just charming and they are lovely, but we seem to have an abundance of bad attitude transplantees. And that bothers me. It doesn't keep me awake at night, but it bothers me. I don't like it!

The frequent charges of entitlement, with reference to gated residents, have remained a constant aspect of being in the field. In daily activities I too have had to negotiate situations where people blatantly cut me off in traffic, asked to move ahead of me in the grocery line, or (my favorite) even followed me around the Franciscan Thrift Store trying to guilt trip me into giving in to a ridiculous

request. Perhaps I should explain: I frequently shopped at the Franciscan Thrift Store on St. Helena Island, which is operated by the Catholic Church. It is a non-profit donation center where nice items are dirt cheap, often donated by the gated residents in the area. I happened upon a glass bottle with a nice pour spout, which I wanted as storage for olive oil on the countertop. A woman spotted it, and followed me all over the tiny store, asking me to please let her have it for her niece. When she finally realized I was not giving it up, she became rude and a bit hostile. "Well, I'll just go into town and BUY one. I don't NEED to get it here anyway!" As she turned to leave, she hastily waved to the volunteer behind the counter, and through a perfect smirk, she said, "I was just looking for cloth napkins anyway!" That particular recollection is a family favorite. My daughters still get mad about that bottle that cost me a whole quarter, but I appreciate the valuable insight.

Commonalities of Gated Residents

Within the group of eleven gated residents I interviewed, whether in a focus group, one-on-one, or unofficially,[6] significant commonalities emerged. All but two had moved to a gated area from the North. Most had degrees and some had advanced and/or multiple degrees. The majority of them were involved in volunteerism, a few with the same national organizations they had worked with up North. Their voluntary work is targeted at the Gullah and Geechee communities in an obviously paternalistic way, thereby casting these communities as in need of their particular brand of salvation. I am not suggesting these are intentional mechanisms of domination and control, but the ways in which their help is offered does not sit well with those they are trying to help (which is often the case). This will receive adequate attention in a future chapter, where I will discuss the traps of whiteness apparent across these reinvented landscapes, as well as the multitude of ways white privilege translates into power and control.

Also common among gated residents is the notion that their years of previous vacation trips to the Sea Islands entitles them to consider it home. Several spoke of making the decision to "come home" in a context that was wholly illegitimate. This practice has become normalized, and nobody says a word when a gated resident from the North claims belongingness.

There is a habitus (Bourdieu 1980) of neo-racism among many of them, reinforced by the

[6] One resident did not want to be identified but agreed to an interview. For his/her protection, I agreed to only use information that would not identify the participant.

quickly expanding neoliberal ideology that validates their position. Operating from behind "white blinders" (Rex Hargrove, personal communication 2003), they suggest that Sea Islanders never truly had a "legal" right to the land[7] and those who have lost land probably sold it; gated communities have improved the surrounding areas because they bring expertise in business and politics, their voluntary backgrounds to help the disadvantaged, and (most importantly) their wealth that gets invested in the counties that serve Gullah/Geechee people.

Some cite the amenities, such as golf, tennis, fishing, and recreation, as their reasoning for choosing a particular place. Others were clearly looking for a like-minded group of people they could view as a community. In Setha Low's most recent analysis of gated community life, *Behind the Gates* (2003), many of her research participants indicated they were searching for a sense of community, defined as "the relationships, social networks, and localities that bind people together" (55). Weather is also a factor, especially to those who came from a colder part of the North. And those retirees who travel quite often enjoy not having to worry about their home when they're away. One trend that cannot be overlooked but cannot yet be properly fully in context is the fact that the decision to move into a gated community is not often made by the wife. Several of the women I interviewed had serious reservations about moving into a gated area, but decided to do it for their husbands. Regardless of the reasons, they continue to come in record numbers, and they continue to perpetuate the historical disparity that exists between natives and themselves (Hawkins 1990).

Beginner's Luck: Crossing Over to the Other Side

During the feasibility phase of my fieldwork in summer 2002, I began to conceptualize and broaden my research question to include gated residents willing to discuss the apparent problems impacting local island populations. I asked friends and acquaintances to put me in contact with people who might be interested and/or willing to grant me an interview. My first contact was Judith Hughes, a resident of Moss Creek Plantation. We were introduced by Queen Quet at Heyward House Historic Planning Committee Board Meeting, of which both Queen Quet and Judith were members. Judith is what I would call a spitfire--she says what is on her mind and that makes me

[7] They were quick to remind me that Sherman's Special Field Order 15 was rescinded, thereby revoking all their claims. Gullah/Geechees, however, say that is the way the government has always treated the poor and minorities of this country; giving them things and then taking them back when they decide they will indeed benefit from it. That is one of the reasons many of the elders of the communities refer to any judicial process as "unjust law" because they had just law before these systems were even put in place.

comfortable (as someone known to do the same). Queen had mentioned in previous conversations her respect for Judith, as someone committed to equality and representation on the board. We met briefly and Judith seemed more than happy to assist me in gaining an understanding about the gated community phenomenon of the area. I contacted her several days later, and she invited me to have lunch in her home. She called me in a pass for the guard gate and I was in. During that particular summer, my husband had to stay back in Tennessee to complete some graduate course work so my daughters accompanied me everywhere I went. I was a bit nervous about asking Judith if I could bring them along, but to my surprise she seemed delighted. She hosted such a nice lunch, and our conversation gave me great hope that this project might actually encourage understanding on all sides of this issue. Her fiery New York intonation conveyed a distinct fervor about the issues we discussed at length, and she did not hesitate to validate Gullah/Geechee perceptions of the gated areas as insensitive and disturbing. I remain sincerely appreciative of her hospitality and candid insight.

> MH: So, how did you end up here?
> JH: My husband always wanted to live in a warm climate, he likes to fish, he wants to fish all year. And when I retired I wanted to live in Vermont because I have friends there and he agreed. And we stayed there until we stopped downhill skiing. And then the winters got too long. And we looked at Moss Creek and we came down and we rented. And we found that people were friendly. We didn't know anything about anything else at that time. I loved Savannah. I love Savannah! And so that was a real draw for me. I love St. Helena's; I love the beach and the naturalness of it--- and although I had great trepidations about living in the South [and certainly in a gated community].... I agreed to try it. So we rented for a month and then came back down for another two months and bought this house because when it came on the market it was an incredible price. And I knew if we ever wanted to live here we better do it before prices went up above what we could afford.
> MH: So when was that?
> JH: This is my third year, I start my third year.

In the early moments of our conversation, Judith had indicated to me that she had deep-seated apprehension about moving into a gated community.

> MH: And when you say you had thoughts about moving into a gated community, explain what you mean.
> JH: Well, my father lived in a place called Century Village in Florida, and there were lots of rules and regulations and he was the president of his building. He was very, very good at what he did. He didn't bother anybody and the place ran beautifully and he was president for 20 years. And I used to get very annoyed at some of the rules and he always said to me, "don't live in an area where people are going to tell you what to do because you're

gonna have difficulty with it." So that was one. I never thought of myself as being a gated community type. I never lived in the suburbs, really.
MH: So you see someone who would live in the suburbs as the same kind of person- when you say 'gated community type' what comes with that?
JH: Living in the suburbs—getting on a train and coming to New York City everyday to work. That kind- and I never really saw myself as that, but I found that people here were very friendly. They're mostly Northerners and Midwesterners.

As a career educator and activist in the North, Judith acquired many life lessons working with a variety of people that I feel made her more open to the questions I was asking. The afternoon we spent together gave me hope that other gated community residents might also want to discuss the issues of gating as exclusionary, the impact on the surrounding Gullah community, and their thoughts on the incessant use of "plantation" in naming. Judith was genuine She was not afraid to say that gated communities have brought severe consequences to the Gullah/Geechee, and she openly admitted the practice of naming such areas plantations ridiculously insensitive. My encounter with Judith proved that other voices do indeed exist on the broader landscape, between the extremes of Gullah/Geechee traditionalism and entitled gated residents. However, I was never able to locate another participant like Judith. The stakes were always too high, stacked one way or the other, to represent anything more than a faint whisper from the middle ground.

Encountering the "Thousandaires"[8]

Fripp Island is the last island in the same chain as St. Helena Island. Therefore all traffic that visits or lives in Fripp must cut across St. Helena to go into town. I contacted the community manager, Kate Hines, and she agreed to speak with me. When I arrived, she had also invited the vice-president of the POA at the time, Al Santoni. I was riding a wave of enthusiastic optimism after speaking, the previous summer, with Judith Hughes, who had agreed wholeheartedly that gated areas are exclusionary and residents inside them do not take enough time to learn about their surroundings. But my optimism was soon diminished.

KH: My name is Kate Hines and I am the community manager here. I've been working on Fripp for, I'm in my ninth year, and I can give you some number, factual type background.
MH: That would be great!
KH: That's about it.

[8] Several research consultants referred to this community by this term, which is to suggest that their elitist attitudes do not coincide with their actual wealth.

> AS: My name is Al Santoni, I'm the Vice-President of the Fripp Island Property Owners Association. I've been living on the island for almost sixteen years and a homeowner for about twenty/ twenty-five years rather. And I've been visiting Fripp since 1968.

This subtle inclusion of Mr. Santoni's long history of visiting before moving to Fripp is his first in a long list of claims to belongingness. Mrs. Hines began giving me the statistics for Fripp Island as a development community: there are currently 1900 houses built, and there will be 2800 at build out.[9] Seventy-five percent of the 1900 are owned, as opposed to vacation rentals, and the majority of their residents come from Ohio (according to the most recent study conducted by Fripp Management). Then Mr. Santoni reiterates his claim, briefly taking a break from swirling the base of his Styrofoam cup round and round on the table just inches from my recorder, which was making me extremely tense and nervous.

> AS: We've been coming here since '68. We bought in '78 and we rented our property through the Fripp Company for about ten years, retired in '87 and came down here full time.

During the actual interview I didn't recognize what he was doing, yet it is apparent on revisiting the transcript that he was focused on establishing his right to be here. No matter what question I asked, he went right back to that agenda.

> MH: And what did you retire from, your occupation?
> AS: I'm an accountant and a systems person. My kids all own property here now, so they were born and raised here (most of them were <u>conceived</u> here). The grandchildren were <u>conceived</u> here. There are eight of them here now that will be here, all twenty of them will be here between now and Sunday.

The interview took place in a meeting room of the business office, and I could hear people coming in and out. There were verbal exchanges between the receptionist and others, and the occasional person would peer in on us. At one point, a gentelman looked in and Mr. Santoni greeted him and invited him in. He entered and they began a conversation, right there with the recorder running. I just sat there, until Mrs. Hines finally introduced me to the gentleman. He asked a few questions and then he left. It was at this point in the interview I realized something was happening, but I could not put my finger on it then. I stepped back into interview mode and diverted to an inquiry concerning what drew Mr. Santoni to the island.

> MH: So what were the selling points of Fripp Island?

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[9] The term "build out" refers to the point at which all the available lots have a house on them.

AS: Mostly its weather. The weather is easier and its not as hot as Florida and we do see a little bit of winter. This past year was the first time we saw ice on the ground for three days but that hasn't happened for twenty years. So, its the weather is so perfect.
MH: It is perfect.
AS: And the beaches are nice and it's easy to get to the beach, and our grandkids who are here now have grandparents in Hilton Head but because they live in a closed community away from the beach it's not convenient for them to just stumble out of the house and go onto the beach. Here it is.
MH: Now that is hard to understand, why you would pay the amount of money people pay to be on a marsh but not even have access to the beach and have to leave your community.
KH: Isn't part of it, I think part of it is what the different people are looking for. The people that I know at Callawassie, they don't want the beach they want golf. They want to be able to get to the beach and by that they make friends with people here so they can come visit.
MH: So, now, how big of a component is golf in this community?
KH: Pretty big.
AS: Here? Golfing community? Probably half the current residents are golfers.
KH: Although I heard the other day that that number is shrinking but that is what drew a lot of people initially.
AS: Yea, we found from a study from Dataw not too long ago that when they began to build the second golf course and started selling houses around the golf course, they had a difficult time selling it because people coming down are no longer golfers. Dataw is a golfing community. It has a little bit of a yacht club but that's about it.

At another point in our discussion, Mr. Santoni mentions additional amenities available to Fripp Island residents. Notice that he corrects himself, changing yacht club to marina (as if I would not know the difference). I had asked what other amenities are available.

AS: Tennis, good tennis, two golf courses, plenty of beach, plenty of crabbing, good yacht club (I mean a good marina). When I went by the sheds the other day they were packed.

The entire interview was tense and uncomfortable, and I was absolutely caught off guard as an anthropologist and a researcher. Things were fine as long as we were discussing weather and golf, or they were recounting a recent accident that made the bridge inaccessible during which the whole community pulled together to care for one another. But when it seemed clear I was going to ask them to speak about the perception of gated communities as invasive, the tables turned immediately. I have never, to this day, seen the bold intimidation tactics applied by Mr. Santoni. He was rude and combative. And I began to get a view of the other side of gated residents.

KH: I think one of the things, Melissa, that I wanted Al here for, to help get across is that it may seem invasive, these gated communites being built around here, but the people who are in these communities are doing an awful lot for the locals, for helping out at St. Helena.

MH: Are you talking about the reading program? [I had been informed by many Sea Islanders that the gated residents go the Elementary school and donate books for RIF,[10] therefore making them feel like they are doing something that is life altering for their children].
KH: the reading program-
AS: The hospital, literacy, these are all well funded by the people here who have donated their time as well as their money.
KH: Yea, there's a lot of giving back [*note that this implies recognition that something has been taken away] that I think the gated communities feel (I think) we get too much bad press and we're doing an awful lot for all Beaufort County, certainly this area. And we just want to get that point across. And Al is one of those volunteers who does all that good stuff with St. Helena Elementary and the hospital.
AS: The hospital is doing well, and we're gonna get the Cancer Center in there fairly soon. All they have to do now is select a site and they have eight opportunities (people want to give them land) to build the cancer center on.

This is a big issue that the gated areas around Beaufort put forth as something they are making happen that will benefit all the citizens, meaning the Gullah of the area as well. Perhaps that is what the lady at the Cultural Protection Overlay District meeting (which I attended in Fall 2003, several months after this interview) was referring to when she said something along the lines of: (I was taking notes so it will not be exact) "*We didn't ask for a cancer center. We don't get cancer. It wasn't until all these places moved in here that we ever got sick anyway. Now we eat foods with preservatives, have microwave ovens, and can't get to the healing plants because they're all gated off. That hospital is for them, not us.*"

As I struggled to salvage a cordial parting of ways, I transitioned into a discussion about why native islanders might feel validated in their negative feelings about gated areas, and was noting the issue of access to ancestral cemetaries, when the bottom fell out (figuratively)--

MH: And I've gone with people to put flowers on graves on Hilton Head Plantation where they have to stop and pay $5 (well they don't have to pay $5 anymore) but the facilitation of people just thinking about these issues, I feel like, would solve a lot of problems.
AS: You think so?
MH: I think so.
AS: I don't think so, God No! They're just looking for any reason, and I would use the same reasons.
MH: See, I don't believe that. After having close ties with so many people in that community, I don't believe that.

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[10] RIF is the acronym for Reading is Fundamental, which is a national reading program that gives a few books a year to each school aged child in participating underprivileged schools.

AS: Well, it's gonna go away as they get older or die off. Then they'll pick on something else, and so will we. Then we'll pick on something that we don't like. OK. And it's going to continue. You just come back here 100 years from now and you're going to get another word (not plantation) but it will be something else. Everybody's gotta have some reason to hate!
MH: Do you think so?
AS: Oh, of course! Well that's all you're talking about is hatred and...
MH: NO, I don't believe it's hatred.
AS: Oh, sure it is.
MH: No, I think it's misunderstanding. I don't believe everybody out here hates everybody there and everybody there hates everybody out here.
AS: No, I think what you're bringing from that community is hatred. And that' s what you're picking up. You're picking it up. Probably about 2% of the people there have a hatred for "plantation." And 98% probably don't. They could care less.
KH: Right.
AS: And I think you may be overemphasizing this difference. You know, you asked us before, we didn't aswer you,"why you're here?" In our case we wanted a community that could better serve the residents than the coiffers of Beaufort County. We want better roads than we could get if Beaufort County had our roads. And we want better fire protection. And all those things cost us money-- cost us $700 more a year per property, but $700 is fairly cheap compared to what we would get if we didn't do those things. So, the only thing we do is stop people at the gate and say 'are you supposed to be here or not?'- that's the difference. The difference is we want better services. And that's why this resort is here.

By this point he was being extremely hasty, and I was on the verge of tears. I had no intention of the interview going in this direction, and I was not prepared for it.

MH: Well, I don't want you to think I'm here to perpetuate hate from anywhere.
AS: But you're bringing it across by the amount of time you're spending on it. <u>So be careful.</u>

I have often wondered what would have happened if I had truly heard that last part. I was too upset to realize that Mr. Santoni "warned me" to be careful. In the short span of only one hour, Mr. Santoni accused me of conducting this research for money (and also pursuing an academic career for the same reason), of overemphasizing the impact of gated communities and the insensitivity of naming them "plantation," and warned me to be careful. I was so ready to get out of there! I tried to reassure him I was simply inquring about reasons people choose gated.

AS: Well, I guess I just told you we want better services. If they're happy with the services they're getting that's great. And we don't seem to be that way. We seem like we want twice a week garbage collection, not one. But never the less, that's what we want and that's what we get, and we pay for it and we're happy to pay for it. And that' s the way we used to

> live. And there are people from New York and New Jersey that come down here and they say, "what do you mean they don't pick up your garbage twice a week?" because they're used to that. And we're doing the same thing. I think that the difference is service. We want services that can accomodate our late-in-life lifestyle.

The Hilton Head R/UDAT report (1995), with regard to similar justifications presented by gated residents of Hilton Head, responded with the following:

> By living in the plantations, where services are provided by private associations, the latter enjoy a far higher level of service that the former, who are dependent for public services on a government with a narrow view of its responsibilities to its citizens. While there may be historical reasons for this disparity, and some may try to justify it on economic grounds, the fact remains that it is not equitable. It is not a fair distribution of resources (8).

The interview finally ended, but it was a few minutes after my tape had shut off. I made it a point to take notes on the comments made after the tape ran out and rushed home to record them. Mr. Santoni and I discussed the land loss on St. Helena, and I related it to his parents up North in an attempt to illustrate that these things happen all over the country. He was adamant about the fact that his parents would have never let a developer talk them out of their property the way the islanders had done. He also shared a story that illustrates the point that I have been trying to make regarding Gullah/Geechees and their lives before development became so out of control. Mr. Santoni recounted that he had invited his dad down to Fripp a few years after they bought and he picked him up at the airport in Savannah, Georgia. In order to reach St. Helena Island, and thus Fripp Island, from Savannah you have to drive through several rural areas along the coast. Mr. Santoni said he glanced over to find his dad just starring out the window, so he asked him if everthing was O.K—to which his father replied *"Son, all I've seen since we left the airport is* ***blacks and shacks****- where the hell are you taking me?"* A statement like that, although I think he thought it showed how long he's been here, truly illustrated the truth that MaVynee Betch recounted about coastal South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida-- during the nearly one hundred years between Emancipation and the 1950s, when these areas were black-owned and occupied: *"Darlin, thirty years ago you could drive from Jacksonville, Florida to Georgetown, South Carolina on Highway 17, and NEVER see a white face. We owned it all Baby!!"*[11] My, how things have changed.

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[11] This quote is also used in the Introduction chapter.

Meeting My Neighbors: Conducting a Focus Group at Dataw Island

Dataw Island was to be my next and final opportunity to dialogue with gated residents as a group. Dataw Island is historically documented to have been the site of a plantation system based on indigo and cotton, which produced enormous wealth for the Sams family. The 1860 US Census recorded eighty enslaved persons of color as property of the Sams plantation (U.S. Census 1860).[12] In line with the industry standard regarding representations of historical truth, Dataw Island literature makes no mention of the Gullahs who worked this island against their will, nor of their intermittent occupation of the island between the Civil War and the early 1900s. I have been told that Penn Center archives accurately record the small community that existed there immediately after Emancipation; yet islanders tell me their ancestors failed to go to Penn and register their claims. It probably didn't seem like a big deal at the time, but at present this lack of documentation makes Islanders' demands for access far less potent.

The proximity of Dataw to my "home away from home" has an undeniable influence on my feelings toward its residents. Early on in the research process I learned that the development of Dataw Island had immediately lowered the quality of life for Gullah landowners across the water. To ensure isolation and privacy, the designers of the reinvented landscape had spent close to a million dollars planting thick growths of fast growing trees, not only on Dataw but also across the water on Polowana. This decision resulted in blocking a long enjoyed breeze that made evenings tolerable during the hot months, and a view of the marsh that was breathtaking at sunrise and sunset alike.

I contacted the president of their Property Owner's Association and she graciously began finding residents for me to meet and speak with. My first interview was with a couple from Tennessee, who had both received their degrees from UT and had a true affection for the state and people from it. They enjoyed hearing me talk, since I have a thick southern accent. They explained to me how in 1983 Alcoa Aluminum had bought Dataw Island and developed it. Many Alcoa Aluminum employees were offered early retirement and a chance to invest in Dataw in the early years, and that is how this couple came to be here. I met with them, along with the POA president,

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[12] 1860 U.S. Census data regarding enslaved persons of color were obtained at http://www.rootsweb.com/~afamerpl/plantations_usa/SC/SC_plantations.html.

to discuss my research interests. It was a nice afternoon discussion, which was relaxed and non-confrontational. They treated me to lunch in the Dataw Clubhouse restaurant, and we enjoyed getting to know each other. The residents did not want to consent to be interviewed that day, but wanted to get a better idea of what types of issues I would be dealing with. The wife, however, wanted to make clear to me that she has always felt uneasy about the gate. "*I have always been aware that the gate separates us from them; and if I were them that would bother me.*" Nearly a year later I received an e-mail informing me that the couple I had met was moving back to Tennessee to buy a home in Tellico Village (another private community in East Tennessee). I have tried to locate them, but as of yet have not been able to. Many months later, the POA president coordinated another group interview, during which wide ranges of topics were discussed with five willing residents. It was an eclectic group, and they were extremely hospitable.

The exchanges with Dataw residents gave me a more complete picture of how people choose where to live, and for what reasons. It also clarified the types of projects gated community residents engage in to "give back" to the surrounding areas outside the gates. Each participant offered a different piece to a puzzle that would allow me greater insight into the gated culture and supporting ideology. Together they have designed and serve to support an ideology of rationalization that privileges (their notions of) the positive impacts they have made to the area. Interacting with this group of gated residents was a lesson in the power of white privilege and its dependence on the philosophy of meritocracy. I briefly explained my research interests and asked that they tell me about themselves, including why they chose this particular place to call home.

Peter Post is originally from Massachusetts but has spent 56 years freezing in Chicago. Forty years of his life has been spent working as a community service worker in the YMCA. He holds degrees in political science and history, and a master's degree in community organization.

> PP: One of the reasons I selected Dataw (and believe me we looked at a lot of places) is the people. I can relate to what you said [speaking to Anne]. And you know, we looked at a lot of places and we had our choice and we selected Dataw, and the reason is the people here ARE involved in the community. And that's what I wanted and I was Chairman of the Board of Penn Center, and probably the first White Chairman since the last 30 years.

It is very important that I contextualize this important piece of the puzzle. Penn Center began as Penn Normal School, among the first schools started for Freedman in the South. It remains, arguably, one of the most important African American cultural institutions in the country. Penn has

been the foundation of St. Helena Island for as long as anyone can remember. There exists a love-hate relationship with it for most; however, as the Gullah/Geechee have grown to realize they were educated right out of their culture. Certainly the white do-gooders who came to rescue the freed slaves (who have been living virtually as an independent community for decades) meant no harm. In the late 1800s and into the early 1900s little was known or respected about Gullah language and culture, so the Gullah experienced the cultural genocide endured by all groups "assisted" by Northern Christians. But Penn was more than a school. After children began going to island schools, it became a place for community organization. For most of the twentieth century, Penn was a symbol of strength and community, and people who were from the area and knew how to approach islanders coordinated it. It was where Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. planned the march on Selma; it was the place he felt safe to retreat and rest, long before the bridges that connected the islands to the mainland of Beaufort. It was the place that helped landowners get their deeds after *Sherman's Special Field Order #15,* and 100 years later it was the site at which pro-bono lawyers would conduct heir's property seminars to assist landowners in getting their titles cleared. But over the last ten to fifteen years Penn has become more of a business. Over the past seven years I have heard the sentiments that suggest islanders no longer feel the allegiance they once did. It seems that Penn is about making money, more than cultural preservation, and that doesn't sit well with the natives. Therefore it is quite telling how far out of kilter Penn has become when a white man from Massachusetts can move to the area and become the Chairman of such an important cultural establishment.

> MH: When was that? Chairman of Penn?
> PP: Two years ago. And then I'm involved in YMCA and United Way and I still have some other community stuff up North that I'm involved in. but, I find Dataw a unique place to live; wonderful people. And, interesting enough, the gate, we didn't, we looked at a number of developments but about half of them had gates, half of them didn't. And it was irrelevant to us. Never even thought about how it would affect me, or how it affected people out there.
> MH: Right.
> PP: Because I was so enamored with the community itself. And we had, we came down for three or four weeks a year for about six years. So we knew a lot of people before we came to live here. We've been here six years. And it's a unique blend of people and we've just been very happy here. And I've tried to be very- well, my wife- my wife does "Meals on Wheels" -- she reads at St. Helena's Elementary School. And I think we're representative of many, many families that live on Dataw Island. They're just very much involved in the community. So when people say "where do you live" I don't say "Dataw Island" necessarily, I say Beaufort. And they know where that is and they probably could figure out

> where Dataw is. But I feel very much that way. In fact, I was offended when the Mayor and the City Council decided not to give Penn Center a grant this year because I felt that Dataw is so much involved in the community that it was a slight to the whole St. Helena's Island.

Penn Center has been in financial trouble for several years now, particularly evident since Emory Campbell resigned as director. He is a native of Hilton Head Island and truly understands what cultural preservation entails. When I began conducting research on St. Helena Island in 1998, I approached Emory about sitting down for an interview and looking through the archives, but Penn informed me it would cost $50 an hour to gain access to the archives, and $100 an hour to interview Emory Campbell. The rationale I got from island natives was that Penn had given away Gullah culture so long, and so many academics had benefited with no reciprocity, they had to do something to stop that cycle. I have never gotten over that, as it made my research much more difficult, but after years of watching that establishment and hearing conversations regarding how it has changed, I have a tremendous amount of respect for Emory for taking that stand. I can't say if I were in his shoes I would have done it any differently, particularly seeing how the culture has become a commodity for academics and entrepreneurs. That type of commitment to the dignity of Penn as a foundational institution of St. Helena Island left with him. And the current leadership, as I am told, "*couldn't give a rats ass about this island or the people on it.*"

The connection between rich white newcomers and Penn Center is one of the major reasons some islanders no longer hold it in such high esteem. Post's comment, "*I was offended when the Mayor and the City Council decided not to give Penn Center a grant this year because I felt that Dataw is so much involved in the community that it was a slight to the whole St. Helena's Island,*" should have prompted me to probe further, because I still am not sure what he meant by this statement. What many suggest, that I think this comment would corroborate, is that Dataw Island residents wield too much power in and around Beaufort when they can serve on boards and panels concerning the future of Penn Center and the islanders it once educated, empowered, and protected. The last straw for many islanders came in May of 2004, as the Penn Center commemoration of "50 years of Brown v. Board of Education" was held at Dataw Island Club, where tickets were $50 per person. This celebration of desegregation in a segregated space represents the epitome of the disconnect between Penn and the surrounding Gullah community.

Another important point to be made concerning Post's choice of language with regard to exactly *where* he lives, is the way it creates belongingness to Beaufort, as opposed to identifying as a newcomer who resides walled off from the greater community of Beaufort. Anne Saravo also identifies herself as someone who invests in the St. Helena community, while being one of the persons I encountered who had constructed an alternative meaning of "coming home" that intersects neatly with a claim to belongingness.

> Ok- my name is Anne Saravo. I have a doctorate in psychology from the University of Massachusetts and I'm a licensed psychologist in California. I was born and raised in Atlanta, except for some time on the family farm in East Tennessee, in McMinn County. My mother's people were from an area in South Georgia called Midway in Liberty County. We were first interested, I think, in The Landings, which is south of Savannah. We'd lived, my husband was in the Air Force and we lived in England for ten years and ended up in the LA area where I practiced; and decided we wanted to <u>come back to our roots.</u> He's of Swedish and Italian ancestry, Newport Rhode Island, but he went to Georgia Tech. So we wanted to come home and because, (I think, we had been away for so long, even though I still had family and friends in Atlanta, we wanted a smaller rural kind of environment. So, a friend in Atlanta, her daughter's best friend is from Beaufort and their name is Trask, and they've been in Beaufort for a long time. So my girlfriend said, "why don't you look at Beaufort?" So I did. And it also turns out I have a cousin in Beaufort.

In my conversations with gated residents over the years, many suggest that they chose gated areas because it offers them a level of control over their investment. The internal structure, such as the Property Owner's Association, allows them some influence over the rules and regulations pertaining to neighborhood representation, and community activities. Anthropologically, I think it also has something to do with the notion that whites can no longer operate with impunity in the realms of real estate and employment. Policies against discrimination make it increasingly hard for whites to control the participation of "others" in their public and private spaces. Gating, I suggest, is one remedy for that. On the other hand, gated folks are looking for a sense of community in which they find ways to connect with others around similar interests.

> AS: Not only is there a participatory kind of governance, but there is-- "Island Friends" who get randomly assigned to a group and go have drinks or whatever once a month at someone's home and it's always different each year. But I play the piano and so I've started some piano, people get together and play piano at each other's homes. But there was a really good organized social structure, which meant that I could meet people quickly, find people I had common interests with, so that was what interested me. So my interests are psychology and music and I've found a way to pursue that outside of Dataw. So, I'm on the Mental Health Disaster Team for the Red Cross. And I've spoken with a woman in (not

> far from here) in Frogmore who's interested in getting something going for wives of – abused wives, wives of domestic violence. And so I'm interested in pursuing that but I haven't done anything because we were on vacation. And then the music, I also volunteer. So there's a "Charity Tour for Homes" that will be in Beaufort so I'm gonna play for that. So, I'm interested in doing those sorts of things. It's a plus for me because I need people that share my interests. Then there were, there's "Newcomers Coffees," there are a lot of interest groups. I don't play golf and I don't play tennis, but, there was a social structure here that was organized.

Larry Rowland would be the next resident to introduce himself, and his reasons for choosing Dataw have nothing to do with coffee clubs or common interests. Larry lived on Lady's Island until the county decided to build a high school directly across the street from his house. That, coupled with the changing dynamics of the neighborhood, helped him make his decision.

> LR: Let's see, I can't remember, we moved out here I think in 1999, what was that, four years ago. We lived on Meridian Road, on Lady's Island, for 25 years when I worked for the University. Raised three kids there; the County School Board decided to put up a high school across the street from our house. We decided, my wife decided, that we had just finished living with three teenagers and we weren't about to live with 1500 of them, any place you don't want to live across the street from a high school so we sold the house on Meridian Rd. We did actually move out here--owned three houses at one time--when both hurricanes hit. At any rate we moved here because frankly this is the nicest neighborhood in Beaufort County, and I know a lot about it. And we've been very happy here. And the gate DOES matter! It matters because of security and let me tell you I've lived outside the gate and inside the gate and trust me, it matters a lot. Because it's relatively high crime area outside the gate and it's a zero crime area inside the gate. It matters for your piece of mind. And we'd leave for weeks at a time, we left for five weeks in the summer. Don't worry about things when we're away. We couldn't leave Meridian Rd. for two weeks without having somebody live in the house, without having a complete alarm system. And it was not an easy decision to make, but my wife wasn't going to live across the street from the High School; and the place, the whole place had become very busy. When we moved there 25 years ago, there were roosters across the street. Ed Allen had a pig farm back in there, you know. It was all farm at the end of the road. There was no bridge there. It was very rural. By the time we left there was a shopping center; a high school- the whole place had become a city. So it was time to leave. And I had just retired so it was time to move out here. And this is a wonderful community; and I can tell you we didn't realize the difference in the piece of mind until we actually moved here. And everyday we just, we don't worry about it. So the gate matter, in that regard.

And finally, Earl Dietz would discuss his ideas confirming why Dataw was the only choice for him.

ED: I've been here, officially, 11 years. I actually bought our property in '86; didn't move down here until almost 11 years ago. I'm Earl Dietz; Ph.D. in ceramic engineering from a school that supports the best football team in the land.
AS: Georgia Tech!
ED: Ohio State! I'm gonna echo all the things about the people, and not just the people at Dataw but the people in the community. Not just the people in Beaufort but the people on St. Helena, Beaufort. I don't care where you go, it's a friendly, friendly place. It was when we first came down here and it's maintained its friendliness. Most of us are involved in the community in some way. I'm doing some things that I couldn't do- I spent my entire career in Northern Ohio. I'm doing some things that I couldn't do because I was too busy working. Now that I'm down here I've been at "Adopt A School," over at St. Helena Elementary School. Matter of fact, I'm treasurer of the organization; have been for a long time.

We transitioned into a discussion of the gate, and whether or not they had given any thought to how it might make the residents of St. Helena Island feel. The responses were honest, and at this stage of the game I appreciated that.

PP: And, interesting enough, the gate, we didn't, we looked at a number of developments but about half of them had gates, half of them didn't. And it was irrelevant to us. Never even thought about how it would affect me, or how it affected people out there.
LR: Now this is an island, it's an easy thing. You probably don't need a gate, an island with a bridge. It has it's own sort of inherent security that matters, they can tell you... when I lived on Meridian Road everything that we left on the front porch was stolen. Had our cars broken into, at least five times in 25 years. Our neighbor had their car stolen, and ran into the bridge at the end of the road. It was just one little annoyance after another. And in a gated community you don't have those annoyances. That's a very big improvement! So, and as far as I'm concerned, there is no price for peace of mind. It's the way people ought to be able to... live, and retire. When they don't have wild teenagers of their own, when they're out harassing the community themselves they deserve a place to retreat to. And this is really one of the finest retreats in the United States.

As we continued discussing how each individual perceives the gate, it became clear that there was difficulty in seeing the exclusionary nature of a gated community, particularly in light of what that might suggest about them as people.

AS: It's a very friendly community, but it doesn't exclude-- which, I think, is a very good thing. The business about the gate was not, did not influence our choice at all. It was irrelevant, as far as we were concerned. And I have no feelings,
MH: About the gate?
AS: About the gate either way. It doesn't bother me and it doesn't seem to prevent people from coming in, when there's any reason to come in.

As I began to delve into their ideas about the gate and its inherently exclusionary nature, Mr. Dietz transitioned into a discussion of diversion. He never said how he viewed the gate itself, but it is clear that discussing it prompted his defense of gated community "residents" as people who give back. This is a common term used to suggest outsiders only look at the negative; however, even the issues many gated residents view as positive aren't things that Gullah/Geechees would necessarily see in the same light. Yet, Mr. Dietz began to illustrate how Dataw Island's existence has been good for the surrounding community, in terms of jobs. He had typed up an itemized document that illustrated the variety of ways gated communities in the greater Beaufort areas have made a positive impact.

> ED: I've been involved with "Keep Beaufort County Beautiful" for all the time I've been here. In addition to picking up things on the highway, we do other things. I head up an organization of six private communities in the area that are all on this side of the Broad river. We call it the Marsh Association.
> MH: I've heard about this, I think.
> ED: And we have done a variety of programs and things, most recently we did something because we keep getting the feedback that we're a drag on the community with respect to finances and so forth; that we come here, and we build our communities and we expect the taxpayers to support it.
> MH: Now, I work with this community out here and I have never heard that you're a drag. I've heard that you're self- inclusive. You have your own roads; you take care of your own-- that's not a complaint I've ever heard.
> ED: Well, we have a, the six communities are Bray's Island, not too many people there. Bray's Island, Fripp Island, Callawassie, Harbor, Dataw, and Spring Island. We gathered together because we felt that six of us together have an impact. We just got started. For example, we pay 10.2 million dollars in property tax; 2.3 in personal property- 12.5, that's enough to support, matter of fact this community pays enough taxes to support the St. Helena Schools. And we have the school buses on the island now. We spend annually over 30 million dollars in wages, salaries and capital spending. We've done a number of things in the community, I'm not going to bore you with everything.

Below I have summarized the statistics presented to me by Mr. Dietz, as well as the qualifying statements summarized for each section of the written report.

> **Combined Economic Impact of the Marsh Association**
> Home Sites: 4660
> Homes Built: 2330
> "Construction of homes has a large economic impact on Beaufort County."

Property Taxes: 12.5 Million per yr.
Annual spending: 30.9 million
Annual salaries, wages, and benefits 13.5 million
Full time employees: 424, Part time 93
Majority of full time employees are paid between $20-29,000 yr.
Vacation time, health insurance and pension plan (401K)
Import money brought by retirees to Beaufort County provides economic benefit
Summary: "We have many retirees who import money from other parts of the country to assist in the growth of many local businesses that create jobs and pay personal property and property taxes to the county."

Most communities have private water and sewer
Maintain security forces with little county services required
Very, very few children attend public school from our community
Community roads developed and maintained by communities
Summary: "We are pointing out that we are an economic benefit to the rest of the county and are not complaining that we pay more taxes than services received."

Time and Talents: Volunteer Hours
1.2 million dollars of service at $15 per hour rate
Assets: some use of golf courses to charitable organizations at reduced rates or, in one case, free for charitable fundraisers
People who give time and talent to community service also are very generous in giving out of pocket and direct monetary assets to the organizations they serve, and other charitable organizations in this county.
Marsh Association residents and employees donated $383,000 to the United Way of Beaufort County, which represents 20.1% of the United Way 2002 goal of $1.9 million.
Summary: "The Marsh Association Members provide time, talent, and assets to make Beaufort County a better place for others to live."

ED: In 1990 when I was talking about building my house, they told me that they had a real problem. They did not realize that people would want to have landscaping work done; yards mowed... all those kinds of things. There was almost nobody in the community who would provide that service. So, since then, we now have a dozen of them, all new businesses all grown up. I'm not going to run through any more of this but I'll let you take it and read it. We just do a lot of things in the community and we're great contributors.

This analysis evaded the principal conflict between gated residents and island Gullah/Geechees: they don't view these types of things with the same level of importance in their lives. Newcomers to the area do not validate the ethnic epistemology of the Gullah cosmology; which has nothing to do with dollars. Their quality of life is based entirely on different aspects of wealth, such as land ownership, community cohesion, and having the ability to pass their culture down to the next

generation. Many of the things Mr. Dietz finds positive have jeopardized the parts of life Gullahs value above all else. What I find truly sad and slightly interesting is the fact that Mr. Dietz values the gated residents' volunteer time at $15 an hour, when none of those trapped in the "culture of servitude" (Faulkenberry et al. 2000) are making such a high hourly wage.

These types of counter claims made by gated residents up and down the coast illustrate their Eurocentric bias, which assumes that the white way is the best and only way to do things. I once spoke with a gentleman in the Target store on Hilton Head who was behind me in line. He started a conversation and I tried to politely answer his queries, but his friendliness caused me discomfort that he refused to recognize. As he probed further, I selectively picked from my discursive arsenal to suggest my research was aimed at figuring out why gated community residents could not see the blatant racism of their actions (strongly hoping he was one). His demeanor changed instantly, and he began espousing the same line of reasoning outlined above. His position was that surely nobody would want to live in a shack and farm in this heat, when they could sell that property for "good money" (that part I remember verbatim) and build a nice house somewhere else. I was so furious by the time I left that store, and equally incensed by his lack of knowledge concerning the way his neighboring Gullah view the world. Perhaps he never sees them, as they have been nearly exiled from the northern end. The commonality of this response was addressed in the 1995 Hilton Head R/UDAT report, speaking directly to the "realities" of improvements brought by gated community development within Sea Island communities:

> Native Islanders have not benefited proportionately from the development of the plantations. While there has been some improvement, and some jobs, they have not led to a quality of life that is necessarily better than before. The cost of living has skyrocketed; so that Native Islanders employed in poorly paid menial positions are often worse off than before. As property values have risen, so have property taxes. Few if any Native Islanders are in positions of power or influence in the public or private sectors [of Hilton Head Island] (9).

The point I am attempting to make, and that I believe represents the root of the problem, is that white people often will not take the time to truly see the perspective of an "other." It is a built in part of white culture in the United States--an inherited habitus--to be culturally disrespectful. I realize that those who volunteer their time and give their money do mean well; yet so did the hordes of Christian missionaries who delivered death, disease and cultural genocide to indigenous and tribal peoples worldwide—as a symbol of their love for their fellow man. The saddest part,

however, is that if newcomers truly took the time to understand Gullah culture, and engaged in dialogue with them (outside of polite conversation at the grocery store or once a year at the Gullah Festival), they would know these are not the kinds of help this (or any other Gullah/Geechee communities) want or need. They need property tax assistance, which could easily be added to the POA dues for gated residents wishing to help the local community. They could also start today making arrangements to allow natives access to places of significance now walled off from access, particularly their ancestral dead. And a strong push to remove "plantation" from gated community names would definitely be interpreted as a commitment to being part of a "community" that extends beyond the guardhouse. I am confident these are the types of gestures they would truly appreciate.

Regardless of how many times I hear the following argument, I am amazed that people find it justification for the continued spatial segregation gated communities foster. Time and time again I have had gated residents tell me that there are lots of blacks who live "inside" gated communities, as if that somehow makes a difference. This is a topic I find extremely interesting, and usually quite comical. It is important to note that the 2001 American Housing Survey paid special attention to this growing claim. Their conclusion, however, is that affluent African Americans are less likely to choose residence in gated areas (El Nasser 2002). This deduction was based on subsequent conversations with a host of theorists who study housing patterns and/or space and place issues (including Ed Blakely, co-author of *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States* 1997). The authors collective suggested that the history of African American's experiences of exclusion make them reluctant to choose a gated lifestyle in a predominantly white development. Blakely, who is black, also attributes the choice to what gating represents: "*the symbolism is too powerful. When a black lives behind the gate and another black comes to visit, the first thing the person says is 'What's going on, man?'*"

> MH: Now what about, what would you say the demographic is for Moss Creek? Let me rephrase that. Have you ever seen a black family living in this area?
> JH: Not living here, no. I've had black friends come to lunch; and other people have also and because most of the people who live here are Northerners I don't think they think twice about it, quite honestly.
> MH: So, Northerners (I mean), Northerners don't have the same ideas about race?
> JH: Not the Northerners that live here for the most part. There are some bigoted people here.
> MH: Right.

JH: There's no doubt about it. And I've heard some very bigoted remarks. I don't socialize with those people. There are alot of people who live here and it's easy to pick and choose who you want to be friends with.
MH: Well, that's good.
JH: And that's what we do.

As someone who interacts with a variety of people at all levels of society, I felt Mr. Lavon Stevens would be a good person to ask about the percentage of blacks living in gated communities on Hilton Head Island. His experiences offer valuable insight about those blacks who have given gated life a try.

MH: One thing I wanted to ask you about was the demographics within-- you'll hear people in gated communities say "well there are black people who live in gated communities." From someone who has been on the inside of them, how many black families have you actually seen that live in gated communities?
LS: There are a few--
MH: But it is a few.
LS: It is a few. And I can tell you that the few (there's a few of them that I know) that have experiences that would be worthwhile. I don't know if they would sit down and talk to you or not.
MH: Well, it would be worth a shot.
LS: But they have been involved in the Country Club environment, and the club membership environment and either have not participated or cancelled their membership because THEY weren't so comfortable in that environment and they LIVE in the gated community.
MH: Have you been able to ask them why they would ever want to live—I mean is it about status?
LS: No I don't think it's about status. I think people can live anywhere they want to. It's just that it's a nice house; it's a nice area—that's where I want to live. It's a shame that it's behind a gate or it's named "something" plantation. But this is the house that I want to live in. And you know, for what people have fought and died for, in America, is the right that we have the same rights to live anywhere. So I think that a lot of people are maybe not comfortable with the names or even the gates but I don't know that there are a lot of people trying to NOT live in the gated community-- simply because the majority (at least here on the island) of the houses in the residential areas of quality, are in the gated communities. So I think that's what a lot of people get caught up in. They would probably rather not have it be that way; I don't think they are trying to live in a gated community [maybe they are] but certainly when they look at everything they're shopping around for, they say "OK I like this property right here, it happens to be in this place."
MH: Right.
LS: Now, of course, you know the other side of that is that the houses and properties are sold from the standpoint—it's not even about the house. It's about the amenities and the advantages of living in a GATED community.

MH: Exactly, the golf course, the tennis—the... all that.
LS: Well, there are people who want that too, and have equal access to that and they feel that "yea, I want that exclusive right as well; to live in an area where I'm a member and everybody can't play this golf course like me because I'm a member here! "
MH: Right, and that makes people feel good for some reason. That's something I don't understand, but whatever floats your boat.
LS: And (like I said) I think a lot of people [well, a couple, not a lot, just a few people that I've met that are black} have gotten caught up into that (I think) and thought that that's what they would like too. But then they found out that that wasn't as nice as maybe they thought it would be.
MH: Because you're not immediately accepted-- just because you have the money!
LS: Not at all; and I think I heard Kareem Abdul-Jabbar describe it best: he said no matter how high you rise, in whatever area you're in, there are still prejudices out there. And he told the story about when he was trying to catch a taxi or something, or standing on the curb and couldn't get one.
MH: And he's Kareem Abdul-Jabbar!
LS: And he's Kareem Abdul-Jabbar.

The Dataw Island residents also included specific reference to black people who have chosen ownership behind their gates:

PP: You know, there are African Americans (on this island) who traditionally owned property on this island, who came from St. Helena's Island-- went on to (whatever they did) and ended up... when they wanted to come back to the south, to come back to their roots, they selected Dataw Island.
MH: And they were here before?
DS: They were, I told you about, ___.[13] I invited ___ but she was, her husband is retired from Boston University. He was the Martin Luther King Chair in philosophy and theology at Boston University. She was raised over at Penn (her parents taught at Penn Center) and she lived on St. Helena until she was about thirteen.
LR: Do you know what her maiden name was?
DS: Fripp. She was a Fripp. She is on the board of their family corporation that owns four hundred acres down at the end of Lands End. She's the chair of the Beaufort County Rural and Critical Lands Board. She and ____ have been here, this is their third property on Dataw Island and they've been here four or five years.
LR: He's from northern urban, plus African American (Boston)--
DS: But not originally--originally he's from Texas. His grandmother ran a boarding house near Galveston or Houston. And he is a jazz aficionado because all the black musicians could only stay at her boarding house when they were playing. So he sat around with them and he is absolutely a fascinating person to talk to. One of ___'s childhood friends is someone who owns a house here. He's only here part of the year. I believe his name is ___.
PP: That's right.

[13] The person(s) named did not participate in this research, therefore ___ will be used.

DS:___ and ___. He also went to Penn Center. He lives up in the Riverdale section of the Bronx, owns a couple of companies. Now, I (this is a hearsay quote that I've heard, I cannot attribute it... I don't know the truth of it) but he has had vacation properties all over the country and in every single one of them (going back to what Larry said) they would be there for a part of the year and the house would be vandalized or burglarized. He didn't particularly care for a gated community, on the other hand, he got sick and tired of being robbed. So he has his vacation home here now. He is down here regularly on a variety of schedules. I visited with him when he was here for one event (for the family births and deaths).
PP: I think he was probably here last weekend because he comes almost every year to Heritage Days.
LR: Is his family from Beaufort or is his wife's family from Beaufort?
DS: All ___ told me is she grew up with him on St. Helena.
PP: And ___, who's a Chicago attorney who comes here just sporadically-- two weeks at a time, six, seven times. His wife was—
ED: More importantly, he went to St. Helena High School.
PP: So, as I say, people that have moved away select Dataw when they come back.
MH: Right.
LR: Yea, there may be class distinctions but I don't think there really are race distinctions. You know, there are **enough** black families that live on Dataw--
MH: How many?
DS: I think we have at least eight.
MH: Out of how many?
DS: Seven hundred, but I mean, of that number-- just recently just within the last month, the special assistant to Herman Gaither (Superintendent of Schools) single parent moved here with two teenage sons.

Escaping The Gates: Former Gated Residents Reflect on Restrictions of Gated Life

At the far end of the spectrum of privatized community control lies the restrictive nature of most gated community Property Owners Associations (POAs), in some cases referred to as Homeowner's Associations (HOAs)[14] (Blakely and Snyder 1999). These organizations serve as a governing body of elected board members, who construct and enforce the "covenants, conditions, and restrictions (CC&Rs)"[15] in these artificial communities. The ideological selling point of this type of control suggests that residents can create a utopia based on common goals. They can ensure that property values will not deteriorate; the streets will be clean and free of debris, and they can socialize with friends and neighbors who share their worldview. In reality, however, the CC&Rs of

[14] POAs and HOAs are based on the premise that residents share in the legal ownership of streets, sidewalks, and other common facilities (Blakely and Snyder 1999).
[15] For a brief introduction to gated community rules and regulations please see http://www.wexfordplantation.com/policies.php (Wexford Plantation, Hilton Head Island, South Carolina).

some such places can be quite ridiculous. Blakely and Snyder documented the following restrictions: rules specifying acceptable traits for home furnishing that can be seen through the windows (from street view), restrictions on hours after which residents may not be seen socializing outside their homes, specific limits on pet size, approved flower lists for landscaping, height limits for shrubs and trees, prohibitions against swing sets, basketball goals, play equipment, window air conditioners, satellite dishes, and political or sales signs (1999). These restrictions are in addition to the standard codes concerning holiday decorations, paint colors, mailbox types and decorations, garbage can type and color, and how many hours prior to pick-up residents can push their cans to the curb (as well as how many hours after pick-up the cans can remain at the curb before fines are issued).

For a select few, such extensive rules prove to be too much to handle. I must admit that the notion of defectors was invisible to me until Jabari Moketsi, owner/editor of the *Gullah Sentinel* newspaper, suggested I contact Joni Diamond. This woman is a cultural icon of Beaufort County. Everyone knows her but nobody knows how to get in touch with her. She gained notoriety after publicly speaking out against the exclusionary tactics of gated communities on Hilton Head (as well as the naturalized racism of the gated phenomenon). Perhaps this might have gone over better with the locals if she didn't live in Wexford Plantation, the most exclusive gated areas on the Island. If I piece together all the different stories about Joni Diamond I would guess this is the way it happened: Joni Diamond began protesting certain rules and regulations as mandated by the Wexford Plantation POA, and it got a bit uncomfortable for them. They got together and figured out what technicality they could catch her on: more than the allotted number of cars in front of her home, her mailbox color, leaves on her lawn, visitors, garbage can visible from the street, holiday decorations not yet approved by the Board... something along those lines. So, as soon as they settled on which one they would use, they gave her official walking papers! I bet that's when she started attending County Council Meetings wearing a hat emblazoned with "WEXFORD SUX." All I know for sure is I worked very hard to locate her, and left enough messages on her machine to be considered a stalker, but I never got to meet or interview Joni Diamond.

The first true gated AWOL I got to meet was Linda Fasig from Wadmalaw Island. Linda volunteers for Linda Gadson at the Rural Mission My first chance meeting with both Lindas was on Johns Island, while attending their Native Islander Day. There was so much food, and so many

people Queen Quet wanted to connect with, I barely remembered it. Linda Fasig gave me her home phone and I contacted her the next week to arrange an interview. As we talked, I explained more and more about my research interests. Linda informed me she had once lived on Kiawah Island but she never found the advertised paradise most say they experience.

> LF: You know I had originally moved to Seabrook and I was living there in a gated community and I was just having such a, an isolated feeling; my friends couldn't come by, I couldn't get mail. There were people, if I wanted to just drop things off in somebody's mailbox or something, people would say I'm going to bring you a flyer or something they couldn't get on the island to do that. [recounting a conversation she had recently with a neighbor on Wadmalaw Island, who had also fled the confines of gated living for a little fresh air an island or two away] And I was just objecting to all kinds of different little things-- and I said so now I've moved to Wadmalaw and here I am having trouble with this neighbor-- maybe there was something to that. But he said, "that's a joke, I'd never do it again. I felt like my rights had been violated." He couldn't put out Christmas lights, he couldn't change-- couldn't have a light sensor at his doorway when he walked in, he couldn't have a dish--
> MH: Right, so why did you leave?
> LF: Very many of the same reasons that this man had moved to Wadmalaw. That and I had, my mother passed away, and I no longer had to stay there. So, as soon as I could sell my house (my condo)—as a matter of fact I actually purchased the house I'm in before my condo had sold—but within about four days of one happening the other took place so that was kind of the tale to me that I was where I was needing to be. But, I do have a love for Wadmalaw and it is-- the people there are beautiful and there are "white blinders" [Hargrove 2003; a concept I introduced to Linda Fasig, borrowed from my husband, to suggest gated residents only see each other. They operate as if the native Islanders of this area are invisible] on the eyes of that community in a way that's different than what you have on Kiawah. Kiawah, basically, those are Northern people that have come down with (also) a misunderstanding of the black culture that exists here.
> LF: I didn't want to be there to begin with. I had originally lived in downtown Charleston and then moved out to Wadmalaw and then (when my mother became ill) I moved over closer. I did not want to live in the home with mother but I wanted to be close by.
> MH: Right.
> LF: So Seabrook was the only (there was actually no property-- at that point when I was needing to do that—available on the road that was ungated (that I could afford). So I just got a little condo on Seabrook. Then, mother got a house (a house on Kiawah)--

Linda's parents were among the first six residents to own property on Kiawah Island in 1978. Today, according to their last survey in 2003, there are 32,000 full time residents. I was a bit familiar with Kiawah myself. It is one of the gated areas I visited trying to see if the guards would just let me drive around. That was never successful. Part of the reason I conducted that

experiment, aside from trying to assess the implied security of such places, was to get an idea how many of the people employed to enforce this segregation were people of color. Unfortunately, out of all the gated areas I have driven into trying to gain access, I have only seen two white employees.

A few weeks before I was scheduled to leave the field, I met a woman who worked in a shop I would often frequent just to stress browse- meaning I would just look at all their merchandise, taking my sweet time, trying to settle myself. The first time we met I had been to the Beaufort Visitor's Center to see what new books they might have. With the constant increase of cultural exploitation, there are always new books representing Gullah culture, Gullah food, or Gullah something! But that afternoon the ladies in the Visitors Center saw me browsing through some old photos. One of the women stood right behind me and a little to the left so she could give me a play by play for each picture. I tried to be courteous, but it was really starting to annoy me when she blurted out, *and that's the old slave quarters*! I said, "what slave quarters?" *Well it used to be one, but now it's been converted into apartments*. I couldn't believe my ears, but she gave me directions and I drove a few streets over to the location marked with a red X on my map of "*Historic Places to see While in Downtown Beaufort.*" I had asked, when she took the map from behind the counter to give me directions, "Why is the house that was used to film "The Big Chill" on the map but the slave quarters aren't?" She looked at me with a dead serious gaze and replied, "why would they be?" From her perspective, they weren't of historical importance. I finally found the building and it was, after all, the same building I had seen in the picture labeled "slave quarters." I still find it hard to believe.

So I had driven away from the slave quarters turned into apartments and headed for my stress breaker. The lady always behind the counter (who has chosen not to be identified) started up a conversation like always, and I asked her where she was from. She had grown up about an hour inland and classified herself as a country girl. One thing led to another and we began talking about what I was doing in Beaufort. As soon as I said "gated community" she said "Well, I just escaped from Fripp myself!" We got together a few days later to discuss her experiences and she recounted the snobby nature of the people, the way they claim ownership over a particular place on the beach, the way their children drive drunk in golf carts all over the island, but yet she couldn't have a cat. For her, it was simply too much. When she and her husband decided to divorce, she let

him have the house and packed her stuff. She convincingly told me she would never consider living in one of those "prisons" again.

Discussing the Gate: An Honest Conversation

During interviews with gated residents, I always tried to clarify that my interest was in the phenomenon of gating up and down the coast, and not with determining the moral fiber of those who chose that lifestyle. I recognized that my affiliation and friendship with several St. Helena families might cast me as an enemy in their eyes. So after hours of dialogue, I took the opportunity to directly address the nature of my proposal and preliminary questions[16], with regard to the ways in which it might have represented me to the group.

> MH: Now do you—I'm interested to see, do you feel like... from my proposal saying "the impact of gated communities" that I feel otherwise? I want to make sure that you know that I don't, I'm not,
> PP: You're not anti-gated community.
> MH: Well, I don't understand the gate, in the sense that, I know so many people that live outside it that are offended by it.
> ED: Take it from another standpoint, and I'll use my mother as an example. OK. My father worked on a golf course; a greens keeper. My mother felt that all the members were kind of not very nice people. Why was that? --Because they had a lot of money. They did things, they had a lot of money, they could go places and she couldn't do it. So she did not judge the people, she looked at it as a symbol of something out there. When we were growing up we had a hard time convincing her, they're pretty neat people! Just because they got money don't mean they're bad.
> AS: Also, coming from the LA area, we did not live in a gated community. But we had several friends that did and it was just like, well, it's gated or it isn't gated. Because if I went to visit a friend that I had to go through a gate (it was sometimes, well what if they aren't there I don't know how to get in), when my daughter moved to Atlanta they were in an apartment complex and that was gated but I didn't think anything about it. It was just like well, some do and some don't. But I didn't feel excluded in any way. So I guess I'm not, maybe, you're point is well taken, because I wasn't crossing a social class line.
> ED: When we were looking we did the same thing, almost, that everybody else did. We looked up and down the coast, we went out to California, went to Arizona. Took vacations all over trying to figure out where we wanted to retire. And we decided that Florida was just too crowded. So we picked Jacksonville as the furthest South that we would go and we picked North Carolina as the furthest North. We started out wanting to have the mountains, salt marsh and golf course. And couldn't get all three. We started at Fripp, and we did The Landings also. But this was, the people were the big thing here. I mean immediately. Not

[16] Research proposal and preliminary questions were requested by the POA president prior to the focus group. I provided both, and have included them in the appendix for further clarity.

just the people that lived here, but the people that worked here. So it was all part of that. Was the gate important? Not initially it wasn't. But it is now, not because I'm worried about the crime element as Larry is because I never lived in an area like that because I can, tomorrow, decide I want to leave for a week or two weeks or a month. And I don't have to worry about hiring somebody to come in and take care of it. So the security gate removes that problem for me, the house-sitting problem or whatever it is. So it's not so much that I worry about crime...
MH: It's that you aren't here all the time.
ED: That's right. Most of us travel and we didn't want to do that.

Then it became apparent that this group of people had actually given some thought to the small tilts of perspective that I am requesting of them (and others who live walled off from the rest of us).

ED: I had a question coming into this- I'm not trying to bait you but I'm curious about,
MH: No, bait me--you guys have been so nice--
ED: If we didn't have a gate would we be different. If we had the same community (absolutely the way it is now) but we didn't have a security gate, would we be different?
MH: Yea, you'd be different.
ED: We'd be different?
MH: Yea.
AS: Why?
MH: Because the gate symbolizes so much to so many people-- from little kids to 90 years old. They don't understand it. Elderly people don't understand it. They feel like it's because they're black, period!
ED: I was more frightened in California-
MH: Because they say, why would these people, why would you move somewhere where you know everybody's black and only live with white people and gate yourself off unless they're afraid?
LR: You know, this place is more gated from 1925 to 1973 than it is now. Trust me, because I kept the gate for 40 years. There wasn't anybody who got out here who didn't- and it was locked. You just didn't get out here. And nowadays, you can at least get through it. But I do think there's a difference. Geographically we have an island with a single access. That is automatically a piece of security. It's like having a street that's (you know a lot of neighborhoods they put a single access street [a dead end street] and that has a dampening effect on passer by crime)– which I lived with. So does the island-- have a significant dampening effect without the gate on passer by crime. But the gate helps. I'm glad it's there. And I'm glad that there's security out there because it gives me a lot of peace of mind. And I know the difference. This is the nicest neighborhood in Beaufort County—and I know a lot about it. And we've been very happy here. And the gate DOES matter! It matters because of security and let me tell you I've lived outside the gate and inside the gate and trust me—it matters a lot. Because it's relatively high crime area outside the gate and it's a zero crime area inside the gate. It matters for your peace of mind. And we'd leave for weeks at a time—we left for five weeks in the summer- don't

> worry about things when we're away. We couldn't leave Meridian Rd. for two weeks without having somebody live in the house; without having a complete alarm system.

In this conversation, earlier thoughts of cultural miscommunication called out to me. And suddenly I realized: these two cultures, that of gated residents (as "outsiders") and the Gullah/Geechees serving as their neighbors from Georgetown to Fernandina (as "insiders"), do not relate to one another on the basic level of what makes life worth living. Such a foundational difference suggests they will be speaking different languages upon this multivocal landscape for a long time to come.

CHAPTER 6
THE COMPLEX QUANDARY OF LAND

"*Land is expensive cause the Lord ain't makin' no more*!" (Charlie Simmons, Cultural Protection Overlay District Meeting, St. Helena Island, June 12, 2003)

Introduction

Many of the physical landscapes of the Sea Islands are admittedly breathtaking, with the huge live oaks, dripping in Spanish moss, swaying gently in the breeze. Many gated residents recall how they fell in love with the area as tourists, and then chose to make it home when they retired. It is, truly, a special place. The Gullah and Geechee communities who still own their Sea Island property are under tremendous, constant pressure from developers. I have met people who reject offers on a daily basis, because this land has become so valuable. What so many outsiders fail to see, however, is that it has always been valuable to the Gullah, but for different reasons. The land, for many, represents the foundation of Gullah/Geechee identity. In this chapter I discuss the impact of land loss, as well as the dominant factors that have caused it. Narratives, chosen from various interviews, clearly articulate the importance of land in the collective cultural memory of Gullah/Geechee people.

The misdevelopment of gated areas throughout the "Gullah Coast"[1] has impacted Sea Islanders in a variety of ways. The force with the most depressing consequences, however, is the loss of that which defines Gullah culture and history, which is essential for ensuring their future survival—the land. Over the past fifty years, black landowners in the American South have been disinvested of 80% of their landholdings (AP 2001). In the Sea Islands of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida, this loss has had a tremendously negative impact on Gullah language, self-sufficiency, family systems, and quality of life. Their relationship to the land has a historical depth linking them to their African ancestors and the survival of their cultural lifeways (also see Carnegie 1987).[2] As Jabari Moketsi told me more than once: "Gullah is about land. If you can't hold on to the land, you can't hold onto the culture." Echoing this crucial cultural message, activists from various Sea Islands have made similar comments on the issue:

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[1] The area was designated the "Gullah Coast" by the National Trust for Historic Preservation in 2004, when the entire coastal area was selected for inclusion as one of "America's 11 Most Endangered Historic Places."

[2] Charles V. Carnegie's analysis of family land in Jamaica illustrates a strong parallel with the Sea Islands. According to Carnegie, the spiritual and cosmological value of land pertains to ideas and knowledge that originated in Africa.

> The land is valuable to us because it symbolizes freedom. We're the ones who stayed here and withstood the heat, the mosquitoes and the malaria. It hurts to see what happens when highways and streets are paved, access to waterways is privatized and we are blocked out. (Emory Campbell, *Chicago Tribune* 2001).

> Some people call us land rich and cash poor, but that doesn't matter. Most of the people here won't give up their heart (Marquetta L. Goodwine, *Chicago Tribune* 2001).

The Sea Island landscapes represent more than just a natural environment. Gullah/Geechees who have retained their land inheritance often reside on the same soil, literally, that their ancestors worked in bondage. In January of 1865, General Sherman's *Special Field Order #15* set aside the Sea Islands and 30 miles inland for freed men and women, from Charleston, South Carolina to the St. John River in Florida. The order specifically prohibited the sale of such land to whites. Freedmen traveled to community institutions to acquire property deeds, and some of their children's children continue to fight to hold on to those same plots. In April 1999, Queen Quet, Marquetta L. Goodwine, spoke before the United Nations and delivered the following speech, aptly titled "Reclaiming the 40 Acres and a Mule: Gullah/Geechees and the Right to Self Determination," concerning the land predicament facing her larger community:

> Today we are still fighting to remain on our land, to preserve our language and customs, and to have people know of our existence before we are eliminated entirely or fenced out of our own home. Wealthy developers have build 'gated communities' through the Sea Islands and left cultural destruction in their wake. Our graveyards and burial grounds have been desecrated. Grave markers have been removed and areas leveled. We are not allowed to visit some of our burial grounds and graveyards or other sacred lands due to gated communities being located there. For us, the land is an extension of ourselves. Without the land which we have nurtured and which has fed us, we have lost all that makes us who we are. As one of our ancestors stated: "We born here; we parents' graves here; we donne ober country; dis yere our home. De Nort' folks hab home, antee? What a pity dat dey don't love der home like we love we home, for den dey would nebber come here for buy all way from we" (United Nations Human Rights Commission Address/ delivered April 1, 1999 in Geneva Switzerland).

From Georgetown to Fernandina, I have listened as one after another shared the heartbreaking story of the loss of Gullah/Geechee ancestral lands. Linda Gadson is the director of Rural Mission[3]

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[3] Rural Mission is an ecumenical, not-for-profit organization providing human services to low-income Sea Islands families and migrant farm workers who have made the Sea Islands part of their journey as they follow the harvests all over the nation. Through education, advocacy and outreach, Rural Mission respectfully provides a lifting hand-spiritually, emotionally, physically and economically. Rural Mission has fostered many programs and services that have

on John's Island, South Carolina, where some of the earliest scholarly literature documented the forced changes of "progress" (see Carawan 1989). She was being comical because she gets so tired of being interviewed by researchers from various disciplines; she has decided she might just make a tape and hand it to them when they walk in the door.

> LG: Because it's been years and years of people from all over different universities and colleges have come to study us and study us and study us. But, things have changed so drastically. In fact, I was just coming down the road just then I was thinking (on River Rd.) I said, you know we don't even have the old run-down houses anymore (on the road that is) because all that property has been sold, gone! And the people who used to have the property on the side of the road don't exist anymore. And we saw one little house sitting behind some trees and I said, why we can't have that back again, with modern equipment on the inside (like the bathroom, running water and stuff like that) why can't we have the old house to show who we really are? And just coming down the road, just talking, you know. But the changes that's taken place, it's just depressing sometimes.
> MH: I'm sure.
> LG: And sometimes it's uplifting and it depends on what day it is; when we think about how our parents and grandparents and great grandparents suffered tremendously just to hold on to the land and now the land's gone. And what can you do about it when you can't compete with money. Poverty can't compete with money. And so, it's one of those situations, which, uh, like I say, it depends on what day it is.

Linda and I discussed the current situation most islanders find themselves in: they don't know their rights as property owners, or they don't want to mention plans to sell until it's too late. Others are just bullied off their lands by developers. Gadson is from Yonges Island, between Beaufort and Charleston, which was included as one of the original five Sea Islands when Gullah/Geechee studies began.

> MH: So, now what about your family on Yonges, do you still own land?
> LG: Yes, not much. Not much, like ten acres is down; now but that's what we started out,, but we got two acres left.
> MH: You started with ten, when what?
> LG: When? What happened to 'em '?
> MH: I'm saying, in your family history, how long has your family owned land?
> LG: OH,, since the 1800s!
> MH: Ok, so started out with ten at that time and now you're to two.
> LG: Yes, because of family wants their own.
> MH: So that's been parceled to family?
> LG: Right.

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improved the quality of life for Sea Island residents. These have included the Sea Island Comprehensive Health Care Corporation and the Johns Island Rural Housing Project.

MH: So you have (like) a compound, a standard kind of family?
LG: Right, it wasn't bought out or pushed out by the White folks. There are people over there that that has happened to. They didn't push 'em out; they bought 'em out!
MH: So did they get a fair amount of money?
LG: Oh, no, no, no, no, no. First of all, most people (black people) when they get in a situation like that, when they selling property—something...they don't talk it until it's over because they don't want anybody to get in their business. And the person who's buying from them, give them such a sweet talk and actually exploiting them. And then when it's over and then that's when they cry; when they realize people were going to put up a business or whatever the case may be, or somebody land went up on Sheriffs Sale. Now that's the *other* thing that's happening a lot. That is happening over on our community (on the Islands too) where people's land is coming down where they can't pay the taxes and it's going up. And see, alot of folk don't know either, that they do have one year to reclaim their lands. One year after it's been sold,
MH: In a Sheriffs Sale?
LG: Yeah.
MH: And the Sheriffs Sale is when the taxes come due and people, and they sell it downtown, and they sell it,
LG: Yeah.
MH: So how much do you think—how much land's been lost to Sheriffs sale on Yonges?
LG: I'd say a good 25, 30, 40%... And see one of the things, what we didn't know what was happening, is that folk got brokers coming from *out of town* come in buy land here. And the reason we found that out because (after I said I cannot believe this) these people have a company out of Florida that come down to get these people's land,
MH: And sent Black people usually? They do that in Florida.
LG: They do that, Yeah!
MH: So people just thought it was somebody they would've, should know.

This has become a very common complaint, particularly used to target the elderly. Developers seek out and hire black developers to approach these communities in an attempt to sway their decision. I have documented accounts of this type of activity in American Beach, Florida, Yonges Island, South Carolina, and St. Helena Island, South Carolina.

LG: Right, Yeah. And also, with this family's land, it was in the woods...and so we tried to figure out... why would those people wants to buy the land in the woods? They already had research done that, that area was going to be developed and where we thought was isolation; a community was going to be built. And see, those are the kinds of information that we don't have knowledge of that's happening. And that kind of thing, you know, like where we are right here now, this property is *so* valuable... so valuable...

The land Linda is referring to is the site of Rural Mission, a community center aimed at improving the lives of migrant children. It sits on the water facing out toward the gated areas of Kiawah and

Seabrook Islands. And it simply drives those people crazy that she has that land right on the water. They have done everything legally possible to influence her to sell it. This situation will be further discussed within a framework of white privilege and the abounding examples of the abuse of economic power.

Land ownership, particularly for people of color and the lower classes of whites, is a defining opportunity that often subsidizes the mythic American dream. These landowners are always the first to be targeted for environmentally harmful development agendas, interstates and roadway expansions, dump sites, and power lines. But the Gullahs inherited and were privileged to buy island property, which continued to nurture their "field to the crik" subsistence culture. Their long phase of isolation insulated them from many of the tactics listed above, but the gating phenomenon has certainly leveled the playing field of whose land loss has been most devastating. In an interview conducted in the summer of 2003, Reverend Williams, of Hilton Head's Calvary Baptist Church, made the following important point: "Land should be an asset, not a liability." Unfortunately, however, Sea Island landholders live with the constant pressures from developers seeking more space to reinvent. Bill Barnwell shared several stories that illustrate this ongoing battle.

> BB: And, of course, that's not possible without those typical, or not so typical pressures from the outside. And those guys that I know that are on Hilton Head now, their parents had quite a bit of property on Hilton Head that's put them in quite a position to be very concerned. So that is part of the normal conversation these days and it's more than a conversation. It's a matter of trying to come up with a lot of solutions as to how to handle things or what kind of connections can be made to sorta withstand the takeover any further. But the typical slam dunk takeover that I've heard of mostly on Hilton Head has been a matter of a structure being constructed right next to your property and then the value of that property goes up and you're forced out. I'm sure you've heard a lot about that development.
> MH: Well, and so many people, Mr. P, here on St. Helena, was telling me that when people build next to you and you aren't really immersed in a cash economy, and you're basically self-sufficient, then you have to pay taxes in exorbitant amounts of money that you've never had to pay. That was a lot of the ways that they acquired property. That you simply couldn't pay the tax on it so it went up for Sheriffs sale or different ways things were gotten.
> BB: Well, you know after, I think one of the things that really helped a lot, after the system, after Penn School was no more--in terms of a day to day educational facility-- it becoming

a Center, they were able to accumulate a good bit of resources to help fight that thing off.[4] And so I mean that really helped because, for a while there, I mean it would appear in the paper and it was getting actually stolen I would venture to say.
MH: And this was in, would you say the 80's?
BB: Ah, hell, it's still going on but I think for the most part I'd say they started getting a real good grip on it in the 70s.
MH: Do you remember how it started, just hearing about this community or that community, or did you know people personally who lost land to a gated area?
BB: I know people who lost property as a result of the situation I described both on Hilton Head and... I didn't become aware of it until Hilton Head. Yeah, I didn't, and I was working over there at the time. You have to remember I have been gone long periods of time over the years.

Bill left the South (which represents a historical trend among early adult aged Gullah/Geechees) and ventured to the Caribbean for a while, where he taught a music seminar the University of the West Indies in Jamaica. He made an important connection for me, in terms of my situating the gating phenomenon as a postcolonial predicament, when he compared the aftermath of Jamaican independence to what was happening in his own community when he returned in the 1980s.

BB: But it's amazing, that country was going through quite a few political changes and it had to do with, it was the same kind of thing, well the property thing had already taken place over there after independence. There were riots and all that crap. But there was a very familiar sense of what was happening here then.
MH: With the tourism and everything? Increased development, land loss...
BB: Yeah, and how people actually responded or did not respond to that and eventually losing a considerable amount of property. And then there were so many people who had gone to the city, to New York, and just were not in touch so they could post something in the paper but there was no answer or no response within a certain time, it would go up for Sheriff's sale. And then they would give them, what, I guess it was a year to respond. And there was some dirty dealing going on: listings that were supposed to be listed probably weren't, or they didn't bother to make the information available after the first announcement. But there were a lot of people who benefited from that, Blacks too, I mean, that came and did the purchase number.
MH: But from outside?
BB: There were some locally that did that too, who were on the other side but who were astute enough to take advantage of a situation that would benefit them.
So what we've had to pay attention to and try to fight, you don't know who you're fighting now. You don't know who, and it's almost a lost phenomenon, you can no longer say "well, the whites are taking us for a ride" because everybody is being taken for a ride but its just that historically that has been the case. And the fallout from that, it will be years before

[4] When Penn School became Penn Center, the institution gained access to federal funding, grants, and various opportunities for assistance in the struggle against further real estate encroachment.

we're done with the fallout because there are so generations of that thing that's gonna happen for a long time and they are still in an acquisition mode.
MH: Who?
BB: The whites, they are still in an acquisition mode. But there is almost a screeching halt, but it's too late.
MH: Do you think it's too late here? (St. Helena)
BB: Well, the property, it's now only a small group of closely-knit families that you actually see evidence of. For example, the bulk of the property is gone, either from Sheriff's sale or people who didn't want to come back and mess with it just sold it for whatever. But the experience I had in, I guess it was in the early 1990s, I was driving down this highway headed toward Fripp Island, and I mean like I left a bit earlier this particular day, I left early because I wanted to hang out before I started playing and I just happened to glance over to the north side, this is after you pass like the schools and all that, and when you begin to get around to Freeman Landscaping thing is, well just before that, just when you get to that first causeway, I look over to the left and some of the trees are clearing and I saw all this development. And what they did was they started on the river and it was undetectable.
MH: Everybody didn't really notice what was going on.
BB: Yeah. And finally it just come back for that far end. The momentum is just too much right now. I mean I'm not saying it can't be stopped but, and there is a contingent of blacks here now that have been here since 1990 that do have the bucks to do it, but they are placing themselves in political postures in order to try to deal with some of that I guess. But it's the same shit, you know. After a certain point of maturity you expend yourself trying to be helpful and I guess it's just common for people to just get selfish.
MH: You hear that all the time but I just know myself well enough to know better.
BB: Yeah, but you know what I'm saying. And so they feel like, well I do so much, hell. And probably, in some instances, it would be good if they didn't do anything at all, than just going on their own selfish trip. Because you get in there and you start stirring up the thing and you draw a lot of attention to it, and you may draw attention to something that just shouldn't be that exposed for that moment because people are working on it and trying to,
MH: And they've worked so hard and you just cut it wide open!
BB: And then they cut it wide open and haul ass! It's a very delicate thing and it's a very dangerous kind of thing because there are some very serious people who's here now who would not hesitate to hurt you.

That comment got me thinking about the warning I received at Fripp Island, to "be careful!" But it also brought back the memory of Patricia Jones-Jackson, who conducted research on Wadmalaw Island in the 1970s and 1980s. In June of 1986, Jones-Jackson died as a result of an auto accident on Johns Island the day before. At the time, she was in the field on assignment for *National Geographic Magazine*. I have had as many as ten people from that area tell me she was murdered. It was an important time to be exposing the dynamics of change as Jones-Jackson was doing, and locals believe she was intentionally forced off the road. Their reasoning, which is eerily logical, is

that she had driven that same road hundreds of times, and there was no apparent reason for her to swerve off the road. Her most important contribution to the study of Sea Island culture, *When Roots Die: Endangered Traditions on the Sea Islands* (1987), might have been what led to her death. The reality of that situation necessitated a change in topic, so I asked Mr. Barnwell about his own experiences with land hungry developers.

> MH: Has nobody approached you about getting this property here?
> BB: Ah, people used to come in this yard everyday and then word got around, of course I started cussing. I said I'm not going to be forced into putting a chain up! They're not going to force me to put a chain up. I'm not gonna do that so finally the word got around "better not go in there!" (Laughter!!)
> MH: He'll meet you at the road with a shotgun!
> BB: Not even that, they know I'm fed up with it so they don't bother anymore. But it's one of the biggest headaches, I think, in the world... the matter of ownership not being a defined and settled issue. It's a big problem, but its getting there, I don't think it'll ever feel the same, but people are going to have to get off their duffs and go ahead and take care of that business, whatever it is, they gonna have to take care of that business. Because, no matter right or wrong, and I'm sounding like the conservative I'm not, but no matter if it's right or wrong it's going down. It's going down and it's not so gradual anymore. Like I said, that whole issue about the fact that it's a matter of law and how the law has gotten so influenced by the bullshit that the law is now bullshit but bullshit is the law!
> MH: Exactly! And that is what I am trying to understand, from a structural inequality standpoint, how do people have so much power that they can bend and shape the law? I mean it happens all over the world but here it happens daily!
> BB: There's but one explanation, it's fuckin' illegal!
> MH: It is illegal, in every way!
> BB: It's illegal, so there is no damn explanation. That's the only one. Its God dammed illegal! And so how do you then begin to, you can say it's illegal, you can come up with all the shit about it being illegal, but it's illegal and it's a done deal! That's bad. That's bad.
> MH: Yeah, because where do you go from there?
> BB: Yeah, and then.... Well the only thing you can do to get your foot in the door that you should already be inside of is you have to buy into the illegal shit just to get in, but if you buy into the illegal shit.
> MH: You're part of the problem!
> BB: You're part of the problem and then you're going to have to struggle... see that's why I said people have to find some resources to go ahead and take care of shutting down the possibility of anybody taking any more.
> MH: So you're saying just get those titles, stay on top of who owns what...
> BB: And I think that's really being done, but even though that's being done, the example I pointed out about early on over on Hilton Head, is that they set up a structure next to a property you've been paying $150 for, and they put up a building worth $3 or $4 million, and your property values are going up. Now, it's good on one hand that your property values are going up now, but on the other hand how are you going to keep it? Because

you have to pay the taxes so then, now there are some loopholes for the benefit of the landowner who is not in the best posture and there are some things that can be done now but I don't know what they are. I think the best thing I heard is to try to keep your property in the residential mode because once it gets into commercial mode all hell is, to hell in a hand basket.
BB: So the level that things are on now, especially my giving reference to the few blacks that are here that have money and have been able to put it into some really good places--despite how I think they're going to act eventually. The fact is that their presence is here and their presence is felt! But the void is, it's a different ballgame. The ballgame is no longer *we've gone too far*. There's not going to be any more of that *just because this person is not able to keep up*, that's going to be... there will be pockets of assistance... because there are still some shakers that will do that; but for the most part the trend is set the deal has been made and unless the thing can turn around politically which it never can be because I mean the law has got to be a part of it because there shouldn't be any of these discrepancies (with who owned what, and so forth) because that was a matter of fact. So the law screwed with it and the law allowed it to happen. So they're blaming the people saying "you should have stood up for this and stood up for that!" Well Goddamn!
MH: Or you've got 90 people who own this land. I still can't understand this heirs' property. If you can name 90 people, you still know that there are 90 people who own that, it doesn't change that, but to use that and find a loophole in that and take people's property,
BB: See, but there again, I'm saying that if you get one individual from say like a family who is in that posture and you get one individual from that family who has power in that family to buy into that shit,
MH: That's it; you've got it all!

Structural Mechanisms of Disinvestment

Primarily, there are four mechanisms through which the gated phenomena has become normalized: 1) the patent delegitimizing of heir's property as a valid epistemology for land management, 2) the legal loophole of "partitioning," 3) increasing property tax resulting in Sheriff's Sale, and 4) acts of intimidation and trickery on the part of developers and greedy entrepreneurs. In combination, these forces have disinvested Gullah/Geechees of the ancestral inheritance commonly referred to as "40 Acres and Mule."

Heirs' property, as few cultural outsiders are willing to validate, is "a sign of ancient culture, not a genuine title problem" (R/UDAT 1995: 13). The middle generations of Gullah/Geechee families inherited this predicament along with the land, and there is a lot of anger concerning the ways it has been manipulated by powerful development firms. Lawrence (LH) attended the focus group in Fernandina, Florida, and he eloquently expressed the fragmentary expressions of frustration I have heard over the years.

LH: How did that happen? You know how that happened?? Because we didn't make wills, we didn't probate that property, and land developers found it easy to take property where the last deed, the person been dead forty years! And the family still pay the taxes and still live there, but they don't own it and it's easy to take it from 'em. So when the developers came, they actually had all of American Beach. The first developers who tried to build a plantation, they had taken a loss and they went broke. They had to give the land back to those black people that they bought it from. And that' why you got a stalemate today because some Black people still own. But if we don't make wills, when these people (my mother couldn't do nothing but cook, clean and iron shirts, but she owned property!!!) and she left that property to us and a lot of those people left property to their children, some never came back. Some never cared, didn't want to come back. But the land developers found that easy prey because it wasn't taken through the legal system, and people weren't willing to pay the price to keep it, because you gotta pay to keep 'em, you gotta pay the taxes on it and if you don't pay the taxes you leave it open to people. That's pretty much where we are.

Heir's property is indeed a complicated mess, but it is not the actual problem. This system existed as the indigenous strategy under "just law"[5] from 1865 until greedy developers and lawyers realized it could be legally manipulated. Similar to the lack of respect shown to Inuit whale hunters and Native American practitioners of peyote medicine, this is yet another case of cultural insensitivity and disrespect for people's cultural institutions allowed by the legal system of the United States. When time honored traditions face off against the combined economic power of cultural capital and whiteness, groups who hold tight to their cultural values seem to always pay the price.

As Gullah/Geechees were give the opportunity to purchase property, aside from the few who were actually given their deeds as was ordered by Sherman, they organized their holdings as their ancestors had in West Africa. The land was set up as a family compound, with the senior woman in the central position with siblings taking adjacent properties all around. Each time there was a birth in the family, then that person automatically became an heir, and the entire tract was owned in kind. Therefore, no one person owned it, and no one person could exercise control. As children got married, they often would select a spot on the husband's family land. But some Sea Islanders with whom I am acquainted with have property on both sides of their family. As time went by, and the concept of single ownership became mainstream law, these communities had no

[5] Just law is how Sea Islanders refer to the mechanisms of social control that were in place before encroachment. Under "just law" community members were kept in line by the church and their social networks. Now that the islands have to deal with other forms of social control, such as the police, they refer to that as "unjust law."

reason to change, as they lived in isolation for nearly 100 years. But through the legal loopholes of "partitioning" this cultural system came under attack.

With each new study beginning in the 1970s concerning land loss and increased development, recommendations for safeguarding against land loss pointed to remedying the situation of heir's property. Gullah/Geechee community organizations sought outside assistance from state, federal, and non-profit agencies, which began providing workshops and free or low cost legal help. Lawyers working pro-bono taught islanders to write wills, and how to obtain clear titles. They also provided landowners with signs to watch for, regarding intimidation tactics recorded all over the South. In 1995, the R/UDAT report proposed the creation of a non-profit corporation under South Carolina law, to be called "The Heirs Property Non-Profit Title Assistance Service." In 2002, the Heirs' Property Preservation Project was created by the South Carolina Bar Foundation and the Community Foundation Serving Coastal South Carolina. A Ford Foundation Grant of $150,000 pays for the project in Charleston, Beaufort, and Berkeley counties, aimed at protecting the property rights of "slave descendants along the SC coast" (*The State* 2002). In its first year, this project reached an estimated 5,000 people who were in need of its assistance (*Charleston Post and Courier* 2003).

In the past thirty years, strategies such as this have been successful in reducing instances of land loss; however, there are still many Gullah/Geechees who do not trust outsiders enough to accept their professional assistance. There is a distinct need for law programs aimed at recruiting and offering scholarships to Gullah/Geechee students, much akin to the subaltern push for access to the power of representation within anthropology. Perhaps this is an undertaking for The Association for Political and Legal Anthropology (APLA). Options for assistance from anthropologists and social scientists should definitely be explored, fostering a reciprocal relationship of collaboration in an effort to build stronger bridges between the academy and the public. The only thing for certain is that the fundamental premise of heirs' property should be "protected and preserved for its value in representing a special element of the past" (R/UDAT 1995: 13).

It is important to note that heirs' property, as a cultural system of managing land inheritance, is not without its own inherent problems. It was created within the context of traditional agrarian economies and corporate kinship, resulting in large numbers of heirs attached to small,

shared parcels of property. Therefore, the conflict emerges when one heir desires to sell, because the system lacks any stable, formal rules for mediating such a process. The resulting instability only became evident, however, as more and more Sea Island landowners fell prey to the legal loophole of "partitioning." It is estimated that black Americans, on the whole, have lost 80% of their 5.5 million acres of farmland since the beginning of the twentieth century. As much as half of that 80% resulted from partition sales, with most of the land ending up in the hands of white developers or development corporations (AP 2001 http://www.mamiwata.com/lawyer.html). When trying to explain the process, it is advantageous to use concrete examples that have been documented in and around Sea Island communities. The following information was gathered by the Associated Press, resulting from an in-depth study of fourteen partitioning cases. All of these cases involved estates that were acquired from black landowners by whites or corporations. These examples were taken directly from the article "Developers and Lawyers Use a Legal Maneuver to Strip Black Families of Land" (AP 2001 http://www.mamiwata.com/lawyer.html).

> This is how it works:
> Whenever a landowner dies without a will, the heirs, usually spouse and children, inherit the estate. They own the land in common, with no one person owning a specific part of it. If more family members die without wills, things can get messy within a couple of generations, with dozens of relatives owning the land in common. Any interested party can buy an interest in one of these family estates; all it takes is a single heir willing to sell. And anyone who owns a share, no matter how small, can go to a judge and request that the entire property be sold at auction.

The report filed by the Associated Press indicates that judges are quick to agree to order partition sales, because it is much easier than appraising and dividing the property.

> In South Carolina in the 1990s, the Beckett family was forced into a partition sale, resulting in years of legal battles that the family could not afford. It began in 1990, when Audrey Moffitt bought a 1/72 interest in the Beckett estate from Frances Beckett, who was a 74 year old widow with a fourth grade education. At the time of sale, F. Beckett was bedridden with cancer and expected not to make it past three years. This land had been in the Beckett family since it was purchased in 1873. Moffitt was able to negotiate with six other heirs, two of which were over 80 years old and had little or no formal education. In 1991, Moffitt filed her partition action and the injustice began. In the end, the court ruled that the Beckett elders had been deceived: one thought they were selling timber rights, another believed he was selling a right of way, and the last was convinced he was being sued for back taxes if he refused to sell. Even after the judge ruled Moffitt's actions unconscionable, he allowed her to pay a fine of $45,075 for the validation of the partition sale. Moffitt ended

up selling off the property she had originally bought for $2,775 for a profit of $214,000 (Associated Press 2001 http://www.mamiwata.com/lawyer.html).

The unethical behavior of developers seeking large tracts of land for future projects is out of control in the Sea Island areas. Unfortunately, this is only one story in a vast collection illustrating the effects of partitioning. Even when families manage to hold these people off, they often end up incurring debt in the legal battle. There are documented cases in which black landowners have been forced to sell a piece of their land to pay the legal fees racked up while resisting a previous sale of an heir's interest in the family estate.

The third factor contributing to land loss in Gullah/Geechee communities has to do with rising property taxes. As both Linda Gadson and Bill Barnwell explained, when property taxes increase to the point that landowners can no longer pay, that land is at risk of being sold in Sheriff's Sale. Elders have recounted the early years (during the 1970s) when developers would hang around the courthouse just waiting to profit from the islanders' losses. Today, thanks to all the seminars and community workshops offered over the past thirty years, Sea Islanders throughout the Gullah Nation have built in safeguards against this type of predicament. For example, churches often have a property tax fund acquired through donations in the event a local resident can't make the payment. The continuing problem, however, comes from the number of heirs who no longer reside in the area and have little or no interest in the upkeep of their Island landholdings. These parcels are continually targeted by developers as easy prey for partition and/or Sheriff's Sale.

Glenda Simmons-Jenkins, my consultant in Florida, has lots of experience dealing with the dilemmas created by rising property taxes. Her family owns property in Nassau County, Florida that was once Nueva Esperanza Plantation. In our initial meeting and interview, we discussed the harassment tactics developers used in Nassau County, as well as the multitude of ways development agendas impact innocent bystanders:

> GSJ: It's Oyster Bay, it's along Mansford Creek and it is a gated yacht community. And it is one of the reasons why the property taxes have gone up so high. The other gated community which is behind--it goes back to what I was telling you about G.E. Prince's property--they came and they built directly behind this old community a new community called Nassau Lakes Town Home Apartments. It's also gated. And one of the most recent issues that came up around this community and their set of single family homes (which is not gated but they have a single family area) is that the people who moved into the single family area protested because they said, "well, you guys said there would only be a certain

number of houses per acre, now you're saying you want to crowd some more houses in here." Well they decided to let them crowd the houses in there but the people complained "we only have one way in and one way out, this is not safe," so on and so forth, and they said "well, what we'll do as an alternative, if we see fit, we'll create a road from this single family community through the G.E. Prince community."

One of the issues Glenda brought to my attention was the fear people have, particularly the elderly, about contesting development agendas that impact them or their land. There has been a tremendous amount of well-documented[6] racial violence and intimidation in Nassau County, Florida that has been grossly intensified by the gated community era (see Rymer 1995). Glenda referred to the resulting psychological impact as the "plantation mentality," which I asked her to elaborate on:

GSJ: Plantation mentality means that those of us of African descent, those of us descended from slaves who have not healed those wounds, scare easily. And when you say "we're going to build a road through..." and you get... OK, we had County Commission where one of the members on County Commission is a real estate broker!
MH: Which is totally unethical. What county is this?
GSJ: This is Nassau County. And he, I know, for one, he called, he had an agent call my house, my mother and father's home. And he had an agent visit the home or homes of people in that subdivision, the G.E. Prince settlement that I was telling you about. I guess word got out and the Justice Department came and passed out some cards. I tried to find out who the agent was from the Justice Department so I could follow it up and let them know that the unethical activity was happening but we live in a county that is very corrupt to its core and its like there's something gripping the black people. To answer your question, "why is it that nobody even acknowledges that black people are here?" It's because of the fear and the invisibility that somehow cloaks this whole island. It's the reason I asked Queen Quet to come and let us have a worship, because there is a story about when the ships would come in bringing slaves illegally, importing them. And then they realized they could be caught and they could be hanged. They dropped the human cargo to the bottom of the ocean. So there was no closure, no ceremony for the spirits and I have really felt that is one of the evils that lingers here, that has caused black people to be so oppressed, unwilling to open their mouths and speak and say "we are here" under such fear. Another example is, I don't know the name of the gated community but, as you drive out Louis Street back onto A1A the Franklintown burial site cemetery is inside one of the gated communities. And when you ever walk in there, and see these homes built around a cemetery...

This is a professional journalist for a local paper, and an activist, who feels she has gone through all the proper channels and still cannot get any attention concerning her family's struggle against the legalized

[6] Russ Rymer details specific cases from Nassau County, Florida in *American Beach: How Progress Robbed a Black Town -and Nation- of History, Wealth, and Power* (1998).

disenfranchisement of people of color in Nassau County.

> GSJ: Well, one thing I can say about this county is that (I don't know if you've ever come across a county like this one), corruption flies right and left. I have been before the County Commission. That's why I'm convinced that it's gonna take legwork on our part and I know this sounds mystic or whatever but it's also going to indeed be a spiritual intervention. Because I've done the other things, I've been before the County Commission! I've filed papers, but I've brought a case, a tight case (documentation, photos, flood plain, every kinda thing you could name) to tell these people "when you make this thing commercial you're going against the rules that YOU have on the books." They continued it, and they continued it.
> MH: What? Where was that?
> GSJ: It was a lot that was next to some family property. The owner said he wanted to make it commercial.[7] We came up with all the reasons why it was against the books for him to do so. The County Commission ruled in our favor and said, "no it should not be commercial." The lawyer rescinded their vote!! He rescinded their vote and said "you need to go back to the table because we could be sued by the developer if this is not made commercial." So he basically took-- out of their hands-- the power to make a decision because, as far as I'm concerned...
> MH: He's in their pocket.
> GSJ: Absolutely! And that's what we live with. So that's how I know it's not going to be human means because I've done that and I know the value of that. To give you an example of how people will struggle to hold onto their property, two years ago the taxes on a piece of land that is in my family was $600 a year, and we thought that was outrageous. This year it was $2000.
> MH: And at that rate, how long do you, I mean you'll do what it takes to hold onto it, but realistically how many families can actually do that?
> GSJ: How many families can do it, without a strategy? And I was told by someone that **developers just wait for the generation that cannot afford what they have inherited**. And that really struck me, because it is absolutely the truth.

One of the most difficult aspects of this research has been making connections between parallel predicaments in the various communities, but not because there is a lack of evidence. There are so many stories, so many transcripts, and so many media articles documenting the plight of Sea Island communities fighting to survive with land holdings intact. The experience linking the following places together, with respect to their struggles, is the constant pressure of intimidation, as well as stories of outright trickery. On Mosquito Beach, otherwise known as Sol Legare,[8] developers are beginning to pressure the Gullah community to sell, in order to make room

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[7] Three other research participants, from South Carolina, mentioned this as one of the recent tactics used to acquire native owned property.

[8] Sol Legare is a community located slightly off of the main highway leading to Folly Beach in Charleston County.

for a desired Condominium project. A close friend of mine who teaches at the College of Charleston alerted me to this situation and offered to show me around that area. This small community has managed to maintain its cultural character and I cannot believe they've been overlooked by developers until now. Perhaps the first step was to build out Folly Beach and ruin the small island feel. Now that this is a done deal, they can move on to other rural holdouts off the busy highway. Residents responded to initial requests with complete outrage. Long term resident Yvonne Rogers had this statement for developers of the condo plan:

> We're never going to sell Sol Legare. We're never going to sell Mosquito Beach. Our parents, our grandparents, our great-grandparents lived on this island. We are living here. Our children are living here. Our grandchildren will live here. The island is not for sale. It ain't ever going to be! (Porter 2003).

I can't help but wonder if Sapelo Island residents made similarly impassioned statements when rumors began circulating that the late tobacco millionaire, R. J. Reynolds, was planning to pursue their property.

I visited Sapelo Island in June of 2003, to meet with the Bailey family and learn, first hand, about the parallel struggles this Geechee community continues to endure. The Geechee community of Sapelo Island has dropped from 500 residents in the 1960s to around 50 today (Maurice Bailey, personal communication, 2003). Cornelia Bailey, author of *God, Dr. Buzzard, and the Bolito Man* (2001), has been interviewed too many times to count about the intimidation which caused her father to sell to Reynolds. Therefore, I didn't want to bother her, except briefly enough to meet and take a few snapshots with my daughters and mother-in-law. It was a pleasure to introduce my family to the woman whose recollections had so eloquently guided my former students around the past and present Sapelo Island. And Brenda, my husband's mother who was born and raised in West Tennessee, finally got to share her thoughts with Cornelia regarding all the shared commonalities of their disparate yet connected Southern rural upbringings.

The "Spirit of Sapelo Island Tour," conducted by Maurice Brown,[9] chronicled the land swaps that relocated all the individual Geechee communities into only one: Hog Hammock. This 430-acre enclave was a far cry from the acreage Islanders held before Reynolds came ashore in 1932, but the residents knew what side their bread was buttered on. Reynolds did not request their

[9] Maurice Bailey is Cornelia Bailey's son.

compliance in these unfair exchanges (their land for land in Hog Hammock). As Cornelia Bailey commented in a recent article:[10] "at that time you either worked for Reynolds or you didn't work." Her father, Hicks Walker, traded his four acres in Belle Marsh (acquired by the family in the late 1800s) for two acres in Hog Hammock. Eventually the entire Geechee community would agree to similar deals. Dolores Barclay, author of the Associated Press article cited above, contacted Reynolds' wife in Switzerland to discuss these unethical land deals. Her position was that Mr. Reynolds had tried to do a good thing to benefit the islanders. This type of paternalistic intimidation must be a gene that is naturally selected for in the DNA if you're born a rich white male in the South, if I may use this biological analogy.

Some forms of intimidation may be shrouded as civic affairs, such as the series of meetings conducted on Hilton Head Island after the release of the R/UDAT Report in 1995. This was also the meeting during which a gated resident had expressed his disgust with "having to see run down trailers along Gum Tree Rd." on his way to his secluded paradise.

> LC: They were having community meetings, it was people from the town[11] coming to the community saying that they were coming so we could tell them what kinds of plans we had for our property. It's that kind of meeting. The thing with them-- where they don't understand why we don't develop our land-- and this undeveloped land has bothered the heck out of these people. You know what I'm saying? So we comfortable with our land the way it is, because it's ours. So we do as we please with it! But it bothers them because, see they look at your land and they can see all the potentials because it's nothing but GREED! It's greed, because they already have, but they want more. So, when will they ever have enough? I don't know, you understand what I'm saying? So I think what bothers them is that our ancestors was taken advantage of, forced labor, no pay! Everything forced! But they, by the grace of God, when they could get some money, and I always say **when** they could get some, I guess they got the minimum, but they could still take that same little bit and purchase land and have it for their descendants. And now, we are descendents of those slaves. These people who are here now--still trying to take advantage of us—are descendants of those slaveholders! You know what I'm saying? So, you dealing with the same people! Partly different faces,
> MH: But the same mentality.
> LC: OK. Yeah. But they're still trying to get what you got. And like I say to people, some people still sell; well I'm not gonna stress over what I don't have control of because that's theirs. But, mine, I will choose what I would want to do with mine. And that's the reason I'm saying we have to take a stand as native[12] islanders and as Gullah people! We have to

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[10] "Peculiar Land Swaps Leave Blacks With Little of Their Ancestors' Georgia Island" (Barclay 2001, AP, http://www.Mamiwata.com/swap.html)
[11] Hilton Head Town Council.
[12] Note the use of "native" islander as a term of self-identification.

> take a stand! And sometimes you look around and you think, "Well I'm so busy I can't do this!" You have to do what you have to do! So that is my main reason and I just know that God is in the plan. You understand what I'm saying?
> MH: Exactly.
> LC: For us to step out and take a stand, and the time is now! We have to take a stand, so, that's my reason for stepping out and taking a stand with the Gullah storytelling, with the shout, with the songs, because all this stuff is a part of me.

While preparing for my interview with Mrs. Cohen, I was parked at a nice little space that appeared to be a park. I always try to arrive very early for interviews and spend some time in the surrounding community just looking around, getting my equipment ready, and preparing myself for the exchange. If the opportunity arises, and I see something of particular interest, I take notes and then ask the person being interviewed about it. This place was all grown up with weeds and vines, but it had a concrete marker of some sort. I asked Louise to tell me what she knew about it.

> LC: That was some land that belong to my cousin. I'll tell you the history of that land. Ok. What happened to him is that someone actually died, got killed. And there was this man that he was working with; it was a white man. He knew that that guy was scared of jail. And that guy that got killed was his friend. So, what he did, he used psychology on the man, and I think he told him something about "Oh, you killed that man!!" He said "I didn't kill that man!" He said "Yeah you killed that man!" He [her cousin] didn't know what he [the white man] was doing. "Yeah you killed that man, you killed him," and I think that [was] some kind of stuff he used on that guy to get that land. The guy scared him into thinking "I might know something about you! Yeah, but you was always with him, so they could very well say you did it." Oh, you'd be surprised at the stuff people pull. But guess what? See, this is why I know God is not dead and he's not sleeping. When my little cousin died, he died now probably about three years ago. But guess who's in jail?
> MH: The white man?
> LC: All right. That's who's in jail.

As an activist who now attends any meeting that fits into her busy work schedule, Louise shared several stories that illustrate how the gated residents of Hilton Head Island yield a distinct brand of political power. Their influence, often through administrative positions on Town Council, is directly linked to further expansion and tactics of intimidation directed toward residents of Ward One.[13] The following narrative represents Louis' participation in a Town Council Meeting held in 2000, which was organized to encourage dialogue about particular community concerns.

> LC: I was in a meeting and I actually heard this man, he commented on the trailers, the mobile home that people live in along Gum Tree Road, you know?

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[13] Ward One refers to the small Gullah community that remains on Hilton Head Island.

MH: That was something I wanted to ask you about.
LC: Wherein, some of these people probably could not get a house.
MH: Well, a house is a home.
LC: Exactly, so they get what they could get. For someone to live in the plantation and make a statement, "well I don't know why they just don't go somewhere with the trailers!" I couldn't believe that man said that! I said, "Well brother, you're traveling down Gum Tree Rd... probably you need to take another route, if you don't want to see trailers, then don't travel down that road.

Later on in the meeting, however, another complaint hit much closer to home for Louise. The Town Council set up a projector and began showing slides of houses on Hilton Head that were of concern, and Louis soon got an embarrassing shock:

> LC: Let me tell you, when the town came into the community with their slides, showing the dilapidated houses that they were saying were Eye-Sores, that little blue house[14] was one of the houses. For a minute, I felt bad, because they showing my house on the slide to everybody and the house **is** run down.

This type of public shaming is a definite form of intimidation, as well as an illustration of structural violence. To speak of houses that need to be torn down, simply because rich people don't like to contaminate their eyes with them, signifies white privilege at its extreme. Many in Louise's position might succumb to the pressure and tear it down, for fear of how they might be viewed in the larger community once the connection was made. Yet Louise resisted:

> LC: Well, for a minute, see we have to deal with that spirit of shame... because, that's how come we wasn't speaking our language, because we was ashamed of our language.
> MH: Because you were miseducated about how important it really was.
> LC: Yeah. For a minute, when they showed that...I felt...but something stood up in me honey, and when I want to do like [she fidgets and hunkers down] something made me stand up. And I stood up. And I says, "I'm going to restore that house!" I didn't know how in the world I was going to do it. All I know is that I want to, is that house had a lot of potentials to be restored. But it's this kind of stuff that make up feel bad. And see, that is the main thing, like a lot of the black folks home that you see coming onto 278 [Highway 278], they don't want to see! They say, "OOOH. Uh,huh!" They don't want people to know you on Hilton Head [they don't want other people to know that there are Gullah on Hilton Head]! So, I just hope the people will just take a stand and say, "**This is mine**! This is mine." So then, what they'll do then is they'll go back and try to come up with some kind of

[14] Louise was referring to a little house on her family's land, which she later explained was the house she had grown up in. She had told me all about the house earlier in the interview, and about her plans to transform the house into a Gullah Museum that would represent the Gullah community of Hilton Head. She is working closely with a graduate student from Savannah School of Art and Design who is interested in assisting with the process, and they have applied for a grant to fund the project.

> law or policy to try to... But I'll tell you one thing for sure. They haven't seen or heard the last word yet. Cause God gonna have that last word!

The drastic changes brought to the Sea Islands by elitist whites from elsewhere have left a stain on the cultural complexion of Gullah/Geechee life. These communities once thrived in isolation, as strong black landholders exercising their will in a companionship with the natural world. Today, much of that natural world is behind gates and fences, and native Sea Islanders no longer have access to places recognized as the building blocks of their collective cultural memory.

CHAPTER 7
THE ORIGINS AND LONGEVITY OF A POLITICAL ECONOMY OF RACISM

Macroduction[1]

Common sense notions of history distance the present context from the centuries of African enslavement that made the U.S. a reality. The various "subcolonies" (Martinot 2003) of African-descended peoples dotting the rural and urban landscapes of America are viewed, by most, as problem areas that arose out of thin air, due to cultural inferiority determined by the racialization of difference. This contextual void, as I will interpret it here, is a direct result of our lack of knowledge about the multiple histories transpiring between plantation days and the present, grounded in our tacit complicity within the "coloniality of power" (Quijano 1997 cited in Mignolo 2000) that has come to define the U.S. as a nation. Coloniality, as a structure of control often used to discuss the western impact outward, has implications here at home which make it ideal for understanding the political economy of racism under investigation. This white, capitalist, Eurocentric, hegemonic mindset has become a habitus[2] of sorts that exhibits very little change over the past four centuries. Within the port cities of Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia this habitus, armed with the power to grant or restrict access to political and economic resources based on whiteness and class privilege, elucidates the macro processes of capital accumulation and their consequences for urban minority populations.

Microduction[3]

The moss-draped urban landscapes of Lowcountry port cities, such as Charleston, Beaufort and Savannah, are but a bridge distance from Sea Island communities; yet, they often seem like separate worlds. Historic downtown districts engaging the white imagination offer mystery and intrigue to the millions who come each year in search of romanticized representations of the Old South. These environments of horse drawn carriages and street vendors, coupled with walking tours of historical landmarks and marvelous antebellum homes, often provoke tourism writers to characterize these urban landscapes as suspended in time. However, buried beneath the

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[1] "*Macroduction*" is a personal invention representing an introduction to the macro level processes at work.
[2] Habitus is a system, which functions to produce schemes for generating and perceiving practices within a "self-correcting" and "adaptable" process (see Bourdieu 1993).
[3] "Microduction" is a personal invention representing an introduction to the micro level processes at work.

cobblestone streets is a subaltern history in need of excavation; suffocating under calculated reinventions of history that shroud the painful realities of an iniquitous past. West African cultural contributions, although sewn into the very fabric of these southern cities, warrant mention only in the context of culinary influences. These jewels of the southern crown are sites of a broader political economy of racism aimed at dislocating Gullah/Geechee communities and delegitimizing their cultural legacy as the original source of capital accumulation enslaved and exploited for the creation of such "softened" urban wonders.

In effort to establish heritage tourism as a revitalization endeavor, city planners have employed a variety of tactics to relocate "black" enclaves comfortably outside the purview of the tourist gaze. Each stage of renewal translates into the erasure of community spaces forged shortly after Emancipation by groups seeking a place to call their own, leaving no visible representation to corroborate their social and cultural memories. As such spaces are wiped clean and sanitized of the realities of the past, divided landscapes emerge along with more digestible reinventions of history capable of luring the ever-increasing tourist dollar. These worlds are often separated by both visible and subtly engineered social, physical, and ideological boundaries, which require a peculiar blend of fact and fiction to maintain. The ramifications of this social dialectic represents a case study in the political economy of racism, as mainland Gullah/Geechee communities encounter a different kind of encroachment labeled redevelopment and renewal.

Multidimensional Realities: Shifting Locations[4]

When I first began working with the Gullah and Geechee of the South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Sea Islands I was theoretically weak, and the nearby port cities of Savannah, Beaufort, and Charleston were nothing more than a diversion from the anxiety of fieldwork or a place I could escape with my family to re-center myself. We would walk the streets of Charleston for hours and hours, my husband and our curious little girls, captivated by the beauty and elegance of the antebellum homes. We were all completely enamored of the place, with its cobblestone streets and horse-drawn carriages. Some of our most treasured family photos were taken there, as reluctant[5]

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[4] bell hooks suggests whites who "shift locations" in an attempt to understand how racism works can (both) come to see whiteness as terrorizing while, at the same time, realizing that all white people are not bad (1992).
[5] Being an anthropologist who studies tourism and its impact in this area, I have a true aversion to referring to myself as a tourist.

tourists in this city of southern charm.

By the third year of research, I had begun to reconnect with my father's side of the family in Lowcountry Georgia, never really making the connection that I had returned to my birthplace to begin my life's work. Visits to my grandmother, who had relocated to Savannah after the death of my Poppa, encouraged me to explore the city (as I got lost every time I went to see her). I remember even then thinking that there were two Savannahs— as I would notice the division between white and black over a distance of a few streets. The stark contrast was frightening, as it was truly my first experience in an all black urban environment. Houses were boarded up, covered in graffiti, with people standing on the corners trying to get my attention. The last street name I remembered seeing was Broad, and I was so twisted around I began to panic. I saw the only sight that my whiteness would permit at that time—the stereotypical urban ghetto. It would take six years before I made the connection between the Gullah/Geechee on the Sea Islands, and their kin in the cities, battling a political economy of racism on vastly different landscapes.

Urban Anthropology: Theoretical Expansions

The anthropological investigation of urban areas has undergone a much-needed theoretical expansion, built upon a foundation of lessons learned from previous accounts (see Low 1999 and Mullings 1987). As cities across the United States have engaged in similar approaches to redevelopment, the macro processes associated with capital accumulation offer anthropological opportunities for holistic interpretations of community dynamics (see Low 1999; Rollwagen 1988). This theoretical transition toward a political economy of the city (Low 1999) exposes the intricate ways in which structural forces of power shape the lives of urban residents, particularly within the context of increasing disparity between whites and communities of color (see Mullings 1987). The intersection of race and class upon specific urban landscapes, and the resulting conflicts, accommodations, and resistance, serve as a microcosm of the macro processes of coloniality and institutionalized racism within the social field of whiteness (see Gregory 1999; Rollwagen 1988; Rutheiser 1986: Williams 1992).

Sister Cities: Charleston and Savannah as Landscapes of Urban Amnesia

If cities could be family, Charleston, South Carolina and Savannah, Georgia would have certainly been born identical twins, separated at birth. They are among the most visited cities in the United States, with heritage tourism revenues showing steady annual increase. But behind the romantic façade of these reinventions of the "Old South" lies a parallel story of more than three hundred years of racialized oppression and disenfranchisement. This political economy of racism has guided Charleston and Savannah down similar paths of social development, resulting in white wealth at the cost of human bondage and inequality for the residents of color. Each city provides sufficient evidence that oppression of Africans during the plantation period and continuing to present for their descendants was the key ingredient in their success.

Charleston, South Carolina is among the most romantic, enjoyable cities I have ever visited. I have yet to meet a person that has visited there who does not feel the same way. However, behind the "postcard façade" are multiple versions of Charlestonian history (Welsch 2003) that silence the voices and contributions of Gullah/Geechee people. The city, first known as Charles Towne, was built on the institution of slavery, and it remained the driving force of the city's economic growth and social life well past the abolition of the slave trade in the early 1800s. Every facet of daily life depended on the bondage of Africans and their descendants, which is perhaps why Charleston was the only southern state to reopen the foreign slave trade between 1803 and 1807 (Powers 1994). It is estimated that some forty thousand Africans were brought directly into Charleston during that period, and many of their ancestors remain there today.

Charleston had the highest concentration of enslaved Africans in the entire South. In 1830, Africans outnumbered whites three to one, and 75% of Charleston families owned enslaved laborers (Stephens 2004). It is estimated that at least 40% of African Americans in the United States had an ancestor come through the Charles Towne slave auction. It was their labor that built the beautiful antebellum homes, the cobblestone streets, the Charleston Port, the luxurious gardens, and every other aspect of the city that lures more than four million tourists and four billion dollars each year. Enslaved females contributed domestic wonders, particularly the recipes that became the basis of the Lowcountry diet and remain a significant part of the booming culinary economy of the city. Hoppin' John, shrimp and grits, crabcakes, benne seed candy, and pecan pralines are the staple of each tourist's visit.

Post-Reconstruction in Charleston, as was the case all over the south, was a violent period for blacks. Whites held firm to their beliefs that blacks were descended from a "higher order of the monkeys" (Powers 1994:227), and dealt with them accordingly. Racist whites, whose presence was city-wide, were unwilling to grant any degree of equality to Charleston freedmen and women, resulting in multiple forms of terrorism (see Du Bois 1969; Powers 1994). Jim Crow laws, lynching, harassment, and racial discrimination in employment and education came to define their everyday lives. Black Charlestonians, however, held tightly to their hard won freedom and carved out a niche for themselves. From Emancipation to the present they have worked diligently to achieve the promises of the fourteenth amendment; they acquired substantial property holdings and developed impressive business districts radiating out from King Street. White Charlestonians, in response, have worked just as diligently to devise more covert strategies for black disenfranchisement (Powers 1994).

Savannah is known for its designation as America's earliest planned city. It was the first city in the state of Georgia, and boasts a yearly visitor count of six million. Slavery was illegal in Georgia until 1750, but once it became legal those willing to exploit it caught on quickly. Savannah became dependent upon slavery for the development of Oglethorpe's[6] dream city, complete with a series of grids that created public squares and parks. Blacks of Savannah account for the population majority, recorded at 62% in the 2000 U.S.Census. These inhabitants descend from the enslaved Africans used as labor in the building of the city, the last 400 of which were delivered to Jekyll Island from the Congo, on the slave ship *Wanderer*, in 1858 (see Pollitzer 1999). A delivery of this magnitude, so many decades after the ban on the foreign slave trade, clearly illustrates the significance of slave labor within the economy of Georgia. More importantly, in terms of African connections to the New World Diaspora, this historical chapter locates first generation[7] Africans in Georgia upon Emancipation.

The well-known white obsession with keeping slaves under "due order and protection" re-asserted itself in the early 1900s, resulting in "the two Savannahs of Jim Crow" (see Hoskins 2002). Blatant racism resulted in massive violence, as Georgia led the nation in lynching from 1889

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[6] James Oglethorpe "founded" Georgia as the thirteenth and final American colony and established Savannah as the first city in 1733.

[7] Ship records from the *Wanderer* specified the cargo was Congo boys between the ages of 11 and 13 (see Pollitzer 1999).

until 1918 (Hoskins 2002). Segregation dictated all aspects of black life, and feelings of dejection abounded:

> Situated as we are, with prejudice, race discrimination and curtailment on every side, our people are now living in the most crucial period in our history. The lines are tightening on us everyday. In politics, in business, in religion and every other avenue of activity we find that we are regarded as a separate and distinct people. We are being told in unmistakable terms and most frequently too, that we are not wanted here nor there (1912 editorial by Sol Johnson, Savannah Tribune).

Contrary to white intention, however, Black Savannah created a close-knit community out of this forced separation.[8] By 1914, the black community, centered on West Broad Street, had two banks, a theater, drug stores, insurance companies, lawyers, ice cream parlors, and many black professionals (Hoskins 2002). They made advances in business through the National Negro Business League and created more than three hundred lodges and societies. By 1940, the total Black property holdings in Savannah were estimated at ten million dollars, but this too would come under attack as urban renewal displaced families and destroyed neighborhoods that had taken decades to establish.

Slavery in these urban areas offered vastly different experiences than life on the nearby plantations. In both Charleston and Savannah, there was a significant population of free blacks,[9] giving rise to class conflicts very early on. There were also opportunities for trusted slaves to learn highly sought after trades and skills, in such areas as bricklaying, blacksmithing, carpentry, and tailoring (Powers 1994). These skills allowed enslaved Africans to become engineers, carpenters, steamboat captains and even bridge-builders. Although it was ultimately the white master who reaped the immediate economic benefits, these skills allowed for a certain level of autonomy and were a form of cultural capital passed down through the generations in freedom.

The port cities of Charleston and Savannah have remained diamonds in the crown of the South because these stories of exploitation and struggle remain hidden underneath a heritage tourism industry of romance and antebellum charm. Their participation in, and ongoing maintenance of, a political economy of racism reinforces a national disorder I refer to as "forced amnesia." This condition rests on the premise that if historical lies continue being presented as facts, year after

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[8] Black communities across the nation established business districts (see Marable 1983).

[9] A sizeable proportion of whom were classified as free people of color or mulattos.

year and in a multitude of ways, they will become accepted as the common sense of the masses. However, the black communities of these port cities are speaking truth to power, even if nobody is listening. The expansion of my fieldwork onto and into these urban sites reveals an intricate pathology, a habitus of racism that has allowed the social field of whiteness to continue operations virtually unchanged. Yet I feel as if I have pulled gently on a string that is unraveling a beautiful tapestry long admired from afar. As the string gets longer, revealing more and more, the urban spaces of the Gullah/Geechee take on a whole new look.

The Social Field of Whiteness: Understanding Racism as Habitus

Introduction: Whiteness Unpacked

Within much of cultural anthropology, the concept of "race" is revealed as a social construct with no valid scientific powers of delineation (concerning human populations). Having said that, the divisiveness of "race" will prove to be an ongoing battle as anthropologists, and others, continue our efforts aimed at dismantling damaging notions of difference. The ability of early colonial powers to categorize the peoples of our vast world as "Others" against a backdrop of whiteness has created the largest majority of the social injustice issues which activists, academics, and governmental bodies are facing, yet the culprit remains masked for most. Citizens of the U.S., for example, encounter the "bureaucratic and legal categories of race" (Rasmussen et al. 2001) on a daily basis. These practices serve to reinforce race as a legitimate category of human variation, thus normalizing beliefs based on inherent biological differences. Occupying the category of "white" has meant never having to question, in any fundamentally penetrating way, why racial problems exist. After all, there are programs in place to monitor racism the world over, and the Civil Rights Movement leveled the playing field in the U.S., right? Such misconceptions are symptoms of the larger problematic of "whiteness" (as both position and practice), which is the crucial element necessary for contextualizing the origins and longevity of the political economy of racism in the United States.

Whiteness, as a definable category of social analysis, is an intricate subject with a multiplicity of meanings in multiple locations (multilocalities) throughout the world. Enoch Page was among the first anthropologists to develop whiteness theory, and his critical contributions remain instrumental to the integration of whiteness studies into the discipline. Page defines whiteness as

"an analytical construct" capable of illustrating "how Europeans in America and elsewhere made themselves into a transnational group called whites to distinguish themselves and their supremacist entitlements from those designated nonwhites and seen as deserving few or no racial entitlements" (Page et al. 1994, 1999:113). Furthermore, this system of racialized access to resources was accomplished and is sustained by a set of racial *practices* (also referred to as whiteness, see Page 1999) based in domination and control.

The literature on whiteness, both within and outside anthropology, continues to grow; yet there are multiple threads that connect whiteness studies into a coherent framework from which a comprehensive discourse has been constructed. Whiteness, as a critical project of scholarship, can be understood to encompass several signature elements. The following are not presented as agreed upon definitive elements of whiteness. Therefore, they are provided here as a necessary appetizer for subsequent discussions of the political economy of racism. Whiteness is the institutionalization of European colonialism, representing the subjugation and exploitation of all non-whites as inferior beings (Rasmussen et al. 2001; Steyn 2001). Whiteness is a social construction representing cultural practice and identity, often linked to history and intent (see Brodkin 1998; Buck 2001). Whiteness is a location of structural advantage, privilege, power, and control; often granting access to better housing, employment, and educational opportunities (see Aal 2001; Frankenberg 2001; McIntosh 1989; Page 1999). In the context of the United States, whiteness is unmarked, rendered invisible on the social landscape (Frankenberg 2001; Rasmussen et al. 2001), and is often cross-cut by class and gender (Hartigan 1998; Newitz and Wray 1997). When whiteness is experienced by people of color, it represents violence and terrorism (see hooks 1992,1997).

Reflexive Notions of Whiteness: Mapping the Habitus of Racism

The perpetuation of inequality based on myths of racialized difference is one of the most urgent problems facing the citizens of the United States. The current anthropological approach to understanding racism,[10] and the multitude of systemic ways it is manifest in the U.S. South, requires somber reflection on just how little progress was truly made during the second half of the

[10] To clarify, racism is being defined here as any and all "behaviors which indirectly or directly support the inequality of racial hierarchy" (Spears 1999:19).

twentieth century. Blatant violence has, in most cases,[11] been replaced by ideological (and symbolic) violence, which reinforces racialized inequality and justifies the interests of the ruling class (see Harrison 1995, 2002; Page 1999; Spears 1999). Within a racist society, which typifies the whole of the United States, present day ideologies translate into normalized behaviors and actions, within systems of social and economic inequality that have real consequences in the daily lives of racialized others (see Fine et al. 2003; Hall 1980). In light of the myriad social programs, legislation, organizations and activists diligently working to dismantle racism, it becomes necessary to dig deeper in order to excavate the truths behind common sense notions about racism to find the underlying foundation of this peculiar and inhumane institution.

No matter how desperately whites continually seek to understand racism, I am convinced there is but one path that will get you there in one piece and with an honest heart: an inventory of one's own whiteness and its unique history. I was raised a racist, as are most citizens of he U.S. (particularly in rural East Tennessee where I grew up), and the habitus of racism came in daily doses within my small childhood community of Maryville, Tennessee. I had two great uncles in the Ku Klux Klan, a fact only shared as it became more and more obvious that this irrational hatred was a demon I planned to exorcize no matter what the cost. I still don't think most of my family understands the severity of the situation nor their complicit role in maintaining a system of racial inequality, but I gave up that struggle in an effort to save myself. I believe, without a doubt, that human beings cannot be whole until they understand culture, until they understand why it is they do what they do, and it is with this is mind that I pursue my research, teaching, and writings.

Whites of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida are extremely racist, but I suspect not any more racist than those in Illinois, California, or Oregon. Those who say they are not racist should be closely watched, as they are dangerous, and living in denial. Unless you grew up in a tent on a deserted island, you have internalized the same calculated representations of blackness as anyone else. There are exceptions, to be sure, but they are too few to warrant serious attention. Therefore, being aware of the multitude of ways racism is perpetuated in society, and contesting those processes, are the more important issues at hand.

The social field of whiteness, much like the disciplinary "fields" often analyzed by Bourdieu (1993), operates as a structured space of positions, with clearly defined stakes and interests.

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[11] Let us not forget that the brutal murder of James Byrd Jr. is classified as a modern day lynching (see Ainslie 2004).

Within the field, agents and/or institutions battle for power over the distribution of the specific capital that has been accumulated (Bourdieu 1992), and it is these struggles and their outcomes that heavily influence subsequent strategies for domination and control employed by those in the loftiest positions. More importantly, and of particular interest in terms of racism, is the rule that all agents within the field "must share a certain number of fundamental interests, namely everything that is linked to the existence of the field" (73). Borrowing this concept, and its rules of operation, allows us to locate the habitus as a system working *within* the field. In order for the field of whiteness to function, there have to be stakes and people willing to engage in the system. These people must also be "endowed with the 'habitus' [in this case, the habitus of racism] that implies knowledge and recognition of the immanent laws of the field, the stakes, and so on" (Bourdieu 1993: 72). Such a habitus, as Bourdieu explains (1993), "is all at once a 'craft', a collection of techniques, references, and a set of 'beliefs'" (72). Within this field of whiteness there is an unspoken collective agreement of allegiance to the power dynamic (Hurtado 1997). The stakes[12] are high (economically, politically, socially, and culturally), for those who choose to ignore the rules (Hurtado 1997). Therefore, in terms of the broader social field of specific urban contexts such as Charleston and Savannah, there must be an agreed upon habitus serving to maintain the field of dominance. This habitus is a political economy of racism that remains much as it has been for hundreds of years, save the physical lynching and barbarous mistreatment of peoples of color.

It is important to clearly distinguish that which is being defined as habitus from a "habit." Habitus is a system, which functions to produce schemes for generating and perceiving practices (Bourdieu 1993) within a "self-correcting" and "adaptable" process. Habitus is a systemic part of the infrastructure of the social field of whiteness and white privilege, and the conditioning mechanisms generated by the system serve to locate the various positions into a hierarchy that appears innate. Once it takes hold, such as my firmly rooted, although irrational, association between evil and snakes, there are constant barriers to delegitimizing it. We find ourselves surrounded by people whose role it is to reinforce the rules. By viewing racism as habitus, we can produce counter-hegemonic representations of the social field as they are witnessed and experienced, and thereby find small tears in the canvas through which to penetrate.

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[12] For a specific discussion regarding the stakes of non-conformity with regard to the social field of whiteness, see Pem Buck's *Worked to the Bone: Race, Class, Power, and Privilege in Kentucky* (2001).

Political Economy and Coloniality

Current anthropological theory, within the framework of political economy, continues to profit from a decidedly Marxist orientation, along with the valuable lessons learned through collective attempts at correcting its deficiencies. By the 1990s, the idea of colonialism, as a concept capable of describing what was happening in previously colonized countries at that time, was facing reasonable critique from several sides as the broader discipline struggled to make sense of the relationship between colonialism and capitalism (Roseberry 2002). The aftermaths of colonial rule were recognized as manifesting similar sociohistorical forces of racist exploitation and white privilege, which require a discourse capable of discussing the present as a direct reflection of the colonial past. In an effort toward reconceptualizing colonial history as a process not yet resolved, some turned their attention toward developing a postcolonial discourse, while others worked to pinpoint distinct characteristics found within each system. Ultimately, these debates and dialogues led to the inception of "coloniality" as a framework for analyzing the persistence of racialized hierarchies and class boundaries (see Grosfoguel 1980). The term[13] is often attributed to Anibal Quijano, who introduced the "coloniality of power" decades ago, to name the structures of power, control, and hegemony responsible for hierarchies of exploitation worldwide "stretching from the conquest of the Americas to the present" (Martinot 2003).

Many anthropologists in the West have been slow to recognize the parallels between the victims of colonization and capitalism in the "third world" and the descendants of Africans who were brought to this continent as capital investment. It is beneficial, as well as crucial, that we acknowledge the legacy of coloniality that has been naturalized within American culture. A few months into my year of intensive fieldwork, I recorded the following notions in my field journal:

> *Western anthropologists, as well as the proponents of postcolonial theory, need to acknowledge that the methods and ideology responsible for creating "postcolonial predicaments" in "third worlds" have survivors in the US as well. People of African descent also face postcolonial problems resulting from the colonization of their bodies and minds -- and such processes continue in various forms all around us. Housing projects are a postcolonial predicament; the drug war as it is waged on poor black communities is a postcolonial predicament; the prison industrial complex is a postcolonial predicament. I*

[13] The "coloniality of power" is an expression coined by Anibal Quijano to name the structures of power, control, and hegemony that emerged during the conquest of the Americas, which have continually become more closely aligned into the present.

would go as far as to say that the current "War in Iraq" is as well, for the simple fact that it seems we are "taking over" their resources, their political system, and instituting a system believed to be far superior (strictly for our benefit). If that is not colonization, or recolonization, what is it? Perhaps someone should begin developing a theoretical basis for studying "postcolonial Iraq" (Journal entry, September 2003).

The underlying premise of coloniality is the valorization of whiteness (as ideology and practice) as superior, progressive and universal (Martinot 2003). This Eurocentric epistemology, regardless of location, benefits the elite few at the expense of the "othered" many. Whiteness translates into power and domination in almost all areas of life, including politics, economics, and the common sense ideology of mainstream cultural values.

The current critical anthropological investigation is ultimately an interrogation of the political economy of colonialism and the existing legacies of racial oppression. These struggles are still quite evident within the institutional structures of these coastal cities. Elite Charleston families who became rich on the business of slavery remain wealthy and influential. Many of them continue to benefit from reinvented forms of racial injustice in the form of service jobs. Descendants of the so-called chattel that made them rich continue to cook and clean for them, they still do backbreaking labor that makes whites richer, and they still live with the reality that those in power have little regard for their quality of life.

Whether we choose postcolonial, neocolonial, or coloniality as the lens through which to view these urban spaces, there are several clear points to be made: (1) the predicaments facing Gullah/Geechees represent white historical fantasies born of slavery and colonialism; (2) the infrastructure of coloniality remains intact in ways that deny the hard won rights of the 14th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution; and (3) surviving enslavement, Jim Crow, and integration took courage, knowledge, and cohesive efforts, and those cultural traits continue to be utilized by Gullah/Geechees in devising reactions and responses to this ongoing battle.

Institutionalized White Power and the Perpetuation of Racial Dysfunction[14]

As the Civil War drew to a close, and the last cannons rang out over the Charleston Harbor in the mid-1860s, the white elite was forced to come to terms with the pending freedom of their

[14] Mayor Joe Riley of Charleston referred to this, in reference to racist whites, as the reason for ongoing problems.

enslaved labor force. Within the port cities of coastal South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida the political economy of racism begun hundreds of years prior was remodeled into systemic forces aimed at perpetuating the power imbalance, "with an unspoken promise to disenfranchise blacks forever; or at least until they could have them deported" (see Du Bois 1969). Through the forces of state supported race making and paternalistic control over representations of blackness, residential segregation, economic and political marginalization, and historical reinventions,[15] the elite extended its oppression into the present. Blacks, although now technically free, experienced unequal life chances in the areas of education, politics, employment and housing (see Marable 2000); yet in many cities majority black neighborhoods created innovative strategies for survival and success (see Chavis 1994; Gregory 1998; Hoskins 2002; Jackson 2001; Powers 1994; Rutheiser 1996). Savannah, Georgia and Charleston, South Carolina were two such places; however, contemporary Gullah/Geechee communities are finding it more and more difficult to negotiate the intersection of race, class, and power manipulated by whites to restabilize the color line.

The Trope of Blackness as a Tool of Whiteness

The dynamic relationship among race, place, and power has often been neglected in research pertaining to black urban spaces.[16] In academic research, as well as within public policy debates and the mass media, representations of black inner-city spaces rely on the conflation of identity, poverty and pathology (see Harrison 1995) with little attention paid to the ongoing relationship between history, culture, and politics (Gregory 1998). This ideology is often referred to as the "trope of blackness." The following example from contemporary Charleston clearly illustrates the symbolic violence of this type of conflation: in September of 2004, Dr. Michael Stephens (contributor for popmatters.com) presented an impressive account of heritage tourism in Charleston ["*These Times/This Place*"].[17] Stephens was obviously troubled by the collective denial

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[15] It should be noted that racism, as a process, "rests on the ability to contain blacks in the present, to repress and deny the past" (see Gilroy 1987:12).

[16] *Philadelphia Negro by* W.E.B. Du Bois (1899) and *Deep South* by Allison Davis et al. (1941) are recognized for their expertise in ethnographic merit concerning black society, however, they were not widely read by anthropologists until quite recently. For important responses to this neglect and new ethnographies of black society, see Gregory 1998; Gwaltney 1980; Harrison 1988, 1992, Jackson 2000; Valentine 1978. Also see Harrison and Harrison 1999.

[17] (http://www.popmatters.com/features/tttp/1stephens.shtml/) Originally from Ireland, Dr. Stephens came to Charleston, SC in 1995 to become Associate Professor in Arts & Sciences at Johnson & Wales University, and presently teaches courses in Food & Culture, Food & Film, Literature. He earned his Ph.D. in 1994 (Cultural Studies) with a specialization in Culture Theory/Popular Culture.

of anything having to do with slavery when it comes to the tourism industry of Charleston: "slavery is only mentioned on tours as an illustration of the white owner's wealth." The particular section of interest to me, however, was the following quote from the Charleston *Post and Courier*:

> Homeless men in ragged clothes sip from 40-ounce malt liquor bottles in a scraggly patch of woods, carpeted with jagged glass, wadded trash and pine needles. Young black men huddle on street corners, speak in muffled tones and glare at passing police. In this neighborhood, as in other predominantly black areas of the city, life lacks the carefree postcard image that Charleston projects to the outside world (January 28, 2004).

Stephens inserted this quote as an attempt to make sense of the lack of heritage preservation projects taking place in the black sections of downtown Charleston. More specifically, he was expressing concern over the freedmen's cottages,[18] which dominate Charleston north[19] of Calhoun Street. Upon searching for the full-length article from which this quote came, I found that most of the headlines were power-evasive reinforcements of the trope of black urban areas. Scattered among articles discussing the recent *Christy's* auction and Lowcountry recipes (another form of cultural knowledge stolen from the Gullah/Geechees for the economic benefit of whites), were consistently stereotypical representations of the collective black community of Charleston. That particular day, they were also wrapping up their two-day *Special Report: Black-on-Black Crime*. With an all-white staff of writers covering a city whose black population fluctuates between 48-53%, this dominant trope of blackness serves to reinforce the power evasive ideology responsible for masking the ten or more decades between Emancipation and the Civil Rights Movement. That historical period, however, is the most critical in terms of (re) presentations of black life in America capable of decentering the invented history currently billed as naturalized fact.

Controlling the Means of Production: A Privilege of "Culturalogical Whiteness"[20]

One of the glaring theoretical oversights of racialized inequality involves an accounting of the concrete ways whiteness translates into control over various means of production. As discussed above, representations of blackness in Charleston are delivered daily, wrapped in power

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[18] "Freedman's cottages are one-story homes that were built by white developers soon after the Civil War to rent to freed slaves. These cottages, like shotgun houses, are among the few architectural forms associated with African American history" (http://www.popmatters.com/features/tttp/1stephens.shtml/).

[19] "North" is equal to "black" in the Charleston lexicon of whiteness.

[20] The privilege of control over the image of blackness from the perspective of whiteness, often used to divert attention away from routine white racist practices and toward tropes of blackness (see Page 1999).

evasive stereotypes equating black identity with a culture of poverty discourse long synonymous with black urban spaces. Unfortunately, Charleston is not the only site within the multilocalities of the Lowcountry to enjoy this uncontestable privilege of "culturalogical whiteness" (Page 1999:113). This "white technocratic authority" (Page 1999) represents the everyday reality facing the black folks of Beaufort, Hilton Head, Savannah, Brunswick, Fernandina; the list can be extended to include people of color throughout the nation and around the globe. This form of symbolic violence allows whites to invent, refashion, commodify, and often omit black images from the white public sphere. This blatant authority, and underlying control of the means of production associated with mass media, prompted Jabari Moketsi of Beaufort, South Carolina to actively pursue alternatives capable of telling more authentic stories of the larger Gullah/Geechee community. His defiance has been costly, thus providing a clear illustration of the price of resistance (see Hurtado 1997; also Page 1999).

I first sat down with Jabari Moketsi in 2003, after years of encouragement from various community members in and around Beaufort County. Our conversations between 2003 and the present illustrate the struggles faced by blacks seeking to defy the system, but the broader dialogue paints a picture of the political economy of racism that no amount of anthropological grandstanding could do justice.

> JM: Jabari Moketsi, of course. I'm born and raised in Beaufort. I went to school for radio broadcasting.
> MH: Where did you go to school?
> JM: Tri-County Technical College. Then I left there and went to Texas Southern University in Houston and I worked out there a while, worked in radio out there a while, worked in a white radio station. I was a black announcer, like what they called at that time, adult contemporary. You know Melissa Manchester, Carly Simon, that kind of thing. So when I got back here I tried to get into the music radio station...
> MH: When would that have been, when you got back here?
> JM: Oh, I came back years ago, in 79' I think. 80', 81' something like that. So I started with the local white station here, you know, and I worked but there really wasn't any money there. So, the black radio station asked would I come over there and run that operation for them since I had major market experience so I went over there for a while, managed that station but still there was not enough moneys flowing. So then I decided I needed more money.
> MH: I understand that.
> JM: So I ended up doing something, which I hated, going back into uniform, which means I went and joined the Post Office. I worked in the Post Office for almost seven years until I couldn't stand it anymore, I mean I hated it man because there was no creativity there,

You never, I just stood in one spot and separated magazines and what I don't finish one day I start the next day. But anyway, after that, while I was in the Post office I was making preparations to get out of there. So, being that I was in the music business, I started a little retail music store and when I saw that the store was able to support me,
MH: And that was here in Beaufort?
JM: Yea,
MH: And where was that.
JM: it's right out here; it's called Music Tek.
MH: I know exactly where it is.
JM: It was out here by K-mart, we just moved recently.
MH: Right down from K-Mart. I bought some stuff in there years and years ago.
JM: Yea, that's my store. Now we moved from there, now we're over here right across from Blockbusters,
MH: I know exactly where it is! Behind Burger King.
JM: Well, we really didn't want to move but Dick Stewart, you heard of Dick Stewart? Rich, Millionaire man just came to town that's buying up everything?

At the time of my interview with Jabari, I had not heard of this man. However, his name began coming up in various conversations, always labeled as someone determined to buy all of Beaufort. I also came across his name when revisiting the transcript from the Fripp Island interview, in which he was named as the person willing to donate a large parcel of land for the proposed Cancer Center. That statement was prefaced with "he will probably be a new county councilman." That interview occurred in the summer of 2003. Stewart ran for Beaufort County Council in 2004 and received strong support from gated community residents, as evidenced by his campaign bumper stickers. He won the race, and currently serves in the following positions: Chairman: Intergovernmental Relations/Economic Development; Vice Chairman: Affordable Housing; Member: Employee Services, Finance, Grants/Minority Affairs, Land Management, Military Affairs, and Public Services.

MH: I never heard of him but I'd like to hear more about him.
JM: He's an interesting character. He would not renew my lease so I had to move.
MH: Up there?
JM: Yea, that's why I moved. I was there 15 years. But I think it had more to do with my politics I think. But that's one of those things I can't prove.
MH: Of course!
JM: You know, you know. During the time that I had the store I was looking at the Beaufort Gazette one day, and they had this kid, this kid made a perfect score (this black kid) on the SAT, 1600 perfect score.
MH: From Beaufort here?

JM: Well, no, his family and everything from Beaufort and he went to school here, all his family and they had moved to Tennessee. His name was Brown, Prince Brown was his name and that was his son. They moved to Tennessee, and he was teaching at Tennessee State or someplace, the father was. So the boy made a perfect 1600, and of course, this is his family here, so they sent it to the Beaufort Gazette. The Beaufort Gazette put it in this little old thing here [showing something about the size of a business card] on the back page with this kid making a 1600! I don't even think they had his picture in there. It was just a little matchbox size, "so and so, son of Prince Brown." So, anyway, I saw that and I said "oh no no no, this can't be.' And on the front page of that newspaper, they had some black guy sitting on the ground with handcuffs behind him and had his pants all pulled down and you could see his drawers and stuff you know and I said, 'now, wait a minute! Here's a kid who just made 1600 on the SAT, no picture! Here's some little dude that's dealing crack and dope on the west side of town over here, his picture this big on the front!'[Illustrating to me that the picture was quite large]
MH: Reinforce the stereotype.
JM: You know what I'm saying! I said 'something here is Wrong!' So, at that point, I said, 'I gotta start a newspaper!'
MH: When was this?
JM: this was back in 19...97. Yea because we've been going 7 years! So I said, 'well I gotta start,'
MH: Did you have experience in newspaper at that time?
JM: No, absolutely none! Absolutely none! I went to the library and I checked out books on newspaper and all the terminology and I spent nights up. I didn't have those kinds of writing skills, I didn't have any of it. I was a radioman, and a music man and everything else. And I learned the style, I got an AP, Associated Press, style book on how to write and I just taught myself how to do that. And then I went to Jackson, Mississippi, I chose a town that had a black newspaper that was approximate to this same town in terms of population...
MH: Demographics.
JM: demographics... and I went there and I spoke to the man who owned that newspaper there and I said 'tell me how this newspaper thing work.' And he sat there and told me the whole thing, how it work, and he said 'you didn't go to school?' and I said 'no, I got the mechanics of it because I read and I learned.' And then I came back and went to Savannah, GA, with a black guy owned a newspaper, I sat with him and he was telling me about the mechanics of the paper and I went to North Carolina and the guy up there told me about newspapers. I just wanted to hear,
MH: How does this work? How do you lay it out?
JM: Yea, how do you do all these things? Right! So after that, I think I hired, my niece was taking computers in school, and my nephew--matter of fact he has his own store right now, my nephew--he always have that little entrepreneurial hustler kind of spirit so I said 'you're gonna be my salesman, my ad salesman. You're going to have to take off all those big clothes and that sweatband you got on your head. I want you to put a necktie on!' And I cleaned him up like that (you know what I mean); sat down had classes with him, showed him how to sell; showed him how to present himself. And we just started from there, and that's the way I got this thing started and it's been rolling ever since then!

MH: How did you come up with the name? [The Gullah Sentinel]
JM: Well, I wanted something that would represent the stories that we were going to tell. And I thought of a number of names, and I thought, 'wait a minute, we're here, Gullah, it can't be anything else but that!' You know what I mean? Because I wanted stories to really represent some of the stories we are going to tell. You know, old folks say 'you pray on it' and I said 'well this is the name!' And what's ironic about this whole thing is, the week we published our very first newspaper, September, that was the same week that the Beaufort Gazette was celebrating 100 years. So, now we're celebrating on the 31st of this month we'll be celebrating seven years, and they'll be celebrating 107 years! So, what's ironic is that they are 100 years ahead of us and sometimes people tax us with such a load, well we should be doing this like the Gazette, how come you all didn't cover this? And I say 'well' they're only 100 years ahead of us!' you see what I'm saying. They have the necessary staff and things like that, and we don't have it.
MH: How do you get your stories? How many reporters do you have? What's the readership like?
JM: Well, we have between 6 and 8,000 readers. And my brother is a part-time reporter, he works here. And we have this schoolteacher, we call him our senior writer, he writes some stories too, but they have other commitments. So in essence I don't really have a full time reporter. I don't have one. That's why a lot of things I can't cover because I don't have the necessary reporters. But I am a member of what is called the NNPA, the National Newspaper Publishers Association. That's just a fancy name for the Black Press of America. And in that organization, you have to meet certain criteria, which we met, nothing really big, to get in there. They just don't let, just because you decided to start a black paper you're gonna get in there. Someone has to recommend you, first of all, and then it has to be approval by a board and they only have 216 members and there are thousands of black newspapers, but there are only 216 members. Like I said, we experience some things in this town by being a black newspaper that's very, very hard. See, remember now, the stories that we cover, I never just beat up the Beaufort Gazette or anything like that because that's not why we're here.
MH: See I read them both and it's like two different worlds. You would never read them both and believe it's the same radius of miles.
JM: Exactly, right. Right, and like I so often tell people 'we try to cover those stories that the Beaufort Gazette is just too busy or just have no interest in', which are OUR stories, stories from the black community! That's it! But I try to be nice about it by phrasing it that way. They're either too busy or they just don't have any interest in those stories. Their readers (they feel as though) don't have any interest in those stories. So we tend to cover those stories.' Now, do we get punished for that? The answer is yes! Now how do they punish us? Well they don't punish us by getting a stick or go and get the cat of nine-tail, get old Simon Legaree to take us out to the barn and get Toby to tie us up and punish us like that. They punish us with advertising dollars. You see? They withhold the advertising dollars from us. I'm talking about the businesses; the same way they do the radio stations.
MH: That's structural inequality. That's what I'm looking at.
JM: Absolutely. Well, that's what they do! I have some... I've been collecting for the last three or four months, especially coming from public entities like the hospital, which is a public entity, the city, the county, the different schools, and I've been doing a personal

survey and collecting and showing how they don't do any, or hardly any, ads with us and they give everything to the Beaufort Gazette. So, as a result of that, as I said to you a while ago, I don't have the necessary reporters, Well the reason I don't have reporters is because I can't pay one! And why can't I pay one? Because I don't have the revenue coming in!! Well, where do I get the advertising revenue from? The businesses! So, what do the businesses do? 'I don't like the stuff that you print, so therefore I'm not going to advertise with you!' See, you're trying to smarten up the sleeping populace and we want them to remain sleeping! If they remain sleeping, we will always maintain control in the service industry, we'll be able to take their land whenever we want to take their land! We'll always have a city council where there are no blacks on the city council. We'll have a county council where you have blacks on there but they seem so impotent that they can't do anything!' You see? 'But now you're smartening people up! No, we're not going to help you do that!' So, those are the demons we have to fight daily so the only way I get around that is I have to try to always get ads from national entities who don't give a damn about the war that you fighting down here. You know, places like Publix supermarket and Bi-Lo and places like that. They could care less about a little Beaufort South Carolina, whatever little craziness ya'll got going on down here. You see? As a matter of fact, I want to back track for a second. When I tried to open that same music store over there next to K-Mart; they gave me, the local property manager, the run around, the run around. He did not want me to get that building. Sometimes he wouldn't show up for the meetings, just everything! So one day I just got tired and I got on an airplane and I flew to Philadelphia to the home office and the home office said, "Yea, we got a property there." I said, "Well, I'd like to get it!" and they said, "If you got the check, you can get it!" and I said, "I got the check!" He said, "Well, here it is! Let's just sign the papers and the building is yours. They want to keep fighting the Civil War down there that's up to them. We're just trying to rent the space!" And when I got back here, I told the property manager, he pretended he was trying to help me all the time. You know what I'm saying? It's unbelievable. So those are some of the things that we're up against, and the black radio station, we have here, is up against as well. And there are only four black newspapers in this whole state. You have about 300 newspapers in the state and there's only four. And they're not dailies, matter of fact, there is not a black daily newspaper in the whole United States of America. So we got four weeklies, bi-weekly, one in Charleston SC, one in Florence and one in Columbia and all of us encounter the same types of strategies.

Jabari and I also discussed the white monopoly of radio stations, which clarified something I had been puzzled about for years: why most black radio stations occupy the AM frequency. Perhaps I knew the answer, but the traps of whiteness often encourage us to find alternative reasons for social problems that might implicate us somehow.

MH: That's something else I wanted to ask you: Why are black radio stations always on AM? Is it cheaper?
JM: Because we can't afford the FMs!
MH: So FMs are more expensive?

JM: Much more expensive. Yea but the question can also become, a lot of times you have a lot of radio stations out there, both AM and FM, mostly FM, they are black programmed but they are white owned. Or you can have black guys, the station that comes out of Savannah, E93 which everybody listens to, that's a white owned radio station, but there are black announcers and they play black music. You see?
MH: But the announcers aren't benefiting like the owners are benefiting?
JM: No. Now the AM station I just told you (they did an Arbitron survey the other day, that's the stations in this area, the Beaufort area) they're number one! The little Black gospel station, because they have a concentrated audience! But, do they get the black dollar? Or do they get the major dollar because they're number 1? The answer is NO! The white stations, (in Arbitron they rate you by how many listeners you have, who has the most listeners, so the station that has the most listeners can command the higher advertising dollar.) So WVGB has more listeners than some of these white stations but they (the white owned stations) get a higher advertising dollar than WVGB. You see?

The realities of capitalist accumulation in and around the Sea Islands, most of which can be traced back to the plantocracies of the past, deny black access to the means of production necessary for the creation of a "black public sphere" (Page 1999). This particular tactic of racialized disenfranchisement intersects with similar strategies devised and implemented within the residential sector of everyday life to form another link in the fence around the social field of whiteness. Standing guard are various institutional and civic entities wielding the power of the pen in the ongoing white struggle to maintain hegemonic control.

Race and Space: Apartheid[21] in the U.S. South

Across the American landscape, and particularly within the urban context of the South, there are two[22] distinctly disconnected worlds: a white world and a black world. This separation, best understood as de facto residential apartheid (Bullard et al. 1994; Massey and Denton 1993; Roediger 1994), is yet another aspect of the habitus of racism developed within the overarching social field of whiteness in response to emancipation and desegregation. African Americans remain the most racially segregated minority group in the United States (Bullard and Lee 1994), with little evidence that the situation is improving. It is not by coincidence that the majority of the 30 million

[21] The system of racial inequality within the United States parallels that of South Africa (see Marable 1983 "Because of its peculiar historical development, the U.S. is not just a capitalist state, but with South Africa, is a racist/capitalist state" (10).
[22] There are a multitude of ethnic and class distinctions within our society that serve as barriers to social interaction, however within the context of this discussion I am specifically referring to black and white.

African Americans remain as segregated as they were at the height of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s (Lewis 1994). This system has been sustained by whites continuing to employ a number of strategies in both the public and private sector.

The ultimate goal of insulating whites from blacks was legally encoded during the Jim Crow era, yet it was not meant to last. With desegregation gaining momentum, racist whites became desperately creative in finding ways to keep people of color away from their neighborhoods and families, including housing discrimination (see Massey and Denton 1993; Yinger 1995), gentrification coded as urban revitalization and renewal, blight designations, economic redlining, and racially mediated historic preservation projects (see Greenbaum 2002; Gregory 1998; Lewis 1994; Rutheiser 1996). With the eventual co-optation of the Federal Housing Administration, irrespective of the 1968 Fair Housing Act, redlining and racial segregation became public policy (see Sacks 1994; Jackson 1985; Gregory 1998) and yet another example of institutionalized racism became an official part of our national heritage (Lewis 1994).

Within these "complex, layered histories of power relations pertaining to the politics of race and space in urban areas" (Gregory 1998) there are many untold stories yet to be recovered. Perhaps the "white technocratic authority" (Page 1999) over representations of blackness reveals a collective paranoia about such a recovery. Do these resegregated spaces (which Rutheiser [1996:6] terms "Jim Crow in twenty-first century drag") possess accounts capable of penetrating the fortressed ideology buttressing the social field of whiteness? Many suggest this is the case (see Du Bois 1969; Marable 1983).

The Mixed Blessings of Desegregation

The androcentric, common sense history of the United States continues to mute the voices of the subaltern, but their audibility is crucial in constructing an accurate temporal picture of the struggles already faced, as well as to forecast and possibly interfere with those only now being formulated. African American communities continue to be analyzed in the present through an ahistorical lens, which moves freedmen rapidly into the Civil Rights era and then to the ghetto, never stopping to contextualize what transpired betwixt and between. As a white person indoctrinated into this national amnesia, I have often pictured desegregation as an exciting time to be alive, when people were free to mingle, as they had never been before. Such whitewashed

imagery just serves to remind me how comfortable white privilege can be, especially when it comes to history. I knew there was resistance, for sure, but I never thought to analyze desegregation from the perspective of the collective black communities with a focus on what was lost, as opposed to what they truly gained. The impetus behind this shift in position came about while watching *Classified X* (1995), a documentary by Melvin Van Peebles illustrating the persistent white corporate monopoly over images of blackness. According to Van Peebles, each segregated black community had movie houses, restaurants, and all the pleasures that make social life worth living... until desegregation. His recollections of the sharp decline in patronage experienced by black owned movie houses inspired a curiosity concerning how other businesses had been affected. Inevitably, I soon became aware that desegregation represents only a partial victory.

Over the years I have glimpsed these segregated, yet nostalgic, spaces through the eyes of people old enough to remember the close-knit communities and thriving black business districts of their particular area. One of the most fascinating, yet tragic, recollections came through Rebecca Campbell and Catherine Braxton, sisters who own some of the last black owned property on Calhoun Street in downtown Charleston (see Figure 7.1). Within this story, which so eloquently connects them to this place, we come face to face with the politics of race and space.

> CB: Some background on my grandfather, who's name was Willis Johnson Sr. Willis came from Drayton Hall, at that time was known as Drayton Hall Plantation, that's where he was born and raised. That's why we have such a close relationship to Drayton Hall, because my grandfather was born and raised there. And he was not, he was a free man. He was not born enslaved but his parents were. His family's name was Bowens, my grandfather was Johnson but his mother's maiden name was Bowens.
> MH: How do you spell that?
> CB: B O W E N S.
> MH: OK.
> CB: And after becoming grown he left Drayton Hall and came to Charleston with sufficient funds to purchase a house. And, if I recall correctly as to which house he purchased first, but I would assume it was number 9 Wharf St.

Figure 7.1: 35 and 351/2 Calhoun Ave. in Downtown Charlestown, SC

MH: Does that house still stand?
RC: No, that's where his children were born,
CB: My mother was born in 1909.
MH: This is all on your mother's side?
RC: Yes, maternal side.
CB: This is my mother's father. So 9 Wharf St., that's where my mother was born, she was born in 1909. So my grandfather has been a property owner in the City of Charleston since about early to mid 1900s. And he then, from Wharf St. he purchased property at 95 Concord.
MH: So what was it like coming here when you were little? What was Charleston like?
RC: We lived in this house. We grew up in this house. This is home. We don't know another home.
CB: We have never lived beyond this Bay Street.
RC: All our lives.
CB: We were born on Concord, moved to 9 Calhoun.
RC: Let me tell her, please, so she can get the record straight. So it wouldn't be like the gentleman who wrote that story incorrectly. We were born on 95 Concord Street, for the record. Catherine Braxton was born "Catherine Brown Johnson Braxton," born 95 Concord

Street. "Rebecca Brown Johnson Campbell" was born 95 Calhoun Street. All of us siblings were born at that residence. My grandfather owned that property. When we moved here, and after we moved here, we lived here, my grandfather gave my mother an apartment, the first apartment downstairs for her family. The bottom floor was given to my mother because my mother was an only girl. She didn't have any sisters, so they just loved her to death. When my uncle got through building the house, they presented her and her husband, which is our father John Brown Sr., that apartment. But, knowing grandchildren, they leave the parents. We spent our time in the front of what we call the big house, in the front. We lived, because all the children, my grandparent's children, were grown. So we took their space, and took the upstairs and our grandmother's bedroom on the front and we stayed in the back bedroom and the middle one. And we lived with them. And we slipped back and forth. And my father had a nervous breakdown.

RC: Our older sister, she died, was killed by a motorcycle, coming from school. She was aged six at the time when this happened. The school down the street, Buist Elementary School, which is Buist Magnet School now, and as she was coming home and she walked (it was October 31st which was Halloween Day) and she had already written her Halloween story or her poetry or whatever. And they found it at her, her notebook, and they published it (I understand) in the newspaper. She died instantly. The handlebar from the vehicle, the motorcycle, went between here, and (she had on her winter coat) and just threw her up and fell back down and smashed. And that was it. So, my father took it real hard. My mother, she was strong enough to hold up and hold the family together. My grandparents, they were there for us. My uncles took the father role for us. So we (actually they had to stay around)- grandparents, they took hands and my mother went to work and then finally she ended up going to New York to work and left us with our grandparents.

MH: Which (seems like it) was a very common thing--

RC: --During that time, it was. She went away. We were raised here, and I remember at like 4 or 5 years old. This is the only place I can remember that I have ever lived, and also Catherine, and I am 68 years old. So can you imagine? 62 years of, most of my life is right here. All of my life, maybe two years or whatever at 95 Concord Street. But I don't remember 95 Concord Street.

When I arranged to meet the sisters at the property in Charleston, we were all strangers and I had not conducted the necessary background research. I had contacted them anticipating they would put me off so they could call someone and check me out. But they asked what day I would like to meet, and I jumped at the chance. I had been urged by several residents of Charleston to contact them, but initially I was just interested in the issue of their exorbitant spike in property taxes. I admit I had very little knowledge of the history surrounding their property, but what I would learn that day inspired me to rework my entire research project, to include an analysis of the political economy of the urban areas. I had heard bits and pieces about some houses that were torn down (and also that the circumstances had seemed quite unethical), but I quickly learned I was far, far off base.

MH: Do you remember as children, all this starting to go on, with these houses being removed?
RC: The houses been removed in the 1990's you know? Oh, you mean the public housing?
MH: Everything they cleared out of this wharf.
RC: They cleared it in 92', they demolished it in 1992! That's just recent!! After Hugo- [Hurricane] Hugo was 89'! That's why I said, this is a long history! You gotta read up on some of this.
MH: So this was a huge community until 1990?
RC: 1992' and this is the only two African American houses standing- did you know this was a community of African Americans all the way to where the auditorium is, where the library is! [she pointed in the direction of the library, which is a few blocks away]
CB: Those were all houses--
RC: African American houses!
MH: Until the 90's?
CB: After the housing project was torn down, then the people that had private homes started selling.
MH: Because they saw what was coming?
RC: No, they were asked by developers.
RC: Those houses were just torn down. You see that field out there? [pointing in the other direction, toward Liberty Square and the new Charleston Imax Theater and Aquarium] Those were African American houses!
MH: Did the City not go crazy? Was there no public outcry?
CB: They had the chemical toxin that was in the ground, that contaminated the ground. So that's why they had to tear down the housing, the low-income housing. But the handwriting is on the wall even earlier because they built this condominium, which is very, very expensive, overlooking the public housing (see Figure 7.2). So, that was the beginning—
RC: That went in the 1960s.
MH: In this area right back here? [pointing to Anson Borough Field]
CB: But the condominium is on Concord Street, and the housing projects ran **along** Concord Street, but only the side where the low-income housing was ---was contaminated.

The houses owned by Catherine and Rebecca are the last vestige of Anson Borough, a once vibrant integrated community on the peninsula, now replaced by an IMAX Theater, Condos, Parking Garages, The Charleston Aquarium, and Liberty Square (see Figure 7.3). These sisters, and their predicament regarding the houses at 351/2 Calhoun Street, were of interest to me in the sense that their property taxes were approaching $5,000 a year. This put them at great risk of losing it, and represented a parallel between the islands and the port cities, and that realization sparked a connection concerning the extent to which the urban areas had undergone (and

Figure 7.2: Condo Built in the 1960s, Overlooking Anson Borough Project

Figure 7.3: Liberty Square, IMAX Theater (View From Anson Field, Charleston)

were undergoing) issues similar to what I was documenting on the islands. Subsequent research regarding Anson Borough, and its controversial demise, revealed a once vibrant "close-knit community" (Frazier n.d.),[23] now erased by urban revitalization.

Many of the thriving business districts that once anchored black communities throughout the segregated South have either fallen prey to gentrification, urban renewal projects, or poverty and violence. Discussions with long-time residents of Charleston provided greater insight into how these particular factors have impacted their community. I scheduled a focus group for Charleston's Heritage Day in September of 2003, held at Hampton Park.*

> MH: So, what is the situation with Black owned business in Charleston?
> Several voices: They ain't none of em',
> CT: Yea, most of them can't afford to operate continuously. The taxes, if you're in the City downtown Charleston on King Street,, we had a store there, we couldn't afford to stay there. The guy was going up on the rent and everything,
> HG: And they were doing construction all over the place. And they were telling the visitors and tourists "Don't turn right, turn left when you get to King Street..." away from our store.
> MH: When we were down there the other day you were saying how amazing, how much it's changed (speaking to Queen Quet).
> QQ: Oh yea.
> CT: Well, because there's no black businesses now, except for Cool Beans Coffee Shop. Everything's been wiped out... Alice's Restaurant, which was a very popular restaurant, her rent went sky high so she had to leave.
> QQ: All those clothing stores.
> HG: So you're talking about plantation and the new crop is tourism. The new crop is attracting, building these buildings, putting these buildings in place so they can make some money off their crop cause they don't have the rice fields anymore. So they want to weed out the people, they call it gentrification, but they are weeding out the people. And what you do with weeds?
> MH: Toss em out.

Dr. Wilmont Fraser, whose comments follow, is from a long line of Black Charlestonians who feel a great sense of loss in the face of such changes. His father, of the same name, was a community treasure. An elementary school on Columbus Street bears his name. I first met Dr. Fraser in 2003 at a Steering Committee Meeting for the *International African American Museum of Charleston*, scheduled to open in 2007. The museum is among the largest projects on record seeking to represent black history and the national contributions of black people. Among the principal goals of

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[23] Herb Frazier, a former resident of Anson Borough, participated in a visual oral history project (Bennett and Stanyard n.d.), archived at Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston.

the museum, as elaborated by Mayor Riley in the strategic plan, is the promotion of "an understanding of how they have shaped the modern world" (Riley, personal communication, 2003). In a matter of minutes, Dr. Fraser eloquently mapped the symbolic violence associated with the racialized power imbalance long characteristic of cultural politics in Charleston. Beginning with a short introduction of his two hundred-year family history in Charleston, Dr. Fraser blatantly questioned the legitimacy of whites on the board, expressing great offense that he had not, nor any member of his family, been contacted regarding participation on the steering committee board. With that in mind, Dr. Fraser posed the unanswered question: *when will people of color in Charleston be given the opportunity to guide their future*? I was moved by his bold honesty, and introduced myself to him later that afternoon. I was very pleased when he arrived at the focus group several weeks later. His life experience gives an accurate portrayal of the historical ramifications of racial injustice in Charleston, while alluding to present problems originating from the same source.

> AF: African American businesses have been very, very silently snuffed out in many instances. When I grew up here in Charleston in the 1950s and 60s there were African American owned hotels, African American owned restaurants, all kinds of (a variety) of businesses, where today you find that there are very few. And, part of that is reactionary; capitalism and a lot of business tends to beat up the small business. The other part of it is that very little is done to encourage African American business by African American people. As you move African American people out of the city, you also lose the possibility of the growth of African American business. Property ownership, African American property ownership, has declined so they don't own as much of the land as they once did, not only in the rural areas but in the city as well. So what we see is the continual economic decline and that's why the reparations issue that you raised is important, and look into building more African American businesses, encouraging the businesses that do try to wear that hat. The African Americans have to be more thorough in the way they plan and execute their ... business so we don't waste our efforts. The reason I am saying that is (in the King Street situation for example), you had places that were doing a lot of businesses owned by African Americans but property was not bought.
> QQ: Right, that's what I was thinking about. You're renting. You're always enriching somebody else.
> AF: And as a result of it, when the person decided "we don't want you anymore!" there was nothing more that could be done to stay there. Even if the business was successful. So we have to be much more thorough in the way we think about our businesses and when we plan their development. My new card I just gave you, an African American business, Fraser's Homestay, I tried to create (I did create) a... A house that is a rental house. I call it a Gullah vacation residence that highlighted all kinds of African American culture and history. Artifacts that represent (what I consider) aspects, key parts of the history and

culture of African Americans in the Lowcountry. The Gullah experiences were put into this house. It's there, and it was my attempt to be an institution but the city said, "No, you can't do that." And they tried to, matter of fact they did take me to court. And fined me! I took a derelict property and turned it into something that everyone agrees is a beautiful place to stay if you came to Charleston; that was in fact designed as a teaching machine where people would be able to learn something about the culture and not just have a superficial tour. But the City said "No" And took me to court and fined me $1035.00 for using my...
MH: On the grounds of what? What were the grounds?
QQ: That's what I was wondering.
AF: Violating the zoning ordinance, by running a commercial establishment in a residential district. I didn't believe that was justified. And despite the fact that I owned the property. So I appealed it and there was someone with some legal sense on the bench that day who decided, "well you just can't do that. You can't tell a person who owns a historic piece of property he can't rent it for a particular period of time. The City of Charleston cannot regulate how long people rent their property." So that was the end of that.
MH: So you won?
AF: Yea I won it finally, but it cost me a good bit of money.

Down the coast in Beaufort, an hour south of Charleston, I heard a similar narrative of racial disenfranchisement. Jabari Moketsi, obviously concerned, had published a feature story in the *Gullah Sentinel* only a few months before our initial interview.

JM: My grandfather and all my uncles, they were all entrepreneurs here in Beaufort. They had businesses, you know downtown Beaufort?
MH: Yes.
JM: I guess you've heard the stories about downtown Beaufort and black businesses?
MH: No.
JM: We had businesses all downtown, now today we don't have one! Not one. And all those businesses downtown used to be black-owned.
MH: Now when you say "used to be," how long, what are we talking about?
JM: Up until about the sixties!
MH: sixties?
JM: Sixties were about the last of them. And Bay Street itself, my uncle has a business on Bay Street. He had a service station on BAY STREET! That's right. Everybody wondered, his name was Sam Stokes, and they wondered how in the world did Sam Stokes get a business on Bay Street? And then after, I don't know if they made him move or whatever the case was, he moved it over to the, you know the Greyhound Bus Station?
MH: I know where that is!
JM: That's where his business was, my grandfather, I mean my grand uncle. My grandfather had his own business, he used to do produce. He had a stand as well downtown. And my uncle, another uncle, he was a junk man, a "Sanford and Son" kind of guy, but he put all his children through school, some of them through college, know what I'm saying? And he understood, you took an old bed spring and throw it out in the yard, he come haul it off because he know that he can take that bed spring and start a fire and burn

> all that cotton off and now he got metal. Then he takes the metal and load it on a truck and take it to Savannah to a smelting plant and make big bucks, you see? Nothing was garbage... refrigerators... they used to call him 'Junkman." But see he never had to work for anybody, not ever. Same thing with my uncles and my grandfather... so, he always taught us the art of entrepreneurship, you know, and he said it's tough! It's Tough! And especially here in Beaufort, you're going against the grain here in Beaufort when you trying to own your own business and you're African American! You know, I talk straight up Melissa! Anybody who know me, I don't try to say things nice but I don't say things with a mean spirit.

In the Sentinel article, *"Downtown Beaufort: Black Business/ No customers, no presence, what happened?"*[24] elders of the Beaufort community reminisced about the glorious past of their downtown business district: "you could get anything you needed down there." *"In the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, West Street was referred to as "Black Wall Street."* There was a pharmacy, a butcher, mini-supermarkets, shoe repair shops, cafes, and tailors. There were black attorneys, doctors' offices, and insurance agencies, but they only exist now as a collective cultural memory. Even the buildings have been destroyed. Reasons often given for the erasure of these districts include the Great Migration, desegregation, urban renewal projects, and economic marginalization in the real estate industry. What all agree on, however, is that the loss extended well beyond economics to affect their social and cultural communities.

The urban landscapes of Jim Crow were inhospitable for blacks outside the boundaries of their sequestered spaces. Violence, both physical and symbolic, was a constant possibility. In Savannah, it was West Broad Street that defined this social life; representing most of the same establishments whites were trying to keep to themselves.

> West Broad Street was the Street. It had everythin' on there. And at this time on a Friday afternoon, great goodness alive! (Leroy Beavers, *Savannah Morning News*, February 5, 2001).

In conducting research on such changes in Savannah, I was sadly reminded of the multiple times I have heard people say, "Oh, just wait until Black History Month! Then you can read these papers around here and learn everything you need to know about us!" It was always spoken with laughter, yet it was overwhelmingly true. It was in the VOICES report (*Hear the Voice of Savannah's Black Heritage*) that I found Leroy Beavers' recollections of change on West Broad Street:

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[24] *Gullah Sentinel* March 2003.

> Let me tell you what happened. We had it great, we had it goin' on. We was on West Broad, and we didn't want to be nowhere but West Broad, you understand? You see, it's one thing about integration. Integration is all right, integration is all right. Integration give us what we wanted, but it taken away what we had. You understand, we don't have nothin' now. Blacks don't have nothin'. We don't even have a grocery store in this city, we don't have a clothing store (Leroy Beavers, *Savannah Morning News*, February 5, 2001).

In a city boasting a 62% black majority population, the reality of Mr. Beavers' words illustrate the bittersweet irony of desegregation within the political economy of racism that continues to define Savannah, Georgia.

Urban Renewal/ "Negro Removal"[25]

The realities of forced change brought similar outcomes across the nation. Black communities that managed to survive desegregation somehow with any sense of community cohesion soon realized they were far from home free. Situated at one of the many posts guarding the social field of whiteness were gentrification and urban renewal, long referred to as "Negro removal" (Rutheiser 1996: 61). City planning agendas seemingly target the black communities of urban areas for massive projects, such as freeway construction, arenas, and convention centers (Bullard and Lee 1994; Rutheiser 1996). This process, which amounts to environmental racism, has left community casualties nationwide. In cities like Savannah and Charleston, the double-edged sword of heritage tourism, pursued as a strategy for economic development, has brought both jobs and displacement. Few visitors ever realize how close (geographically) they are to the more dangerous parts of these cityscapes, due to the relocation that has been part and parcel of urban renewal. In Charleston, these overlapping barriers to upward mobility are being employed ideologically to strengthen the case for reparations.

> HA: Yeah, reparations, because of all, well what the reparations will go for is we could rebuild a lot of institutions that these tourism and system is destroying. Especially in our community and how they take away from it, gentrification. Our people have been moved from one spot to another spot.
> MH: Here in Charleston?
> HA: Yeah, because of higher rent prices.
> MH: In what areas of Charleston?
> HA: Downtown, yeah, from downtown.
> AF: The whole gentrification thing.

[25] "Negro removal" is an emic expression.

MH: I'm trying to understand, is that just in Anson Borough?
QQ: Oh No, the whole peninsula!
AF: Gentrification has taken place on the entire peninsula. Large numbers of African Americans were removed off the peninsula and into other (parts of the) cities.
QQ: North Charleston,
AF: North Charleston or other sections outside the peninsula, so they no longer have the political authority that they once had, in terms of numbers. They no longer have the cultural cohesiveness that they had—in terms of the kinds of schools that they could build for themselves and control and organize. Even the churches have been affected by it, so the numbers of the various congregations have declined as these populations have moved out of the peninsula. So many of your downtown churches, historic churches that have been there for hundreds of years, have begun to decline in numbers, because of the fact that so many African Americans have been pushed off. It's a gentrification phenomenon.

This exchange illustrates the complex web of connections among race, space, and power upon the urban landscape. Urban renewal agendas are designed and implemented in ways that destroy communities, even when those communities have historical roots worthy of preservation. Historic status becomes a tool of the white elite, who undoubtedly choose what is and is not worthy of saving.[26] In Savannah, for example, urban renewal projects have often positioned the importance of buildings over the importance of community stability (W.W. Law n.d). Traditional black cultural institutions, such as the Cannon Street YMCA in Charleston,[27] are struggling for financial survival, yet no local or federal agencies are rushing to their rescue. "*That building means just as much to me as the John C. Calhoun status means to whites in Charleston*" reasoned one community member. Within this historic city, such examples of "racially administered" policies of historic preservation suggest that this is a battle the black community will be fighting on their own.

On Solid Ground: Miraculous Recovery or "Negro Removal?"

The most controversial urban renewal project in recent Charleston history was the 1992 forced relocation of 160 black families from Anson Borough Homes in downtown Charleston to peripheral areas off the peninsula. According to the Charleston Housing Authority, as well as city officials, the area was contaminated with "traces of coal tar residue left by a creosote plant that

[26] This is a problem with deep roots—the United States historic preservation ideology has no official guidelines for preserving living cultures. We desperately need to implement the comprehensive "cultural conservation" initiatives put forth in the 1980s to combat this blatant cultural disrespect (see Howell 1994; Hufford 1994).
[27] Among the oldest black YMCAs in America, Cannon Street Y (in downtown Charleston) is in danger of being merged with a white institution for financial reasons (*Charleston Post and Courier*, December 21, 2003).

operated from 1887 to 1892" (*Post and Courier* July 8, 1990).[28] Several months prior to this discovery, the city had been granted a $ 2.9 million modernization grant to renovate the project complex, which it desperately needed. The area suffered from frequent flooding, and several sections remained damaged from hurricane Hugo, but that did not change the fact that it was home to so many families who had no desire to relocate. Immediately after the contamination reports were released, the tenants began going public with long held beliefs about what was really taking place: "the city don't want people going to the number one tourist attraction to drive by poor, black faces at the entrance," stated one longtime resident. Many had long suspected that the proposed aquarium would result in their removal, fearing that a housing project would not quite fit in with the city of Charleston's master plan of revitalization (*Post and Courier* December 21, 1990).

The closing of Anson Borough Homes became a polarized conflict, with most residents of the project convinced that the soil "scare" was part of an eviction plot (*Post and Courier* September 5, 1991). Perhaps their ideas were legitimate. Test reports suggested the soil was only hazardous over long-term exposure, defined by the EPA as "the ingestion of 0.1 grams of soil every day for 70 years by a 155 pound adult." However, the project was closed and demolished, and the residents were relocated to sites off the peninsula. Plans to build replacement homes were slated for West Ashley, citing new federal regulations that prevent new public housing in areas that have high minority and low-income populations (*Post and Courier* October 18, 1996). By 1997 the city was considering plans for new developments at the site, including a possible IMAX Theater and multi-level parking garages, which solidified for many what they had thought all along: the property Anson Borough Homes occupied had become too valuable. As of the writing of this dissertation, the IMAX Theater and parking garage have been built, but the Anson Borough Field, the site of former Anson Borough Homes, remains undeveloped and controversial.

If anything positive can be said to have come out of this conflict, it is the attention it has brought to the plight of Rebecca Campbell and Catherine Braxton. Their properties at 35 and 351/2 Calhoun have become the focus of vindication efforts aimed at ensuring that the memories of Anson Borough live on. The site was the focus of the 2003 Spoleto Festival "Evoking History" Program, Charleston SC, described as "a blending of art, history and politics to create a public forum for community leaders, students, residents and other participants of all ages" (*Charleston*

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[28] *"Will 'the Borough' survive?"* by Kerri Morgan.

Post and Courier June 8, 2003). This program, in many ways, laid the issue at the feet of the city, suggesting if Charleston truly preserves its history, this is a truly important contribution to telling a more balanced picture of the diversity of downtown Charleston. Rebecca and Catherine are actively pursuing various pathways aimed at restoring the properties, with the help of activist organizations, scholars (such as myself), historians and anyone else who is willing to help. During my interview with Mayor Riley in May 2004, I asked if he would commit to assisting them in their efforts, and they have since sat down with him to discuss how the city can help. They are also involved with the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

In Beaufort, South Carolina a similar project raised an eyebrow or two regarding the veiled racism of redevelopment agendas. Jabari Moketsi recalled the demolition of a community institution, Robert Smalls School, with much suspicion:

> JM: When I got back here, the very first thing I heard, my school was called Robert Smalls High School on the corner by Piggly Wiggly, I remember reading in the different newspapers about they're going to close the school down, the schools was already closed, and they weren't going to rebuild the school because the school was sinking because the foundation, the land out there would not support a high school. See, that school was right on that corner on Ribaut Rd. You know when you get to the corner down there and the Government center and the jail is on the right and the big parking lot? The whole area where those new buildings at... that was the school. That whole area where those new buildings are at over there.
> MH: That wouldn't support any new buildings?
> JM: And they said it would not support any buildings, they did a geological survey, but at that time I wasn't involved because I thought that there were some black people who had this thing under control! You know! I thought 'I know these blacks ain't gonna let that go on over there." So I didn't pay no attention to it. The next thing I know, they had already acquisitioned land out in the woods out on Highway 170 and moved Robert Smalls School out there! Then the next thing I know they tore this building down where Robert Smalls school was located! Then, they decided to build a Government complex and a jail on the **same land they said would not hold a school!** Now being a thinking person, I said, "you know, in essence what they did... they destroyed an institution of education and replaced it with an institution of incarceration!" That's what they did!!!!
> MH: You don't have to be a genius to know the demographics in the jail.
> JM: On any given night it's like 97% black you know! So, they tore down that educational institution to put up an incarceration institution.
> MH: When was that?
> JM: It had to be in the early 1980s. Robert Smalls High School, elementary, and middle. You had three different buildings, that's why I said, they took that whole stretch! We had that whole stretch! What it was, is that's the gateway to Beaufort so they did not want all those little black kids running around at the gateway to Beaufort!! Now, sooner or later,

> now you watch, if you come back years from now, I bet you 10 to 1 the Piggly Wiggly will not be there! They're going to run Piggly Wiggly out and they're gonna run out Sergeant White [this is a locally-owned and operated barbecue restaurant]!! If Sergeant White thinks he's gonna stay up there with that big pig sitting up on the side of his place [referring to the sign]. The idea is they're not gonna allow, that black man and all those black people just hanging, they would rather that be some kind of park with some kind of Confederate statue or something sitting out in that nice green grass right at the gateway coming into Beaufort. But that's the first time I started noticing all this crazy stuff.

Economic Marginalization: Declining Job and Educational Opportunities

The economic marginalization of blacks in the urban areas of the Lowcountry represents a microcosm of the national practices indicative of institutionalized racism (see Oliver and Shapiro 1995) responsible for black *underdevelopment*[29] (see Marable 1983, 2000). Local economies are defined by the interlocking industries of tourism and service, with little opportunity for black upward mobility. Unequal access to capital, unfair housing policies, redlining, and poor social services are part of everyday life for the black citizens of the coastal port cities. U.S. Census 2000 statistics report 31% of the black population of Charleston lives below the poverty level, compared to 12% of whites. Per capita income statistics paint an alarming picture, with blacks earning less than half that of white Charlestonians ($13,000 for blacks as compared to $28,000 reported for whites). Within the limited employment opportunities available, the majority are low paying service jobs aptly referred to as the "culture of servitude" (Faulkenberry et al. 2000) associated with the tourism industry. Conversely, the higher paid positions are overwhelmingly occupied by white outsiders (Emory Campbell cited in Joyner 1999), resulting in the out migration of black professionals unwilling to succumb to the "subservient roles most blacks are put in."

In 1933, Carter G. Woodson's *The Mis-Education of the Negro* interrogated the complex relationship between racial inequality and public education, suggesting the ability to accept subservience to whites would limit black accommodation:

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[29] Marable defines underdevelopment as the exclusion of blacks from U.S. material, cultural and political gains (achieved by other ethnic minorities) resulting from the combined historical processes of chattel slavery, sharecropping, peonage, industrial labor at low wages, and cultural chaos.

> The keynote in the education of the Negro has been to do what he is told to do. Any Negro who has learned to do this is well prepared to function in the American social order as others would have him (1933:134).

Recent studies suggest this relationship has undergone little change (see Gordon et al. 2000). Nationally, black students in public school settings experience institutional racism as a lack of access to the technological advances necessary for success (Page 1999), racial profiling in disciplinary tactics (Skiba et al. 2000), race and class biased standardized testing, and patriarchal programs shrouded in progressive language. Within the habitus of racism that defines these urban landscapes, the educational system has become yet another guard post within the social field of whiteness.[30] Accusations of blatant inequality recently led the Florida NAACP to file federal charges against the state, citing public school policies believed to perpetuate segregation and inequality,[31] including: advanced placement, TAG (talented and gifted), standardized testing and student discipline (Skiba et al. 2000). The legitimacy of such claims is clearly evident in the response of Florida's Education Commissioner Jim Home, who referred to the NAACP as "an agitating organization." Such a statement of disrespect, both literally and figuratively, would never be acceptable if directed at a white organization claiming the social victories earned by the NAACP (if one exists). It would simply be inconceivable, in light of the severity of these allegations 49 years after Brown vs. Board of Education.

The black communities of Charleston and Savannah face similar struggles. The magnet school system of Charleston County remains embroiled in an ongoing battle with parents of non-minorities who claim reverse discrimination regarding race-based admissions policies that guarantee a 40% minority student body. Lawsuits have been filed, forcing the school board to reevaluate the policies developed decades ago to counter resistance to integration (*Charleston Post & Courier* February 8, 2005). Rev. Joe Darby, President of the Charleston NAACP, suggested doing away with such policies would quickly translate into the magnets becoming all white. Darby suggested citizens take another look at the holistic picture, which still shows a significant gap in performance between white and black students in the district. A dismal 14.9 percent of black

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[30] Bourgois (1998) offers a parallel discussion of racialized inequality within the inner-city educational system (as experienced by New York Puerto Ricans), representative of the national trend toward blaming the victim. He calls this inequality "urban apartheid."

[31] *Gullah Sentinel* September 25-October 8, 2003.

students scored proficient or advanced on the English portion of the 2003-2004 Palmetto Achievement Challenge Test, compared to 55.8 percent of white students. The numbers were similar for the math portion. On the issue of TAG (talented and gifted program also cited in Florida lawsuit), Rev. Darby referenced recent district reports, which document that only 3.1 percent of the students in TAG are black although they account for 58 percent of the students in the district.

Racial disparity in education within the Savannah system has caught the attention of city officials, academics and community organizations. University of Indiana professor Russell Skiba, who summarized his research findings in the 2000 study "The Color of Discipline" (Skiba et al.), documented the hurdles facing young African American males in the Savannah school system. Statistics provided by Skiba et al. report that African American males experience a type of profiling within the educational setting that has resulted in increased rates of expulsions and suspensions:

> No support was found for the hypothesis that African-American students act out more than other students. Rather, African-American students appear to be referred to the office for less serious and more subjective reasons (Skiba et al. 2000).

From April to June of 2004, the *Savannah Morning News* included a weekly series titled "Left Behind: Black Males and Public Schools," in which they discussed various obstacles facing men of color in Savannah utilizing "institutional research, national and state data and the stories of black males[32]" (Few 2004). In Savannah public schools, black males account for one third of the student population, yet they receive 53 percent of all suspensions and 69 percent of all expulsions. Also, they are mired down in a steady 30-year economic decline, which directly impacts opportunities for marriage and success, and they remain at high risk for incarceration (Few 2004). In concluding segments, officials suggest that the public education system "stands at the epicenter of black male development," and must therefore take the lead in combating these obstacles (Few 2004). Through testimonials of those who have and have not been successful, the series sheds important light on the role of education in shaping children's futures. It remains unclear how the results of the study were utilized by the Savannah school system.

In an unrelated conversation, Jabari Moketsi, of the *Gullah Sentinel*, commented on the

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[32] The Left Behind series was sponsored by the Education Writers Association and supported by a grant from the Lumina Foundation on Education. Savannah Morning News reporter Jenel Few's proposal to study of the plight of black male students was one of just two selected nationally.

persistent problems of racialized inequality in education, resulting in the miseducation of Gullah/Geechee youth:

> Well, see it's like this, the school system here, and I think you touched on it when you asked "who's gonna clean the toilets?" The school system here does not teach thinking, or encourage thinking skills. They don't encourage thinking skills! They teach you how to be obedient. How to follow orders, "How many ma'am? Ten! Yes ma'am." This is what they teach here. They're dumbed down! And they punish independent thinkers.

In the "From the Publishers Desk" column of the *Gullah Sentinel*, Moketsi further elaborated on the parallels between the plantation system of the past and the public school system:

> Speaking now of contemporary master/slave relationships, I am confident that any reader will agree when I say the master will never teach/educate the slave to the point where the slave becomes master and the master the slave. The master must at all times know more than the slave in order to maintain control.[33]

The reassertion of the master/slave relationship within public schools thus becomes a mechanism of forced inequality, delivered via "a pedagogy for black subservience to capitalism" (Marable 1983). This process prepares children for futures "accorded with their class and caste background" (Leacock 1987:328), thereby ensuring generations of workers to fill the ranks of the service sector. When these various charges are viewed as a process, it seems only logical to view the system in slavery terms. This notion was given serious consideration by Angela Davis in *Are Prisons Obsolete?* (2003). Davis equates the modern prison industrial complex with a new form of slavery, in which young black and Latino males are more likely to go to prison than high school. With poor minorities accounting for an unrealistic percentage of the more than two million people behind bars, Davis' question seems disturbingly legitimate.

In light of the booming industries of tourism, the Port Authority, and commercial and residential development within these cities, one might expect adequate job opportunities alternative to low paid service work. Obstacles to access, however, with regard to bidding contracts, business ownership, or administrative positions with the Port Authority enforce the invisible boundaries of whiteness, even to the extent of elevating lower class whites to buffer status. Pat Gunn, an activist from Savannah, shared several enlightening stories that speak to the deeper issues of racialized access to economic resources within the overarching political economy of racism.

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[33] "Schools, do they encourage thinking or obedience? *Gullah Sentinel* (July31-August 14, 2003).

PG: I just want to say that every year, we've been advocating change for three years, but every year we make it a point of booking a gala, (an end of the year gala at Claudia's Manor). And this year we're not going to be able to book that because she's closing, and she can't sell it because this whole area is (now) called Thomas Square Neighborhood[34]. They're rezoning, pushing our butts out basically. And the twenty,two zones that they now have will be reduced down to four or five. But in the process of that they're not going to "grandfather" her so if she sells it right now it has nine rooms that people can rent. But under the new zoning it will reduce it down (her bed and breakfast) to four rooms and the other rooms cannot be leased out under this new zoning law. Therefore, no one is going to buy it so it's a catch 22. In addition to that we have 57, 58% African American community and majority of African American City Council and we're losing! We're not gaining! But in terms of the tourism dollar, if tourism is your number one industry and we're the majority of the community then we have to hold ourselves accountable to get involved in the tourism industry. I'm just saddened that that hi-class five star bed and breakfast that has done everything to market itself to the world... if you pull up ' claudiasmanor.com' you'll see a virtual tour. You'll see people. Let me just say one last thing. We have a Georgia Black Caucus that comes into Savannah once a year for a Conference. I've seen Claudia plead with them (Savannah Tourism Council). I've seen Claudia give complimentary rooms, for just the planning of the Caucus! I plead with them to complimentary rooms for just for planning of the caucus to stay there, and the rest of the folks stay downtown and they still won't. But they come to the meeting and they talk about 'buying Black.' Because the bed and breakfast folks are downtown Victorian and basically have intentionally done her out. Even though she's done everything to be on that Tourism Council and all of that there's no room at the Inn for her, The Confederate Inn, the Drayton? Packed!

In a further effort to illustrate the intricate nature of the manifestation of racialized access, Pat Gunn discussed the bidding process within the Savannah business world, and the corruption that has severe implications for minority economics. Ensuing conversations revealed the complex nature of black economics in Savannah.

PG: To control a piece of...a bid, a minority bid, actually a city bid. 14 million dollars in this contract, folks raising their hands all up in there saying "Hey that bid that you just gave to that contractor has a 5% set aside for women and a 12% for African Americans and other minorities. And therefore he doesn't have the 12%, it's all just women and others, and it passed. Black folks voted for it. So the younger guy who lost went to court and got a restraining order and froze the money being transferred to his account and said we're going to challenge it. And the city attorney, who's been an attorney since 1964, who doesn't work for the city as a staff person but he's on retainer, so that every time he does something for the city he bills them $600 an hour, he says don't worry about it City Council. I will (for the city of Savannah) represent you all, passing it to give it to him even though there were not any minorities in it. So the 12% minority also had the women and not one Hispanic, not one African American, not one Asian, and it passed. So they power base

[34] Designated a National Register Historic District in 1997, officially referred to as the Thomas Square Streetcar Historic District.

again, it's like you have an opportunity to do the right thing and you still don't so you can't get it. And, Oh by the way, the 14 million dollars that was awarded to that contractor, (when you're a general contractor and win, I don't care if I register 75 to 80 under that, if I'm the general contractor for city of Savannah and I win the bid) there's no City mandate that I have to do business and subcontract to any of you! I can just go over the Jesup or Ludowici and get somebody. $87,000 was the bid for dumping of dirt to the landfill by a local brother; he passed the $87,000 bid and went to Ludowici and got a brother and gave it to him for $137,000. So it ain't even about the lowest bid, it's about **I'm not letting you in Black man!** The majority of City Council voted for that!

Ogbanna Mossi, who attended the focus group in Savannah, has experienced the discrimination Pat Gunn described. He shared a bit of insight, adding a necessary layer for further analysis—there is a gendered aspect to this issue:

OM: I've been working city contracts for the last twelve years now. I work one now boarding up these vacant houses around town. We need more sisters to apply for some of these contracts because in this town they got more backbone! The majority of the small time contractors like myself, they're too afraid to go down there to the property managers and complain about anything, within their contract. I did it one time, afterward, they said the next year "We're gonna fix this darkie here!" And then they split up the contract to where five contractors did the same contract. We need sisters going down there to apply with some backbone.

PG: Let me just tell you, when you talk about the sisters, yesterday at our Chamber meeting—we had some women come, some African American women who have a lawsuit and the lawsuit is against the ILA. When you say ILA, (ILA, International Longshoreman's Association) you aren't just talking about just Black—1414 is Black; but 1414 had a whole contract at one time (and not just the loading dock) but also for the clerks that work the window. Somehow they pulled a coup and now they split the contract, steamrollering half the clerks hourly. Ok watch this, there are ZERO African American women clerks in the Georgia Port Authority! They are a majority White females, their daddy worked there, their granddaddy, you know the nepotism deal, but that's not against the law. However, all Black women who applied to work as clerks, the window, have been denied to the point where now there are seventeen of them and there are several lawsuits against the group. We come up with the money for them, the Chamber did the research, the average clerk that works at the port, makes $75,000, $100,000 a year to sit in that,, So that's majority white women working those jobs and feeding their families and not one African American or Hispanic or anything get a job. We sent testers in, white female testers and black ones. I'm telling you now; three of the white ones got hired just like that! And the Black one? "We'll get back to you." So we massaged the lawsuit but now it's a class action. Same thing that's happened with sisters on Section eight, we got it. We got seven, eight sisters and the government paying them Section eight money for the ownership of that house and a separate amount for repairs; but they won't repair it. So we go in these houses sitting in these houses, ceiling dripping and everything! Those are the ones taking the tax. I know Ogbanna and sister can speak to it. I mean, every time you talk about getting a grant for

> the tourism or cultural affair, you might get two or three African Americans that get a few dollars but it's basically a clique. I don't know, it was about ten years ago that we did a study on where culture is intermarried and how much money we're putting into it. And they had a consultant, came in (I'd just come back in) they had one page, page 47 out of all that bull, that was dedicated to the acknowledgement that Savannah was not spending enough money on African American tourism and culture.

The social field of whiteness, be in within Savannah or elsewhere, maintains a position of domination by implementing a diverse strategy of interlocking dimensions of power. While the guard posts of housing, education, and local government are taking a respite; units associated with black political marginalization relieve their comrades in the ongoing battle for white supremacy and black underdevelopment. The current potency of, as well as strategies of manipulation regarding, the black vote in urban areas of the Lowcountry reflect the process by which such white cultural practices "reinscribe white supremacy" (hooks 1992:34).

Political Marginalization

Since the earliest days of Reconstruction, blacks have faced an uphill battle for political participation and representation throughout the South (see Du Bois 1969), often settling for small victories obtained through dependence on white liberal organizations (Marable 1983). Historically and at present, black efforts at political mobilization encounter violence, be it real or symbolic, designed to intimidate them into conforming to the bylaws of the social field of whiteness. Disempowering tactics continue to be adapted for effectiveness, but political redistricting represents a key hurdle for the black communities of Savannah and Charleston. The practice of redrawing voting districts, particularly in areas with substantial black residents, often results in the dilution of the black vote (see Botsch and Botsch 1996). In 1990, black Charlestonians, represented by the NAACP, began protesting the city's redistricting plan, the implementation of which would spread concentrations of black voters in three voting districts over six. The protest delayed the 1990 elections for almost a full year and instigated a federal investigation (Green 2003). In April of 2004, the U.S. Court of Appeals ruled that Charleston County's voting system, in place since 1970, "blatantly discriminates against blacks by diluting minority voting strength" (Behre 2004).

Irrespective of this important legislative decision, 2004 voters experienced uninterrupted tactics of intimidation of a most bizarre sort. Letters drafted on NAACP letterhead were mailed to black citizens throughout Charleston County informing them that voters who are behind on child support, have unpaid traffic citations, or bad credit will be arrested upon trying to vote in the 2004 election (Green 2004). One of those letters just happened to end up in the hands of Rev. Joe Darby, the vice-president of South Carolina NAACP, who sounded the alarm to the State Elections Commission in Columbia. "This is the most blatant, unseemly voter intimidation tactic we've seen so far," suggested the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee. The source of the hoax remains unknown; however, NAACP officials suspect the Ku Klux Klan, the Council of Conservative Citizens, or the neo-Nazis (Green 2004).

The actual power behind black politics remains a slippery issue. Those who have managed to secure a position of representation are often put in compromising positions in order to gain the support of the white political majority. Even in districts boasting a black voting majority, such as Atlanta, Georgia, negotiating with the white power structure may be the only option for securing some of the needs of the larger community (Rutheiser 1996). Such concessions to "the rules of the game" (Marable 1983:170) render the black political elite a quasi-post in the field of whiteness, thereby implicating them in the underdevelopment that continues to impact communities of color.

The present "crisis of black leadership" (West 1993) provides an example of the divide and conquer strategy employed within the political economy of racism. Members of the black petty bourgeoisie are allowed a certain "illusion of power" (Marable 1983) in exchange for providing a buffer between the poor black masses and the white ruling class. Ensuing *intraracial* (Johnson 2001) class conflicts provide a deliberate diversion, often resulting in subtle cultural penetrations[35] whereby class boundaries are drawn and reinforced according to interpretations of social actions.[36] Such folk theories of race and class, inadvertently obtained through years of ethnographic inquiry and daily conversations, position most black elite as *Negroes*, who willingly "*cooperate with their own oppression*" (Moketsi, personal communication 2003). The complicated social dialectic between race and class, as well as the ongoing struggle for black upward mobility, promises to

[35] For a discussion of "penetrations" see Willis 2000.

[36] The critical project of redefining race and class as behavioral, undertaken by John L. Jackson Jr. in *Harlemworld* (2001), offers important strategies for destabilizing racial essentialism as a rationalization for social hierarchy.

intensify as long as the habitus of racism remains the foundation of economic and political life across the landscape of the Lowcountry.

Reinventing History: Romanticizing the Painful Southern Legacy of Hate

The forced amnesia of southeastern port cities does not represent an anomalous predicament of racist historical revision. On the contrary, Savannah, Charleston and Beaufort are among the majority of spaces representing the "New South" (see Gaston 2002; Rutheiser 1986). In the three decades following the Civil War, the habitus of racism gave birth to a mythic ideology capable of valorizing the southern past (Gaston 2002; see also Bowden 1992). Within this New South of the white imagination plantations were glorious farms showcasing the entrepreneurial expertise of the white planter class. Slaves were dangerous, infantile and subhuman and thus in desperate need of white paternalistic guidance. Slavery, as an institution, was a necessary evil. And, most importantly, the Civil War was fought in defense of freedom, bearing no relation to the perpetuation of white supremacy. These myths, sewn together with white lies and edged with white racism, created an atmosphere conducive to (efforts I refer to as) an ideological "reinvention of the plantation" upon multiple Gullah-contested Lowcountry landscapes of South Carolina, Georgia, and northern Florida.

Heritage Tourism: Limiting Access to Truth

The heritage tourism industry of coastal port cities encodes the complex intersection of culture, power, and history that racism has produced. Gullah/Geechee culture and "what their hands wrought"[37] (Pollitzer 1999) have become commodities to be packaged and sold by white owned and operated tour companies offering sanitized versions of history. In interviews from Fernandina, Florida to Georgetown, South Carolina, Gullah/Geechees expressed frustration regarding the romanticized notions of the "Old South" concocted to feed white fantasies of antebellum life and leisure (Stephens 2004). These reinvented representations of history, most suggest, have but one golden rule: do not offend the white visitor! White paternalistic control over the heritage tourism industries of Georgetown, Charleston, Beaufort (South Carolina), Savannah,

[37] Beautiful antebellum homes, cobblestone streets, historic sites, wrought iron masterpieces, etc. were built by Gullah/Geechee hands, yet tourism makes little or no mention of their contributions.

Brunswick (Georgia), and Jacksonville (Florida) guarantees the necessary "white point of entry" (see Page 1999) desired by tourists; some even willing to suggest slavery wasn't racist (see Macdonald and Macdonald 2003):"*The African captives just happened to be an unfortunate group of vulnerable people.*"

During the Savannah focus group, Ivan Cohen[38] discussed the multiple barriers to black cultural empowerment within the heritage tourism industry. His frustration, symbolically representative of the macro processes at work, amounts to (what he calls) the *Black Catch 22, you can't win for losing.* Seventy percent of the tourists who visit Savannah, both black and white combined, choose the white owned tour companies who have air-conditioned buses or trolleys. Mr. Cohen, who does not have either, cannot accumulate the necessary capital for such an investment, yet without it he loses valuable business. Furthermore, as the heated discussion made clear, black owned businesses don't have the advertising budget, can't get the bank loans, and therefore, can't compete with large white owned tour companies. This is how the blacks of Charleston and Savannah have ended up with whites interpreting and sanitizing their history.

> IC: We have this saying in Trinidad. But there are no exceptions anywhere in the world, not even in Savannah. And the saying is "the fools (F O O L S) [Mr. Cohen has a thick accent so he chose to spell it out] live off (O F F) the damn fools!" THE FOOLS LIVE OFF THE DAMN FOOLS! It applies in Savannah. It applies in Trinidad. It applies in every city. And we would be damn fools if we expect white people to tell our stories. That's a damn fool idea. We have refused to tell our own story...

Everyone in the room began yelling.

> IC: Let me finish. I conduct this African American History tour for the Civil Rights Museum. A couple of weeks ago two white people got on the van, I discovered midway through that one of them was a part time travel tour guide. I said "give me a critique of the tour, what did you think?" and he said, "Well I learned a lot of things I didn't know," And I said, "yeah, but give me something critical; this is where you improve." He said, "you didn't say much about Oglethorpe!"

The entire room erupted into laughter!

> IC: The other day I saw some black people standing up by her, [white] woman who offers tours at the Civil Rights Museum. So when I came back she had taken them. And she said, "well they wanted a black tour, so I told them I'll give you a black tour!" and I said, "Ma'am, I can't blame you. If you can get it, take it! The damn fools, they deserve it!" You see two tours, and you go on a white tour to get a black tour.

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[38] Gentleman from Trinidad who offers a black history tour in downtown Savannah.

QQ: Doesn't make sense!

Within the social field of whiteness that largely defines these landscapes, however, it makes perfect sense. Whites can only take tours (having to do with these sensitive issues) in the company of other whites who are guaranteed not to make them feel guilty. I have witnessed it time and time again, while engaging in deliberate ethnographic observation alongside carriage tours in Beaufort, Savannah and Charleston. Sites, events, and even ghost stories that implicate whites in the barbaric institution of slavery are handled swiftly or not at all. Visitors who take horse and buggy tours in these areas must leave with the notion that the mansions sprang from the ground, thus beginning the history of each particular area. Nothing comes before, and nothing comes after, thereby denying the economic and cultural contributions of Gullah/ Geechees and their ancestors.

Responding: Agency and Everyday Forms of Resistance

In light of the power wielded by white racism,[39] it remains a struggle to have blacks perceived as agents (see Gilroy 1993), as actors "making choices within a structure of constraints that then modify the structure" (Mullings 1987:7). The black communities of the port cities do indeed respond in a variety of ways, each uniquely designed to erode racist barriers to equality and social justice encountered on a daily basis. The introduction of counter-narratives shared by Ivan Cohen and Pat Gunn, particularly within the heritage tourism industry, provides opportunities for cultural and economic empowerment.

> IC: There is no need to cry. The story of slavery is not that we were enslaved, that is something done TO us. The story of slavery is that we SURVIVED IT!! That is the story. WE survived. There is nothing to cry about. When I do the First African Baptist, and I have a group, I usually choose the youngest person in the group and set them up. I say, "this was built in 1859. Isn't it extraordinary? Built by slaves!" And they're like 'Yeah, yeah built by slaves.' "The walls are four bricks wide." And they say "aren't we proud of them, yeah!" And I say, "we look back and we're proud of what they did in 1859." And I say, "you have to be careful and live in such a way that when they look at you they'll be proud of you." The story is we survived. That's what they did to US! We survived. And we have the genes of survival in us!
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> PG: Well, let me just share one beginning real quickly; two things happened! A couple of years ago the National Congress of black Mayors came to Savannah. Floyd Adams was

[39] Defined as "the entrenched prejudices of white Americans, the subtle and blatant acts of discrimination by these whites, and the institutionalized system of oppression created by nearly 400 years of that prejudice and discrimination" (Feagin 1994:17).

the president, or chairman, and he basically sold Savannah to them (to the group) saying this is the best place to have it, majority of black business da da da. They came in and it was about 250 mayors from across the country. They told me: Day one: they had a nice time. The 2nd day, early morning, Mayor Adams sent a trolley to pick them up and he took these mayors on a tour (sponsored by the city) of the City **with a white tour company** (Number ONE!). Secondly, they never heard of a black restaurant until they were walking downtown, they found Nita's Place.[40] They never had a package sold to them about it. What we did was we pulled a coup, and this is a cultural experience for us. We went to the Hyatt where they were staying, and asked the management: could we perform in the center (a re-enactment) and they allowed us to do it. And we had the Union soldiers come and ...at the time they were just coming out of a cocktail and we actually had them spellbound coming out of rooms and all. And basically introduced a tour package to them with plantation re-enactment, where we talk about **our people as slaves**. And we signed up forty-seven mayors! The next morning we picked them up and we took them OUT of Savannah. We told them about this experience, we took them up Highway 17, they went to Freedman's Grove, we had a re-enactment: soldiers who dispersed the "40 Acres and Mule." Then we had brothers and sisters at a restaurant in McIntosh County ready, and then from there we went on up. About one hundred of those mayors said they would never be the same, but the dialogue on that tour was angry! Mayors who said "how dare Floyd not tell us about the black experience. How dare he bring us in and show up something that don't represent us." And Floyd was so angry with me, and he said "you're not supposed to do that" and I'm like "You're house is over there, and this is the Hyatt. And when you think we're not supposed to tell them there's tours, you're speaking the dialect of **your** people, you're ashamed of your own dialect. You're telling me the same thing that you're speaking. You're the same person. But it's OK. The second thing is when you talk about doing something to enhance it, we have our own Web site, we're linking to "Georgia on My Mind"-- you pull Georgia on My Mind, we're linked in terms of Geechee Institute. We got an opportunity to host 250 CEOs that are top of the Fortune 500 Companies. I didn't even know we had Black CEOs; that we had brothers that were managing Corporate America (over 8 to 10 million dollars). So they met at the Westin Hyatt and what we did was give them some tours downtown. That's the only time we've ever had access to that kind of money, where we actually got a chance to dialogue with them. I sat down with the top CEO from Coca-Cola from the Western Area. And the brother was sitting on the side and he wept about the story. And I said to him, "but you've got the power in your budget, when African American people come to you and ask for funding in your Coca-Cola budget you have the power to now enlighten folk by putting some money back into those brothers and sisters who are trying to tell OUR Story!" So what we've been actually doing is turning this into some action, and we said the same thing every night and it was a good experience, and I'm still getting responses back from them. I've gotten individual calls saying, "we're coming this way." If they're going to Carolina I'll hook em up with the Coalition (Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition). But we just have to keep pushing, but I'm glad we had access to those CEOs so now we have access to them to put some packages together and hopefully they'll give us some funds back. And it's a way to build; it's like a

[40] Nita's Place is a popular African American owned restaurant in Savannah that serves traditional soul food.

small package of a reparations piece because God knows our people drink Coca,Cola. And so therefore we need to get a little bit of it back. So we have brothers and sisters scattered across the country in those companies, we gotta make them sensitive enough to do something.

Others, such as Ogbanna Mossi, advocate connecting with the entrepreneurial spirit as a mechanism of empowerment and a tool for promoting black self worth. Ogbanna was very kind to me, and I learned a tremendous lesson from his constant focus on the positive aspects of life even in the most negative times.

OM: It's a democracy for those who have power. Just like you're talking about the press, even one of their boys, Thomas Jefferson—freedom of the press belong to those who have one. So we have to ask ourselves, what is real power? And we have to know that to claim greatness don't make us great. To claim great history doesn't make us great. We got to get up and ask ourselves, "What is real power?" Che Guevara had a saying, "man and woman attain total humanity when they produce something that either the world wants or something the world needs." And we're not empowering our people to do something, I know it's much more complex and much larger but you have to start somewhere. I can admire this brother [referring to Brother Shabazz], he empowers seven other folks, black folks, in his restaurant.

PG: That's a victory!

OM: That's a victory. And that's what it has to be about. We need the message; we need the history; we need that! But it should springboard us into getting about the business of realizing: in this world, what is real power? It's not blackness. It's not culture. White folks are not upset with us having a family reunion. We got to get about the business of producing some good. That's where I am in my development, at this point in my life. It's about finding things that we can produce, something that the world wants or something that the world needs.

Throughout my years of fieldwork, one name came to signify black defiance against economic and political marginalization: Maynard Jackson. In the following ethnographic exchange, Ogbanna and Pat discuss the forms of resistance Jackson remains famous for:

OM: There is something worth looking into the strategies of Maynard Jackson because he dealt with that same thing. I don't know enough about it, but there were similar cases where contractors were selling out their contracts,

PG: He set up a monitoring team, that monitored the Airport contract from the beginning to the end and set up a post evaluation two years after. Maynard wasn't going to let them come in two or three times in one year. He said, "you got twenty million dollars, that's it for your turn. It's someone else's turn." And then he also relaxed the bidding so that no

> contracts were, until people came up and were trained on how to bid. So he suspended all bidding until all folks came in to go to school on how to bid, which is us. He took 50/40 bidding and took the hourglass and flipped it and gave blacks 60% of the contract and whites 40% for ten years until we caught up. Then he took trade delegation and took them against the international stuff.

The controversial practices of Maynard Jackson, the first black mayor of Atlanta, Georgia, created more than a decade of African American economic opportunity (Rutheiser 1996), which continues to serve as an inspiration for black comminutes nationwide forced to negotiate the political economy of racism. Jackson once threatened that "tumbleweeds would run across the runways of the airport" if minorities were not included in city contracts. Jackson's policies[41] have been condemned by some as "beneficial only for the black middle class" (Rutheiser 1996), yet he remains a motivating force for some. I regretfully admit I knew little to nothing about Jackson prior to his death in June of 2003, which was met with sincere expressions of loss throughout the greater Lowcountry black community. Moketsi, editor of the *Gullah Sentinel*, responded with the following critical analysis of Jackson's contribution, laced with politicized insight aimed at exposing the longevity of the *Good ole' Boys Network*:

> With all due respect, it is really ironic that three great southern sons recently passed from our midst, only days apart: Strom Thurmond, Lester Maddox and Maynard Jackson. However, sadly, history will record that only one of them was on the right side ("Maynard Jackson, True Leadership" (July 3, July 16, 2003).

Moketsi commended Jackson's leadership style that did not include "*cooperating with one's own oppression, especially when it comes to the representation of the Black entrepreneurial spirit*." After surveying the political and economic terrain in cities across the nation, that appears to be quite an accomplishment.

Black Power and the Dollar

Jabari Moketsi advocates a form of resistance based on educating his readership about the power of their dollars.

> I just try to open people's eyes to look at thing and not just be running this game about 'Gullah this and Gullah that and Gullah the other...' and the only real power (you said how's it gonna change) but it has to be through education, but there are two things, and

[41] Jackson's policies were struck down by the Supreme Court in 1989 (Rutheiser 1986).

> education is part of what I'm getting ready to say, but there are two things here that keep us in bondage. One is ignorance, which has to do with education, and the other is fear. Ignorance and fear: we afraid of our shadows around here! They have us just like it was slavery days because after all, you gotta remember, you know, our mouths are in these people's kitchens, you see, you understand what I'm saying? It's the same thing with me...that's the way they choke me off here, same thing! They do me the same way. Right now this business here should be worth millions of dollars but it's not! They say "well we don't like what it is that you're printing!" I could turn around and start printing the gospel paper and they still ain't gonna like it because I own it! You see, but if I sold it to somebody else and I worked for them. So, what I try to do is I try to explain to people that the only real power we have is our money!!! So if you look in our newspaper, no, no. I want to show you something... [Jabari gets a paper and shows me the full page ad VOTE WITH YOUR DOLLARS!]

Through editorials and national news stories, Moketsi urges the broader Gullah/Geechee community to abandon the Eurocentric concept of individualism and return to a genuine African consciousness that values an even exchange: *tis fa tat* (Moketsi 2003). Moketsi reminds readers of the connection between money from the black church collection plate and the same Beaufort banks that continue to fund encroaching development.

> We as black people have over 650 billion dollars that we will be pumping this year into this weak ass George Bush economy and less than two percent of those dollars will be coming back to our community. Look first to our community for the expenditures of your dollars.[42]
> JM: I was saying that when black people learn and understand that their only power is in the dollar. WE spent 631 BILLION Dollars, six hundred and thirty one BILLION in the black community across America, of that 631 billion we spent 96% outside our community and of the other 4% we spent within our community we spent 2.5% with businesses that are not FROM our community, which means the Arab businesses, the Indian businesses,
> MH: Just IN your community?
> JM: Yes! You see what I'm saying? So that only left us with 1.5% of 600 billion dollars, now you figure those numbers out. So with that kind of drain, you see, with that kind of money, if we learn how to use that money correctly. Like in this community here, I was telling the lady who came in yesterday from the Chamber of Commerce (White Chamber of Commerce), and I was speaking with her yesterday, nice lady, we had a long conversation, I was just telling her the reasons why a lot of white businesses should advertise in this newspaper and we got to talking about that. And I said "because all old black people do here in Beaufort County is we spend money. That's all we do, we don't have any businesses, we don't have any investments, any blue chip stocks and bonds, certificates and yields and all, we just spend money!" So if all we do is spend money,
> MH: It looks like you'd want to advertise to our community,
> JM: Right, and for our community, if our community understands that our power is in our pocketbook and if we understand when and how to withhold our dollars from a lot of these

[42] "Do Business with us, we'll do business with you" *Gullah Sentinel* (June 19-July 2, 2003)

places around here, they will begin to respect us! But they will never respect us as long as we just give them our dollars for free. And that's what we do; we give them our dollars for free!! So, we don't have any power! If you wanted (you know what you do) if you wanted County Council to stop a development around here, let's say somebody want to put a development someplace where blacks traditionally go and fish and hunt, you know what you do? You say, "Look, here's what we're gonna do, we're not going back to Wal-Mart ANYMORE!!!! You all pass that, we're not going to Wal-Mart!" and don't go in there! Do you think that development is gonna come up over there? Wal-Mart is going to go to County Council and say, "Look, you all are hurting our business. Now either you stop that development over there or we're gonna pack up Wal-Mart and we're going!"
MH: So, you're saying, that you just pick randomly someone who has power and you put them in a bind and say "here's the deal!"?
JM: That's right! And say, "here's the deal, you try to widen Highway 21 and take people's land, We're gonna take it out on Wal-Mart, because Wal-Mart will go to County Council and say, "we employ this many people, and we pay this much in taxes and you've got to do... In other words, you beat me up, I'm gonna beat your brother up! You see what I'm saying?
MH: But how do you do it?
JM: You have to rid the people of the fear and ignorance and I do that through this newspaper and I do it on the radio station every Sunday.
MH: But it's apathy that makes people think, "Ah, it doesn't matter if I don't shop there." But it DOES matter!
JM: It does matter. In reality, our dollars sometimes determine whether a company break even or make a profit because **all we do is spend money, we don't do anything else**.
MH: What do you mean?
JM: We as blacks.
MH: You don't invest? You just go to work, you take your money, buy what you need?
JM: That's all we do. Now sometimes blacks get angry with me for saying these things publicly but it's the truth. You don't invest no money. We don't go to Edward Jones and Charles Schwab ..." Edward Jones? What are you talking about? Shit they got a sale going on at Maxway, that's where, I'm trying to get over there!" So that's what you do. Do you see what I'm saying? So that's what you do. I can't remember who said it the other day, but somebody said "You know, the problem with the black community and the dollar, we have forgotten what works." In other words, selective buying, it works!
MH: So, do you think this community is an anomaly? Or do you think this is a US wide phenomenon with black power, the dollar, black businesses?
JM: Yes, the US is the same thing, in every hamlet and every village. As you go around you'll see it. Same thing--same thing. This is just a microcosm of the whole! It's the same things just different area. We don't have a black bank here you know.
MH: Does anybody?
JM: Well they have one in Savannah, Carver, Carver Bank (named after George Washington Carver) they have a bank over there but what I'm saying is, when you ride around here, I call it **cooperating with your own oppression**. See we, as black people or as Gullahs, we cooperate with that stuff, rather than resist it; rather than practice a form of

disobedience! And when you begin to cooperate with something that is negative to your well being for so long it becomes normal.

Confrontation: Challenging the Status Quo

On rare occasions, the threat of black public protest sends a clear message of resistance. Several years ago, Pat Gunn faced off against the city manager of Savannah in protest over limited access to a public park.

> PG: When he was city manager we talked and challenged him several times. And we were trying to get the park and he denied us. He said, "You got all your permits except the noise permit but we're not going to give it to you." I said, "Why you not going to give me a noise permit?" He said, "cause you got this music they call ragay [reggae], or some kind of thing and it's too loud for the people who live around the park." I said, "Well sir, we got all the permits except that one--so two things gotta happen here: I got vendors that are coming from across the country. I got local brothers and sisters. **We either gonna have a festival or a Rosa Parks sit in!** But you're better talking to me about this thing because the vendors who are coming from all over the country, if they come to your park, Foresyth Park, and see those Confederate soldiers holding up guns to keep us enslaved, they might paint it red, black, and green and blow it up! (See Figure 7.4).[43] So, therefore is it better for you to talk to me and see if we can get this thing taken care of, with this reggae music, or for you to deny us access to a public facility that was passed in 1964? Whichever one you want to do, I'm giving you Mr. City Manager, 48 hours!" And I gave him 48 hours and 12:00 Noon that Monday he was looking all over for that thing I said I needed. I said "I gotta go downstairs on the steps of the City Hall, I gotta call some folks in Atlanta. We're getting ready to start a federal lawsuit with Savannah for denying me access to a public facility because ya'll don't want reggae music. Tell me what you want to do." He found it; went downstairs, punched the elevator, came down and we had our festival. The day after the festival the city came back and said, As of May 29th 1992, there can no longer be any festival in Foresyth Park, unless they only host four vendors. Now we had 220 vendors from all over the country and the local vendors we gave free space cause they had never had a festival. And out of all those vendors everybody making money. Can you imagine the fountain, and left to right all those people all over the country made money!?! So, now you can only have four vendors. They have to sell T-shirts and beverages only. Well, what happened was, we've been monitoring them since 1992 and "anytime you all festivals have more than four vendors I'm raising **! I'm waiting for it!" But what they'll do is just change it. But that's what happened. They starve us by changing the rules, you can only

[43] The base of the Confederate Monument reads: "To our dead heroes, by the United Daughters of the Confederacy. Victrix Causa Diis Placuit Sed Victa Catoni." M. Ezekiel, sculptor, Rome, MCMXII. Made by Aktien-Gesellschaft Gladenbeck. "Not for fame or reward, not for place or for rank, not lured by ambition, or goaded by necessity, but in simple obedience to duty, as they understood it, these men suffered all, sacrified all, dared all—and died." - Randolph Harrison McKim

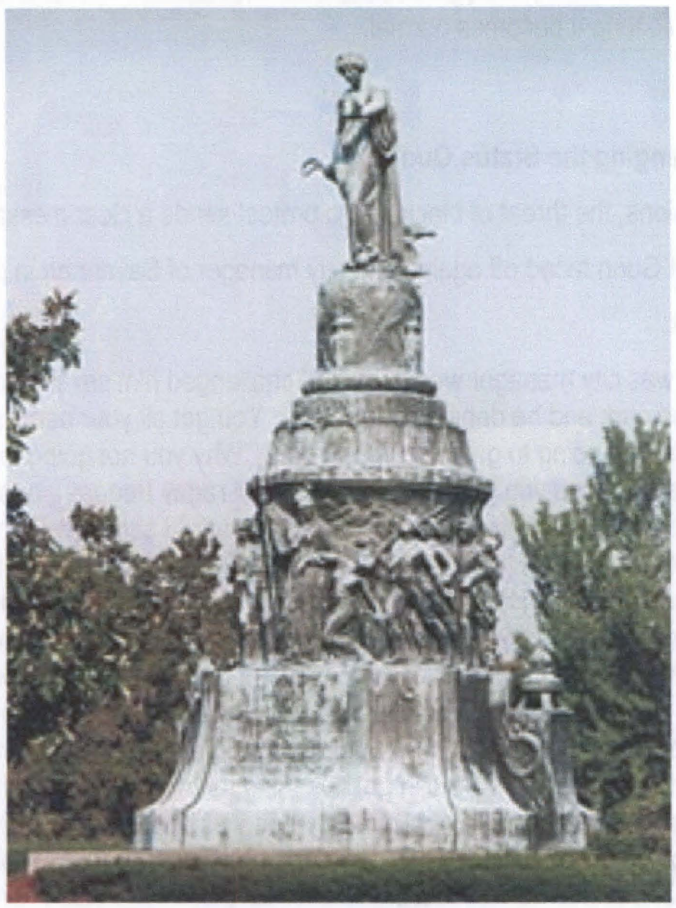

Figure 7.4: Confederate Monument at Foresyth Park, Savannah GA

have four vendors at Foresyth; at that particular beautiful Confederate piece, you can only have four.

The racialized inequality experienced in Savannah led one local resident to establish a means of resistance capable of getting white peoples attention. Yusuf Shabazz, a black intellectual and restaurateur in Savannah, started the New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense in Savannah in 2001 (Few 2003). I thought it could be used as a vehicle to galvanize people," Shabazz said (Few 2002). The Party soon erected an African Holocaust Monument (See Figure 7.5), at the corner of East Broad and Anderson, as a representation of the past and present quality of black life in Savannah (Few 2003). The monument was vandalized in March of 2003, signaling to Shabazz and others that the history of racial aggression endured by blacks of Savannah is far from over.

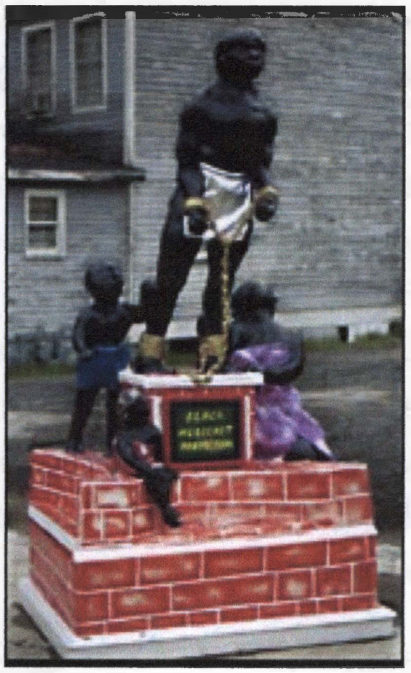

Figure 7.5: African Holocaust Monument, Savannah GA, by James Kimble

Savannah police cited weather as the source of damage. In letters to the editor of the Savannah Morning News, as well as during ethnographic conversations, whites of Savannah express outrage over the party's demands, consisting of: reparations for decades of injustice and inequality, a separate state for blacks to govern for themselves, decent housing, free health care, and exemption from military service (Few 2003). "It's a message that seems far-fetched and divisive to some, but one that has been embraced by many poor and working class blacks who feel society and integration has failed them" (Few 2003). The Southern Poverty Law Center classifies the New Black Panther Party for Self-Defense as a hate group, evidenced by their affiliation with guns and racist language referencing "white devils" and "bloodsucking Jews" (SPLC 2005). Yet Shabazz remains committed to the ongoing struggles facing black residents of Savannah:

> Those who stand with this uniform are those brothers and sisters with conviction who want to see change. They are those who want to raise the level of consciousness of black people and see them rise up socially, economically and politically.

Whiteness in the Black Imagination

The intellectual deconstruction of whiteness has, overwhelmingly, become the praxis of whites; however, it is people of color who have amassed a store of knowledge concerning how whiteness is *experienced*. The social field of whiteness produces discriminatory practices that permeate all areas of economic, political, and social life, offering daily expressions of white behaviors that reinforce "the delusion of superiority" (Essed 1990). The resulting "ethnographic" inventory produces *"special knowledge of whiteness gleaned from close scrutiny of white people"* (hooks 1992:338) qualifying blacks as the most authentic experts on whiteness (Essed 1990). The collective accumulation of black knowledge concerning the habitus of racism may also serve as a form of resistance and self-preservation, as is suggested by Lisa Wineglass Smalls' elaborate theory on whites and their position within the global human family.

> LWS: I think a lot of blacks do look at whites, like I was telling you before, as the baby of the family; even though whites don't see themselves that way. The problem really is that we just have to deal with the viciousness of the baby. The baby is very violent, you know, and we're trying to educate the baby, to the point where (like say) Martin Luther King...
> MH: Where you don't have to spank it, nonviolent.
> LWS: We've been trying to do it nonviolent, but, after a while, we just have to try to distance ourselves from the baby because the baby, there's just things that the baby has to learn right now! The baby is very violent. It's almost like whites are going through a "terrible twos." They're just in the terrible twos right now and there's only so much you can do. "Just have your little temper tantrum" and there are things that you just really can't get through to a child, like when my daughter was in middle school, you just can't really get through. So there are things that we cannot... Well, you try to tell white people certain things but unless you experience...unless you look at that experience. So until white people, to me, experience downfall; and they don't seem to understand that as human beings we all go through these things. But they've never even acknowledged what my ancestors have done as far as a civilization.[44] Civilizations rise and fall because as human beings we really don't learn, they say if you don't learn from history, you're bound to repeat the same mistakes. OK, so if you don't even acknowledge that my ancestors had a civilization, how could you learn from the mistakes that we've made? And so I can see whites (European Americans) making the same mistakes as my ancestors because my ancestors felt, since they are the oldest, as far as the arrogance, as far as,
> MH: You're talking about African Kingdoms, stuff like that?
> LWS: Right. You know, and when they encountered whites, since they had only seen blacks with these kingdoms, when you start talking about prejudice and bigotry, it's not just a certain race type thing. That's a human problem. Ok? So, my ancestors went through

[44] Smalls' frustration speaks to the "ideological assault" black folks have had to endure, which represents them as the antithesis of civilization, intelligence, and economic advancement (Harrison 1999).

a certain race type thing. That's a human problem. Ok? So, my ancestors went through this thing where they thought, with all this melanin in their skin, we're superior to everybody! We haven't even seen these people before. Then, by the time the baby of the family got everything from us, then they started thinking they were superior. Also I think that the ancestors had a certain attitude, "these people don't know anything." So you had that to deal with, (you had the jealousy factor to deal with) but then you also had to deal with the same thing we're dealing with now... the arrogance, the prejudice. You know, it's not just a thing that "white people are so bad," everybody has done this when they've come into power! They look down their noses at people, so therefore if you study history, the rise of the civilization, how these people acted when they were on top, then you would be able to learn.
MH: Greece, Egypt...
LWS: Right. Right. But we [referring to the U.S. as a global superpower] do not learn, we do not learn. We keep thinking, "ok, that happened to them but it will never happen to us." But it is happening; it's happening right now. And Americans just don't realize, just like white people don't realize, everybody WATCHES YOU! When you're the leader, everybody watches you and people are taking note of that.
MH: So what you're saying, let me see if I get this, you're saying the whole white mentality is just like... we see it played out everyday in politics, it isn't just the plantation. It's the whole historical process of conquest and colonization and then...
LWS: A cookie-cutter plan. If you go back in history, and I mean they just do it over and over, over and over. It's almost like it should be perfected by now, and the whole world is watching, everybody is watching. Like I said, it's a human type thing. Being that, like Queen would say: "how you do things decent and in order", OK? You lose your power and that balance when you don't do things decent and in order. The Creator is very patient; he's a patient father. But then you have a father and a mother in a patriarchal society. You're only acknowledging the father; in fact you have so much disrespect for Mother you don't even acknowledge her as 'Momma' you just call her Holy Spirit. But there's a father and a mother. OK, so the parents realize that this is the baby, but now the baby, you should have learned by now. And it goes right back to the rise and fall of civilization. Whether it was the oldest child who didn't recognize: "no, you're not God, you're the first child and your parents love you so much. We've given you all of these things. But if you don't act accordingly, we'll pull the rug out from under you." And that's what I see is about to happen now with this particular power structure. It's a life-type thing and we see that. There's a lot of things that **we understand** but since we don't get a chance to talk to each other you don't know what I know; you don't know what I'm thinking. You can only make assumptions as to how I view life. And the native people are the same way too, the indigenous people. They're not worried about the baby in the family because they know, at some point...
MH: Oh, like Indians, meaning they're like '"he white man's crazy, and we just try to stay away from him as much as possible."
LWS: Because we know, at some point, you know they would say 'the great Spirit, the holy Spirit', yeah, that's going to bounce out. The karma, whatever you send out is gonna come back... but the baby of the family, just like a child, if something doesn't happen right away they're like " If I hit you and you don't hit me back right, then they're thinking: 'oh, I've

dominated you!'" but you reap what you sew. Since you already put out that negative energy, I personally do not have to slap you back. You will get the slap! It's like Europeans don't understand that so they just kept thinking, "Well, we did all these things. These people are afraid!' There **was** a certain amount of intimidation. One thing that I thought was more hypocrisy (with respect to the War in Iraq) was when Bush spoke about all this terrorism. And I was like, "well how can you talk about terrorism and you never even spoke about the Ku Klux Klan, the Aryan Nation?"

LWS: And it's like, well if you, meaning whites, just tell me a bunch of bullshit, you know it's bullshit and I know it's bullshit—but when I call you on this bullshit, it's like: "How dare you?" but it's like, OK. You just go on in your own little façade. That's why I am so happy with the Nation [Gullah/Geechee], because as long as we just take care of our stuff. I don't want to continue to get caught up in your bullshit! All I can do is control my little stuff and that's all we're concerned about, our little stuff, because there's so much you don't understand! You keep thinking that I don't understand things but there's so much that you don't understand and you cannot continue to do all these things to other people and not expect these people to get mad, you know we were trying to just say: "OK, you know, give the baby time to catch on. He'll eventually catch on and he'll understand this karma thing, but I do believe in the corporal punishment. Sometimes you have to smack your little baby, little smack on the hand, get his attention and say "you are not in control here!" We understand that he's the baby, and that's the beauty of the African spirit, and it's like, **you hate us so much**. You've made us the number 1 (#1) enemy but while you're focusing on trying to fuck us and keep us down, that's the only way some white people can feel good about themselves, somebody has to be down, "I have to be stepping on someone to feel good," but that's not what it's really about. The Creator created the whole world for us. All of us are supposed to be able to have happiness! So, now if you're only focusing on me, as long as I can say I'm above the black person to feel good, you're not watching all these other things. And you didn't seem to understand: Ok, the oldest brother and sister, [meaning Africans and African descended peoples], "we're gonna get our shit together and we're not even going to be thinking about you!" But now the middle brother and sister [meaning peoples of the Middle East], they're about as buck wild as your ass is! OK?
MH: If we just focus our energy on ourselves,
LWS: On US! That's all we're doing right now. Focusing on US, you go ahead you can blow your ass up. We don't give a shit! We're not studying you. We're just trying to make sure ya'll aren't trying to fuck us again. But see, I think what it is; white folks want to say, "well we didn't have anything to do with slavery and most of us didn't own slaves," but in reality you know that you had a lot to do with it. That's why you keep worrying; they keep wondering "Well, when are these people going to get us back?" That's the biggest problem. On the one hand, like I said, they want to say that 'we had nothing to do with it' but in your heart of hearts you know that what you did was wrong, and you cannot understand "why are these people not attacking us?" That's what they're worried about. They cannot understand, because it we had done to white people what white people did to us, they would have been going on...
MH: Slaughter.

LWS: Right. So that's what they cannot understand. That's what they're waiting on! But they keep waiting. That's what they're waiting for. Because white people expect black people to act like them. **We are not like you. You are the baby!** Been there done that, but if you don't acknowledge my heritage, my culture... see, we're not like you. We've been down that road! And we see you're headed for self-destruction. And that's why I say it's so beautiful what we're doing with the Nation, with the dual citizenship and everything. It's like, "we are not going down with you!" because you don't seem to understand, the people that you have pissed off, they coming after you! You're worried about me coming after you?? I'm not the one coming after you! But then, they underestimate the white supremacist groups. They hate the government too! Why didn't you go after these people that came up with this doctrine that Timothy McVeigh followed? So, see it's like I say, if you don't dialogue you don't know all the different things we're paying attention to. And it doesn't mean we only want to listen to the ones who go to four-year schools, because they've been so indoctrinated that they're now thinking like you! They're not really questioning. The Negroes aren't really going to question these type things. The Negroes are lock-step.
MH: What does that mean?
LWS: Lock-step?
MH: Yea.
LWS: That they're so assimilated into white America,
MH: They're just consumers.
LWS: Right, whereas people like me, Queen Quet and stuff like that, we're really just sitting back watching and its like: "Oh my God! Look at what these people have done and they don't seem to understand," And it's like: this is bullshit! We're trying to tell you. We're trying to save your life! And after you've talked till you're blue in the face with the baby then you just say, "Look, we can only control our little group!" I refer to this as "Noah's Ark Time." You tell the people, l"ook, we've done some terrible things out there. Some bad energy is coming! You need to get your little ark, build your ark now. Don't stay out in the world because some really strange things are about to happen right now."

The keen insight of Smalls' multifaceted theory of whiteness reiterates the parallels between the microcosm of "the habitus of racism" in these urban contexts and the macrocosm of coloniality as an ideology of white disrespect, presently manifest through global restructuring and reinforcing the boundaries of the "third world" cemented by typologies of difference.

Daily manifestations of the *practice* of whiteness (see Page 1999), increasingly experienced as symbolic violence, reinforce messages of race and difference in extremely subtle ways often *barely visible* to white observers. This condition, which my husband began referring to as "white blinders"[45] three years ago (Hargrove, personal communication 2002), is a symptom of

[45] Rex Hargrove's concept of "white blinders."

the larger national disorder of forced amnesia that we, as whites, refuse to "see" (see also hooks 1992). Jabari Moketsi elaborated on several such practices he views as most damaging, and asked that I test his theories for myself. The accuracy of his claims proved enlightening, further illustrating that the subject position born of black experience commands a level of white respect few seem willing to deliver.

> JM: I want you to notice something else, next time you go to a convenient store, it don't happen all the time, but most time, but you watch: if a black person buys some articles, they'll take the money [He is showing me how the cashier will lay their change on the counter, not put it in their hand], sometimes they'll put it back on the counter, the guy hand like this [holding his hand out palm side up], they'll put his change back like that [illustrating the cashier placing the change on the counter] then he'll have to pick it up. See what I mean? You give him a five-dollar bill and you get your articles, and he put it back down on the counter and say "thank you!" and the black guy will go [raking off the change and shuffling it into his pocket].
> MH: And not put it in his hand.
> JM: Exactly, the other one is, you go and you buy some articles: some Gatorades, some this and some that and you got all these things and you put em' on the counter, pay for it, they put the money back and say "thank you!" and I see the blacks they'll [rustling around trying to manage carrying all that stuff without a bag].
> MH: Instead of it being put in a bag.

I too had noticed this dynamic on several occasions over the years, but only realized it at that moment.

> JM: Right, they'll do that! But you know, when they try that with me, they give me my change and they say "thank you!" I stand there just like this, I do this here [Jabari stands up and begins looking down curiously]. "Oh, you want a bag?" "Uh, yes please." I don't even move! But some of those blacks they'll [shuffling and balancing with his head down]. I saw a black man walking out of a convenient store the other day, he had potato chips, candy, kids in the car, sodas, man, and he was trying to do a balancing act to get to his car! Must have spent about ten dollars worth of doggone crap! He was trying to do a balancing act to get to his car!
> MH: And all that is part of it.
> JM: That's right. I walked outside the door, I left the line, and I said "brother, you want me to help you?" He said, "no, I got it man," and I said 'why didn't you ask them for a bag?' He said "ah that's alright, I'm just going out here to the car!" "Yeah, but no one walks out the store with all that stuff." "It ain't no big thing man" and I said "Allright." I just left it alone. But now if a white guy comes in there and buy a damn pack of cigarettes, they'll bag it right up.
>
> JM: And let me show you another one, see I'm walking into a store, see I can identity this stuff and I don't stand for it. OK, there was a person standing in line in a convenient store and I walk up and I'm standing behind that person, right? But then, some more white

people walked in and they got their stuff and they stand right **next to me**. Now they came in probably about two or three minutes after me. She [referring to the cashier] saw when I came in, standing behind this guy. So now after she got through waiting on this guy,
MH: She looks here, at me, they do it to me!
JM: Yea, but then she asks the question!!!!! – "Who's next?" But she knew who was next, "you knew who was next." And the people over here look at me sorta funny like I'm trying to start something, man she came back and, this is what she did, she walked up and said "who's next?' Now if I was the good slave, I'd say "she's next ma'am." I said, "You know who's next. I've been standing here behind this man, and you saw me standing here and you're gonna ask this question?" And just like the girl said to me, little white girl, she said, "Sir, I didn't mean anything." And I said, "I know you didn't honey." **And I know she didn't**.
MH: But it's part of her mentality!
JM: Exactly.
MH: She's used to doing that!
JM: Exactly, and she didn't mean nothing by it! And I know she didn't. She didn't do it in a mean-spirited kind of way. It's just a mental thing. I said, "the reason I say that honey is because somebody else may take a serious offense so you just try to be mindful of it." She didn't mean nothing by it. So I just walk out the store.

bell hooks suggests that white people who are willing to shift locations in an effort to see how whiteness is experienced by blacks can begin to understand how racism really works. From such a location, whites can actually see whiteness as terrorizing without interpreting that to mean that all white people are bad (1992). Through a willingness to engage in such critical exercises, hooks asserts, "we decolonize our minds and our imaginations" (1992:346). The vast number of these experiences I have been privileged to over the years, and the lessons accompanying them, give me hope that I can now help other "recovering racists" (Wright n.d.) comprehend their whiteness; thereby raising awareness as to the multiple consequences of the power of whiteness. The critical deconstruction of such complex ideological processes, especially those occupying common sense status, is the first step in truly combating the broader system of racial discrimination and structural inequality within the United States. Within the Gullah/Geechee communities of the cities and the islands, this deconstruction begins at the threshold to the "New South" of the white imagination.

CHAPTER 8
REINVENTING THE "OLD SOUTH" PLANTATION IN THE "NEW SOUTH"[1]

Introduction

At a moment when many Sea Islanders eke out a minimum wage living in service to white wealthy newcomers and tourists (Faulkenberry et al. 2000), gated communities are an index of the "underlying tensions" (Blakely and Snyder 1999) and economic disjuncture within American life. This new form of segregation illuminates the ostentatious affluence of those who reside on the other side of the guard gate, while the very names of these communities further underscore their role as status symbols and instruments of social separation (see Figure 8.1). In Sea Island community after Sea Island community, long defunct historic plantations once again come alive in these new forms of economic exploitation and colonization. Some occupy the same spaces and places as plantations of yesteryear, but most are inventions within the *ideoscape* (Appadurai 2002) of the "New South." Throughout this newly imagined region, the house that hate built has received a new, fresh coat of high gloss white paint. To outsiders, this façade goes undetected; however, the realities of wear and tear are beginning to show through, revealing the structural scars of history beneath.

Situating the Peculiar Institution: The Plantation of the Past

The history of the Lowcountry is inextricably linked to the institution of plantation slavery. The capital accumulation made possible by the Transatlantic Slave Trade bankrolled these southern spaces, and today the racialized power imbalance of the "good ole days" remains intact. The resulting relationship, therefore, between descendants of the enslavers and the enslaved, cannot be fully understood without devoting sufficient anthropological energy to the study of slavery as a sociohistorical process; a process that continues to shape the everyday lives of Gullah/Geechee people.

For more than two hundred years, historians and social scientists have discussed New World slavery as the economic necessity that mediated the void between exploitable land and resources and sparse populations (Curtin 1977), thus suggesting the institution was merely

[1] I am using this term in a much different way than historians. For clarity, see Gaston 2002.

Figure 8.1: Examples of Gated Communities Named Plantations (Hilton Head, SC)

peripheral to history (Berlin 1977). Outside the academic realm, writers contextualized slavery in terms of economic benefit—"the cotton kingdom"—or within the broader discussions and debates concerning the Civil War (Curtin 1977). Beginning after World War II, such benign representations understating the centrality of slavery to the rise of America were contested through much needed revisionist accounts capable of illustrating the broader historical realities of slavery as a process and enslavement as a condition (see Branch 2002; Rubin and Tuden 1977). Kenneth Stampp's *The Peculiar Institution* (1956) is among the most influential of the earliest revisionist contributions, and his candid motivation for the study remains crucial for developing lucid connections between slavery, history and the present:

> This institution deserves close study if only because its impact upon the whole country was so disastrous. But, in addition, such a study has a peculiar urgency, because American Negroes still await the full fruition of their emancipation (vii).

Almost five decades later, those devoted to understanding and combating racial forms of social inequality would argue they still are.

The peculiar institution of slavery was a social and cultural phenomenon of unparalleled violence and depravity. The plantation complex,aptly referred to as "capitalism with its clothes off" (Gilroy 1993), which operated for more than two centuries the U.S. South and nearly four centuries in the Hemisphere (Mintz 1970), represents an important micro-process, offering fruitful lessons for making sense of present day systems of global restructuring and capital accumulation.[2] Such lessons become even more profitable when placed squarely within the context of the political economy of racism under investigation. Although the colonial masters of the New World did not invent slavery, the plantation complex in the Americas was the first incidence of conflating race, in the form of blackness, with slavery (see Drake 1987; Mintz 1974). That particular convergence has undeniable relevance for scholars interested in mapping the ongoing forms of structural inequality within various communities of the New World African Diaspora (Berlin 1977) as proof positive that "the legacy of slavery and colonial domination is still very much embedded in the strata of today's sociocultural terrain" (Harrison 1993: xv). The cultural and social residue of this *in-human trade* (Pollitzer 1999) remains branded on the collective conscience of the United States, irrespective of the degree to which each citizen is willing to acknowledge it.

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[2] To truly understand the global, we must first come to understand history (Friedman 1994).

The political economy of racism anchoring persistent forms of structural inequality throughout the Lowcountry owes its very existence to the peculiar institution of plantation slavery in the U.S. South. For nearly four centuries, enslaved Africans were forced to produce and reproduce[3] within an economic complex recognized as foundational to the development of modern global capitalism (Marx 1846; Mintz 1970). Present day marvels of a reinvented antebellum fantasy represent physical manifestations of the costs paid with African blood, sweat and tears. From historic homes to port bridges, slave labor built the South, yet their contributions have been all but erased by a conscious agenda of historical fabrication referred to as "southern mythmaking" (see Gaston 2002). This process of racism, "to contain blacks in the present, to repress and deny the past" (Gilroy 1987:12), serves to delegitimize the collective past intimately connecting Gullah/Geechee people to these recently appropriated landscapes. Even more alarming, however, is the common sense version of the region's history, which legitimizes structured inequality by masking it as progress and natural order.

An Alternative Anthropology of History and Truth

Poststructural analysis within anthropology has pulled history and "truth" from the margins into their rightful space in the center of the deconstruction agenda. An exploration of the politics of history making reveals the cracks and gaping holes between the dominant "common sense" perceptions of the past and the muted subaltern, and often racially marked, versions of historical memory—or the more *dangerous* readings of the past (Tosh 1984). In most cases, the official version of history pits the subaltern translation against the historical nostalgia of those in power (see Jordan and Weedon 1995; Olwig 1999; Roseberry 2002), producing a contested landscape upon which the romanticized version becomes common sense. The resulting frustration and disconnect were clearly articulated by William Jefferson of Fernandina, in the following ethnographic passage:

> WJ: They bring about a whole new name, where we know Fernandina as Fernandina, now it's Amelia Island! So, therefore, even the name Fernandina is becoming obsolete now. So, now therefore, they don't even incorporate your history into an advertisement. Just like when we be having our family reunion, my mother and my brother went down to the ... Commerce,
> Crowd: Chamber of Commerce,

[3] Slavery in the New World commodified both the production and reproduction of slaves (Mintz 1974)

> WJ: They have those flyers and stuff because they were trying to make up those little packets that you have for relatives when they come, and they had everything that was dealing with African American history, they had that up under the counter. And my brother and mother said "did you see when we was asking about OUR history the girl went down under the counter and got OUR history, when they got all this other stuff dealing with the other Fernandina, with the white part of Fernandina laying on top of the counter." So, therefore, there's two, they trying to sell something but they trying to exclude the original inheritors of the land out of it!

Thus, history becomes a story about those who won (Trouillot 1995), with the often-added luxury of providing damage control for those in power (Buck 2001). I had a similar encounter at the Florida Visitor's Center when trying to obtain information about the African American Heritage Trail. I had learned there was an excellent guide detailing the specifics of the trail; however, neither the South Carolina nor the Georgia Visitors Center had a copy. After searching through what felt like millions of brochures in the Florida Visitors Center, I approached the information desk for assistance. Upon my inquiry, one of the two white women staffing the desk turned to a cabinet directly behind them and retrieved the coveted guide. She placed it vigorously upon the counter with an obviously forced smile. "I would like two please," I replied, as a friend from Beaufort had asked that I get one for her if I was able to locate them. "*We aren't allowed to give you more than one!*" she sharply replied. "*These simply cost too much to print to just hand them out. That's why we keep them back here.*"[4] I immediately felt lucky to have even gotten the one under my arm, so I fled the Center, feeling as if I had just stolen a classified government document. Perhaps in some ways I had.

In the United States, this process, aptly referred to as "the propaganda of history"(Du Bois 1969 [1939]), has resulted in monitored silences about the multiple realities of slavery. Du Bois suggests the facts of American history, specifically the inadequacy of a science which has portrayed enslavement as a mere event that just happened, with no real fault to be placed, have been falsified out of a collective national shame (1969):

> In a day when the human mind aspired to a science of human action, a history and psychology of the mighty effort of the mightiest century, we fell under the leadership of those who would compromise with truth in the past in order to make peace in the present and guide policy in the future (727).

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[4] It is important to note the stacks of brochures I saw spilling over in the outdoor garbage cans at the Florida Visitors Center that day, the ones discarded by visitors before then even make it to the car. One must wonder if those are printed in a way that makes them less expensive to waste.

The collective recognition of such an agenda, Stephens suggests, makes Americans uncomfortable with historical reality (2004). "We are still a reality-challenged culture" (Stephens 2004), which explains the preference for the "edited airbrushed version" represented in the heritage tourism venues of Charleston, Savannah, Beaufort, and Jacksonville.

Heritage tourism, although it has increased the visibility of cultural diversity in communities across the globe, has added a different, albeit just as problematic, dynamic to the politics of history making. What becomes big business, such as the plantation tours throughout the Lowcountry, often have free license over what counts as "heritage" and what does not. Anthropological studies, particularly those interested in contextualizing power struggles over cultural identity, have an important role to play in locating the processes by which certain conceptualizations of the past become dominant over others in particular historical periods (Olwig 1999; see also Tonkin et al. 1989). While taking care not to suggest our discoveries represent an authoritative "truth" (Jordan and Weedon 1995), we have a unique opportunity to contest "heritage myths" (Lowenthal 1996) represented as historical fact.

Throughout the Lowcountry, this recreation of history has produced sharply dichotomous representations that reinforce the white imagination of the antebellum south, while intensifying the emotional scars of slavery's cruelty to blacks (Stephens 2004): a "disordered"[5] past centered on the luxuries of plantation society and an illegitimate cultural memory of centuries of enslavement with no contemporary recognition of the economic, cultural, or social contributions such forced labor made to the present. The tools of ethnographic research are crucial elements in the process of speaking directly to this disjuncture between "Truth" and "reality," ultimately aimed at producing an alternative history "from below" (Humphries 1984). More importantly, this praxis of empowering multivocal readings of historical experience allows formerly silenced voices to play a legitimate role in narrating the past. This chapter is dedicated to the production of such an alternative history of the Gullah/Geechee in the Lowcountry South.

Reconstruction(s) in the Old/New South(s)

An alternative history of the Gullah/Geechee would be wholly incomplete without an examination of the period of history known as Reconstruction, and the subsequent, entangled

[5] See Roseberry 2002.

reworking of the myths of the New South. Before conducting this research, I had conceptualized Reconstruction in terms of what was undertaken to steady the legs of the collectively emancipated black communities of the south; yet that was only part of the story. As is true of most historical events, there are many subject positions, yet the words of the powerful often drown out the subaltern contributions. Throughout the Sea Islands, Reconstruction policies empowered freedmen to enter politics and purchase land. Some federal policies went a step further, such as the Port Royal Experiment,[6] which assisted Sea Islanders in acquiring property on plantations they had worked as slaves. This federal program was mandated by General Sherman's Special Field Order #15, which set aside the islands from Charleston to St. John's River, Florida for the settlement of newly freed Negroes. This great start, however, was soon interrupted as Johnson caved in to political pressures and provided for the restoration of all land holdings back into Confederate hands (Du Bois 1969), thereby nullifying the 14th Amendment's protection of property rights for freedmen. Sea Islanders resisted, oftentimes violently, yet their determination would prove no match for the rising tide of racial hatred in the South. In South Carolina and Georgia, poor whites resorted to physical force: "the whites do not think it wrong to shoot, stab or knock down Negroes on slight provocation. It is actually thought a great point among certain classes to be able to boast that one has killed or beaten a Negro" (Simkins and Woody 1932). Whites, from both the North and the South, who were willing to work toward black political and economic empowerment during Reconstruction were deemed "nigger worshippers" and subjected to a vast array of symbolic and physical violence (see Simkins and Woody 1932). This disorderly climate eventually gave birth to the Ku Klux Klan, as poor whites struggled with the notion that blacks might somehow be reenslaved (Du Bois 1969). In this tumultuous time, the inventors of the New South created the false ideology that would eventually provide the intellectual and moral basis of Jim Crow segregation (Gaston 2002), thereby further disenfranchising the black citizenry (Kirby 1978).

In direct protest to the whitened history of Reconstruction, W.E.B. Du Bois offered an alternative history, *Black Reconstruction* (1969 [1939]), which has yet to receive its full incorporation into the broader discourse. Within this historical account, Du Bois highlights the many Negro speeches and actions that have been deliberately omitted in the historical representations of Reconstruction written by "passionate believers in the inferiority of the Negro" (1969: 381). The real

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[6] See *Rehearsal for Reconstruction: the Port Royal Experiment* (1964) by Willie Lee Rose.

story, according to Du Bois, is that: "Northern capital compromised, and Southern capital accepted race hate and black disenfranchisement as a permanent program of exploitation" (1969:626-27). This compromise, it stands to reason, soon translated into the conscious undoing of Reconstruction progress, which was later attributed to the inherent intellectual inadequacies of blacks. Alongside this effort blossomed the revisionist accounts of the Civil War, which proved an invaluable tool in the building of the New South (Rutheiser 1996).

It is important to note the current conflicts surrounding the recent introduction of a bill (introduced by Senator Ernest Hollings [D] of South Carolina) to study Reconstruction. The bill has set aside $300,000 to complete two studies over three years: one to determine sites of significance in the U.S., and the second to determine whether five Beaufort County sites[7] should be added to the National Park System. Yet the suggestions were met with extreme opposition from the Sons of the Confederate Veterans (SCV) (Burris 2003). The SCV immediately began contacting politicians in an effort to block federal support, insisting that Reconstruction was "a terrible time for southern whites." Many members of the group suggested a study of Reconstruction that focuses on the contribution of freedmen will ultimately result in the devaluation of white efforts. "If the National Park Service wants to honor blacks being free from slavery and blacks getting the right to vote, that's fine. Just don't do it under the pretenses of Reconstruction" remarked Michael Givens, the first lieutenant of the state division of SCV. Givens went on to suggest that the current "bad relationships between the races" was the result of the mistreatment of Southern whites by "carpetbaggers" during Reconstruction. Such illogical reasoning is indicative of the mechanisms of mythmaking employed by white Southerners to support the mechanisms of mythmaking now recognized as the New South.

Reinventing the South

From its inception, the term "New South" has had an ambiguous meaning (Gaston 2002). It has been used to characterize a doctrine, as well as a specific period of time, although no clear consensus has been reached to delineate the beginning or end (Gaston 2002). What unifies all

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[7] Michelville on Hilton Head Island, recognized as the first established Freedmen's Village, is among the sites under consideration. The others are: The Freedmen's Bureau, The Old Fort Plantation, the Robert Smalls house, and Penn Center.

uses of the term, however, is the disruption of the nostalgic Old South, "a society dominated by a beneficent plantation tradition, sustained by a unique code of honor, and peopled by happy, amusing slaves at one end of the social spectrum and beautiful maidens and chivalric gentleman at the other" (Gaston 2002:28)—as a result of the Civil War, and the need to recreate the South in ways capable of valorizing the white past. The task was accomplished by a host of racist writers who became the "history mill for Southern myths" (Kirby 1978). These revisionist accounts, such as Thomas Dixon's *The Clansman*, D.W. Griffith's film *Birth of a Nation*, and the so-called Dunning School of Southern historiography, emphasized the corruption and ineptitude of carpetbaggers, scalawags, and especially, the newly enfranchised African Americans (Kirby 1978). These uneducated authors became the authoritative source through which many Americans learned their (reinvented) history. The resulting widespread adoption of the "New South Creed" (Gaston 2002) left distinct marks on the collective history of the South:

> [The New South Creed] rationalized the abandonment of Reconstruction and the inauguration of the Redeemer regimes in the 1870s; the mature doctrine undermined the first menacing reform movement designed to overhaul that order in the 1890s; the Jim Crow system was added as an insurance measure; and the New South myth, fully articulated, offered a harmonizing and reassuring world view to conserve the essential features of the status quo (222).

Over time and space, the mythic New South has taken on a life of its own, being molded into various agendas during various periods between the mid 1800s and the present. In the Lowcountry South, the white imagination has reclaimed the romantic notions of the good old days in their regional version of New South imagery, reminiscent of *Gone With the Wind*: when plantations were glorious farms showcasing the entrepreneurial expertise of the white planter class, and slaves were dangerous, infantile and barbaric—and therefore in desperate need of white paternalistic, Christian guidance. Slavery, as an institution, was a necessary predicament. And, most importantly, the Civil War was fought in defense of states rights, bearing no relationship to the perpetuation of white supremacy. Northern newcomers and visitors appear to devour these "Confederate illusions" with insatiable appetites. These reinventions, sewn together with collective white lies and edged with white guilt, created an atmosphere conducive to the phenomenon I refer to as "the reinvention of the plantation."

Disseminating the New South: Imagery Across Time

One of the most important media through which the mythic South was introduced to the world was, and remains, the Lowcountry genre of fiction writing. This body of literature, as well as the closely associated tourism and real estate advertisements, illustrates yet another site of white monopoly over images of blackness, which allows for the white point of entry so crucial for the maintenance of the trope of blackness in the South. Beginning shortly after Emancipation, there was a re-infatuation with fictional accounts of the antebellum plantation, exemplified by the Uncle Remus Tales of Joel Chandler Harris (Rutheiser 1996). The earliest of these writing appropriated the folklore and (what was then recognized as) "dialect"[8] of the Gullah in ways that had a detrimental impact on their self-identity. Derogatory assessments[9] painted a backward picture of black life on the Sea Islands and motivated Gullahs to abandon one of the few traits they had produced and maintained that was wholly theirs. It has taken over a century to fully situate Lorenzo Dow Turner's work as the accurate source of reference for the study of Gullah language, and for Gullah speakers to reclaim their linguistic legacy.

This genre of writing was well received both inside and outside of the South. Whites remained eager to consume these idyllic representations of the plantation days, which reinforced their paternalistic notions of racial inequality (Rutheiser 1996). One such work, which refers directly to the "Negroes" of the Georgia Coast, was a collection of myths by Charles C. Jones, Jr. (1888). Jones recounts the "songs and lore of the old plantation darkies" (v), "told in the vernacular," with deep affection for their contribution to his life. The book dedication, "In memory of Monte video Plantation, and of the family servants whose fidelity and affection contributed so materially to its comfort and happiness" adds substantial complexity to this strange relationship. Jones' reference to the "fidelity and affection," brings us back around to the white infatuation with legitimizing the closeness between oppressors and the oppressed.

Presently, the Lowcountry genre is a booming business. Novels written by a handful of authors wax poetic about a variety of subjects set against the backdrop of charming southern

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[8] Lorenzo Dow Turner's "Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect," (1949) legitimized Gullah as a bona fide language. It was recently reprinted and remains the most important linguistic study on Gullah to date.
[9] A prime example is *The Black Border* by Ambrose Gonzales (1922).

towns, such as Charleston and Savannah. Writers who have received national acclaim, such as Pat Conroy and Anne Rivers Siddons,[10] eloquently evoke a Lowcountry that lures the reader, both ideologically and physically, to the region.[11] Conroy often occupies the "best local author" spot in Charleston and Beaufort literary reviews, although he isn't from the Lowcountry, and Siddon's work was recently described as "firmly rooted in the culture of the modern South."[12] One of the top selling books by Siddons, *Low Country* (1998), is of particular significance to the study of gated communities as a gendered experience. In the book, an upper-class Southern woman, Caroline Veneble, battles against her husband, who is a developer, to save the Lowcountry island "her beloved Grandaddy left her."[13] She drinks a lot, expresses feelings of isolation, and is obviously living a reality she doesn't morally agree with. The significance, however, comes in the form of a critical analysis of this fictitious account from the Gullah perspective. In discussions of my interest to understand gated community residents and their reasons for choosing gated, several people have suggested I read that book: "those are the women you are trying to figure out" most say. Over the years the Gullah have constructed a critical analysis of gated residents as a characteristic type, and this book, from their vantage point, seems to be representative of the type of women who reside inside the gates.

The Lowcountry represented in these works of fiction, such as Pat Conroy's *The Water is Wide* (1987) represents the black Lowcountry from a white outsider perspective. The Gullah and Geechee, if they are included at all, represent a romantic, exoticized background for the white characters. One particular author whose work captured a more authentic essence of the black folks in and around the Lowcountry was Zora Neale Hurston. Although most would not situate Hurston's work within the genre of Lowcountry fiction, I do so with the specific intent of illuminating her contributions toward a more balanced understanding of black life in this region in the era of Jim Crow segregation. Hurston, trained as an anthropologist yet locked out of the white, male-dominated academic realm (see Harrison 1995; Davis 1998), utilized her ethnographic training to legitimize storytelling as an important form of communication within the African American communities of Eatonville, Florida. Hurston refused to creatively primitivize her subjects, choosing

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[10] Both writers reside in the Lowcountry in gated communities.
[11] As illustrated by the Southern Living article discussed in previous chapter.
[12] "Meet the Author" series of Barnes and Noble Booksellers.
[13] Quote taken from the books back flap.

rather to portray them as the strong communities of her childhood memory, memories that left a lasting impression on Hurston's identity (Garfield 1991). Hurston represented an alternative blackness in her fiction, which directly rebuked the identity of the South "as a single definable reality" (Trefzer 1997). Her depictions included strong black women, hard working black men, and the constant struggles of life within an oppressive system of racial and gender inequality within the South. In a subtle manner, she blurred the boundaries between anthropology and fiction, suggestive of the multiple interactions between her character as narrator, anthropologist, ethnographer, and black woman of the South. Fifty years before the postmodern turn, Hurston simultaneously recognized the role of subjectivity and the richness and value of African American folklore, as representative of ethnic epistemologies anchoring generations of struggles for self-identification. More importantly, Hurston's work represents a postcolonial counter-narrative of the experiences of racism in the U.S. South, (see Trefzer 1997) capable of dislodging reinvented versions of Lowcountry history.

Plantation Tourism: Romantic Reinventions Within the Linguistic Market

The term "plantation" has become a commodity within what can best be understood as a "linguistic market" (see Bourdieu 1993). The importance of semiotics within the larger complex of historical reinvention is the way in which language exposes how people make sense of their "being in the world" (Csordas 1994). Therefore, the power struggle over the meaning of plantation reveals the deeper political, social, and cultural stakes within the contested landscapes of Lowcountry history. Within this particular linguistic market, those capable of exerting power over "linguistic legitimacy" (Bourdieu 1993) have redefined "plantation" in ways that censor the contesting voices of Gullah/Geechee people, supporting Bourdieu's assertion that "every exercise of power is accompanied by a discourse aimed at legitimizing the power of the group that exercises it" (1993: 150). Thus, the neo-plantation (in both tourism and real estate literature) romanticizes a period of the past; suggestive of a great era lived out upon these particular landscapes when whites owned blacks and they were wealthy and lazy, representing the true aristocracy of the plantation South. People visit and migrate to Sea Island areas with these images and linguistic tags attached to their heads and hearts, and Gullah/Geechee residents pay a high emotional, economic and political price for such a rendezvous with racism dressed up as historic nostalgia.

During my trips up and down the coast, as I traveled from Georgetown to Fernandina time and again, I made a deliberate effort to stop at the visitors centers and collect brochures advertising the plantation tourism industry. Text analysis of these documents revealed yet another site of reinvention, through which the plantation becomes a majestic existence symbolizing all this is beautiful and charming about the Southern past. The comprehensive tour magazine for South Carolina, *South Carolina Smiles* (2003) was an interesting place to start. The section of the magazine devoted to the Lowcountry was titled "Steeped in Romance" (Burka 2003), illustrated with depictions of plantation landscapes in all their glory: Live Oaks draped in Spanish moss swaying in the Lowcountry breeze, awaiting rediscovery by those seeking the "romance of the antebellum days."[14]

In the advertisement for Litchfield Plantation the travel writer recalls the majestic beauty that once welcomed a plantation owner and his family "home" (see Figure 8.2).

Figure 8.2: Tourism Advertisement Representing the Beauty of Litchfield Plantation

[14] Advertisement for Litchfield Plantation, in Pawleys Island, South Carolina.

This "exclusive enclave framed in old Southern charm," "as it once was" represented "the good life" for the owners of the past, yet it still represents the good life for those fortunate enough to find "this romantic hideaway called Litchfield Plantation." These types of representations romanticize the multiple realities of plantation life, never delving into the dark despair of how such sites came into existence, whose labor made them possible, whose production and reproduction were co-opted in the process, nor the immense knowledge of Africans exploited in the production of the "Carolina gold" rice that transformed area plantations into an economic empire. At the opposite end of the Lowcountry, Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation along the Altamaha River in Georgia, lures tourists to this state historic site offering the following experience: "the culture of a forgotten empire comes alive at this historic rice plantation." This 7,300,acre plantation was home to 357 slaves, and features a model of a working rice plantation, along with a slide show depicting the life of planters and slaves.

The imagery conjured by such representations[15] has created a common sense ideology of plantations as beautiful landscapes offering serenity and pleasure; which is consumed by tourists at an alarming rate. However, descendants of enslaved Africans who labored and died upon such landscapes have a very different perspective. This is an example of the ways in which history is recreated into a nostalgic and digestible illusion concerning the history of plantations in the Lowcountry, which, unfortunately, digresses much further with regard to the recreation of the relationship between master and slave. Magnolia Plantation and Gardens, located on the periphery of Charleston County, was "home" to 300 slaves at the beginning of the Civil War. The tourism brochure for Magnolia has an entire section devoted to "Slavery at Magnolia Plantation." From within the twisted logic of the white mind, Magnolia Plantation is depicted as a place where slave and master held each other in high regard: "While little is known of conditions existing in the earliest days, it is documented that during at least the latter years of the slavery era, if one had to be a slave, then life on Magnolia Plantation was relatively enviable." The brochure documents that the owner affectionately wrote of his slaves as his 'black roses' (21), bragging that he went against the laws of the times and built them a schoolhouse. The passage goes on to document how this "close master-slave relationship" was illustrated by Adam Bennett during the Civil War, who refused to disclose the spot where he had buried the family's valuables even under the threat of

[15] Some plantation brochures refer to the enslaved as "plantation workers."

death at the hands of the Union troops (as he was "strung from a tree") yet his loyalty did not stop there. He apparently journeyed 250 miles on foot to bring news that the house had been destroyed but the garden remained, and to assure the master that the former slaves were caring for the plantation.

My obsession with collecting tourism literature, and the subsequent textual analysis, motivated me to visit these plantations to experience them first hand. I first visited Drayton Hall, which boasts the existence of the oldest preserved plantation house in America that is open to the public. The tour is what one might expect of such a tour, highlighting the family history and describing their lives before, during, and after the Civil War. At the end of the house tour, however, we were informed of the newly added "African Connections Tour" which is optional and meets under a makeshift tent outside the gift shop. In my tour group of thirty or more, I was the only person to attend the Connections tour. I conducted an informal interview with the white female guide, who had no prior knowledge or interest in the subject matter. She was "simply doing her job." The addition of such programs has become the norm across the plantation tourism industry. In January of 2004 I visited Middleton Place to explore the representations of daily life promised in their brochure: "Middleton Place: experience history, beauty and daily plantation life." While the brochure acknowledged that the profits from slave labor transformed Charleston into a great colonial city, it described a visit to Middleton Place as "a rare opportunity to see and hear what plantation life was like in the 18th and 19th centuries." Upon arriving, I was surprised to find a component had been added, "the African American Focus Tour" and I was excited to see how such a tour would represent daily plantation life. I politely asked the desk attendant "who facilitates the tour?" and she looked quite embarrassed to tell me a retired white man from Ohio. When I asked if any persons of African descent conduct interpretation for this particular aspect of Middleton Place she replied, "the only blacks who work here are in maintenance." The tour was politically correct and made use of current literature regarding the African contributions to the life and culture of the plantation. The guide commented that romantic notions of the plantation days were inaccurate, yet he followed that statement with a quote from the brochure: "the romantic plantation of today was simply the hardworking farm of yesteryear." I finally recognized the origins of the notion that a plantation was merely a farm, so often espoused by the newcomers residing within the newly imagined plantations scattered throughout the Lowcountry. A parallel review of real estate

literature revealed more of the same.

One such real estate advertisement, among the many, was particularly interesting in its depiction of a newly developed gated area as "Paradise Found." I used this notion to inquire what a Gullah interpretation of "paradise" might entail, and the conversation progressed into a discussion of often-overlooked factors that accompany the infusion of white wealth and power.

> MH: When it says "paradise," what is a Gullah idea of paradise?
> QQ: Paradise, well I guess most Gullah/Geechee people would answer that with a place where there's no trials and tribulations. So, whether that is heaven, as Christians would look to it to be, or whether that is heaven on earth, meaning your life is peaceful everyday. And that you have food, you have shelter and you have clothing and you have your family. So, those things would be our paradise, which we had until about 25 year ago when this major influx of outsiders started coming in here disrupting everything. And as they disrupted, everything that wasn't here came with them: drugs, violence, deaths, court prosecutions, because I guess you could say we had our own court prosecutions in our community. But court prosecutions, zoning laws (if you want to throw that in, because some people think that's horrible) and major theft, a lot of theft. All of what they call the crime ratio goes up the more gated areas there are. When those weren't here, our sheriff used to hang out most of the time! I mean we were still considered a small town for a long time. So now to be almost considered a metropolis I mean because people come here, all of them have heard of Beaufort County South Carolina, because of Hilton Head, and Fripp Island. They come there to golf. They come here to go to the beach. They come here to get a tan. But along with them they bring what they had at home.
> MH: Tons of cars, tons of exhaust.
> QQ: Right, tons of cocaine, tons of Hennessey.
> MH: Escort services, have you seen the escort services?
> QQ: NO, I didn't know about no escort services on Hilton Head.
> MH: Strip bars?
> QQ: Oh, they have strip bars on Hilton Head? I didn't know that.
> MH: They say "let us be your nineteenth hole."
> QQ: Is that right?
> MH: Yea, I've got a book for you, of the alternative lifestyles of Hilton Head.
> QQ: Unbelievable, that is so wild because specifically here on St. Helena we made sure that in any of the zoning for St. Helena you're not allowed to have places like that.
> MH: Well they've got 'em.
> QQ: We don't want (quote) dens of inequity. And see and they used to, you couldn't even, let me tell you how crazy that is. If you used to want to open a little restaurant and get a beer license, you would have protests from the community. They would tell you "you too close to a church." "Ain't gonna operate on Sunday!"

> "Doesn't matter! You're too close to a church!" Or, you're too close to a school!" Anything that would stop you from causing this to be a place where there could be a lot of potential negativity, because once people get alcohol or any substance that's not natural then people cause a problem and people just didn't want that being an element in our community. So, people would protest. So, it's way ridiculous for me to hear that now Hilton Head actually has all this stuff. But why? They need to cater to their tourists. They need to cater to their businessmen.

Textual analysis of tourism and real estate literature reveals the multiple ways that the term "plantation" has been reinvented as a marketing tool. The possibly unintended consequence of this practice, however, offers justification for the newcomers from the North who have bought into this representation of the "Old South" equipped with a "New South" ideology. In the end, it is the Gullah who cannot justify their offense at having to endure the public proliferation of this painful brand of historical reimagining.

***Confederate Illusions*: The Neo-Confederate Movement**

Situated within this complex social field of contested meaning lies a distinct group dubbed the neo-Confederates.[16] They have become increasingly visible during the ongoing regional debate over the Confederate flag and its role, or lack thereof, within public space. The ideology of this collective group takes the myth of the New South to an entirely different level, exemplified by the following ideology aimed at revealing the truth about "our Confederate ancestors and history" (Davidson 2004). The foundation of (what I call) "Confederate illusions" is based upon collective responses to (what neo-Confederates deem) the lies of southern history. In their view, the first lie consists of the notion that slavery is somehow linked to racism, which they vehemently deny: *Southerners were following the words of God, the bible says slavery is sanctioned by GOD, as the Bible clearly states in Leviticus 25:44,46*. Therefore, "*people who are bitter and hateful about slavery are obviously bitter and hateful against God and his Word*" (Davidson 2004). In an effort to establish an unbiased analysis of this historical rebuttal, the Southern Poverty Law Center sought the opinion of leading scholar Brooks D. Simpson[17] on the history of the Civil War and Reconstruction. In response, Simpson commented:

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[16] Defined as a white supremacist hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

[17] Brooks D. Simpson, a professor at Arizona State University, who has published extensively on the topic.

> First of all, without slavery there's no Civil War in the first place, there's no irreconcilable conflict. One of their first missions is to whitewash the Confederacy of any connection with slavery. They certainly want the revival of the principles of the Confederacy, and one of those principles would in fact be white supremacy, unquestioned and explicit. Confederates during the Civil War had no problem whatsoever in associating their cause with the protection of slavery and a system of white supremacy, which they thought was inherent in the Confederate world order (SPLC n.d.).

The second lie rests on the accusation that slaves were mistreated in the Old South, which neo-Confederates contest using an ideology of family:

> A typical family plantation had one family of Whites living next door to one family of Blacks. They had the same last name, worked in the same fields side by side, played together, prayed together, raised each other's children, took care of each other in sickness, and all in all, loved one another, just like family (Davidson 2004).

It is important to note the existence of sufficient evidence suggesting some masters possessed a bizarre affection for their human property; however, human slavery could not promote authentic relationships out of such interactions of vast inequality and forced compliance. In Stampp's *Peculiar Institution* (1956), this particular rationalization for slavery was expressed by a Georgia plantation owner, who suggested, "*the surest and best method of managing Negroes, is to love them*" (Stampp 1956:163). Indeed, there were laws against cruelty to chattel, however, most states[18] had clauses built in to ensure their ability to discipline as they saw fit: "nothing herein contained shall be so construed as to prevent the owner or person having charge of any slave from inflicting on such slave such punishment as may be necessary for the good government of the same."

In an interview with Linda Gadson (Gullah), director of Rural Mission on John's Island, we discussed what I should envision this fondness to entail. Linda Fasig (white), who works closely with Gadson, was desperately trying to come to terms with the realities of racism on John's Island and nearby Wadmalaw, where she resides. Her frustration in attempting to excuse racism induced by ignorance led directly into a dialogue of particular relevance to the issue at hand:

> LF: And again, as I said earlier, there is a spirit of the people—the southern white people that live in Rockville have a different set of prejudice...
> MH: A different kind of racism?

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[18] South Carolina law (Stampp 1956:220).

LF: A different kind of racism.
MH: Because there are so many levels, it is scary that something that bad could develop in such a multi-layered fashion.
LF: That is right, it is. And many of them have been loved and cared for by locals and what not. And there is a kind of feeling... I don't know, I think they would call it love. White people would call it love, for...
LG: **Their own Black!**
LF: Their own associated persons.
MH: Their mammy figures?
LF: Their mammy figures.
LG: The person who took care of me when I didn't know who I was and gave me that titty to suck when Momma was gone. That's my Mammy, and I don't want anybody touching them and don't—it's really something, because people actually in their heads, feel that they have ownership over that person! And don't have to come to one of their Mammy's funeral. Because they actually-- but their Mammy got a house with no running water and a toilet! And yet, "Mammy brought us up and we got a mansion, but we don't see the need for Mammy to have a descent house to live in!" That's the part that, I mean, I **cannot** get over that part! Mammy caused you to have the kind of job, kept your children, have done all this and you go to Mammy and carry Thanksgiving dinner and whatever, whatever – take her a gift every now and then for birthday or cake or whatever—and Mammy going to toilet in... Let me tell you something, this was so depressing for me. Chris, that works here with us, her grandmother in the Hill family,
LF: Is this Williams or,
LG: Williams. Her mother, her grandmother live on the plantation, well they don't call it plantation, well on the land. Poor lady has taken care of the whole family; all of them are raised, all of the children, the grands, great, grands. And they love her so much... even the little kids lovin' on her. But this woman didn't even have electricity. But they let her stay in the house; she can stay there all her life. If Rural Mission wanted to put electricity in there, run water to the bathroom—they didn't mind!!
MH: But they didn't [install electricity and plumbing]?
LG: But they didn't. But they love Henrietta so much. Oh Henrietta, we don't want nobody to hurt Henrietta.
MH: And this is where?
LG: John's Island! John's Island! And Henrietta don't have to pay no rent, don't have to, you know—and she died last year. We did get her running water, we did get her a bathroom, we did get her... and they were so hurt and crying—but they couldn't see the need! But they had no problems with Rural Mission, they didn't mind... Oh sure, go ahead, whatever ya'll want to do to make her comfortable, go ahead! Not one of them said, I would give a dime, a quarter whatever. That's the kind of mentality, that's the kind of thing that bothers me and my thing is: do they plan to go to heaven? Do they plan to meet Henrietta again? And they're innocent to where they are because they just feel like they've just done all the right things. They give her a place to live, so this house, she can stay there until death.

This type of paternalistic relationship is yet one more symptom of the dis-ease of whiteness. Yet neo-Confederates would remind us that it was on these family plantations that blacks were converted to Christianity, and "*it is to be sure that those converted Black Southerners are most grateful today*" (Davidson 2004). They would also point out that is was upon these plantations that Blacks acquired skills in the areas of farming, milling, and carpentry (among other things).

The third lie of Southern history pertains to the Civil War, and the underlying reasons for its occurrence. Neo-Confederates assert that the war had nothing at all to do with slavery, and everything to do with "taxation without representation." The Civil War, therefore, was a war for Southern independence (Davidson 2004) and not the four-year battle to perpetuate human slavery, as Du Bois suggested (1969[1939]). Within the Neo-Confederate movement, the notion that slavery was a part of God's plan increasingly redefines the Civil War as a Holy War (Wilson 1995).

The forces driving the neo-Confederate movement have been slowly building since the Civil Rights struggles of the 1960s; however, the controversies over the Confederate flag galvanized the merger of several small factions of white supremacists into what is now recognized as the League of the South (LOS). In 1993, the United Daughters of the Confederacy (UDC) requested a renewal of their group patent, the "Stars and Bars" flag. Within days, Senator Carol Moseley-Braun delivered a passionate speech detailing why the flag should not be considered as part of a shared southern society (Webster 2004). The request was, therefore, denied, which enraged groups claiming Confederate pride. Among them, the most visible was, and remains, the LOS, classified as a white supremacist hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC 2000). The rhetoric of the LOS,[19] aimed at the preservation of a southern way of life, based on "heritage, culture, freedom, and honor" (Webster 2004:139), represents the growing tendency toward more subtle tactics used by contemporary hate groups to arouse pride and connections (Webster 2004). What makes these groups so appealing, Webster suggests, are the multiple scars upon the collective southern identity, including the South's defeat during the Civil War and the role of the South in staging of the Civil Rights movement (2004). Therefore, the LOS promotion of a return to Old South values, including a revival of secessionist ideology, has made the group

[19] The mission statement of the League of the South (LOS), as outlined on the website (http://www.dixienet.org) is as follows: "We seek to advance the cultural, social, economic, and political well-being and independence of the Southern people by all honourable means."

extremely popular among poor southern whites who have been historically manipulated into exchanging race hatred for a non-redeemable voucher of white privilege (see Buck 2001; Du Bois 1969 [1939]). In July of 2005, the League of the South Institute for the Study of Southern Culture and History, is hosting a summer institute on the gated island of Seabrook in South Carolina. The theme is "Reclaiming Southern Culture" during which "the South's finest unreconstructed scholars" will teach participants "the true history of our beloved Southland" (LOS website n.d.).

Plantation Realities

The recent expansion of the discourse on slavery, which recognizes the multiple realties of slavery as a process and enslavement as a condition, requires a positioned reworking of the term "plantation." Du Bois ushered in a point of departure some seven decades ago, with the important question: "What did slavery mean to the owner and the owned?" (1969[1939]) Yet, few, within the academy or beyond it, were allowed a voice in answering. The national collection of slave narratives were a solid beginning, along with the heart-wrenching accounts of the violence of enslavement—such as the autobiography of Frederick Douglas—yet these situated knowledges have yet to receive their appropriate place in our national common sense depiction of slave life from the dark side. Such representations of this historical atrocity are necessary if we are to transcend the "conventional story of the old slave plantation and its owner's fine, aristocratic life of cultured leisure" (Du Bois 1939).

> I have often been awakened at the dawn of day by the most heart-rending shrieks of an own aunt of mine, whom he used to tie up to a joist, and whip upon her naked back till she was literally covered with blood. No words, no tears, no prayers, from his gory victim, seemed to move his iron heart from its bloody purpose. The louder she screamed, the harder he whipped; and where the blood ran fastest, there he whipped longest. He would whip her to make her scream, and whip her to make her hush; and not until overcome by fatigue, would he cease to swing the blood-clotted cowskin. I remember the first time I ever witnessed this horrible exhibition. I was quite a child, but I well remember it. I never shall forget it whilst I remember any thing. It was the first of a long series of such outrages, of which I was doomed to be a witness and a participant. It struck me with awful force. It was the blood-stained gate, the entrance to the hell of slavery, through which I was about to pass. It was a most terrible spectacle. I wish I could commit to paper the feelings with which I beheld it (Douglass 1845).

Douglass's recollections of the plantation, for those who read them, clearly defined it as "an archaic

institution out of place in the modern world" (cited in Gilroy 1993:59), and dismissed many of the commonly held illusions about the experience of slavery (see Du Bois 1969). The plantation, according to Douglass, operated as "a little nation of its own, having its own language, its own rules, regulations and customs. The laws and institutions of the state, apparently touch it nowhere. The troubles arising here, are not settled by the civil power of the state" (1855).

The reinvented plantations of today, in the form of gated communities, share distinct similarities with the plantations of the past. Each "plantation" has its own security force, which "serves to keep their problems **in-house**" (Beaufort Law Enforcement Official, personal communication, 2004). Most of these communities are incorporated, with a Property Owners Association (POA) that is responsible for the maintenance of all necessary facilities, which places them firmly outside the jurisdiction of local law enforcement. There is a distinct culture of entitlement that permeates these communities, based on a sturdy doctrine of meritocracy often used to mask white privilege. Many have a logo or distinct symbol of representation, such as the ship anchor displayed by a former Fripp Island resident. They share these things as a collective experience designed to promote cohesion, which simultaneously expresses their desire for separateness from the larger community "outside" their designated boundaries. The most obvious parallel, however, is the *culture of servitude* (see Faulkenberry et al. 2000) operating throughout Sea Island communities, within which a black service class of Gullah/Geechees manicures the grounds, and cooks and cleans for the nearly all-white populations residing within. This racialized social positioning, I argue, reflects an underlying white supremacist ideology Stephens refers to as the "regressive side of the American dream" (2004). Within this subconscious position of whiteness, cultivated within the habitus of racism which defines American life, slavery becomes the historical basis for an American fantasy: "a life of unlimited, undeserved, un-worked for bounty" associated with the free energy which once made planter's most grandiose dreams come true (see Stephens 2004).

Destabilizing "Sambo:" Race Making and the Reinvented Plantation

The ideological reinvention of the plantation requires the parallel repositioning of whiteness, in relation to the contrasting images of blackness necessary for subordination. In order

to theoretically map the history of white supremacist thought over time, one needs to investigate the imagery of blackness both during slavery and afterward (Fredrickson 1977), which reveals a contrast between "Nat" the rebel (Blassingame 1972) and the happy, docile and infantile Sambo (Fredrickson 1977). The image of Sambo, the good Negro who knew his place, served the dual purpose of rationalizing the peculiar institution while also calming the nerves of fearful whites regarding the possibilities of slave revolt (Fredrickson 1977). This duality of blackness, between child and savage, was further employed by the elite to instill fear in poor southern whites concerning the prospect of harm awaiting "his wife and children" if emancipation should became reality (Stampp 1956:425). Fredrickson (1977) further asserts that this "negrophobic image of the black savage turned loose on white society" was the true inspiration for the militant assertions of the South's secession.

The argument being constructed here recognizes the distinctly discernible connection between the "Nat" images of the slavery era and modem day imagery of black criminality as pathological. Digging deeper into this ideological framework also reveals the similarities between the paternalistic rationalization of white supremacy in the past, evidenced by the apparent need for some whites to believe that slaves were happy with their condition (see Mintz 1974), and present paternalistic suggestions of gated residents who position their presence and their economic contributions as a blessing to Sea Islanders. It seems plausible to suggest, therefore, that the paternalistic complex born of plantation slavery has evolved into the seemingly altruistic volunteerism that gated residents engage in, serving as their "justification for class privilege" (see Ostrander 1984).

Susan Ostrander's sociological study, *Women of the Upper Class* (1984), suggests that women of privilege often recognize their position as a natural arrangement of society, which compels them to engage in charitable work in an effort to help those less fortunate. However, the complexity of such volunteerism requires deconstruction, which will be utilized to illustrate the more hegemonic expressions of white supremacy I have documented in the voluntary actions of gated community residents. Ostrander's analysis suggests there are several major underlying motivations which compel upper class women toward community volunteer work: First, and most important in terms of the perpetuation of class status, is the opportunity to exercise private control over

community affairs (Ostrander 1984). Second, and of particular relevance regarding the documented similarities I have suspected among gated community women, volunteer work makes them more visible, which increases the political, social, and economic networks of their husbands. Like many of the gated residents I have met, (though they never officially voiced it) the women of Ostrander's study expressed resentment concerning their lack of career choices after marriage (1984). Every woman I interviewed (both formally and informally) who lived behind the gates moved there on the decision of her husband. The third reason for volunteerism is the symbolic power associated with giving—the power to make a difference in people surviving or not, as well as the power to control how the donated funds are used (Ostrander 1984). This motivation appears to be particularly strong (and paternalistic) when the donations are directed toward recipients of color. Mrs. Harper, a participant in Ostrander's study, is particularly proud of her yearly contribution to the poor black children living neaby: "*every summer I get about eighty kids from the city's black ghetto and bring them out for a day at my place in the country*" (1984). This representation of the white savior, evident in many of the voluntary programs discussed by gated residents, subconsciously perpetuates the image of black communities as collectively in need of white paternalistic care. A clear example of this type of paternalism emerged during a conversation with Linda Gadson, director of the Rural Mission[20] on John's Island (see Figure 8.3). The facility is located directly on the waterway, facing outward toward the gated communities of Kiawah and Seabrook Island.

In this ethnographic passage, Linda is describing the origin of this missionary organization (before she ever became the director), followed by a few of her experiences negotiating the "conditions" attached to charitable contributions from the white, upper class, community.

> LG: And they'd come down to assist with the reading program, to DO GOOD! And so, they found out about this place and by that time the lady who had owned it, she wanted to get rid of it because she could no longer operate it. So she met these old white women and they told her "Gosh, it would be nice if we could use that nightclub, we could clean it up and make it a nice little place" da da da da. And the lady, she said "OK. Well, I'll sell it to you—to the Rural Mission"—cause that's who they came down through—"but I can't get all this money at one time because of taxes." Mrs. Cook didn't want to pay taxes. They says fine. But what Mrs. Cook did, she signed the deed with the understanding that they would give her a certain amount of money every year. And later, after she did that, like a year or

[20] The purpose of Rural Mission, Inc. is to provide human, spiritual and social services to Sea Island residents, migrant workers and transients. They provide migrant headstart services, crisis intervention, scholarship funds, work camp projects, emergency food vouchers (limited), information and referrals for families in need.

Figure 8.3: Rural Mission, Inc. on John's Island, SC

two years later, she found out this place was going to be developed. Remember now—it's a one lane highway here, ain't no four lane, ain't no none of that. Where "Church of our Savior" is an old raggedy house and this nightclub back here and nothing on the store side and all that. So, anyway she accepted that. Then when she realized what was happening, what was going to take place, she wanted her place back. But it was too late. So we ended up being in the "master of equity" in the courts for more than ten years. And finally the judgment was made that Rural Mission had every right to the property because she wanted it that way when she signed the deed. And she didn't want all her monies at the same time, da da da... so finally the Conference of United Methodist Church raised the money and paid her what the judgment was, which the final total price was $28,000 back in 1978, 1979 when we finally got cleared, —back then that was like a million dollars. And from that point on we were harassed every year by developers wanting to come in here and take the land!

MH: Do they still come?

LG: They still inquire. They call me every day.

MH: You see them just about every day?

LG: Yea. They come down looking.

MH: It drives them absolutely crazy, I am sure. That you have a place here to help the poor and Mexicans!!! Right on the water! And you're black!!!!

LG: **OOOOH!** They've done everything to try to get it, by not giving us the water, we don't get no funds out of Kiawah or Seabrook [the neighboring gated communities]. They give all their monies to Habitat! And they try to be sure that we DON'T get anything!
MH: They're trying to starve you out?
LG: That's it!
LF: One of the churches came in and said, "We will put some money aside, and you can only help the people on John's Island. And if they come to you and they have a need, you have to fill out this form and this form and this form. And then you keep a copy; you give us a copy back— Well, it was kinda a little crack in the door to sorta let—and I keep thinking if they can get them in there and let a couple of them see—
MH: See, you're optimistic! I like it!
LF: Well—
LG: But you see, it took them forever to even trust us.
LF: That's right! Even enough to do that.
LG: To give us $400 dollars a year. Because see, they, for all these years we've been here together, they didn't feel like we were worthy of their support. So the people used to go there, to them, and they found out that "you know, hey! This really don't make too much sense." They've had two different people on our board, at different times during the past. So they found out we really weren't stealing any money and we don't get enough to steal and that we really got a little bit of wisdom and know a little bit about how to operate a institution. But, at the same time, "you don't let them have that kind of money." And then they realized, they changed ministers also, so this minister they have now they think is really crazy, from Utah. And he's trying to bring a whole bunch of changes there, he feels like the agency, Rural Mission, is already here. Why should they do the same thing there? Why don't you connect with them? But they still gotta hold the purse string, and every time we get $400; use that $400, give them an accounting as to how that was used, then they'll give us another $400.
LF: It doesn't last about 10 minutes!
LG: They might get up to $1,000, ten years from now, when they realize... OH! Because, I've shared this with Linda before, let me tell you something: Rural Mission could be anywhere it wants to be in this country if there was a White woman running it. She could be a poor White—but as long as she was **White** she would have the support because of who she—because my skin color is—
LF: She's had, a few months ago, they were upset with her, this guy was like, he was like some German, he called down there and he started reaming her out and was just all upset. He had called twice and she hadn't returned his call. He was so ridiculous. I mean some of the stuff, it is just too crazy!
MH: So, how do you function? How do you operate this place?
LG: Faith. God. And the folk from out of town.
MH: People from out of town send?
LG: Sends funds. And, you know, her church [referring to LF], well, Rockville Presbyterian Church for the last five, six years have been giving us like $1,000 a year because they've had someone from their church, a young lady, her parents are members of that church and she did work here with us and they found out that it was all right, it's all good.

> LF: And then there was a big chunk given by the...
> LG: The National Presbyterian Church, of $200,000 and the local church gave the endorsement to the proposal. You know, what you were talking about "grant writing?" We went through a lot of hoops with that and that's how we were able to do some work here. We were able to develop the dock; re-doing and stuff like that. But the amount of monies (and folk ask all the time), "You are so close to Kiawah and Seabrook and the amount of monies that they get... these golf tournaments and this thing, why don't they? Well, see—racism is alive and well, and a lot of times we don't want to talk about that and folk don't wanna, "that's just a crutch you just want to hold on to that!" It's not a CRUTCH, that is FOR REAL! I've seen it happen, LISTEN!!! I've been invited to Kiawah, I've been invited to Kiawah to speak; to be in women's group and you can see in the audience who is and who's not. You know, my spirit tells me I can, you know, and then when you don't hear anything afterward, you know for sure.

Linda Gadson is a hero in the larger Gullah community around Charleston. She has received many awards for her dedication to the community and the Rural Mission organization. After spending the afternoon with her, I am convinced: If anybody can give an accurate representation of the state of affairs regarding racism in the Sea Islands, it is Linda.

At the opposite end of the child-savage construction, the contemporary representation of "Nat" the rebel slave is overtly symbolized by the culture of fear that necessitates living behind fortressed walls and guard gates, in otherwise predominantly black communities. The trope of blackness perpetuated by the white owned media serves to continually reinforce white notions of black criminality. Within the real estate industry, advertisements for gated communities capitalize on this stereotype, making reference to the 24 hour surveillance, the community security force, and the existence of a guard house which screens all incoming vehicles. Word selection, such as safe, private, and secure suggests the people and places outside these gated areas are something to be feared. Many gated residents cite increasing rates of crime and drug usage as legitimate concerns, yet Gullahs assert that their communities were virtually crime free before "plantation" development. Several Gullah elders went so far as to suggest it was the gated areas that brought the drug trade into their communities, because these problems never existed before their arrival. This debate became a source of concern over the years, after getting caught in the middle of more than my share of heated conversations, so I sought the assistance of a law enforcement official in Beaufort County,[21] where I was granted access to the crime records and statistics (SLED) from 1975 to the

[21] The law enforcement officials requested to remain anonymous.

present. An investigation into the possible correlation between crime rates and gated community development revealed a direct relationship between the two; however, the crime increase could also be strongly correlated with population increase in Beaufort County (39.9% increase in population between 1990 and 2000 in Beaufort County). What was most significant, moreover, was the low crime rate **before** the real estate boom. Crime in the "pre-gated period" was extremely low, not to mention one of the officers telling me the police didn't really even go to St. Helena thirty years ago! On the issue of drug usage for Beaufort County for 2003, the arrests for drug possession with intent to distribute were microscopic: 24 for cocaine; 39 for crack; and 38 for marijuana (Population 128,000).

Defining the Plantation as a Contemporary Experience

Using a wide variety of methods over the course of two years (2002-2004) I devoted special attention to engaging participants, on both sides of the debate, in a dialogue about the multiple definitions of "plantation." Furthermore, I posed questions concerning the Gullah perspective on the widespread practice of gated developments being named "plantations," in an effort to map the diversity and commonalities of such experiences across the multiple locations of the holistic social field. It is important to keep in mind the historical process through which Gullah/Geechees came to their present understanding of the term plantation. During the short implementation of Sherman's Special Field Order #15, freedmen traveled to nearby community institutions to acquire property deeds, often as extended family units. When possible, the land selected by the formerly enslaved were those they had long worked for free, and the plantation names became associated with distinct family groups. Within the multitude of definitions used to characterize plantation, this ethnic epistemology of "plantation" is uniquely derived from a collective cultural experience.

> MH: When you hear the word "plantation" what comes to mind?
> QQ: It depends on who says it. Meaning if it's someone in my community I already know that they're just telling me what community they live in and that they've been part of that community for a minimum of 300 years. So it depends. If it's a Gullah/Geechee person and they say "well I live in Frogmore plantation" I already then can know, based on what their name was, and knowing that locale, 300 years of history instantaneously. That's what I know. I know what that family's about, I know if that's a trustworthy family, I know if they are a dedicated family, I know if they continued our traditions or didn't (pretty much), I know exactly what is the tradition that they are known for, whether that's going in the water, going in the field, going to do baskets, whatever. I'll know that. Now if someone

else, who is new to the area, says "I live in Hilton Head Plantation" then that indicates to me that you are a person who is a *segregationist*, that you want to segregate yourself away from the people who originally were here; because somehow, by design, you think that putting up fences is similar to putting up moats and walls to a castle. And that whatever is in there is more valuable to you than human life is outside of it. But that, generally speaking, you also want to exclude everyone outside your gate from what you do inside. Yet, somehow, you want to be able to come from inside your gate out here and dictate a lot of what goes on "outside" your gate as well. I've seen that dynamic. I've seen that most of the people who live in gated places with the word "plantation" on the outside don't understand that they bought into something that was marketed to them as a "Hollywood" version of a plantation, not a real life, traditional, Sea Island plantation. And what they were looking to buy into was something like Scarlet O'Hara's life, where everyone waits on you hand and foot. And you can be the Ms. Priss and Ms. Pristine Southern Belle and don't get your hands dirty, and faint at the first little whim. And I've never even seen that movie. I need to watch that movie. I've seen clips because of Hattie McDaniels winning the award, being the first African American to win an award for her role in a Hollywood film and that's how I've even known who Scarlet O' Hara was. Scarlet O' Hara is non-existent to us, as Gullah/Geechee people, and even with native families that are here that are Ango Saxon or of European ancestry, that's ridiculous to them! That people come here thinking they could live like Hollywood because these people knew, NO, anything you get in the South you're gonna work for it. You weren't gonna just sit by and fan, and have somebody bring you stuff. And it wasn't gonna be such a keen life where you just did what you wanted to do because again, our system, we're the majority here, so it's not the same as, say, Virginia. And that kinda thing, where you have a dynamic where the majority are the enslavers, not the enslaved, so they can then make you, by all kind of means, convert into whatever they want you to be. Here the people who were enslaving us learned kinda quickly that they could keep trying that but it wasn't working too well, so in a lot of ways they converted more to the things we did, in terms of foodways, in terms of dynamics. And so even now a lot of those families, they tell other people who move here, like specifically here on St. Helena, they'll tell whites that they know in Beaufort, "don't go over to St. Helena" or "don't go over there with no stupid talk!" Like "if you go over there to visit or something, go visit, but don't go over there thinking you're gonna tell them what to do." You know? Now half the time these people blow this off because again, the new ones to the area who live in plantations and stuff, they've come from urban environments, [where] everyone is neighbors. They're not communities. So you could move any day and I don't know you moved. I mean I might see the moving truck but I never knew your name anyway so why does it matter? Where[as], with community, it unifies you with what you have in common. So it would concern me that you're going somewhere, or that you're no longer there.

Across the broader landscape of this research, a direct correlation emerged between the plantation system of white power in the past, and more current attempts at reinventing the racialized power

structure. In Charleston, South Carolina, Gullahs reveal an ideological link between the plantation system and white control of the heritage tourism industry.

> AF: In my case, the word plantation has a very special connotation because of this new committee they've been discussing, the International African American History Museum, because the descendants of the people who owned the plantation, where my forbearers were imprisoned, are on the committee. And I've been systematically excluded from the committee despite excellent qualifications. Superb qualifications! I'm a cultural insider; he's a cultural outsider.
> MH: So it's about power?
> AF: The plantation system is about power; it's been about power from its inception. One man who controlled too much land for he and his family to work by themselves went out and forced other people to work for them. They fist tried to force the Amerindian population and they would eventually flee or were killed. And other groups of people, the indentured servants, as long as they could, and African Americans could be corralled and brought here from societies which (internationally) did not have a great deal of gun power, [which was what was necessary in the 15th century] were able to be enslaved. So that's why they did it, they did it because it was economically beneficial to them, socially uplifting to them and at the same time destructive to other people, and in a way, terribly destructive of the possibilities for the society they were trying to build. So, it's the kind of thing that even though we're still in a situation where we're human beings. And the denial of the other person's human "being" within the context of the plantation system, did not prevent or **could not prevent** the assertion of human qualities by all of the people involved. And, in the end, that assertion of human qualities is what has born fruit and allowed us to get to the point where we are today.
> QQ: Absolutely right.
> CT: Right, right.
> AF: But still many of those aspects of control, power and control--social, cultural power and control, domination, etc., that come from the plantation system. I see the plantation as a system, not just a farm—in small it's a farm, but in large it's the whole thing. It's a system that's been imposed on people, not just African American people who happen to be at the bottom of the plantation system, but imposed on all the people within that plantation system to control them and keep them working for the benefit of the few who control it. And allowed themselves to benefit from it to everyone else's exclusion. And they're still trying to do that today.
> QQ: Correct!
> AF: It's bound to fail, they've seen it fail before in many, many ways, in other instances. But it was partial failures. Now we're at this point, as a system of mind where people believe that this is the way of life that is practiced and should continue to be practiced! But now people question that. You have the whole human rights movement that has swept the world within the past century. And it's even longer than that because this have been around before. So we have a long history of fighting for human rights and as that ascends the plantation system and all that is repressive with it, will decline. And that's what we're trying to do, change a system and a way of thinking about the world that oppresses many

and benefits only a few.
HG: But the contemporary words for plantation are "corporation" and "ethnic tourism."
QQ: Heritage tourism.
HG: Those are contemporary code words for the same meaning because the same structure is still in place. The same hierarchy is still in place.

The plantation has also come to symbolize the racial inequality of the "culture of servitude," which, in an ideological sense, (re)enslaves the African descended population.

MA: I think of my job as a plantation!
QQ: He said he thinks of his job as a plantation.
MH: I've heard that a lot.
MA: It's cheap labor; there's always an overseer, somebody there to tell you how to do this and how to do that. And it's managed by people other than ourselves.
HA: You know, subconsciously people carry around that sickness and it's hard for them to break loose from that sickness.
MH: Which people? You mean everybody?
HA: Basically in that environment, where it's still got the word 'plantation' in it.
MH: So you're saying, I want to understand you, you're saying the social system that was in place during the plantation era is perpetuated by having to see it [the word plantation] all the time.
HA: Right.
MA: Ok, that makes sense.
HA: And it's become a way of life for a lot of people, they can't break loose. It's everywhere; and that's part of the tourist system. That's the main thing... that word is. That word helps produce the workers and stuff,
CT: True, true. (Charleston Focus Group)

The service industry or "culture of servitude" (Faulkenberry et al. 2000) in the Sea Islands is predominantly made up of Gullah/Geechees; some even travel up to 70 miles each way to work in these reinvented plantations, but such efforts go unrewarded. There is virtually no opportunity for upward mobility, which is pushing the youth out of their home community and into other areas where the options are better. Queen Quet gives lectures and coordinated workshops in the gated communities quite often, thus she has an opportunity to observe a diverse range of operations. I felt it only appropriate to get her input regarding what she has witnessed behind the gates.

MH: I wanted to ask you a bit about the service industry, the service industry that particularly caters to gated communities and these so-called plantation areas, are the demographics shifted more on the end of Gullah people in the service sectors?
QQ: Oh yeah. Maid service, and grounds maintenance, kitchen work (whether that's in restaurants, the clubhouse or wherever), so whether that's cooking, cleaning the dishes, whatever, it's usually the back room in the kitchen. We have those jobs. We have the jobs of cleaning the villas and all that stuff to switch em' over for the next sets of guests. We

> have the jobs of cutting the grass, planting the trees, we have the jobs of actually building those buildings. But that's about the most visible places you're gonna see us in most of those areas when we're building the buildings, but not after the guests arrive. We don't usually get the managerial jobs. We don't get the front desk job to greet you to come in. It's a rarity. It's a rarity. And the places that do have a lot of us in the front desk jobs again will have a tendency, like I notice now, like you coming and asking me the questions, they have a tendency to do the same thing people were doing during **Reconstruction,** they get the most light skinned one of us that they can find that you might not be able to tell to work there. Or they give them a managerial job but that person's job might be to answer sales calls that come by phone and not necessarily... still when you get there, they don't necessarily see you-- unless they know to ask for you and then you come out the back, out the office. I've seen that. I've been paying close attention to that. So they can always answer EEOC questions to say "but I employ black, I employ women." But **where** do you employ them? And how much are you paying me? Are you actually paying me equal salary that you're paying that white male in that office over there and we have the same job title? That's another issue. The other dynamic of it that I've witnessed is that the power position is still the same ideal as if we took away the gate and put the cotton back because (like that motel that I just mentioned with the Westin) there were no people of African descent at the front desk. If I asked for a manager, it was a Caucasian male. It was not a person of African descent and definitely not a Gullah/Geechee but the Gullah/Geechee are the ones on the golf course cutting the grass, watering it, changing the beds, all of this stuff. So, again you gotta keep the power dynamic in place and I think there's a comfort in it. I think for people who are of European ancestry in America, there is a comfort in keeping the power dynamic, or as we say the status quo, intact.
> (One-on-one structured interview 2003)

The presence of the word "plantation" has such a wide-ranging impact. I must admit I only anticipated the most negative of responses, and I assumed (which is a drawback of getting emotionally involved in research) that the rage of Gullah/Geechees would be symbolically directed "at" the newcomers who buy into the reinvention of the plantation (thus perpetuating it). However, several of my research consultants are more concerned about the internalization of "plantation," as something they have inadvertently accepted as normal. This type of cultural *penetration* (Willis 2000), I suggest, speaks to the overwhelming nature of this phenomenon. It is, literally, everywhere you look. I imagine, as a person from East Tennessee with loads of cultural shame about the "hillbilly" image, that I too have been penetrated by the vulgar misrepresentations of my regional history. These kinds of connections, although painful, are the most valuable rewards of qualitative research.

In the following narrative, taken from the Savannah Focus Group, Jamal Toure elaborates on how even **he** has ingested "plantation." As an activist tirelessly devoted to promoting cultural pride and awareness, Toure's comments reveal just how powerful the imagery is.

> JT: Someone said to me, look at how we use it in our own common language when we're talking, when a brother says he's going to work, brother says, **"Well, I'm going to the plantation!"** (whole crowd in unison), same word for the job. I'm going to the plantation! That's how they look at it. Some may say that that's slang for a job but for some, they say I'm going on the plantation! And that's that person who may be at International Paper, or working at Stone Container at one time.
> MH: But not necessarily behind the gated of anything named plantation?
> QQ: NO!
> JT: Personally, me, as long as I can remember on Hilton Head we've had plantations! I said "As long as I can remember," I have always known of Sea Pines Plantation, I've known of Hilton Head Plantation... I've not... for all my life I've known of plantation. I've heard plantations: Palmetto Dunes, Port Royal Plantation, Shipyard Plantation, that before we even get on the island we knew of Moss Creek Plantation, they have been there and it is in the psyche of us—that even **"I"** say Sea Pines Plantation, **I say** Hilton Head Plantation—it is embedded in the minds of Gullah/Geechees. So we know that that's what it's called. Now what happens for some of us, we may go on and brush it off or shrug it off or kick it away, but still yet, it's still there.

Among others, the public proliferation of "plantation" represents a conscious effort, on the part of whites, to destabilize the identity of slavery's descendants, and to remind them of their position within the larger power structure. Linda Gadson's response was particularly poignant.

> MH: So, what kinds of imagery does that conjure [plantation]?
> LG: Well, what they want it to. To show where they are, in terms of their mentality. "Well, see we have all the best. And we still have the plantation mentality of keeping black folks out except to come and clean. Because you don't even exist, invisible! Clean, clean, clean, keep it all nice—the golf course, keep everything in order. Keep building for us, keep building for us! And let it remain that way, but you are not good enough to stay here." You know? And I'm just wondering-- Linda I think about it often-- these folks with the mentality that they are far superior to the poorest Black or Hispanic,, and do they ever consider death? I wonder do they ever consider death and what happens to them and do they actually go to a separate place than poor people?

Delores Nevils, of St. Helena, expressed a similar position, yet she was obviously insulted by the implicit audacity of its continued usage.

> DN: No, they want to keep that image there **for their children** (banging on the table)! That's what they want. They want their children to see that this is plantation, WE ARE LORDS!!! And you are underdogs! That's what that mean.

KW: If you look at how the system, if you look at how the plantations are kept today, there is a class system in a sense.
DN: Oh sure.
AJ: Yes there is.
QQ: Absolutely.
KW: There's a, it's not like it was in slavery times but it's there—it's real evident. You have your place. Where we want things, you have your place.

Queen Quet then framed it as a structural mechanism, serving a double purpose, simultaneously.

QQ: The ramification of gated communities is that it relegates people to a level of subservience. It also serves to have people escape the reality of history, whether past or present. Those that have invested in living in gated areas have bought into what they saw in brochures that were a la "Gone with the Wind." However, that was not the reality of plantation life nor is it the life of those that are natives of the Sea Islands that built the islands that they live on, and those that are being removed from and gated out, the Gullah/ Geechees. The people in the gates do not get to know and attempt to understand the rich history of those that were here long before they sought to find a place to retire in. It is a mechanism that is used to promote sales to one group while letting another group realize "their place," in the event that they enter the gates.

Carlie Towne's reaction was based on a collective pain, caused by an association her soul makes between "plantation" and the ancestors-- those who truly **experienced** the plantation as more than an ideological presence.

CT: The word plantation, I personally see the word as, when I hear the word, my memory immediately goes back... and it's not a very good positive back.
MH: Explain it to me.
CT: I think about my people being enslaved, and on plantation, working on plantations for not a lot of money and how it has affected them up to this day. It brings back this memory of, "I really don't want to be on the plantation." But when I see other people who have connected with it, and I say "its all good for them," maybe they don't have the kind of memory that I have.
QQ: I know for me, my spirit immediately goes to enslavement if you say plantation in one connotation or another. Now the thing about it is, maybe there is a spiritual connection that allows us to have a collective consciousness that-- for us-- we still endure and feel the pain of our ancestors if you say the word plantation.
(Charleston Focus Group)

Each and every perspective (from both sides of the gate) offered food for thought about how people do or do not make sense of this term and its permeating presence in their everyday lives. My dialogue with Lavon Stevens was no different. As he explained his position, I slowly started to

realize that the issue is so "cut and dry" for me because I am not tethered to it. For those in the service industry, that is the unfortunate reality I was not seeing.

LS: Most of the people that I've run into, whether they are African American or European American, have questioned, from time to time, why we call the areas plantations and some of the negative connotations that go along with that. Most people who are not from the South or this area—they have a little bit of a hard time with that.
MH: And what are some of the reasons people talk about?
LS: Well, just the word "plantation" has a certain meaning or a certain impact.
MH: What does it mean to you?
LS: Well, you know, I've lived in the South all my life. So I think even beyond just the gated communities there's always been words and topics and titles that are used that are derived from the history. They streets that we live on, a lot of times, have negative connotations too.
MH: That's something I wouldn't have thought about.
LS: Well, if I lived on Beauregard Drive, I mean, it might not affect somebody else the same way. And in recent years more towns and cities have fought for having one street or another, in particular, changed to Martin Luther King Boulevard. So those are the kinds of things that I think have been significant in history, in history, as we know it. So that would make the African American community feel more at ease. Or at least we would have a part of the history.
MH: That is representative?
LS: Yeah. So that's really what I think we get out of the plantations, of course, what plantation means to most of us is a big house, and somebody picking cotton or doing something like that. Most people don't associate it with a residential area. I don't know what the discussion or the opposition would be to changing the name or using something else but that does seem to be a very popular way of naming residential areas here in the South (or this part of the South that I'm familiar with). Um, it makes me think, it doesn't bother me as much, but it does make you think.
MH: About what they are trying to say?
LS: Yeah, it does make you think, and it's really not a problem or an issue until you ask somebody "well, why can't you name it something else?" Then there seems to be a problem. So, now it's like "what is your problem?" It makes you think, it does stir up some conversations about this and that. "Well why does it make you feel like you're on a plantation?" "Well, because it's named a plantation!"
MH: In a couple of these places and one thing that struck me was when you drive up it says "Shipyard" or it says "Moss Creek" and when you get past the initial fountain or whatever, it says "Welcome to Shipyard Plantation!" or "Welcome to Moss Creek Plantation!" (See Figure 8.4). And so I began asking people, I asked the lady who lives in Moss Creek, "Why doesn't it say Moss Creek Plantation out on the big sign but it says it inside?" And she said, "Well it's a real good question." And so when I talked to Tom Barnwell about it he was saying there was a push in the 1980's to stop naming things plantation. But I can't figure out what happened?

Figure 8.4: Signage Within Shipyard Plantation Located Directly Past the Guard Gate

In the 1980s, there was an audible public outcry on Hilton Head concerning the use of plantation in naming gated areas. The response, which is often the common response of white privilege to accusations of blatant racism, was the conversion of the practice into a more subtle logic of racism. Such an action suggests there was a clear acknowledgment of this as an offensive practice, yet not enough to motivate gated residents to give up their emotional attachment to the term. From the limited newspaper articles available on the issue, it appears that the community protest simply disappeared. I am left wondering how the conflict played out.

> LS: Probably was not a good enough push and it was probably not continued. Yeah. It wasn't probably, like you say, a group that had that concern and raised the issue and the issue was dealt with and addressed and time passed by and that was the end of that, you go right back to business as usual—as many things in America are. Yeah, we— we say we care about something and we're passionate about it, but when it really comes down to doing something about it there are not that many people who are going to make that sacrifice. Because somebody would have to make a sacrifice.

MH: But how big would it be?
LS: Well, you'd have to sacrifice your reputation, your status, your economic security, your well being, and be tainted and taunted! Really, the risk runs, I think, very deeply because then you run the risk of being rejected by both sides: the people that you're trying to help and the people that you're working against.
MH: Never thought about that.
LS: Yeah, it's just like— you know, for me, it's like the Civil Rights Movement. Martin Luther King was thought of as a troublemaker. There were a lot of blacks that did not want him to continue his work, because it meant they were going to lose their jobs! There was going to have to be some sacrifices made.
MH: Exactly.
LS: So then there were people on both sides saying, "We don't want to sacrifice our jobs or our position. We're doing pretty good the way things are. We don't like some of the stuff that happens but we're not WILLING to...
MH: Well, and I never really thought about, what people who worked in these communities cleaning houses and things have to lose if the larger Gullah community came out in opposition to this, a lot of them work there. A lot of them depend on this service industry to live.
LS: [from behind a spontaneous smile] I do pretty good there myself!
MH: Right. So it would be a risk to start fighting these folks.
LS: Sure.
MH: So what do you do?
LS: Well, it's hard to deal with issues like these from the outside. It takes, what we here at Mt. Calvary would call, changing the man from inside. It takes change of heart. It takes change of the developers and the individuals who are designing and building these places.
MH: And when I talk to them I just hope I spark anything in their minds. That's all I can really ever do.
LS: Because you know that people would still live in Wexford Plantation if it was called Wexford Heights! They would still live there. It doesn't have to be called a plantation.
MH: Exactly. It wouldn't change a thing, except their stationary.

Upon reflection, this interview was extremely important as an illustration of my own white privilege, although class has prevented me from the full benefits of whiteness, I have been puzzled as to why so many Gullah/Geechees express spirited opposition to the practice of naming gated areas plantations yet they are not actively engaged in protesting it. My whiteness prohibited me from even contextualizing the conflict in terms of risk. The gated communities and resort areas are a primary means of employment for Sea Islanders, therefore their position is extremely compromised. This revelation simply adds yet another layer to the complex web of interconnections within this social field.

Shared Experiences of Cultural Disrespect Among Racialized Ethnic Minorities

The habitus of racism within the U.S., when coupled with the stereotyped cultural signifiers used to represent ethnic minorities, has produced similar experiences bordering on ethnocide. Gullah/Geechees recognize the unifying experiences of white racism, which connect them to others who have been written out of our national history.

> LS: And the only thing else I would say that was along the lines of what happens or has happened to the Native Americans.
> MH: Yeah, a reservation, to go out near Arizona and start putting up housing units that are called "So, and, so Reservation" which is not above developers and probably if I went out there and spent enough time I would find somebody thinking about it.
> LS: Oh yeah there's probably a Teepee Street somewhere.

For the sake of clarity, I should explain the connection I was inferring by "reservation." I am not suggesting that a reservation and a plantation are equivalent, in terms of glorifying white culture, but I am drawing a "correlation" between white domination, incidence of physical and emotional trauma, and the loss of that which plays a defining role in cultural identity—land. The correlation is in no way designed as a comparative devise.

Several responses to my questions about "plantation" position the holistic experience of Gullah/Geechees within the global context of human rights, which positions the Transatlantic Slave Trade as equivalent or even surpassing the Jewish Holocaust:

> The racist cruelty perpetrated on the black slaves could only be matched with the brutality of Nazis toward the Jews" (Rajadurai 2001:23).

In the following dialogue from the Savannah Focus Group, Ogbanna Mossi responds to, what he obviously sees as, the wasted time I am spending trying to increase awareness among gated residents regarding the racist nature of the "plantation" phenomenon. His explanation quickly intersects with the Holocaust parallel, as well as other human rights violations on the global level. In the end, Ogbanna sees an opportunity to promote change where it matters most to him, on the local level.

> OM: Well my experience in dealing with... as far as trying to find some kind of sensitivity among whites, because you know, I would say probably disproportionately the vast majority of whites living on the plantation, they're not from the South, they're from the North. I say that to say you know, whether they're from the South or North they lack the sensitivity in dealing with words like plantation. I don't think we can ever find it. No more than the Native Americans have found any kind of allegiance of weeding out all these names of "Redsox" and" Redskins" in sports. What I do see, and I would contribute to, is

creating some kind of vehicle to change it in the minds of OUR people, African people in America. You know, so I'm an artist. This brother's a great graphic designer (referring to Yusuf). He and I designed that shirt that he's wearing there. He's got a lot of, just that shirt alone you know. You need... a small silk screening machine, I would train however many people you want me to train, a couple of days, how to print, how to get this information out. You know, South Africa, one of their main vehicles to get the word out was through t-shirts. Even in East Germany, because they didn't have the funds to control television, radio, and print. So I can see, that is what I can see me being able to contribute to—creating a shirt, and having on the shirt (what's one of the names of the European concentration camps?),
MH: Auschwitz, I've said that,
OM: I can see a shirt saying "Auschwitz/Moss Creek"-- I can see a shirt... let's think of another culture also...Pearl Harbor, or Andersonville, here in Georgia, Bed and Breakfast Prison – then you say "does this sound funny to you? Well brothers and sisters think about Moss Creek Plantation." Something like that, I would be glad to contribute to... because with me it's based on changing the mind of some of our people. I think white folks think just what they want to think and they have the resources to think just what they want to think. And if they want to change tomorrow they would change tomorrow. They're not gonna change, they're not gonna change.
QQ: Right! Why should they?
OM: Why should they? We want to change the way our people are feeling about the word plantation. That's my contribution, I'll gladly give it. We need a kind of vehicle, you know, to get what we want to say out. You're only one person (speaking to Queen Quet); Jamal is only one person; ya'll doing an excellent job traveling around getting the word out. But we need to be able to leave something with people where they can use it, where they could put on the shirt. Cause that's my contribution. That's my contribution, what I would like to give.

Looking back over my discussions with gated residents, Ogbanna's assessment of the "white lack of sensitivity" is clearly legitimate. When making connections between slavery and the Holocaust, in both formal and off the record conversations, I encountered extreme opposition and even disbelief from most gated residents. I began to feel as if I were going insane, or else these people were living in some type of (creatively constructed) historical oblivion. I had even been accused of inventing this conflict:

MH: At Moss Creek the sign out front that is gorgeous says Moss Creek, and then you pull in and within fifty yards it says 'Welcome to Moss Creek Plantation', well to name something a plantation in this area, the historical implications... you might as well just slap someone because historically a plantation is not a farm. It's a place where people were bought, sold, raped, murdered, used...
KH: Yea, but to a guy in Ohio, a plantation—he thinks Spanish Moss and heat and humidity and farm.
AS: Yea, we don't think of a plantation in that manner.

The Gullah recognize this tactic of sense making among outsiders, and the response if often straight to the point:

> GSJ: We want to live in peace, we didn't come to make trouble. But this whole word plantation is offensive to me!-- that people build gated communities with the word plantation but they've convinced themselves that a plantation was a farm. And they've ignored the fact that the farm was worked by people who were held in **bondage** (One-on-one interview, Glenda Simmons Jenkins, Fernandina, FL).

Yet, positioned logic falls on deaf ears, when those ears are attuned to only that which fits within their historical construction.

> MH: Yea, but if you're going to build it around people who (for hundreds of years) their families were what made that plantation--
> AS: Yea, but they inherited a lot of plantations here too.[22]
> MH: Who?
> AS: Blacks.
> MH: They don't have them anymore.
> AS: There are a lot of multi-family ownerships of land here.
> MH: Here, St. Helena, absolutely. Yeah, but I've spoken with lots of people in Hilton Head who had that land and don't have it anymore for various reasons. And some of those are out and out theft, illegal signatures, completely criminal. Because all the literature says Moss Creek Plantation, but on the sign it says Moss Creek, so what is it? What is this fascination? I mean I have 78 pictures of just the simplest things named plantation and I'm amazed, when I talk to people, that they've never thought about it in that context.
> AS: What is the definition of plantation in Websters?
> MH: But it doesn't matter. What is the definition of Ashwitz? I mean if you were a German and someone built something called Ashwitz Estates how would you feel?
> KH: (Laughter)
> MH: And people laugh but the Holocaust was very short. Plantation slavery was very long and drawn out and **millions** of people died. And lots of people don't really...
> KH: Well, they choose to forget that.
> MH: but these people can't forget that.
> AS: Right.
> MH: It's their legacy and their heritage, and they live on land where great grandparents were brought through on these boats to these islands-- and the horror stories--and so they live this everyday and every time they see that word used in "plantation cafe" plantation this...
> KH: But now is that being carried down to the Natalie Daise and younger? I mean, when you say the Gullah culture is there and it's not dying, are they perpetuating, are the elders saying to the youngers that are coming up, "this is a word to look out for, this is a catch

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[22] This statement brings up an important dynamic concerning the reinventions of history: gated community residents manipulate the historical accuracy of Gullah/Geechee land acquisition during the Port Royal Experiment, dependent on the point they are trying to make. When contesting Gullah rights to access property they now "own" they insist the lands deeded to freedmen were made invalid by Johnson. When trying to suggest they inherited plenty but they have lost it through careless ways, they validate the lands deeded to freedmen communities.

word that is bad bad bad?" Or is that going away. I mean, I think that my kids don't get the same connotation of plantation as you're saying because they don't hear it like that. Because I'm not passing on, "'this is what happenned on plantations." I'm not even discussing it. I'm wondering are the elders teaching the youngers,
MH: to look at that and see a signal? No I don't think so. Not that I am aware of, not that I've seen.
KH: So that's the kind of thing that's going away and it's probably a good thing it's going away.
AS: What do they think of resort? Fripp Island Resort?
MH: Very differently. That word [plantation] is very loaded, and you can see the animosity in places that are named plantation much more so than you can a place that's just an island. And when you have people developing these places and calling them plantation over and over and saying "we're creating a community" or (like Daufuskie)-- I'm totally amazed by the real estate literature that's coming out of Daufuskie, as a place that says "uninhabited, come discover." I mean, that is so offensive to the people who have been able to hold on tooth and nail to what they had out there. I'm amazed at this recreation, as if nothing was here and then "we're going to create this pristine beautiful environment," and people come and they don't realize that so many people lived here. And now they don't -- and why is that? And these people have their history tied to these places.

There are many things to say about my interactions with the research participants on Fripp Island, but I will save them for the conclusion. I have, indeed, learned volumes from reading and re-reading that particular interview.

The exception to the rule, ironically, regarding my comparing the slave trade to the Holocaust, was Judith Hughes, a Jewish resident of Moss Creek Plantation in Beaufort County. Her honesty and sincerity made me hopeful that a broader dialogue would someday be possible.

JH: Initially we spent a lot of time in the plantation.
MH: When you say "the plantation," what do you mean?
JH: In here! Moss Creek is the plantation.
MH: But Moss Creek was not a historical plantation?
JH: No. No. It's a gated community; the reference is "plantation" in this area. I always wondered about the designation, but once you move into it, you don't think about it, unfortunately.
MH: So, you probably are, but do you think the majority of people who live here are aware of how the native islanders' view the use of the word "plantation?"
JH: I don't think so. I don't think they give it a second thought.
MH: Do you think if there was an awareness raised they would be willing to see that view?
JH: Oh yeah, I do think so. Most of the people who live here have a pretty high level of education. They're not stupid. And I think, once it's pointed out to them, they would certainly clearly see it. Whether they thought it would make a difference if they changed it, I don't know. It's like, changing the names of sport teams from Chiefs, I certainly think they would recognize it. Whether they would be willing to change, I don't know. I think some

> would, certainly. Others would have the same point of view as your students do, "why don't they get over it!-- it's a modern term." **But I haven't gotten over the Holocaust, so why should blacks get over the plantation system!**

Wrestling With Imagery: Taking the Fight to the Next Level

After physically leaving the field, I devoted a substantial amount of energy to locating documentation concerning the short-lived protest waged over the plantation debate. The results leave this mystery unsolved for the moment, possibly to be exposed by forthcoming publications from members of the Squire Pope community of Hilton Head Island.[23] Danielson's *Profits and Politics in Paradise* (1993) briefly mentions the conflict. His criticism of gated newcomers on Hilton Head, however, suggests my anthropological analysis about the use of "plantation" in far from an intellectual exaggeration:

> The term plantation was so offensive to blacks that Sea Pines dropped it from their name in 1993; but five other planned communities did not. There is no excuse for this many educated persons to move forward with such little attention to the notion of social justice (295).

Danielson's designation of this conflict, as one related to "social justice," now seems prophetic, as the Gullah/Geechee have boldly entered the international arena to protest this abuse of their human rights. In the spirit of resistance against white domination, grassroots groups have mobilized, united by a collective invocation of "Africa" as the cultural signifier for the force that has brought them this far. Beginning in 1999 with Queen Quet's visit to Geneva to speak before the United Nations 55th Session of the Commission on Human Rights, the Gullah have joined forces with the International Human Rights Association for American Minorities (IHRAAM) in the quest for recognition as a linguistic minority. Such a designation would deliver the self-determination promised by Emancipation, but subsequently revoked time and time again through political and economic marginalization within a framework of white racism. By situating their plight within a human rights framework, the Gullah/Geechee offer crucial insight regarding the parallel

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[23] Thomas Barnwell, a native developer on Hilton Head Island, has been credited with the push for changing the names and discontinuing the practice of naming gated areas "plantations." I contacted Mr. Barnwell in 2002, and we spent the day discussing this issue, as he drove me around and gave me a native history of the changes that have taken place. He also gave me a tour of all the affordable housing complexes he has built in the area. However, he is writing a book soon to be released, and has chosen not to sign an informed consent. I await the publication.

predicaments being dealt to diasporic communities throughout the "New World." The next chapter will narrate this struggle, up to the present, within the broader context of positioning the Gullah/Geechee within the African Diaspora, as an important interlocutor between the African past and the hybridized future.

CHAPTER 9
RESPONDING TO THE POSTCOLONIAL PREDICAMENT

Introduction

Across the various landscapes of the African Diaspora, postcolonial populations suffer from the residues of colonialism that remain embedded in the structures of power that continue to dictate many aspects of their everyday lives. In the interrelated arenas of politics and economics this historical aftermath is crucial in our understanding of how Africans outside Africa have created an identity, in both their sense of self and a sense of community. These negotiations are ongoing and complex, yet an understanding of the diversity of such postcolonial predicaments is essential for making sense of identity after "diaspora." This chapter will contextualize current anthropological and cultural studies approaches to understanding the African Diaspora as a connected yet separate group of hybrid constructions, resulting from diverse translations of Africa in the New World. Special attention will be paid to the limited use of rebellion and resistance in prior renderings of diasporic identity, particularly as they invoke Africa as a cultural signifier against whiteness and racial inequality. Using the Gullah/Geechee as an example, I will elaborate on the cultural practice of reinterpreting the past to create an identity in the present, and illustrate how the spirit of African resistance is incorporated into their current struggle for recognition as a linguistic minority group seeking rights to self-determination.

The Gullah communities residing on the South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Sea Islands are among the most studied ethnic subsection of African descendants in North America. They represent a cultural hybrid created from various West and Central African groups enslaved and brought to the region to harvest rice, cotton, and indigo. *Trace elements* of an African past, or *Africanisms,* particularly in the areas of subsistence knowledge, maritime technology, arts and crafts, language and oral tradition, and belief systems have attracted scholars from a variety of disciplines.[1] Many such scholars have designated Gullah as the most authentic representation of Africa in the "New World" (Moltke-Hansen 1999; Twining and Baird 1991) despite overwhelming pressure to assimilate (Kly and Kly n.d.). Situating the Gullah within the broader diaspora offers

[1] Subsistence knowledge and maritime technology (see Carney 2002; Wood 1974), arts and crafts (see Vlach 1978, Twining and Baird 1991), language and oral tradition (see Jones-Jackson 1987; Mufwene 1994; Montgomery 1994; Turner 1949), belief systems (see Holloway 1990; Thompson 1990).

valuable insight into the black experience in the U.S. Lowcountry South, particularly in light of accumulated knowledge concerning the complexity of identities born of the violence and degradation of the Transatlantic Slave Trade (see Hall 1999; Gilroy 1993). The exercise may also serve to illustrate parallel postcolonial predicaments facing diasporic communities, particularly as each interprets a connection (or lack of connection) to one another and to Mother Africa.

Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory

Situating the Gullah within a postcolonial framework calls for an interrogation of two paramount signifiers of this specific historical moment: identity and the African Diaspora. The intense and ongoing critiques of the process of the production of knowledge about the Other has elucidated the impossibility of utilizing these terms in an all encompassing manner. When accounting for the ways in which power and knowledge exist in a symbiotic relationship, identity and diaspora radiate out from an established core meaning, to highlight the particular predicaments of the previously colonized, the twice and thrice colonized (Torres and Whitten 1998), and those whose oppressors have maintained centuries of ongoing domination via adaptation and masking. In short, postcolonial contributions have stabilized *hybridity* as the most appropriate concept for analyzing identity across the vast communities of the Black world.

Edward Said's groundbreaking deconstruction of *Orientalism* (1978) stands as the point at which the West formally recognized colonial discourse as an area of study (Williams and Chrisman 1994). This elaborate unpacking of the body of theory and practice about the "Orient" clearly illustrates the detrimental effect of such knowledge production on postcolonial self-identity. The sturdy framework of *Orientalism*, therefore, can be stretched as a model for understanding countless others around the globe recognizable as postcolonial subjects. For the purpose of grounding the present discussion, "blackness" can be positioned as a mirror image of *Orientalism*, in important ways: blackness operates as a constructed discourse taken as naturalized fact. Also, in the New World context, blackness is a "cultural and political fact" that exists in an uneven exchange with political, intellectual, cultural, and moralistic power (see Said 1978). Postcolonial subjects, as well as scholars from a variety of disciplines, seek to better understand this process of

othering. The resulting knowledge of that collective quest suggests that *identity* is overused yet undertheorized, specifically in relation to the homogenizing way it is applied to communities within the diaspora.

Identity Politics: Embracing Hybridity

The recent "globalization" bandwagon has pulled identity politics to the forefront and positioned it alongside culture, a move that exposes the complex interactions and *reactions* human groups experience and engage in during times of rapid change. Friedman suggests that the ongoing articulation between the global and the local has inspired a remodeling and reorganization of identity, within which subjects often evoke the past in crafting an identity in the present (1994, 2002). Therefore, this reworking of identity is a response of sorts, a resistance to any of the many forms of domination that accompany globalization as a process and serve to disconnect or disorder the broader social and cultural landscape. Studies of identity and identity politics have led anthropologists in various directions, although most pay close attention to the multiple processes within which identity intersects domination and resistance (Glick Schiller 1994).

At present, many aspects of Western culture appear to be spreading across the globe. Popular cultural icons, designer drugs, even eating disorders, are but a few of the many aspects of culture introduced to "Others," often conflicting with existing and competing cosmologies. More importantly, the mindset of *coloniality* accompanying such cultural transfers often puts minority groups and communities of color at risk of further oppression and cultural disrespect at the hands of the state. Many groups respond by recasting identity as ethnic, nationalist, religious/fundamentalist, and/or indigenous (Friedman 1994) – all of which are aimed at cultural empowerment and several of which confer access to specific rights and legitimacy. These remodeled identities represent a resistance to the colonizing forces of globalization, in an effort to maintain at least some semblance of one's "self"-- much akin to the process enslaved Africans and their descendants have been negotiating for four hundred years and counting.

Theoretical (Re)Imagining of the African Diaspora

The Transatlantic Slave Trade, as a human rights violation exceeding the atrocities of the Jewish Holocaust, undoubtedly turned humans into chattel, leaving postcolonial inheritors

scattered throughout the Western hemisphere. The unique yet shared experiences of colonial rule and continued exploitation as an encounter with whiteness have produced similar identity conflicts within a *politics of difference*. Whiteness has come to represent power and prestige, while blackness often relegates diasporic peoples to the lowest rungs on the social, economic and cultural ladder (see Douglass 1992; Gilroy 1987; Gordon 1998; Harrison 1997; Valentine 1978; Williams 1996). Within the varied structures of domination, these communities experience diminished access to resources, to autonomy, and to the political power necessary for self-determination. Racialized inequality becomes reified in religious (Burdick 1998), moral (as in the gendered and racialized constructions of masculinity and femininity in Williams 1996 and Harrison 1997), and ideological ways that disavow, suppress, and dishonor Africanity. Such deliberate cultivation of false consciousness has resulted in disconnections between people of the African Diaspora and their cultural inheritance. Thus, Africa takes on a whole new meaning, constructed from those nuances of culture hidden in language, arts and crafts, dance, folklore, song, family systems, foodways, and spirituality. The extent to which enslaved Africans were able to continue such practices, outright or in secret, is dependent on a wide range of factors a bit beyond the present discussion. What is important, however, is the reality that we have merely scratched the surface of what it means to be African outside the continent, because it is in hybrid forms of cultural resistance that such traces often survived. Therefore, the term "diaspora" needs "constant critical analysis" (Drake 1975) if it is to be of use in making sense of the diversity of experiences and outcomes across these scattered communities.

The postcolonial, poststructural, deconstructionist interrogations of "African Diaspora," as an all-encompassing term, have exposed its inadequacy as a defining moniker of the African experience outside Africa. Within the process of being diasporized, quite possibly more than once (see Hall 1999; Torres and Whitten1998), identities must be negotiated across shifting contexts, requiring that the "trace elements" (Hall 1999:6) of an African heritage be reworked, translated, interpreted and reinterpreted. Differential experiences and encounters must also be addressed, for they result in wholly different configurations of Africa. Stuart Hall, for example, traveled around to various diasporic communities, in which he felt the presence of Africa, and experienced African cultural survivals (Hall 1999). However, Hall suggests that the Africa of the diaspora is not the Africa of enslaved origins; nor (I would add) is it the "structurally adjusted" Africa of the twenty-first

century. Therefore, what remains is "what Africa has become in the New World, in the violent vortex of colonial syncretisms, reforged in the furnace of the colonial cook-pot" (Hall 1999:13). Bearing these revelations in mind, the future of African Diaspora studies must confront the "propaganda of history" (Du Bois 1969) in an effort to recover the multitude of hidden histories, exemplified by Afro-Nicaraguans (Gordon 1998), Black Seminoles in the Bahamas (Howard 2002) Afro-Cubans in Tampa, Florida (Greenbaum 2002) and African Americans in Harlem, New York (Jackson 2001). The present study of the Gullah/Geechee seeks to make a similar contribution.

The collective diasporic experience of "the derogation of blackness" (Drake 1975:1) is, without question, an integral factor in identity formation. However, many have resisted the European definition of them "as things" (Gwaltney 1980), ironically reaching back to claim those enslaved foreparents whose blood, sweat, and tears pulled them through. The spirit of African resistance is a thread running through the diaspora, yet it is manifest in a multitude of cultural forms (Mintz and Price 1992). For some, survival itself is a sign of resistance, as domestic networks reminiscent of an African past fill the gaps left by structural racism and paternalistic oppression (see Day 1982; Davis 1941; Hall 1999; Stacks 1974). In other contexts, Africa becomes the signifier for rebellion and political mobilization around a shared point of origin and tradition, manifest as Negritude in Haiti, Rastafarianism in Jamaica, and Garveyism in Jamaica, the U.S. and a number of Diasporic settings (see also Gordon 1998; Gilroy 1987).

Important theoretical alternatives are continually emerging as structures for understanding the true complexity of the African Diaspora. Paul Gilroy's innovative contribution, *The Black Atlantic* (1993), offers a perspective on the triangulation of the cultural exchanges back and forth across the Atlantic, between and among Africans in Africa, and those scattered across the New World. These flows shape identity AND political culture in the past as well as the present. It is useless, Gilroy suggests, to focus on any one contributing force in an Afrocentric attempt at connecting all diasporic populations. The necessary shift, therefore, should be away from similarity and toward *difference*, and how that difference becomes translated in ways that symbolize their connection to the larger complex of Africa and African-ness anywhere and everywhere. The same directional shift is necessary in anthropology, pertaining to the ongoing fascination with establishing "Africanisms" in populations outside Africa (Torres and Whitten 1998; Yelvington 2001). The foundational debate between Herskovitz and Frazier has driven much of the anthropological

research on the subject (Yelvington 2001), with far too little being devoted to instances of liberation, rebellion, or acts of empowerment (Drake 1975). What exists in that vein, however, suggests that "Africa," in one way or another, becomes a crucial component in the quest for collective self-identification.

Situating Gullah Within the African Diaspora

There has been a substantial amount of research devoted to the study of "Africanisms" in the Sea Islands, with the majority aimed at establishing linguistic relationships between West and Central African languages and Gullah, Creoles[2] on both sides of the Atlantic, and connections between the Gullah and the various Creoles of the Caribbean. The most influential publication remains Lorenzo Dow Turner's *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* (1949), which includes a phonetic alphabet, West African words found within Gullah speech from a variety of African language groups[3], syntactic features, morphological features, and Gullah texts transcribed in phonetic notation. All features within this collection illustrate the undeniable contributions of African languages to Gullah. At present, there are an estimated 750,000 speakers of Gullah in the Sea Islands.

Evidence of cultural connections between Africa and the Lowcountry region have been established[4] in the areas of song, children's play, and games (Twining 1977) folklore and "trickster tales" (Bascom 1941; Davis 1998; Jones-Jackson 1987), musical instruments (see Holloway 1990), basketry (Derby 1980; Rosengarten 1986, 1994), crafts and woodworking (seen Vlach 1978), initiation ceremonies (Creel 1988), and medicinal plant use (Mitchell 1978). Those who came from the Guinea Coast are credited with contributions in the areas of grammar, magic, secret societies, possession and trance, quilting, ceramics, and skilled metallurgy (see Pollitzer 1999). The Central African captives brought many Bantu words and names, as well as values of kinship and their deep religious beliefs concerning death and the afterlife (Creel 1990; Pollitzer 1999). As Pollitzer

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[2] Creole languages are the result of a pidgin being taught as a first language and developing into a full-fledged language over time.

[3] West African groups represented in the linguistic connection between the Sea Islands and West Africa include the Twi of the Gold Coast, the Mandingo of Sierra Leone, the Yoruba of Nigeria, the Ibo of Nigeria, and the Ovimbundu of Angola see Turner 1949; Pollitzer 1999).

[4] References to follow are not the only documented research on the subject, however, they are those most recognized as associated with the particular cultural element.

illustrates in the most recent comprehensive synthesis of Gullah culture, *The Gullah People and Their African Heritage* (1999), "no one Sea Island can be connected to a specific region in Africa" (1999:198). What is knowable, with relative certainty, is that Gullah represents a hybrid constructed over time out of many different cultural influences from West and Central Africa, as well as early influences from the Caribbean.

One of the most critical directions for future research involves investigating the connections between the Diasporic situations of the United States and the Caribbean[5] (Drake 1975), as well as the relationships between the Sea Islands and the Caribbean. Sea Island Gullah are, by Census parameters and racial classification in the U.S., considered African American, however, they share as many similarities with their distant kin in the Caribbean as with African Americans.[6] Ultimately, that distinction has not been made clearly enough in the past, and was a factor in the current grassroots effort toward minority status within the international human rights arena. Strong linguistic connections have been charted between the Sea Islands and various diasporic sites in the Caribbean (see Montgomery 1994), yet the sociocultural links have been severely neglected (Montgomery 1994). Montgomery suggests further examination of the relationship between, particularly, South Carolina and the Caribbean would highlight the differences within Gullah that distinguish it from other black speech communities in the American South, as well as providing deeper understanding of the evolution of New World languages (1994). Future comparative analysis of this nature is essential to an understanding of the extent to which experiences dictate the translations of Africa in contemporary cultures of today.

Two such projects have emerged within the present research involve Barbados and the Bahamas, and their affinity to the Sea Islands. The Black Seminoles of the Bahamas (see Howard 2002) are a population descended from refugees who managed to escape from Georgia and South Carolina plantations. In 1693, a Spanish Royal Decree officially offered freedom to any slave who could manage to reach La Florida, in exchange for Catholic conversion and four years of service to the crown (Mulroy 1993). These runaways formed separate communities in Spanish Florida,

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[5] This was suggested by Drake (1975) as "a matter of crucial significance to Diaspora studies" (9).

[6] Cultural similarities I have become aware of, yet are not substantially documented in the literature, include living arrangements (particularly on family compounds), kinship systems, folklore, and religious syncretisms kept alive in the invisible institutions. I am planning to design a multi-site ethnographic research study aimed at retracing the data within the Herskovitz "Scale of Intensity of New World Africanisms" which offers vast possibilities for establishing various connections within the New World Diaspora.

working with, and sometimes marrying, Seminole Indians. In 1819, when Florida was ceded to the United States, these communities fled in many directions. Those who settled on Andros Island, Bahamas exhibit cultural continuities with Gullah[7] that will undoubtedly expand our knowledge of diasporic identity formation as it is (re)negotiated across shifting contexts.

Another project of interest involves documenting the cultural continuities between Barbados and the Sea Islands in and around Charleston, South Carolina. The English colony founded Charles Town in 1670, as an overflow for Barbadian planters (Cassidy 1994). The earliest Africans transplanted into present-day Charleston were chattel from Barbados, and the importation of slaves from Barbados and Jamaica continued to supply the labor force in those early years between 1630 and 1690. Among those earliest imports was the Bowens lineage, which landed at Drayton Hall Plantation near Charleston. For two years, I have been working with Catherine Braxton and Rebecca Campbell on issues relating to the preservation of their downtown Charleston property. They recently informed me they are descended from the Bowens lineage of Drayton Hall Plantation, which is well documented in the historical family records. Family members of the Bowens have traced their roots in Barbados and are planning to visit the family left behind in the coming years. I have expressed my interest in accompanying them on such an important journey. These are only two of the many research areas of promise that have emerged over the past eight years conducting research on various Sea Islands, which could expand our knowledge of the complex dynamics of the New World Diaspora.

Beyond Culture: Pan-Africanism, Nationalisms, and Human Rights

The following brief analysis is designed to loosely situate the present Gullah/Geechee struggle within a wider context of Black Nationalism.[8] As the Gullah/Geechee engage the struggle for recognition as a "Nation," and thus an identifiable group with inalienable human rights, it is beneficial to glance backward and take stock of similar movements offering comparative analysis. I have witnessed, on numerous occasions, Gullah leaders invoke the spirit of Malcolm X, W.E.B. Du Bois, and resistance leaders such as Denmark Vesey, as a request to make time spent (at a

[7] Linguistic patterns and particular word selection, as well as coiled basketry using the same technique used by Gullah sweetgrass basket weavers.
[8] This analysis will be addressed in depth in post-dissertation research.

meeting, discussion, etc.) productive toward the goal of "freedom." The foundation of the movement, as I have witnessed it, does not build upon previous philosophies of "returning to Africa"[9] or "militant black separatism." The mobilization effort does, however, possess distinct characteristics I would associate with Marcus Garvey's "transnational" model (Carnegie 2002).

What attributes, for example, of Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) were essential for the movement's success? What were the unifying themes that defined the "largest-ever mass movement of black people in the United States" (Carnegie 2002:146), and how do those themes intersect with contemporary forms of Gullah/Geechee collective resistance? This reflective exercise isolates, what I suggest are, three crucial parallel elements offering valuable comparative analysis: (1) situating local struggles within a global quest for black unity; (2) empowerment through knowledge exchange; and (3) the sacred nature of the struggle.

Garvey was committed to both local and transnational black politics (Carnegie 2002) in writing, teaching, and public performance. He used the public platform, and the newspapers born of the movement, to educate his audience about history, world events, multicultural parallel struggles, and world politics, often in ways connecting the broader struggle to a sacred natural order (Carnegie 2002). Similarly, Queen Quet and various community activists throughout the Sea Islands empower their communities by sharing and producing knowledge, often linking local issues with other diasporic groups. Through lectures, performances, online print media, web based listserve(s), and native publications (to mention a few), Gullah leaders educate the broader community in ways that both empower them and connect them to the wider black world.[10] Within the focus groups of this research, discussions arose on issues ranging from the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Black politics in and around (border) Canada since 9/11, and a trip to Haiti, taken by Jamal Toure, as part of the ongoing effort to establish relations between Haiti and Savannah, Georgia. The sacred nature of these struggles, which should not be misinterpreted as religious or fundamentalist in nature, based on a moral claim of universal liberation and freedom from injustice and oppression (see Carnegie 2002).

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[9] The comparison I am making rests on deeper foundations of the Garvey movement.
[10] For example, Jamal Toure is actively engaged in collaborative projects with organizations in Haiti.

Grassroots Mobilization: Steps Toward Collective Solidarity

Beginning in the early 1990s, various Gullah/Geechee communities mobilized against the devastation of increased development and tourism. These groups, such as SICARS (Sapelo Island Cultural and Revitalization Society, Inc.), the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition (St. Helena Island), the Geechee Institute (Savannah) and Gullah/ Geechee Foundation (Charleston), began documenting their cemeteries and land holdings, developing community land trusts, implementing land-use plans, and getting involved in local level politics with direct bearing on their future. The following quote represents the origin of the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition, begun by Marquetta L. Goodwine of St. Helena Island in 1996:

> In 1996, I was given the vision to help bring resources to my people of the Sea Islands and Lowcountry in order to continue to keep them on our land. While seeking the support of others for such resources, I found that many people in the world had never heard of Gullah/Geechee people or they had been misinformed about our language, history, heritage, and culture through various means. Thus, I went to the elders and sought guidance on what was to be done and how it could be done. Many of those elders have now gone on to be ancestors, but a charge was mine to keep. From the vision emerged the name of an organization that has grown to be national with international supporters, the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition. From its beginning, there were and continue to be those that want to contribute to educating the world about Gullah/Geechee in an accurate manner and also assisting in various ways with helping to protect their homeland which is the Gullah/Geechee Nation from North Carolina to Florida on the southeastern seaboard of the United States of America.

For nearly ten years the organizations operated independently of one another, struggling against specific local issues of encroachment. However, these bold representations of human agency caught the attention of Dr. Yusuf Kly, an international human rights attorney and a native of South Carolina. Dr. Kly is internationally recognized for his professional and intellectual contributions to the struggle for minority rights, including the edited publication *A Popular Guide to Minority Rights* (1995). In 1993, Dr. Kly played a foundational role in organizing the *Conference on African-Americans and the Right to Self-Determination*. This conference, and the publications that followed, "marked an historic initiative in exploring the rights and equal status needs of African-Americans" (Davis 1995:45). During the *Keynote Address*, Dr. Kly elaborated on the purpose of the Conference:

> Our attempt today to begin the process of reorienting intellectual thought around the right to self-determination is first of all an act toward intellectual liberation, and is an historical landmark suggesting that we have finally broken free of the enslavement paradigms, and can now begin to contribute positively and meaningfully to African-American freedom and to American intellectual, political, cultural and material development (1995:47-8).

Later that year, Dr. Kly submitted the *Petition for UN Assistance Under Resolution 1503* on behalf of IHRAAM,[11] which specifically requested:

> that the UN employ all measures at its disposal, including those to be indicated herein, to exert pressure upon the U.S. government to cease its violations of the human rights of African Americans, and to seek to resolve the long-standing grievances and inequities resulting from such historic and on-going policies, which includes extending to the African-Americans minority rights or internal self-determination, if such is required to achieve equal status with the majority (1995:179).

In 1997, Dr. Kly contacted Marquetta L. Goodwine, founder of the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition, seeking editorial assistance for the *Clarity Press Gullah Project*. Those involved with this project were interested in publishing a volume on Gullah culture, in an effort to "illustrate and to contribute to the many efforts now underway for the protection and development of Gullah and Geechee culture" (1998:7). Goodwine went on to edit *The Legacy of Ibo Landing: Gullah Roots of African American Culture* in 1998, which remains the first and only anthology of Gullah culture to privilege multiple voices of Sea Island natives alongside previously published academic works. In the introductory chapter, written by Goodwine, the call is sent out to collectively rebuild the Gullah/Geechee community:

> As African people in America, we have witnessed the tearing down of the things that we have built up and seen our communities practically fall apart before our eyes. We want and need to combat this and rebuild our families, our organizations, and our institutions. We need to recapture the interest and respect of our youth and pay attention to and care for our elders as our foreparents did. The blueprint for how this is done lies in our traditions (Goodwine 1998: 8).

The book includes recipes, ethnohistorical sketches, Guidelines for Researching the Gullah Community (1998:202-203), and an entire chapter devoted to "sites, individuals, and organizations preserving the Gullah and Geechee heritage" (184-197). This was Goodwine's first in a long line of

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[11] This petition was submitted in direct reference to the beating of Rodney King and the state execution of Gary Graham, both African Americans residing in the United States and believed to exemplify clear cases of human rights violations perpetrated by the United States.

steps toward international recognition and support regarding the postcolonial predicament of Gullah/Geechee people. Within a year, in April of 1999, Goodwine was invited to speak before the United Nations in Geneva, Switzerland, as a delegate of IHRAAM and on behalf of her people. Goodwine's address to the UN Commission on Human Rights formally requested assistance in preserving Gullah/Geechee culture:

> My community is looking back at ourstory and doing all that we can to have it recognized by others as we fight to hold on to it. We know that you truly do not know where you are going if you do not know where you come from. We ask that this Commission help us in continuing to be the keepers of our culture.

Later that year, Congressman James Clyburn (D-SC) introduced the *Low Country Gullah Culture Special Resource Study* (SRS), which was authorized in the *Interior Appropriations Act of 2000*. This act directed the National Park Service to determine the national significance of Gullah culture, as well as the suitability and feasibility of adding various elements of Gullah to the National Park System (GGSRS 2003). Throughout 2000 the NPS held public meetings in key counties, "to gather advice and feedback on desired outcomes of the study" (5). The meeting transcripts were subsequently analyzed and used to construct alternatives, which were presented at community forums in October and November of 2002. The final report was issued to Congress in December 2003.

In June 2004, Congressman James Clyburn introduced HR 694 Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Bill. After timing out in the 108th Congressional Session, the bill was reintroduced in March of 2005. HR 694 officially passed the House by a voice vote on March 14, 2005, providing for the establishment of a Heritage Corridor [Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor], with authorized appropriations not to exceed $20,000,000. This act shall establish one or more Coastal Heritage Centers at appropriate locations within the Corridor, according to the alternatives identified in the Record of Decision for the Low Country Gullah Culture Special Resource Study. The Bill now moves to the Senate.

As this process was intensifying, Queen Quet was invited to speak before the State Department in Washington D.C (See Figure 9.1). Queen Quet elaborated on her role in the Gullah/Geechee Nation to the assembled reporters from Austria, Germany and Scotland, as well as the United States:

Figure 9.1: Queen Quet visits the U.S. State Department, February 4, 2003

> Her role, she explains, is to bring the message to an international audience as well as to Americans, "for us to be recognized on an international platform as being a unique, linguistic minority as it's called within the United Nations" (Ellis 2003).

These types of opportunities serve to advance awareness of the particular situations facing Gullah/Geechees of the United States. In the midst of this and other journeys, Goodwine remained dedicated to developing relationships with other grassroots agencies committed to cultural preservation, and the momentum continued to build. In December of 1999, during the third anniversary celebration for the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition, Carlie Towne and Brother Halim of the Gullah Geechee Foundation presented a petition to the larger community, requesting that Marquetta L. Goodwine become "the head on the body of the Gullah/Geechee Nation." In this historic petition, "Who Speak Fuh We?" they outlined the importance of their efforts:

> Aware that we have a universally recognized human right to maintain our distinct and historic culture, as protected under Article 27 of the International Covenant on Civil and

Political Rights (ICCPR), an international treaty which has been ratified by the United States Government;
We, the Undersigned, do hereby wish to assign to Marquetta L. Goodwine the right to:
Serve as the official spokesperson of the Gullah/Geechee peoples.
Select a consultative assembly or council to assist her in the following efforts:

- Negotiate with local, state and federal governments for official recognition of the Gullah/Geechee peoples the means for effective exercise of their human rights and developmental needs;
- Solicit the assistance of international organizations, and African and other governments, in order to achieve these aims and pursue these objectives within the framework of local, national and international law.

We do so with the full understanding that this action democratically endows Ms. Goodwine and the consultative assembly she selects with the official leadership role to provide collective guidance for the Gullah/Geechee peoples in our effort to achieve formal and official recognition of our collective existence and special institutional requirements for our equal status development, in order that the suffering and sacrifices of our ancestors shall not have been in vain.

Goodwine tentatively accepted the designation, on the understanding that it would be only "if the Creator so directs." The petitions were mailed out, circulated on various organizational websites, and dispersed throughout numerous community newspapers and by hand.

Enstoolment of Queen Quet and the Rise of the Gullah/Geechee Nation

The media reported a picture perfect day at Sullivan's Island on July 2nd, 2000, just outside Charleston, South Carolina. The decision to announce the rise of the Gullah/Geechee Nation and to formally enstool Marquetta L. Goodwine as *Queen Quet* on this date represented a symbolic tribute to Denmark Vesey, who had been hanged that same day in 1822 for a planned insurrection in Charleston. The site was chosen due to its significance as a major point of entry for Africans in the American South. This was also to be looked upon as a reunion celebration, when Gullahs and Geechees from up and down the coast would meet yearly and reconnect. Queen Quet accepted the position of leadership, speaking directly to the various groups in attendance:

"Now that I have been asked to stand in the point position of the front line, I do as I am asked. I lead as I am directed. I listen, pray, and then speak.
Unto those that have asked me to be Queen:
You know not how many have called me this before.
Unto those that have supported the question:
Asante sana! Meny tenks!
Unto my elders that voted through pats on the

back, hugs, and continued blessings:
I do this for you and the children to come.
I only speak by your permission and God's will.
Unto my friends-the dear ones:
I look to you for confidence and solace as we continue to evolve as one.
Unto my family:
I give praise for you being the tabby on the foundation.
Unto the ancestors:
I offer my body as the vessel through which you speak.

ALL THESE THINGS are given unto and with Divine Guidance of the Creator, the Almighty that guided the existence of ALL things and ordained the creation and evolution of the Gullah/Geechee people, language, heritage, and culture.

In the sight of God and witnessed by man while infused by the power of the ancestors, I hereby give completely my mind and soul unto God to direct my path as the head on the body of the Gullah/Geechee Nation as we are and shall be recognized evermore"

I was unable to attend the 2000 Ceremony, but I attended in 2002 and 2003. There were hundreds of people present, and many had specific questions concerning landholdings, family lineage archives, and what they could contribute to the cause. Each year Queen Quet announced the chosen representatives for the various Gullah/Geechee communities, comprising a man, a woman, and a child. This annual event is also utilized to bring the various communities up to speed regarding local, state, and federal policy issues affecting Gullah/Geechees, the status of the National Park Service Study, and the progress of the quest for minority rights to self-determination.

The title of "Nation," as well as the organic nature used in its construction, deserves brief explanation, yet not a critique concerning the legitimacy of the claim. Nations are, precisely, "communities of people who see themselves as such" (Carnegie 2002:5). In the years since the Gullah/Geechee declaration of nationhood, I have been asked to define exactly what the Gullah mean when they use the term "nation," which I find wholly inappropriate. Nation, as a concept, is as much a social construction as "race" or "intelligence" or, for that matter "anthropology." Therefore, I have not, and will not offend my research consultant with an inquiry that questions their valid right of self-definition. With respect to internal politics, the designation does not suggest that all

Gullah/Geechees are unified as one, just as I do not identify with American nationalism. Nationality is, therefore, a choice.[12]

What is significant about the conception of the Gullah/Geechee "Nation," however, is the knowledge to be gained from its representational metaphor: the body. This is an example of how cultural groups often draw upon the human body as a template for spatial and social relations" (see Low and Lawrence-Zuniga 2003:4). As a critical observer, I can attest to the collective pride that has grown quickly (and particularly within the elder population) as this self-defined designation has taken on energy. I began hearing references to "the body" of Gullah/Geechee while in the field in summer of 2001.[13] In 2002, at the reunion on Sullivan's Island, Queen Quet made reference to the Nation as a living entity, "because it has breath," yet there was no clear definition or elaboration offered at that time. However, in a recent speech, *Gwine On: The Gullah/Geechee Season of Self-Determination*, delivered on a return trip to the United Nations in August 2004, Queen Quet elaborated on the concept of Nation:

> The Gullah/Geechee saw that the most effective mechanism to continue to harvest positive seeds that would then bring forth more seeds that would produce Gullah/Geechee that continued to know their own story and continued to use their own language and traditions within their homeland was to bring all the energies of the culture back to one central mechanism of operation. They realized that the masses MUST be ONE body. This BODY became the form of the Gullah/Geechee Nation:
>
> - The head is the chief or chieftess that is authorized to speak for the masses of people.
> - The right arm is the Wisdom Circle Council of Elders, which is "empowered to maintain its customary roles, rules and practices and to exercise supervisory powers of review on laws and policies passed and administered by the other sections of the Gullah/Geechee Nation's government."
> - The left arm is the Assembly of Representatives "which is the legislative arm of the Gullah/Geechee Nation."
> - The citizenry are the internal organs, and legs that keep the body moving and functioning while being protected by the Deacons of Defense that "have the power to interpret, construe, and apply the laws of, or applicable to, the Gullah/Geechee Nation."
>
> Throughout its existence, this body has continued to have to battle against the United States governmental agencies and political bodies that seek to define the Gullah/Geechees in their own way. Their definitions come from the period of enslavement and the continued racism and oppression that followed thereafter and brought about stereotypical, and later, academically calculated descriptions for a culture that is not that of what is called "the American

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[12] Carnegie suggests there is a bitter irony in group claims such as this, as they legitimize the power structure they are seeking relief from (2002).

[13] These connections came to light while reflecting on my fieldnotes taken over the past seven years of research.

mainstream." In fact, forced assimilation through the missionary schools and now the public school systems, such as that of Beaufort County, South Carolina, working within the context of cultural educational patterns of Gullah/Geechees have sought to, in essence, "drown" the Afriicanisms of the Gullah/Geechees in the mainstream. However, the Gullah/Geechee continue to stand against these agencies as well as against developers, Chambers of Commerce and other tourism agencies that seek to exploit and/or eliminate them from the process of making decisions concerning themselves. Thus, they are seeking to act as opposing forces to the Gullah/Geechee Nation's international human rights to self-determination."

Gullah/Geechee as a Contemporary Representation of *The Wretched of the Earth*

The arena within which Gullah/Geechees are seeking rights of self-determination as an American minority represents a contemporary "special battle-field" Frantz Fanon was referring to in his analysis of "National Culture" in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1967). Clearly, Fanon was concerned with colonial and postcolonial Africa; however, he did suggest that the "Negroes" of the diaspora were not very different, (in that respect) for they too were stripped of their beingness—ultimately defined in relation to whiteneness. By situating the contemporary predicament facing the Gullah/Geechees within Fanon's framework of national culture, the parallels between these spatially and temporally distant postcolonial communities implies there has been little to no change in the colonizing mentality over the past half century, while also illustrating the ways identity becomes hybridized within the process of rebellion against the forces of colonial domination.

Fanon constructed a sturdy template for the study of postcolonial agency and determination regarding the demands for national culture. Dynamics directly applicable to the Gullah/Geechee include: (1) the way in which postcolonial subjects revert back to the past in an effort to recover cultural treasures capable of rivaling the historical reinventions of the political elite (which often become common sense); (2) the ways in which native intellectuals go back and "dig deeper" into the cultural past to find there is nothing to be ashamed of. On the contrary, they often uncover dignity and glory; (3) "a national culture under colonial domination is a contested culture whose destruction is sought in systematic fashion" (46); (4) arts and crafts associated with the past are "retrieved" and "begin to reach out"; and (5) oral traditions are transformed from a dramatization to an invocation, summoning characters of resistance and rebellion (Fanon 1967). Furthermore, Fanon asserts that "an **attentive spectator** can feel and see the manifestations of

new vigor and feel the approaching conflict" (49) long before the battle really begins. My role as attentive spectator, and the situated knowledge resulting from such a position, provoked the current comparative analysis between Africans seeking a national culture in Africa, and those seeking a national culture in the United States South.

Mainstream notions of the Lowcountry area have long disavowed the African inheritance of Sea Island Gullah. The Gullah have responded by reaching back to reclaim distinct attributes of their African-derived culture, particularly those which are exploited in the tourism industries of the Lowcountry. For example, there is an abundance of storytellers, folklorists, tour guides, and native authors who are now rewriting history from the Gullah/Geechee perspective. These counter-narratives, whether they are part of a plantation tour or personal histories, reveal the ways in which the regional history has been reinvented to attract the mighty tourism dollar, while continuing to exploit Gullah culture. Also, I have witnessed powerful presentations when there was not a dry eye in the crowd depicting the realities of enslavement, while simultaneously illustrating the African will to survive such hardship. Only they can tell those stories, and I suggest these shows of agency are sometimes capable of encouraging witnesses to think about it in a more critical light.

Native intellectuals, of which there are many within all the Gullah/Geechee communities, often do go back into their histories to retrieve clues about who they have been in the past, as well as the ways in which such a quest can prevent potential problems aimed at cultural assimilation. The most empowering realizations have come from land deeds and titles in the historical archives in many communities, where residents obtain verification of their family's relationship to the landscape. Gullah/Geechees have learned that it was the knowledge of rice cultivation held by their ancestors across the Atlantic that fueled the plantation economies of the Lowcountry, the labor of their ancestors which built the infrastructure of the port cities of Charleston and Savannah; and the numerous contributions Gullah/Geechee culture has made to what is considered Southern white culture (see Holloway 1990). These, as well as other, revelations have helped to erode the cultural shame that had often been instilled in Gullah/Geechees concerning their language and practices, during forced exchanges with the mainstream such as public education and employment. In this quest for identity, Gullahs have found dignity.

Arts and crafts that represent a connection to Africa, such as sweetgrass basketry, net making, boat building, and oral traditions, have taken on increased significance within

Gullah/Geechee communities, due to increased awareness of their symbolic value as signs of cultural resistance to colonial oppression. Traditional practices are once again being incorporated into celebrations, and storytelling has been transformed from a dramatization or performance to an invocation of the African spirit. Prior to any community meeting, scheduled focus group, or cultural event I have participated in, there was a time for calling on the spirit of Africa and African ancestors in the hope that they will guide the following event in a way that is positive. Those present join in a circle and pour libation to those ancestors remembered at that time: *Denmark Vesey, ashé!*[14] *Marcus Garvey, ashé! Robert Smalls, ashé*! And this is repeated as long as there are people to be summoned. It is a spiritual experience for all involved.

Attentive Spectator: Experience as Knowledge

Over the course of the past seven years, I have had the privilege of witnessing this grassroots movement toward cultural empowerment and preservation. I have participated in countless events and programs in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida that signify the coming together of the various grassroots groups into a collective body now referred to as the Gullah/Geechee Nation. Many times I have looked on as people are awakened to the ancestral links they possess to this important Diasporic community. I have also watched the same people who disavow their connection one-year, seek out community activists and leaders the next, to ask how they can get involved. The unfolding of this process has been of immeasurable value, as an anthropologist and a human being, and I look forward to future progress. The following transcript excerpt is included here to illustrate the experience as spectator.

In the Spring of 2004, I accompanied Queen Quet to Fernandina, Florida for a community dialogue. The request came from Glenda Simmons-Jenkins, a local newspaper reporter, who I had interviewed months prior about the gated community phenomenon in and around Fernandina.

During our second discussion, she elaborated on the impetus behind inviting Queen Quet to her community:

[14] This is a Yoruba term often used in spiritual practices and refers to the spiritual life force.

> GSJ: We live in a county that is very corrupt to it's core and its like there's something gripping the Black people- to answer your question "why is it that nobody even acknowledges that Black people are here?" It's because of the fear and the invisibility that somehow cloaks this whole island. It's the reason I asked Queen Quet to come and let us have a worship because there is a story about when the ships would come in bringing slaves illegally, importing them. And then, when they realized they could be caught and they could be hanged, they dropped the human cargo to the bottom of the ocean. So there was no closure, no ceremony for the spirits and I have really felt that is one of the evils that lingers here, that has caused Black people to be so oppressed, unwilling to open their mouths and speak and say "we are here" under such fear.

The community meeting was well attended and held in Yulee, Florida, just outside Fernandina. We also used it as a time to hold my research focus group, which had been planned for another time. Queen Quet, Glenda and myself discussed the option of adding it to the agenda and decided it would be advantageous to all involved. At the conclusion of my focus group about gated communities and their impact in the surrounding areas, the chef who had prepared the day's meal came out of the kitchen (where he had been listening to the ongoing dialogue of the day) and joined the conversation. The following transcript section illustrates the elements used previously as comparative analysis between the Gullah/Geechee movement and Marcus Garvey's model of transnational black politics (copied here) based upon: a) situating local struggles within a global quest for black unity; b) empowerment through knowledge exchange; and c) the sacred nature of the struggle.

> CH: My whole thing with this day is, we all understand how we got here, we all understand what happened, we all understand what is going on and the situation- the question is- what are we gonna do about it? Where can we go from here? I got some questions that needs to be answered, some things that I would love to do that I'm not educated about doing, how do I get educated? How do I get educated, then I educate somebody else. Where is the unity going to come from? Who is going to be the one who steps out and says, "I'll go!" Where do we go from here? We know where we're at! But do we stay stagnated right here, do we just talk about the situation or do we come up with solutions?
> CA: The problem is, we (as a people, as a race of people) we're not social people and this is what causes a lot of problems. We do not, if we obtain a certain amount of status and property we don't contact our fellow man and socialize with him. We sit upon that pedestal and there is no communication. Once we receive a certain amount of education, we get up on a certain level, and we don't communicate with our people. And communication, for the Black folks concerned, is the problem. The Caucasian, or what have you, they go to

breakfast, they go to supper they're in groups of communication all the time. We don't communicate with each other. Right now, I'm all upset with myself-
RB: But that's on us. That's on us. There's nothing to say that we can't all get together and go to someone's house.
CA: But what I'm saying- we're not doing it.
GS: But we can. The seeds of change are being planted.
QQ: And see what I wanted to add, which just goes to what everybody's saying- the brother asked a pointed question and-- as I said earlier-- I didn't come here to take burdens with me. I didn't bring my big vehicle to load it with junk and that's what burdens are! What he's talked about is the point to why God had today set. It is about solutions, it is about changing things. It is about going back to old landmark, the beginnings of why we are here, in terms of talking about Gullah/Geechee heritage of this area. You would not have had it, had people who had totally different tongues-- (someone spoke Ibo, someone spoke Mandinka, someone spoke Malinka, someone else spoke Mende, someone else spoke Vai, someone spoke Creole)-- they managed to end up speaking with one another! If they could manage to come to one accord and speak with one another (and everyone I've heard in **this** language, the language of England) OK-- English-- then you don't have an excuse. So there's no reason for us-when we say go back- -we don't need to go back to say "ok, we never do this" no what we need to know is OK, we're not doing this, when did the breakdown in communication occur. We need to meet at that point and rebuild!
Crowd: Amen!
QQ: Right at that point. And that's why we're here. This church is here, Mt. Zion, Mt. Olive- (I'm in Zion here). Mount Zion is down the road a piece' (as we would say). You are not lacking for institutions for a meeting place. I don't think anybody in here is homeless either, so (as the sister just said) it's not stopping you if you need to sit on somebody's porch and meet. It's not stopping you if you go to American Beach on a particular day and sit out there on pieces of sheet or on the sand, or in the lobby of American Beach Villas. You don't have to have no program to meet! There is the issue. Last night, when we had the praise meeting at Mount Olive- when we had praise services and praise houses it wasn't just to go there and sit and the reality is, God is tired of just you coming to church building for singing and for entertainment, because that was never supposed to be what it was about. It was about nourishing your spirit! So when the sister said that's not us or that's on us, the social--that's what Jesus was about was the social well being of the people. So if you are saying you are Christ-like you have to be taking care of every element of everybody around, not just you. And our problem is, like you said, we start a little bit of something, "I got mine, you got to get yours." But that is a trick of the enemy. That is what somebody else taught you. That's not what your great grandmamma, big daddy mamma, aunt Mary somewhere, they didn't teach us that foolishness! We picked that up in other people's institutions. We got to throw out the trash sometime. You got to realize, that was trash, and you got to get rid of it. And the point it, God didn't ordain Glenda and those to start a Gullah/Geechee Heritage Society here for no reason! It was started because you need to go back to traditions and one of which being "open your mouth- talk with your mouth wide open- crack ya teeth!" OK. Open your mouth. Because what people say in Western society is silence gives consent. So now let me show you where the problem is- the problem is people's egos, OK- because if you do know something that I don't know, I

don't want to submit my ego to letting you speak, but if you know more, you're the one who's supposed to speak!
Crowd: Amen.
QQ: If I can't cook, I ain't got no business going and throwing the brother out of the kitchen talking about "move, move I'm older than you so just move." No, he know how to cook though, so maybe his position is to cook the food, so that everybody here's body is built up enough that when we need to take a march down to County we strong enough to get there. Maybe his job ain't to speak when we get there. It could be somebody else who's job is appointed to get there, but the problem is you have to be willing to submit your will. That's the first thing. Lines of communication break down because everybody want to be in charge and everybody want to overstep they bounds, instead of using THEIR gift. God gave each one of us a gift, or multiple gifts, so if you're gift is not shooting no pictures- you would cut everybody head off, leave that camera on the table and let somebody who could handle it handle it. If you can't drive cause you can't hardly see, you don't need to be the one taking us on the bus no place. OK. So we need to quit with the foolishness. All that stuff is egotistical. I have degrees too, they don't mean nothing. They're a piece of paper, you could light em' on fire, so what! I'm still who I am whether you put Dr. in front of my name, Ph.D. behind it, nothing on it, whatever, buck naked or fully dressed! I'm still the same person. So it's about where's your mind, where's your spirit? So you have an opportunity right here. It's about choice, like I said, we're in the clearing. It's up to everybody who lives here everyday not to wait until Glenda calls with a program. And say OK, then today's Saturday... this was a good time on a Saturday, it looks like enough of us to gather... then let's say every third Saturday of every month at 12:00 we gonna meet. We're gonna rotate: we're gonna meet at Mt. Olive, then we gonna go into O'Neil, another time we're gonna meet at First African- you rotate, wherever you need to meet. And you deal with what is the present issue. The present issue I'm hearing from everybody is gated areas is a problem; plantations (however which way you want to put the word) is a problem; and the problem being the disconnect--it's causing people to be disconnected. So you have to find something that's going to reconnect you. In terms of the work that I do everyday (God sends me places everyday to do this) I am willing to come to work with communities to get them to start to do things we never did--reading the law, who wanna read law? Lawyers don't want to read law, but I gotta read law everyday for one community or the other because God gives me understanding. I sit and look at a paper discerning and check with a couple of my legal representatives to make sure I got the right definition, and then say "OK' ya'll, you know this big old thick thing they handed out downtown, you know what that means? That simply means they ain't gonna let you drive down that road no more. So if ya'll don't get your butt up and get down to that hearing and let em' know you're gonna drive down that road, so you might as well burn up the documents or you won't be driving down that road! OK. And things come to me plain as the hand on my face that I've never seen. So I know God has it that I'm supposed to do that. So you ain't gotta send somebody in this group back to college for a law degree. You got things right here you need but it's about accepting that you have it. A lot of times we have what we need and we don't want to accept it. If we're a man, we don't want to accept a woman as a leader-- if we old, we don't want to accept a young person tell us nothing. If we have a degree, and the other person only got a high school diploma, we don't want

them to speak for us, we got all these little barriers. We need to start today, not that that means anything. Like I said, what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul in the process? Every vessel in here got a soul in it; now it's about choice-- what you do with it. So that means, brothers, don't get me wrong...there will have to be meetings of just brothers... sisters, they'll have to be meetings of just sisters... that's about rejuvenation not segregation. Because after you've had both those meetings they come together and you say now ok, cause men, you all got fire and you'll be like "I say we get the guns and march down there!" OK and the women, because we have the nurturing (don't get us wrong, we be carrying our guns too but we keep em' tucked in the back of the skirt and if they jump off we got their butts, because we have to take care of the children)- we'll have to be the ones to calm you all on down. We'll be like "ok, that's true, but look at this: if you kill the man you're going to jail and then you're going to work in the jail for free for the same county we fighting against." So these are things we gotta keep in mind, you gotta be ten penny sharp. So the thing is today, all these things and all the things we already covered, are some of the things you already have as resources but now it's about taking those resources and putting them into place and using them. My e-mail address is here; sister Glenda always knows how to e-mail me and get in touch with me if you guys decide you want to do a whole retreat, we'll come down here and do a retreat. Get you on point first. The next thing is now we need to do a workshop-- hey we need to understand CRA, we do a workshop on what is this CRA thing and we structure a document that comes from this community that says we're not gonna support the CRA! And you all gotta stop the foolishness-- just because that affects American Beach directly don't mean it don't affect O'Neil-- OK? So don't think that because that bridge is there that you all are really separated. You're not, never were. So get that out your heads! And then if the next thing we need to do is, yes, maybe you still got questions about the culture; how you tie into the culture, we do a workshop on that. If you need to figure out how to pick up your drum again, we do a workshop on that. However God so orders it, these are the things: so when you say what are we gonna do. I can tell you what I'm gonna do because I do it everyday. So if you need me give me your info right here. That's what I'm gonna do. And anytime you feel like, the drum sound ain't reaching St. Helena quick enough, maybe it's reaching but I ain't home, you get her (Glenda). She'll get to me. That's part of having an assembly of representatives. They got legs and eyes and ears on the ground when I'm up in the air or I'm traveling the roads or the railway, they got it. They get it to me by e-mail cause I get that joker wherever I'm at. And if I need to turn around and double back and get there I will be there. So these are the things that we need to begin to accept- -we have resources amongst us and stop looking outside. It's right here! Everything we need is right here.

Also in attendance was Carlie Towne, the Charleston representative for the Wisdom Circle Council of Elders, who offered an example of this type of community mobilization she is involved in, which was inspired by Queen Quet's vision for the future.

CT: I just wanted to comment; as Queen Quet was speaking I was listening to her and addressing some of the questions that you all had here today about what can we do. Well

we asked ourselves that question too, in Charleston. And we decided Yeah we're gonna do something! We're not gonna be a jack in the box- we're gonna leap out and that's what we did. We have two sisters down in Charleston with a historic house that need to be restored. Queen Quet and the Elders, the Council of Elders, we all went there and they asked us to take this house and do what you gotta do because it's your house. And I find that, we found that, when people work together and they think with oneness of mind then we can get a lot accomplished. So what we did on Wednesday nights, we started having these meetings and we put this big sign up letting people know that we are a nation, that it's not just individual- but it's a whole group of us thinking together!

QQ: Yes.

CT: So as people pass by, they stop because it's a historical site; because it's Anson Borough where there's only two houses left- a whole Black community was wiped out! And we, Gullah/Geechee people, had the opportunity and chose to stand strong and say I don't care- you can't push us out of here. So once we got that mindset, and everybody that walks in that house feels the same mindset, and says what can we do? And we say,' what do you do?' And they say, 'well I can do floors,' and someone else says,' I can do... ,' and we've got a list of people that's coming in right now-- and now Wednesday has become a day where we all meet together and we got all the community so that' s one of the things that we have done because we designated Wednesday as the day that we all meet together. And we tell, each one must teach one, so we were telling people and our family members and whoever to say please come Wednesdays because we gonna restore this house. So that's one of the things that we did and it's working, it's working because we had lost that touch, that community togetherness- that communal living- we said that wasn't the way we should be, but that is the way we have lived before—and survived—and if we plan to continue to survive we must get back to the old ways.

GS: Just to answer Chester I feel that a seed has been sewn, that's why our theme says the seeds of transformation. If we're going to transform ourselves, we have to go back to what was the original people, who were we? That allows us to get to the next step, which is the root, our heritage and our culture... and then we get to the fruits, the results.

Recent Developments

IHRAAM delegates continue to work with members of the various Gullah/Geechee communities in the quest for self-determination and minority rights status through the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. In 2004, Dr. Kly once again spoke on behalf of the Gullah/Geechee Nation, regarding the *Economic and Social Council Resolution 1996/31*.

The Right of Peoples to Self-determination and its Application to Peoples Under Colonial or Alien Domination or Foreign Occupation

Submitted by IHRAAM International Human Rights Association for American Minorities, *(a non-governmental organization on the Roster)*

> The Gullah/Geechee people, an African American nation of some 750,000 speakers of the Gullah language located primarily in Southeastern Lowcountry of the US have begun the process of exercising their human and minority rights and seeking international, national and local recognition for themselves as a non-territorial nation or national minority within the state of the US. They have begun the implementation of cultural Self-determination policy on the local level by initiating numerous efforts to preserve historic sites and cultural traditions in South Carolina, Georgia and Florida and intend to begin soon their diplomatic mission by arranging mutual recognition treaty-signing ceremonies with various Native American nations. Afterwards. In consultation with the US State Department, it intends to send diplomatic missions to other states, particularly in Africa, in hope of signing international economic and cultural exchange agreements between those nations and the Gullah/Geechee Nation which will serve to further or contribute to the cultural and social economic development of the Gullah/Geechee peoples and the US as a whole.

IHRAAM has also provided support with the development of the Gullah/Geechee Constitution (included as Appendix F), as well as bringing Queen Quet into the broader dialogue on reparations. The *African American Reparations Tribunal*, an associate organization of IHRAAM, has constructed several documents on behalf of the Gullah/Geechee regarding their specific entitlements as "Proposed Indigenous African Americans Special Measures." These measures, along with any future developments, will be of extreme significance to various Diasporic communities seeking justice and equality based upon their human rights.

The shared experiences of injustice, resistance to oppression, and reclamation of an African heritage connect the diaspora to each other and to the homeland. By invoking "Africa" as signifier, many groups are beginning to find peace in their hybrid identities as descendants of an historical event of genocidal proportions. As the layers of physical and mental oppression, cultural devaluation, and forced assimilation are peeled away to reveal the multitude of ways in which Africa has been translated across various New World contexts, communities of the diaspora will profit from the mobilization efforts of one another. As a gift to the ancestors, perhaps someday, these experiences of collective resistance will move the Black world closer to the Pan-African cohesiveness envisioned by the brilliance of Garvey, DuBois, and St. Clair Drake. As anthropologists investigating these processes, we must work hard to uncover the structural tactics that inhibit such a process, waged from within and from the outside, as well as sharing the stories of rebellion and resistance, which remain hidden beneath reconstructed histories. At the

intersection of culture and power, where identity is constantly being made and remade, the anthropologist's role[15] takes on an even greater significance (see Glick Schiller 1994).

[15] My role, with respect to the movement occurring in the Sea islands, has been "attentive spectator" (Fanon 1967).

CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION: MAKING SENSE OF SENSEMAKING

Gated communities throughout the Sea Islands of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida represent a postcolonial attempt at reinventing the plantation of the white imagination. Upon these contested landscapes, incompatible, historically transmitted epistemologies result in an ongoing power struggle between "those who have the money and those who hold the memory" (Rymer 1998:16). Gullah/Geechee communities, descended from enslaved West and Central Africans whose exploited labor made world capitalism a social reality, inherited these islands during one of America's few "multifaceted experiment[s] in democracy" (McGuire 1985:2). Within this cultural and political economy of racism, the Gullah have experienced overwhelming exploitation of their sociocultural institutions, resulting in land loss, economic and political marginalization, and forced acculturation that violate their universal human rights. This ongoing struggle against coloniality connects the Gullah to other diasporic communities encountering varying predicaments of white racism, couched in rhetorics of difference. Their response embodies an African spirit of resistance and survival that has brought them thus far.

This critical ethnographic analysis is a contribution to African Diaspora studies, framed within a reflexive political economy. Theoretically and methodologically, the findings of this research seek to contribute to four specific areas of anthropological inquiry: the anthropology of racism and race making as sites of cultural and political-economic struggle; the anthropology of space and place; critical interrogations of power, particularly as power relates to the production of knowledge and inventions of history; whiteness as the contemporary manifestation of coloniality; and experimental methods of ethnographic inquiry.

Spatial Segregation: Reinventing the Landscape

Manifestations of racism and social inequality have and continue to shape space and place within our physical and ideological boundaries. Across the landscapes of capitalist-centered North America, "spatial discourses play an important role in the construction and reconstruction of social space" (Cooper 1999: 377). More often than not, these new spaces represent a collective mythology of the social imagination (Shields 1991) that, nationally, has something(s) to hide. Developers and planners come on board by utilizing such myths in name choices and advertising

foci, in an attempt at altering common sense perceptions of historical reality (Cooper 1999). Newcomers retiring to these fabricated utopias ingest and invest in these spatial discourses in ways that "variously and ambiguously help/lead/force them to think and act in certain ways" (Cooper 1999:378). For the Gullah, the consequences have been devastating.

Within this growing phenomenon of gated community segregation in the Sea Islands, "plantation" has undergone a vulgar reinterpretation, filtered through the lens of white privilege. The resulting "reinvented" plantation is nothing more than a large farm, exhibiting glorious representations of antebellum architecture, live oaks swaying in the Lowcountry breeze, and gentile Southern charm. Within this "New South," there are competing realities of plantation slavery battling for common sense legitimacy. Gullah/Geechees possess a collective social memory of bondage and violence, thereby linking the plantation to horrific images of their ancestors as human chattel. Therefore, the reinvented landscape blatantly contests those memories of the "geocultural landscape" as it existed prior to these recent recolonization efforts. In formal and informal ethnographic interviews, Gullah/Geechees expressed collective uneasiness and offense concerning the mass appeal of the word plantation. Most suggest it serves as a device of social, political, and ideological control, aimed at subconsciously keeping people of color in their relegated positions within the larger social structure. I suggest it represents the broader parallels of oppression, segregation, and exploitation between the historic period of plantation slavery and the present.

Cultural anthropologists in the West has been decidedly single minded with regard to victims of capital accumulation. The discourse of globalization has sought after the stories of "others" outside the U.S., while most communities of color on our soil continue to suffer under a system of white privilege and residential apartheid. By critically examining space and place within the local context of the coastal Southeast, I was able to locate a social field of disturbing irony, in which once self-sufficient Gullah/Geechee communities have been virtually re-enslaved in a system of labor exploitation aptly referred to as a "culture of servitude" (Faulkenberry et al. 2000). Their story represents but one example of the increasingly problematic global practice of mapping race onto space.

Racism and the South: Displacing the Burden

In Sea Island communities up and down the coast, the persistence of racial inequality is "diligently maintained" (Spears 1999) by the ideological reconstruction of the Southern plantation as representative of all things charming and nostalgic. This regional system of "neoracism"[1] (Harrison 1995) is naturalized by the structural privileges of whiteness that safeguard an uneven allocation of political and economic power (Rasmussen et al. 2001). What is often overlooked, however, is the rapid influx of Northerners into these coastal areas, and their increasing participation in positions of power.[2]

The gated enclaves of the Lowcountry are dominated by Northern retirees, who choose to live spatially segregated from the surrounding Gullah/Geechee communities. Many of these residents suggest that they chose a gated community based on amenities and services. Simply stated, it is the golf and tennis along with the strict rules of the Property Owners Association that makes gated life so enjoyable. But I am suggesting, based upon this research, that there is far more to the story. Northerners have internalized the myths associated with the Civil War and plantation slavery which position them as somehow socially enlightened above the south. Their constant ideological reinforcement of that myth serves to displace the perpetuation of racism onto poor southern whites, and the subtle penetrations of class have poor whites powerless to its acceptance. This much I know from personal experience. After seven years of research relating to issues of race and racism, I recognize their collective efforts as an example of the subtle rhetorics of difference that perpetuate racial inequality. The gated areas silently serve as a justification to fear those on the other side. Throughout the Lowcountry, those areas directly outside the gates are, predominantly, Gullah/Geechee communities. Therefore, the implied need for security reinvests in the damaging trope of black criminality. This implied connection is a structural mechanism of racism that goes virtually unnoticed within the invented ideology of meritocracy veiling white privilege.

Over the years, I have engaged in many conversations with Sea Islanders who remember growing up in cohesive mixed communities, before the influx of development and Northern whites.

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[1] Neoracism, as elaborated by Spears, is still racism, in that it functions to maintain the racial hierarchies of oppression (1999:13).

[2] Several gated community POAs have conducted statistical studies which suggest gated residents overwhelmingly originate from Northern states; see also Hawkins 1990.

Sea Island farm families, both black and white, worked alongside one another with little racial conflict. I am not, by any means, implying that racism does not exist in the south. However, I am suggesting that poor southern whites often lack the power to translate their prejudice into real consequences. This conclusion, I realize, is nothing new. It builds upon previous findings with regard to the dynamics of race and class within (what are considered) lower class mixed populations, as characterized in ethnographies such as *Deep South* (Davis et al. 1941), *Worked to the Bone* (Buck 2001), and *Racial Situations* (Hartigan 1999). This connection among race, class, whiteness, and social inequality provides an exciting opportunity for future research, aimed at exposing the historical invisibility of whiteness and white privilege.

Research Questions and Answers

Methodology: Claiming Ethnographic Legitimacy

Several methods employed within this research offer valuable lessons for the future of ethnography as a tool of anthropological analysis. Primarily, a study can only be classified as ethnographic if new concepts exist at the end of the study that were not part of the original research problem (see Agar 1996). First, the depth of this phenomenon was sorely underestimated, which has implications that extend far beyond the Sea Islands, particularly with regard to racial inequality. Research and analysis revealed *coloniality* as the complex supporting structure fueling this particular type of development, which represents a parallel with other postcolonial predicaments creating similar inequalities across the New World Diaspora. Second, the methodological praxis of reflexivity was not part of the initial research design, however, participant observation and subsequent analysis brought whiteness to the forefront, requiring that I interrogate my own position as a white woman from an Appalachian background. During this project, I recognized that Gullah/Geechees have endured a burden of cultural shame, similar to that which I have battled throughout my adult life. In coming to terms with my own whiteness, I became more committed to exposing the inequalities I witnessed in the field.

Naming the unspoken privileges of whiteness, however, transformed into an "obsession with honesty" (Ulysse 2003) that many scholars of anthropology seem unwilling to validate. This style of representation, often presumed to be a less rigorous model of anthropological inquiry is, however, tolerated. Therefore, the resulting piece of work represents an unintended method of

ethnographic expression, and yet another disciplinary boundary reinforcing value free positivism as the only method of ethnography that is scientifically valid.

Interviews as Conversations

Upon revisiting the text, I recognized several non-traditional features that require clarification. In an attempt toward decolonizing anthropology, with respect to qualitative methods of research, I feel it necessary to relinquish power wherever possible. In the context of ethnographic interviews, I often refer to them as "conversations" because it is a more appropriate representation of the specific context of that interview. There were instances, some of the focus groups for example, that felt more like conversations among a group of people engaged in sharing and collaboratively producing knowledge. The dynamics of the discussion were mediated by someone other than myself playing the role of an all knowing anthropologist forcing the discussion into specific direction. I analyzed those transcripts as "conversations," because they evoked an atmosphere that seemed more organic and spontaneous than ethnographic interviews usually are. Similar ethnographic contexts formed the primary methodology in John Gwaltney's *Drylongso* (1980), in which individual testimonials were elicited within "folk seminars." I am not suggesting this as a standard methodology for all projects, however, it is clear that dialogue takes many forms, not all of which may be immediately recognizable as appropriate for qualitative research.

Combining Methods: Focus Groups and Multi-Site Ethnography

The year of research supported by a Wenner Gren Dissertation Grant afforded me the luxury of designing an ethnographic project lacking the previous constraints of money and time. In an effort to broaden the analysis, I extended the research design across the entire geographic area of the Sea Islands, selecting relevant sites along the coast for ethnographic inclusion. Taking into consideration that the six years of previous research were confined to South Carolina, I chose focus groups as a way to conduct interviews in a more comfortable environment. Focus groups, therefore, served as an initial encounter, often producing opportunities for subsequent individual interviews. Established research consultants in South Carolina assisted me in this endeavor, and I evaluate those interviews as a methodological success.

"Studying Up"

The gated areas of the Sea Islands are enclaves of wealth, but I felt compelled to draw the residents into the discourse I was creating about their impact on neighboring communities. In an attempt to adequately analyze the competing actors within the broader social field, I implemented a research strategy commonly referred to as "studying up" (Nader 1969). Briefly, I want to address this term, and advocate for its revision. At the time Nader proposed this bold method of inquiry, the idea of studying "up" seemed only natural. However, knowing what we do at this juncture, about the politics of identity, I hesitate to legitimize a group as "up" because it suggests that such a position exists. I offer "locating privilege" as one possibility we might consider to better define exactly what we are trying to accomplish with this innovative strategy.

The objective of such research is to locate the elevated power structures intimately connected to the research question. Once located, the structures and the people within them become components of the study. There are inherent problems in this approach, as Nader anticipated and suggested early on. For example, those in power do not particularly want to be "studied," so gaining access can be extremely difficult (Nader 1969). In my experiences, there were few options for unstructured observation of their daily lives. Therefore, even when one gains access, the parameters of interaction and observation are under their constant control. Also, the "elite" often possesses elaborate sensemaking strategies that justify their position, which can become quite frustrating.[3] Adding this strategy to my research, however, was crucial for elucidating and questioning the power imbalance. The conclusions of this research would have been impossible to develop without those experiences.

Studying up can also serve to benefit the less powerful actors within the social field, offering useful information for countering social inequality (Nader 1969). As the Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Act is implemented, through strategies for community empowerment, perhaps this research can serve as a crash course for administrators in pinpointing specific areas of interest and concern. It might also assist the Gullah in their quest for self-determination within the national and international arena, as a way to illustrate the wide-ranging community and environmental concerns resulting from such rapid change. At the very least, my daily interactions with a wide range of citizens, differentially positioned across the social landscape, perhaps planted a seed of

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[3] One example which immediately comes to mind can be found on page 112.

interest that will germinate into some type of action. That type of result, in and of itself, would bring greater change than many imagine possible.

Narrative Affirmative Action

During a particular interview, which I critically analyzed in Chapter 5 "Encountering the Thousandaires" (beginning on page 89), the exchange was, by all accounts, intense. In stepping back to refocus on that data, I can easily discern what was occurring—the condescension I felt directed at me, from the moment I arrived, provoked me to speak with an edge in my voice. Quite honestly, it set me off. The flippant disposition Mr. Santoni displayed was a clear attempt at intimidating me; yet it remains necessary to explore the methodological implications of such emotive exchanges. Did I provoke him? Not intentionally. While I willingly acknowledge that I can be extremely opinionated and pushy, I take the process of research very serious, and I conduct myself with the utmost respect for those who take time out of their lives to assist me. Are the data reliable? Are they valid, when elicited in such a heated exchange?

I "slept" on these questions, as I often do, and then revisited the transcript several days later. As I read, I was drawn back to a complementary discussion concerning the differential ways we sometimes find ourselves interpreting our data:

> However, we also find ourselves differentially theorizing and contextualizing voices. That is, those voices that historically have been smothered, we typically present on their own terms, perhaps reluctant to surround them with much of "our" theory [Weis, Marusza and Fine 1998]. And yet when we present the voices of white men who seem eminently expert at fingering African American men for all the white men's pain and plight, we theorize boldly, contextualize wildly, rudely interrupting "them" to reframe them [Weis and Fine 1996; Weis, Proweller, and Centrie 1997] (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:189).

This type of strategic analysis was classified as "narrative affirmative action" (Denzin and Lincoln 2003:189).

Perhaps I was engaging in my own brand of "narrative affirmative action," unwilling to have myself painted into a corner by a white male hurling power-laden daggers my way. I have concluded that the data are, indeed, valid and reliable. Were I to sit there and be accused of being a social scientist that invented the gated community/plantation dilemma for financial gain? What would be the ethnographic purpose in that? How would these data be more reliable if I had scurried away like a dog with my tail between my legs? I do not think it would be. Therefore, I am

suggesting these types of interview encounters can be productive, although extremely painful. I do regret that I allowed myself to get so upset, but for the knowledge I gained that afternoon I would do it all again. I got a front row seat to an individual performance of the constant play of power Gullah/Geechees negotiate everyday. My advice for others who feel compelled to interrogate power-- toughen up, emotionally, so the frustration will not bleed over into subsequent responses. It is important to remember that many people occupying positions of power have had to establish and maintain rationalizations for such positions, and most are not willing to have their power questioned.

Gullah Preservation: Forcing Change

The recent Gullah/Geechee Special Resource Study (GGSRS) introduced the broader Gullah community to one of the most power-laden federal arenas in existence: the National Park Service. Over the years, the agency has promoted a clear separation between tangible and intangible resources,[4] resulting in a management style that was philosophically incompatible with cultural conservation[5] (Howell 1994). The primary focus has been on the preservation of buildings, archaeological sites, and material objects, with no commitment to conserving living practices and cultural knowledge (Howell 2002). In recent years, cultural groups on the receiving end of federal custodial management have demanded respect, concerning decisions affecting their lives and communities. The National Park Service responded with a program known as REAP, Rapid Ethnographic Assessment Procedures, designed to incorporate local voices into the early planning stages of park projects (Crespi 2002). Although this method of data collection has been criticized for the broad conclusion drawn from short spans of time in the field (see Low 1994), it is definitely a step in the right direction. The GGSRS held community meetings at various locations throughout the designated areas, to obtain feedback about preservation concerns. They then took the data from those meetings and synthesized them into a preliminary study report. The draft of that report was circulated back through the community in 2003, at the same time I was conducting field

[4] For a discussion on tangible and intangible culture see Hufford 1994, Loomis 1983, Peterson 1990, and McKercher & du Cros 2000).
[5] For an overview of "cultural conservation" see Hufford 1994 and Howell 1994.

research. Both Queen Quet and I were asked to review the document,[6] so we would always take the draft to focus groups or community meetings to make it available. Another substantial part of the draft was preliminary recommendations (alternatives) designed by the National Park Service, to be evaluated and voted on by Gullah/Geechees. Alternative A proposed Gullah Geechee Coastal Centers,[7] which would present an interpretive overview of Gullah culture; Alternative B suggested an expansion of existing National Park Service sites; and Alternative C recommended a National Heritage Area, which would have no direct National Park Service ownership or management duties. It was clear, very early on, that the vast majority of Gullah/Geechee people preferred the Heritage Area.

Heritage Areas, as a strategy for preservation, promote community involvement, collaboration, sustainability of resources and relationships (Hart 2000). Although, as Hart points out, this option has its own set of inherent problems it is an excellent choice for cultural preservation. In 2004, Congressman Clyburn ([D] South Carolina) announced plans to introduce legislation that would make the Heritage Area a reality. The recent passage of HR 694 (Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Act) is of extreme significance for anthropologists and cultural groups keeping surveillance over cultural policy issues. Primarily, this case study suggests that the recent changes in NPS philosophy and methodology were successful in promoting local participation. This represents a real shift for the NPS, long accused of silencing the local voice in past projects. The future development of the Gullah/Geechee Heritage Area promises to be both exciting and intellectually stimulating.

Limitations of Conclusive Data

It is important that I situate several limitations of the present analysis, which surfaced during final revisions. First, the conclusions I have drawn from years of research are not meant as an all-encompassing representation of Gullah/Geechees nor gated residents. Intracultural politics produce varying degrees of contestation alongside strong collective community action. Therefore, this investigation represents a particular ethnographic slice of the social realities of contested

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[6] I worked on contract as the principal investigator for the Synthetic Overview of Scholarly Literature (which required me to read and synthesize all un-published masters theses and dissertations pertaining to Gullah culture).
[7] Two of the three proposed sites for coastal centers were historic plantation sites, which the Gullah vehemently opposed.

landscapes in the Sea Islands, further illustrating the point that all ethnographies are partial, "period" (Agar 1996:39). Second, I must acknowledge that the use of plantation (the word) on gated community signs is only a symptom of a deeper social disease. Even if "plantation" were removed from the signs, the deeper fundamental problems of cultural disrespect and racism would remain. I am not suggesting that broad, sweeping change is possible overnight, but I am definitely suggesting it is possible over more extended time. Nothing will give back the land that has been lost to decades of land disinvestment; yet as a "recovering racist" I know the value of knowledge acquisition. I know change is possible. Third, my politics are evident throughout the text, and I acknowledge the possible consequences concerning validity. Being committed to the larger project of decolonizing anthropology requires that I act in accordance with social justice and not disciplinary standards (when such standards go against my fundamental paradigm). Certainly, we cannot stand back and document inequality as anything else when it is such a blatant social reality.

Future With the Gullah/ Future With Anthropology

I cannot bring myself to suggest that this conclusion signifies an end. It is, simply, a new beginning toward future areas of inquiry. I owe a debt of gratitude to my consultants within the Gullah/Geechee Nation for their collective mentorship and tough love, and I credit that effort with a substantial part of my unwavering commitment to human equality. Through the years of searching for Gullah culture, I recently wandered upon myself—the Appalachian self I had been running from in shame of my mountain roots—and that encounter was somehow different based on the lessons I have learned as an anthropologist and a white woman working alongside the Gullah.

As I look out onto the wide expanse of what anthropology has to offer, I hope my legacy will be viewed as a "classed" contribution, joining the many subaltern voices bringing much needed diversity to our discipline. I slipped through the cracks—the first woman in my family to go to college, and the first anybody to pursue a Ph.D. My career, thus far, signifies an approaching wave of other "lower classed" southern whites I can just make out on the horizon. And we are no longer willing to carry the burden of racism for the true racists hiding behind privilege and power.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
DISSERTATION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY: 2000-2005

Structured and Unstructured Interviews
Research participants and consultants were chosen on the basis of established relationships, planned events in cooperation with grassroots organizations and community activists, and recommendations from established participants.
All interviews were recorded using a *Marantz* professional recorder.
There are thirty-six taped interviews with persons considered ethnographic participants (usually single encounter, and includes focus groups).
There are sixteen taped interviews (60-90 minutes) with persons considered ethnographic consultants (ongoing relationships established over the course of ongoing field research, beginning in 1998). Thirteen of the sixteen are one-on-one interviews.

Focus Group Interviews
Sites for focus groups were chosen utilizing methodological suggestions within the multi-sited ethnographic model (see "modes of construction" in Marcus 1995)
Focus groups were held in five Gullah/Geechee communities: Savannah, Georgia (organized by *DayClean* September 2003); Charleston, South Carolina (organized by the *Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition* and *Carlie Towne Gullah/Geechee People Foundation*, in conjunction with the Heritage Festival at Hampton Park, September 2003); Fernandina and American Beach, Florida (sponsored by the *Gullah/Geechee Cultural Heritage Committee of Northeast Florida*, November 15; follow up in February 2004, Fernandina Black History Month Festival); St. Helena Island (*GGSIC* and Coastal Development Corporation, January 28) and Georgetown, South Carolina (Community Meeting sponsored by *Family Tyes* and *The Gullah Ooman Shop*, May 15, 2004).
Preliminary questions were sent to event coordinator in advance, and were subsequently posted on the *Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition* Listserve (see Appendix B)
Focus groups were held in two gated communities. Preliminary questions were sent in advance to Dataw Island Property Owners Association (POA), as well as nine POAs on Hilton Head Island (see Appendix C). There was no response from Hilton Head.

Participant Observation (all were documented extensively in field notes)
I attended four Beaufort County Council Meetings
I attended one Beaufort County Development and Planning Board Meeting
I attended two Landowners Association Meetings (St. Helena Island)
I attended three Cultural Protection Overlay District (CPOD) Meeting (St. Helena Island)
I attended one Bluffton Historic Preservation Society Board Meeting
I attended one African American Culture and History Museum Steering Committee Meeting (Charleston), where I briefly met with Congressman James Clyburn and his assistant Derrick Hope
I participated in a variety of tours: Alphonso Brown's Gullah Tour, Magnolia Plantation, Fort Sumpter Historic Site, Drayton Hall Plantation, Middleton Place Plantation (Charleston); Historic Walking Tour (Downtown Beaufort); Reverend Zack Lyde's Sea Island Tour (including Brunswick, Georgia); Maurice Bailey's Sapelo Island Tour (Sapelo Island, Georgia)

I attended various cultural festivals: John's Island Native Celebration 2003, Gullah/Geechee Reunion at Sullivan's Island 2003, Charleston Heritage Festival 2003, Penn Center Heritage Days 2004, Gullah Festival 2004, Fernandina Black History Month Festival 2004
I worked with two teen service-learning groups (*3D* and *Visions*) who engaged in community service on St. Helena Island in the summer of 2003 and 2004.

Systematic Observation

On three separate occasions I counted cars on Highway 21 to assess the increase of traffic flow and traffic speed during the tourism season (which had been documented as a concern by elders on St. Helena Island). I also attempted to correlate traffic patterns with tags that differentiate gated community residents from native islanders and visitors/tourists to the area.

On two separate occasions I deliberately observed and recorded shared characteristics of the clientele who frequent different grocery stores.

On four occasions I engaged in guided plantation tours in Charleston County, and recorded observations of the staff and visitors. I also engaged in informal conversations with visitors to assess their interest of, and knowledge concerning, the alternative stories of the enslaved communities of such plantations.

On thirteen separate occasions over the course of two years I attempted to enter gated communities by stopping at the guard gate and simply asking if I could go in and take a look around- all such attempts proved unsuccessful.

Mapping

I utilized mapping to document kinship connections, Gullah land ownership, changes brought by gated community development, and the decline of black business districts in Charleston and Savannah.

Document Analysis

I collected and analyzed tourism brochures obtained at South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Visitors Centers to evaluate the growing popularity of Gullah culture (and Gullah sweetgrass basketry) as a commodity within the tourism market and the representations of "plantation" ideology in promoting the Lowcountry. I also used these documents to analyze the increased visibility of the Confederate flag symbol within tourism literature.

I collected and analyzed real estate listings and advertisements obtained from various locations within the research area to evaluate the ways in which romantic notions of the plantation were used to construct an image of the Lowcountry, as well as to document the reinventions of history accompanying gated community developments.

I subscribed to various newspapers from June 2003 to June 2004: Lowcountry Now, Gullah Sentinel, Beaufort Gazette, Island Packet (Beaufort County, SC) Post and Courier, The Sentinel (Charleston County, SC) and Savannah Morning News (GA), to keep up with local news and events, and letters to the editor. From this analysis I was able to clearly establish the appearance of two separate worlds, separated by color.

I analyzed WPA archives from the research area to establish geographic and culturally specific knowledge with regard to the historical landscape

I analyzed Slave Narratives collected from South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida to gain deeper insight into the impact of enslavement, as well as the cultural (and linguistic) elements and

practices that distinguish Gullah/Geechees from African Americans. (Library of Congress "Born in Slavery: Slave Narratives from the Federal Writers Project 1936-1938" Online archives http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html)

I collected and analyzed relevant posts to the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition Listserve.

Archival Research

General: Avery Research Center at the College of Charleston, Beaufort County Public Library
Maps: Beaufort County Public Library, Charleston County Public Library
Policy: Beaufort County Municipal Government Records Office (Beaufort County Zoning Ordinance), Nassau County Public Records (Blight Study conducted for American Beach, FL 2000), RUDAT Report conducted on Hilton Head Island (obtained through personal means)
Plantation Records for South Carolina (by county):
http://www.rootsweb.com/~afamerpl/plantations_usa/SC/SC_plantations.html
Census Data: 2000, South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida
National gated community development statistics: US Census Current Housing Reports, Series H150/03
Photo and Interview Archives: Avery Research Center (Ansonborough Housing Project Oral History Project, Spoleto Festival)
Area Crime Statistics: Beaufort County Police Department

Visual Methods: (recorded using personal Sony handheld camcorder)

Video recording for future documentary project: 26 hours
Photos (35mm film and digital images) using personal equipment: to document proliferation of "plantation" in naming: 65 images

Field Notes and Journaling

I took random notes of daily activities and relevant encounters and conversations that occurred both in and out of the field.

Transcription and Analysis

Interviews were transcribed using a Sony transcriber (property of the University of Tennessee Anthropology department) and digitized for CD recording in the UT Media Lab. The transcript and audio CD were sent to all participants and consultants to be checked for clarity of message and accuracy.

Transcripts were cut and pasted into a single document totaling 346 pages, and coded by electronic keyword searches: *plantation, community, gated, secure, safe, we, they, space, place, home, development, change, crime,* and *private.*
Transcripts were also analyzed for content using the following coding terms: *racism, inequality, political economy, PER (political economy of racism), plantation, history, RH (reinventions of history), identity, power, NPS (National Park Service Study), GRM (grassroots mobilization), resistance, whiteness, white privilege, reinventions, SP (space and place), gated community development, Confederate Illusions, agency, nation, south,* and *landscape.* This process helped to define the emergent themes of the research, resulting in the current configuration of the dissertation chapters.

APPENDIX B
PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS (GULLAH & LISTSERVE)

Melissa Hargrove is in anthropology at the University of Tennessee-Knoxville. Given the various mechanisms through which the Gullah/Geechee Sea Island Coalition seeks accurate representations of Gullah/Geechee people and our history, heritage, and culture, we will be hosting a number of focus groups so that Professor Hargrove can dialogue with Gullah/Geechees and others that dwell in the Nation face-to-face concerning her research. However, we also realize that many of you on this list would be left out of making contributions based on your observations living and/or visiting. Thus, I suggested having a discussion online concerning her research.

The questions that she would like to address are below. Please send back your comments on any or all of them here so that we can dialogue on this matter. If you would not like to be quoted in her research or would like your identity to remain unknown when you make a statement, please put a sentence stating that in your response. This way, she will not include your remarks in a research document or will not directly cite your e-mail address, name, and other identifying mechanisms.

I look forward to the online discussion being as interesting as the live meetings have been thus far.

Peace and blessings,
Queen Quet
Chieftess of the Gullah/Geechee Nation
List Moderator

Melissa Hargrove Research interests and agenda:
Following are the four major components of my research interests, as well as the practical issues I am proposing to gather information about:

1) Racism and structured inequality as a site of cultural andpolitical-economic struggle
Access to jobs with a living wage (by the standards of universal human rights)/hassles of travel back and forth to resort spaces to work
Political marginalization and lack of representation within local government
Racialized economic policies (contract work and bidding, black owned business, gentrification, etc.)

2) Space and place within the Gullah Nation
Reinvented landscapes- how do gated communities reinvent familiar landscapes, thus making them unfamiliar and robbing former residents of their cultural ties to place?
How have people been impacted by gated community development?
The phenomenon of naming spaces and places plantation- how do Gullah/Geechee people feel about this practice?
Why, from their perspectives, is the word used so often and in the ways it is used?
What images does the word conjure for each individual?
What would you say to my theory that developers are trying to 'reinvent' the plantation?

Land loss, unethical development practices, local government collusion with developers' agendas, rezoning agendas, etc. (Individual stories regarding the cultural memory of spaces and places that no longer exist as they once were).

3) Power

How is money converted into power in the various Sea Island communities of the Gullah/Geechee Nation?
How does power produce history? (How has knowledge about Gullah/Geechee history been ˜produced" by academics, city planners, tourism operators,
outsiders who move here, etc.) to benefit their constructions of the past, present and future?
How will the NPS agenda to reinterpret Gullah/Geechee culture impact various communities?
What were the levels of community involvement (individual and group) in guiding the study?

4) Agency

How are Gullah/Geechee communities responding to and against these factors?
How are grassroots efforts being organized?
How do Gullah/Geechee people make sense of (and construct meaning regarding) their daily experiences?

APPENDIX C
PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS FOR FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEWS (GATED RESIDENTS)

Melissa D. Hargrove
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Doctoral Dissertation Research
Summer 2003-Summer 2004
(843) 838-7651
mhargrov@utk.edu

Personal Statement:
My name is Melissa D. Hargrove and I am a cultural anthropologist from the University of Tennessee. I am conducting research on gated communities in the South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida Sea Islands in an attempt to understand the dynamics between local communities (within what has been designated by the National Park Service as the Gullah/ Geechee Area) and planned communities. I would appreciate your assistance in this endeavor, particularly in the form of one-on-one interviews or a focus group interview with various members of your community. The following are topical questions of inquiry:

***Background Information:**
Occupation? Where are you from originally? What other areas have you called home? What are the similarities and differences between the community you left and the community in which you now reside? How long have you been a resident of Dataw Island?

* How would you define "*community*"?

* Why did you choose Dataw Island?

* Did you consider other gated areas in your search for residence? If so, which ones?

* What influenced your decision concerning residence inside a gated area?

* What are the positives and negatives of residing in a gated area?

* How would you characterize your knowledge of the surrounding communities (outside the gates) in terms of culture and history?

Participation in this research is voluntary, and all participants may choose to remain anonymous or be identified by name.

VITA

Melissa D Hargrove was born Melissa Denise Hinely on Valentine's Day, 1969. She soon moved to Maryville, Tennessee, where she attended elementary and high school. She entered the University of Tennessee in 1990, after becoming a Mom, in hopes of becoming someone her daughter would be proud of. She later had another daughter, which reinfused her with the energy to go to graduate school in 1997, after earning her BA in anthropology. In 2000, Melissa was awarded her MA from the University of Tennessee and went on to pursue her Ph.D. there as well. She plans to seek employment outside Tennessee.

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