THE MOST SOUTHERN PLACE ON EARTH: 
NEGOTIATING IDENTITIES THROUGH TOURIST ENCOUNTERS IN 
SAVANNAH, GEORGIA 

DISSERTATION 

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By 

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***** 

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ABSTRACT

Tourism in Savannah, Georgia has increased more than three-fold since the publication in 1994 of the true-crime, non-fiction best-selling book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* by John Berendt. This research investigates the relationship between the sudden and dramatic growth of the tourist industry in Savannah and the publication and growth in popularity of Berendt's book and the 1996 movie of the same name. Two dimensions of tourism in Savannah are considered. First, tourists drawn to Savannah as a result of their direct or indirect experience with Berendt's book come with a set of expectations about the authentic nature of Berendt's representations of Southern life, Southern culture, and the city of Savannah. Second, this work considers the relationship between literature and ethnography as it is expressed through a detailed analysis of the book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* and through the specific ways in which tourists ascribe authority and accuracy to this book.

This research explores the ways in which tourists articulate and express these specific expectations and manage the realities they confront as they tour the city. Data in this part of the discussion are derived from 16 years of informal and formal research. The ethnographic research consists of long-term participant observation, judgment sampling, opportunistic informal conversations with tourists, formal and informal interviewing of tourists and cultural brokers, and informal correspondence and conversation with representatives of the tourism industry and the Convention and Visitors Bureau. In addition, this project makes extensive use of internet sources, focusing on reader reviews posted on a variety of web sites, including those sponsored by Amazon.com, and from chat
rooms and bulletin boards linked to a variety of Savannah and book-related websites. The second major methodology used in this analysis is a close semiotic analysis of the book, the movie, and the products derived from these sources. Here, materials are considered for the forms and degrees to which they express themes articulated by tourists in the field and on internet websites.

This research shows significant relationships between tourists' expectations based on their exposure to The Book and The Movie based on Berendt’s book, and their activities in Savannah. Tourists have been attracted to Savannah in substantially larger numbers since the 1994 publication of The Book and have been found to confirm or construct their ideas about the city of the Savannah in particular and the US southeast in general based on their book-inspired tourist experiences.
Dedicated to Professor Erika Bourguignon

for her many years of patience and guidance.

My gratitude and admiration cannot be fully expressed.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to acknowledge the contributions of many individuals who, over too many years, have contributed to this effort personally and professionally. A work of this scope, and one that has been conducted over many years, necessarily has relied on the help and support of many people. These words scarcely acknowledge my debt to them all.

Many years ago, when I first expressed interest in traveling to Savannah, Ann Cothran found her own renewed sense of family connection to the city. I wish to thank her for accompanying me on many trips and for her insider’s perspective on the magical significance of Savannah in the Southern mind.

I wish to thank the staff of the Esther Shaver Bookstore in Savannah, Georgia, for their many years of consultation and service. In particular, Alice has a special place in my thanks for providing conversation and books at a distance between my visits.

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Several of my students and advisees over the years have developed their own interests and research in tourism, and working with them has provided for me many opportunities for our mutually beneficial and stimulating conversation. In particular, I wish to acknowledge the interesting and important work of Molly Schultz, Jane Ferguson, and Christian Skotte, and to offer them my thanks.

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the spark of ideas with her and have the enormous benefit of hours of conversation. Together we collected many of these data and artifacts, and with her I was able to develop and refine many of the ideas expressed in this work. Our shared love for the South undergirds this project.

My deepest thanks if offered to the members of my committee for their many hours of consultation and collaboration. Without their generosity, flexibility, and patience, none of this would have been possible. Amy Zaharlick has provided valuable support and insight and many productive lines of questioning. Adrienne Frostholm has stepped in as the Graduate School representative has made valuable contributions and offered excellent advice during these final days. In particular, Amy Shuman has for some years acted as an intellectual stimulant and support system, encouraging my interest in tourism and supplying me with many suggestions and leads.

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PUBLICATIONS


FIELDS OF STUDY

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION:
ONLY IN SAVANNAH

The contemporary world presents many problems and opportunities for anthropologists. Gone are the days when anthropology was the natural science of so-called primitive peoples... The subject matter of anthropology broadly conceived is 'difference', the study and understanding of 'otherness' in its various forms...

(Graburn 1995:158)

General Introduction

The subtitle of this chapter, and, in many important respects, the underlying spirit of this research, is taken from the title of a 1995 locally best-selling book written by the Savannah, Georgia, journalist Tom Coffey, known to Savannahians as "the dean of the city's newsroom" (Coffey 1995:xiv). The research described in this dissertation concerns the nature of the city of Savannah and the ways in which this nature has been and become expressed by the hosts and experienced by the guests through tourist encounters. In particular, it concerns the ways in which identities--of both host and guest--are understood and negotiated in the context of Savannah tourism.

The character of tourism in Savannah over the last decade has been radically transformed by several central events. First, the release of the motion picture, Forrest Gump stimulated interest in Savannah because of its setting in the city and the massive marketing efforts that entailed Savannah-specific icons, such as the squares in the Historic District, and the benches particular to these Savannah squares. A second event, of international
scope, was intended to draw large numbers of tourists to Savannah and bring wide attention to the city. The 1996 Summer Olympics used Savannah as a venue for yachting events. Although this effort was locally regarded as unsuccessful in terms of attraction of Olympics tourists and the generation of revenues, the occasion of the Olympics planning and marketing efforts directed considerable local attention and investment in the growing tourism economy in Savannah (Stastny 1997:1B). The third event, and the event under consideration in this research, was the publication in 1994 of the true-crime, non-fiction book by John Berendt, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. The popularity of this book, measured by its sales record and appearance on the *New York Times* Bestseller List for a record 216 weeks, resulted in previously unknown attention to the city of Savannah.

The next chapter outlines some of the history of tourism in Savannah and provides a survey of specific current efforts to increase and diversify tourism. Although not the primary focus of this research, the context of tourism in Savannah provides the framework into which the research problem fits. The coincidence in a short period of time of the release of *Forrest Gump*, the Summer Olympics, and the publication of the work known to residents simply as "The Book" provide a point of departure for my own long-term research on regional identity and tourism in Savannah. The central problem undertaken here focuses on the direct connections between the growth and diversification of the tourism industry and related commercial enterprises in Savannah and the publication of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. More precisely, this research concerns the processes by which identities are articulated, exchanged, and assimilated in tourist encounters.

In 1991, notably before the publication of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, in the first deliberate and concerted effort to increase tourism to the city, the Savannah
Convention and Visitors Bureau developed a five year plan in collaboration with local businesses and residents, and aimed at steady, focused increases in tourism, with particular focus on expanding the convention market and attracting diverse populations of tourists.

During the middle of the 1990s, after the publication of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, the city of Savannah was transformed in every measurable sense. This transformation entailed changes in many aspects of local life, from economy to housing development, from the earnest and deep appreciation of the local understanding of the beauty of the city to the manufacture of many exportable and marketable versions of Savannah. The most striking aspects of the transformations in Savannah are evident in the context of tourism.

Visitors to Savannah arrive with a variety of preconceptions and expectations about the city, about Savannah as a proxy for the American south, and about their most recent exposure to Savannah through social connections or through a variety of popular media. For example, Savannah has famously served as the shooting location for many recent popular films, including the November, 2000 release of the film, The Legend of Bagger Vance, directed by Robert Redford. Set and filmed in Savannah, potential tourists are attracted to the city, in part, through their experience with this film.

*Introduction to the Context of Tourism in Savannah*

Visitors come to Savannah for a variety of reasons. According to the Convention and Visitors Bureau, travel for business ranks second as a reason for travel after pleasure. Based on my own fieldwork, conducted over a sixteen year period and including an overall sample of 250 formal and informal interviews, 45 individuals, or 18%, cite "personal heritage" or "family connection" as their direct motivations for travel to Savannah.
Motivations for visiting, specific events that trigger tourism, such as a music festival, specific individual purpose of visit (in general, distinguished as "business" or "vacation"), length of stay, amount of disposable income available and amount spent, specific location during stay in Savannah (for example, varying by Historic District or Tybee Island), and a variety of other factors shape and regulate the individual tourist experience in Savannah, and, reflectively, such individual experiences interact with expectations and with the actual reality encountered. Seasonal travel provides still other inflections that regulate the kinds and levels of tourist activity in Savannah. Spring, in general, draws tourists interested in tours of homes and the vivid emergence of spring gardens. The beginning of March marks the beginning of the tourism season, and commences in earnest with the various and protracted St. Patrick's Day celebrations. The publication, Simply Savannah, a quarterly pamphlet produced by the Savannah Convention and Visitors Bureau, for example, lists some of the following events in their February-May 1997 issue:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>08</td>
<td>Wormsloe celebrates the founding of Georgia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-17</td>
<td>St. Patrick's Day Celebration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-17</td>
<td>St. Patrick's Day Encampment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>01</td>
<td>First Saturday on the Waterfront</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04</td>
<td>Easter Brunch on the Savannah Queen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Confederate States Memorial Day Ceremony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summer attracts tourists interested in water-related activities such as yachting and sailing. A small sample of tourist attractions listed in the July-August 2000 section of Savannah Scene, another publication produced by the Savannah Convention and Visitors Bureau, lists some of the following as attractions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>03</td>
<td>Fireworks over Tybee Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Neptune Seafood Festival</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sand Gnats AAA Professional Baseball games</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4
throughout summer Dolphin tours

The Savannah Convention and Visitors Bureau markets a variety of activities in the arts and historical attractions during the Fall. Winter attractions include Christmas displays along the Savannah River, shopping, and a variety of Hanukkah and Kwansa celebrations.

This research primarily concerns not the largest scale of the tourism industry in Savannah, nor the specific nature of the variety of regional and local special attractions. Rather, this research focuses on the relationships between several elements of the tourist industry in Savannah, Georgia: The primary issue concerns the book, *Midnight In the Garden of Good and Evil*, and its dynamic relationship with the city and its visitors. On more subtle, specific, and obscure levels, this research seeks to uncover the ways in which an *image* of Savannah is sought, the ways in which such image is produced, marketed, and consumed by tourists. This entails analysis of the deliberate efforts to package and market some essence of "Savannah," those incidental and accidental consequences of marketing, and the fluid and changing nature of visitors' perceptions of the city as a symbol of ethnicity and southern authenticity.

Savannah, Georgia, embodies for residents and tourists alike mythologies animated by experience. Untouched by the ravages of the Civil War through a grand gesture of General William Sherman in issuing to President Abraham Lincoln "a gift" of Savannah, the city was spared the devastation of burning and pillaging. For decades during the middle nineteenth century, Savannah was the richest city in the southeast, monopolizing the cotton industry and serving as a major port city. During the end of the nineteenth and early twentieth century, Savannah fell into economic despair and cosmetic ruin. The formerly
shinning city by the sea had become, in the words of Lady Astor, like "a beautiful woman with a dirty face" (Berendt 1994:146). By the middle of the twentieth century, the historical preservation effort in Savannah had begun, residents became self-consciously aware of their sense of place, and the first interest in tourism in Savannah was becoming evident from inside and outside the city.

Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil first appeared as a Random House true crime non-fiction publication in the winter of 1994. The publication of this book has transformed the tourism industry in the city of Savannah, Georgia, indeed, the city itself. The complex interactions between The Book, as it is called by natives, the city, tourists' expectations, and Southern identity is the subject of this research. This transformation in Savannah tourism has entailed dramatic demographic, economic, and geographic shifts and re-alignments. It has also involved a conspicuous and proliferating set of packaging opportunities for the city in terms of image and local identity. Issues of local and regional identity are embedded, in turn, in larger frameworks of race, class, gender, and sexuality. Public interest in Savannah as a tourist site derived from exposure to Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil brings with it a potential set of specific expectations. The negotiations of such expectations and actual tourist experiences is expressed through many interactions and exchanges.

Introduction to the Influence of The Book on Savannah Tourism

Public interest in Midnight of the Garden of Good and Evil has been overwhelming since its first appearance in 1994 and continues through the present. The book has led to an unabridged audio cassette version, a major motion picture directed by Clint Eastwood, a documentary produced by the Arts and Entertainment television network, several internet
web sites, chat groups and fan clubs, and countless souvenirs and Book-related products. A wide range of products, souvenirs, and keepsakes have appeared, each bearing images of central characters and locations from the book. These souvenirs are priced from a couple of dollars to several hundred dollars.

Between 1994 and 2000, the transformation of the city of has been marked by sudden and dramatic transformations in the real estate market that includes, at the extreme for some properties in choice historic district locations, near tripling of value, and by a vigorous building effort in the downtown area and increases in numbers of tourists and the influx of tourist revenue. On average, during the period from 1995 through 1997, historic district, downtown, and nearby Tybee Island properties increased in value a total of 22.5% (Sechler and Fogaley 1997:1). Properties in the historic district, for example, have increased from an average 1996 assessment of $421,090 to a 1997 assessment of $526,000. Although such compiled statistics are not available for more recent years, my evaluation of the real estate section of The Savannah Morning News indicates that the value of Historic District and Tybee Island properties continues to climb.

Developments in the tourism industry have seen nearly three times as many tourists as the city had previously welcomed annually. During 1995, the tourism industry began to grow dramatically, after two steady years of decline even in the midst of the modest growth of the industry. Popular sentiment among the Savannah Convention and Visitors Bureau, many other members of the hospitality industry and the city's old guard argue that the rise in tourism over the past decade represents the continuing success of the combined and concerted efforts over many years of many agencies responsible for attracting revenue-generating visitors to Savannah. Still others factions, particularly those whose economic
interests are immediately emergent from activities and products related to The Book, claim that the book alone has acted as catalyst for the dramatic increase in tourism that has resulted in significant growth in the tourism segment of Savannah’s economy. Tourism-related jobs have risen in numbers from 16,223 to 20,529, total number of visitors from 1.5 million to nearly 2 million, and a growth rate for the tourism segment of the Savannah economy of approximately 9 per cent (Wittish 1998:22; Savannah Convention and Visitors Bureau 1996).

In January 1994 John Berendt’s book, Midnight In the Garden of Good and Evil, was published by Random House. Within six weeks, the title had reached the New York Times Best Seller List. By the spring of 1996, the book had appeared on the list for the 100th week. Before its run as a best seller would end, it would last longer than any hard cover non-fiction title in history. When John Berendt arrived in 1985, Savannah’s tourism industry was modest but successful. Throughout the 1980s, for example, the numbers of hotel rooms available in Savannah increased from 3,330 in 1980 to 4,960 in 1984. By 1998 the total revenues attributed to the tourism segment of the economy has been calculated at $907 million, the total number of visitors has been estimated at 2.62 million, and the tour and derived industries associated with The Book have generated incalculable revenues, although some estimates claim the direct tourism impact at approximately one-third of total tourism money (Savannah Convention and Visitor’s Bureau 1997-1998).

It has been estimated that between 40 and 60 per cent of all visitors come because of The Book, or, at the least, have heard of the book (Wittish 1998:23). Many tourist locations have been stimulated or, in some cases, created by singular events or products such as the publication of best selling books or popular films. Many tourist sites have
grown as a result of the production of a movie or its setting in some locale. The novel, The Bridges of Madison County single-handedly drove a small but steady tourist pilgrimage for several years after its publication. In Savannah a long history of association with Hollywood and independent film production companies has created a small event-based attraction to the actual filming of motion pictures and to the spots where movies had been filmed. The films, Forrest Gump (1993), Glory (1989), and, more recently, The General's Daughter (1999) and The Legend of Bagger Vance (2000) have produced tourist interest. Once the visitor has been drawn to the Garden City, as Savannah calls itself, the quest for the authentic Savannah experience, the search for the scenes and people of The Book begins.

More than the dramatic economic social effects of this increase in general interest in Savannah expressed through tourism, the city itself has been confronted with a rare set of challenges and opportunities to present itself to a vast national and international audience. Indeed, rather than seeking this opening to the world, the managers and residents of Savannah have been called upon to cultivate, package, and dispense a set of images of itself. This production of image is part of a dynamic, collaborative process that entails tourists, tour guides, and retail merchants, in other words, the persons and encounters that take place in the tourism staging area.

Introduction to Issues of Regional Identity and Savannah Tourism

As tourists approach their encounters in Savannah mediated through their images and expectations from The Book, they are required to negotiate the actual reality they experience, reconciling it with their preconceptions and the abstractions they have developed over the reading of The Book or the viewing of the film and the planning of the trip.
Additionally, many tourists, regardless of their own origins, approach Savannah, Georgia with assumptions and ideas about the South itself.

Tourism entails a number of fluid exchanges between hosts and guests. In addition to the many obvious economic exchanges, tourists and tourees negotiate a variety of identities in terms of each other, in terms of the nature of their encounter, and in terms of the locale and setting. In the American South, a variety of cultural identities are presented, consumed, modified, and assimilated by hosts and guests. Following Dean MacCannell's (1977, 1984, 1999) formulations of constructed and re-constructed ethnicity and Pierre van den Berghe's discussion of re-created ethnicity and tourism, and MacCannell's (1973, 1999), Donald Redfoot's (1984), and Erik Cohen's (1988) discussions of authenticity and tourism, the argument advanced here contends that the chief export commodity of the tourism industry in the South is both an explicit and tacit version of The Old South, particularly where conservation of gender, sex, class, race, and sexuality stratification is at issue. In particular this argument examines the case of tourism in Savannah, Georgia, and the effects of the 1994 book and 1997 derived movie, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil.

Summary of Issues Argued

In particular, the following arguments are advanced in this dissertation:

(1) The packing and marketing of historical and cultural sites in Savannah, the presentation of the Savannah identity to tourists, and the multiple subsidiary product-based industries emergent from tourism combine to demonstrate the contention that various versions of the image of The Old South are central to attracting and entertaining tourists in Savannah;
(2) The publication in 1994 of the book by John Berendt, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, increased tourism steadily and dramatically each year following the appearance of the book, reaching a peak around the production and release of a major motion picture based on the true-crime book. The interest in Savannah generated by the book and the movie has created new cultural niches for the production and consumption of tourism encounters and products. These new tourism opportunities have compelled the city to market itself in terms of the specific dimensions and challenges posed by the book. Similarly, tourists engage in a process of expressing, reflecting upon, and perhaps re-organizing their own identities in terms of how they understand those identities in the context of the material presented by Savannah.

(3) The plot and characters in the story of *Midnight* are, according to readers, fans and by local accounts, exotic and colorful. The cast of characters of this non-fiction story include an African-America drag queen, an African-American voodoo woman, a closeted social-climbing white gay antiques dealer, a drug-using white male hustler, and a variety of locals who display various degrees and manifestations of quirkiness. On the surface, such explicit plot details of a gay sexual relationship that ends in manslaughter, a drag-queen who extorts abortion money from the parents of her white boyfriend, and a voodoo woman whose services are as crucial to the legal outcome as the defense attorneys appear to disrupt the social conservatism of the tightly organized race, class, and gender hierarchy of Savannah. It is argued that the plot itself precisely undermines the potential disruptive power of these individual and ultimately restores and reifies conventional social arrangements. Tourists drawn to Savannah because of their interest in the book or tourists who happen onto any of the many manifestations of the book's tourist products and
attractions are confronted with these apparent direct challenges to traditional Savannahian sensibilities but find, through the specific constructions of the tourist experiences, that ultimately the social order is restored. This argument will be developed in detail in Chapter 5. The book and movie related tourism in Savannah ultimately conserve rather than challenge the Old South social order in terms of class, race, gender, and sexuality;

(4) Following MacCannell's (1973, 1999) and Cohen's (1988) analyses of authenticity, it is argued that tourists to Savannah--irrespective of regional origin--seek a "real" Southern experience, look for evidence that in Savannah is embodied evidence of The Old South, untouched by time. This is revealed through book chat material and internet interviews as well as on-site interviews and participant observation.

(5) Following MacCannell's analysis of constructed and re-constructed ethnicity, it is argued that tourism in the city of Savannah has been directed in large part by the themes, sites, plots, characters, and issues presented in the book and movie. Combined with the pre-existing foundations and elaborations of self-presentation (Goffman 1959) articulated and reiterated by the tourist industry in Savannah, the tourism that has emerged from the book and book-related considerations emphasizes explicit formulations of Southern, specifically Savannahian, identity based first on its distinctiveness in contrast to other (Northern) identities. Beyond this, such identities are devised first for the entertainment of visitors but, through a variety of processes, ultimately become products consumed by the locals themselves. The observer--whether ethnographer or tourist--can be aware of only the aspects of the constructed, or re-constructed, or re-created identities that result, in part, from the engagement of hosts and guests.

*Origins of the Project*
This research emerges first from personal rather than professional origins. In March of 1984, I made my first trip to Savannah, Georgia. With a long tourist-driven stop off first in Charleston, Savannah seemed the most remote, most exotic, most alluring destination within reasonable driving distance from Springfield, Ohio. I knew little about Savannah, but guessed much. A friend, a member of a many-generational Southern family, told me that her ancestors, if they had lived well, went to Savannah rather than heaven after death. In elementary school, I had been, it turns out, misinformed but persuaded that Georgia had been founded as a penal colony, a permanent haven for the least desirable refugees from British prisons. I knew that Savannah held buried pirate treasure. I knew that it was hot, humid, and coastal.

The route to Savannah is circuitous and long. No major highway conducts the tourist directly to the city. The dedicated visitor must plot a route that navigates the marsh lands and back roads to the most westerly spot on the Eastern coast of the United States. Savannah’s interior is protected well by its remote geography, by its tree-lined miles of driveway, and by its pleasant but remote hospitality. My first trip to Savannah was captivating in a number of respects. The city’s physical beauty and charm attracted me deeply. I found myself contemplating relocating, retiring, and otherwise plotting to spend more time, more real time, in Savannah. My attraction to Savannah has not diminished, but rather intensified over the last fifteen years.

During one of my early trips to Savannah, I was struck by a series of stories in the Savannah Morning News. In May 1981, a local prominent antiques dealer had been charged with manslaughter for the shooting death of a young man in Mercer House, one of the reputedly finest restored homes on Monterey Square. The story caught my attention
because of its vague but persistent suggestion of some homosexual undercurrents in the life and death of the accused and the victim.

In 1994, an explosion took place in Savannah that began as a modest acquisition of a manuscript at Random House in New York. After several rejections when John Berendt shopped around his true crime story of the murder in Savannah, Random House published *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil.* Berendt had been, at this time, a visitor to Savannah of eight years' duration, and had lived part-time in the city for several periods. The murder antedated Berendt's own arrival in Savannah, but, through the people who eventually became his intimates, the murder and its aftermath became the center of the Savannah Berendt came to know. His book explored the shooting, the four trials that followed and an array of real people who became characters in his story. Within a few weeks after its publication, the book shot to the top of the *New York Times* Best Seller List where it stayed for 216 consecutive weeks, ending finally in September 1998 after shattering all previous records for duration on the Best Seller List.

My own experiences in Savannah seemed echoed in Berendt's words. He, as I had, first made the trip from his original visiting base in Charleston. He had fallen in love with the city and wanted to know more. He installed himself as an intimate stranger, to borrow from Hortense Powdermaker (1966) living with and talking to as wide a range of locals as he could. Never posing as anything other than an author doing research, Berendt gained access into both some of the higher echelons and the wilder denizens of Savannah. Berendt conducted his six-month periodic stays as a mixture of ethnography and tourism. He sought historical context for the observations he made. He interviewed, he participated, he moved as widely through as much of Savannah as he could. Finally Berendt created a
novelized non-fiction story that used as its point of reference for character and plot the murder from 1982.

Over the sixteen years of my relationship with Savannah, the city both has changed in some respects greatly and, in some respects has remained stubbornly untouched by the drama loosened by Berendt's book. Early in Berendt's book he is told by one of his characters/informants, "We happen to just like things just the way they are" (Berendt 1994:30). The relatively underdeveloped local tourist industry has expanded and specialized to both create and exploit the newly available niche created by Berendt's book. In terms of its national and international profile, Savannah is now recognized. In gross terms, the city has been substantially and irrevocably changed by the attention the book has attracted. Tourism has risen more than 47 per cent, outstripping the typical annual growth rate of 8-9 per cent. Real estate values in the downtown Historic District have increased significantly over the last six years, with dramatic increases in growth and value in the past four years. The combined force of high prices for houses and the increase in noise, traffic, and influx of strangers has pushed some long-time residents of the historic district out. The real Savannah, the society that lies beyond River Street and away from the cruising tour buses, has gone underground, become more insular and self-contained than before.

I read The Book shortly after it was first published, eager to have any contact with the images of The Garden City during a gray Ohio winter. In gross terms, The Book conveyed some of the sense of Savannah. Its true crime plot line and emphasis on individual eccentricities created rather than captured a mood. When I first read Berendt's novel, I could not have imagined the transformative effects it would hold for my own work and for the city.
My own travels to Savannah involve a fairly long and intensely personal history that entails precisely some of the most striking characteristics of the tourist experience. For many of the sixteen years I have spent time in Savannah, I have offered myself the thin and slightly artificial protection of regarding myself in Savannah as an anthropologist rather than a tourist until about ten years ago, when I realized that, on the one hand I was not precisely doing systematic ethnography and, on the other, that I was not enjoying the rights and privileges of the tourist. As my own attachment to the city grew and matured, I found myself increasingly intellectualizing my relationship to Savannah. Beginning in 1990, I began to realize that the city offered a relatively unexplored, unexploited set of ethnographic opportunities. Soon after I made my own serious biannual efforts to begin deliberate data collection, Berendt's own heavily ethnographic true crime non-fiction account of the city was published.

This research is based on a variety of methodological strategies and sources of data. During the early years of serious interest in ethnographic research in Savannah, I engaged in a range of formal and informal participant-observation techniques, including participating frequently in the licensed tours offered by the dozen or so tour bus companies that operated in Savannah during the period of 1982 to 1994. My engagement with these tours included extensive photography, informal, unstructured interviews with my fellow tour bus guests, and formal and informal interviews with merchants, members of the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and tour operators. After the effects of Berendt's book became evident in the city, my strategies over the years multiplied and my efforts intensified. I moved to a deliberate and systematic rotation through all the city's tours, toured all the historic homes, talked informally and formally with the docents, guides, and guests in a ever-widening
circle. Most significantly, I pursued every public and visible agency of The Book, including specialized "Book" tours, bookstores that specialized in autographed copies of The Book, specialty stores that carried The Book merchandise, and pursuing walking tours of significant sites from The Book as outlined by specially developed maps.

As my research progressed it became clear that much more than economic changes or increases in tourism was at stake. It became clear that something of the very essence of the city, something of the city's understanding of itself and something of the visitors' hopes and expectations of what Savannah held were at issue.

*Introduction to the Theoretical Framework and Summary of Research Problem*

A core question here concerns how, exactly, the book and movie, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* have attracted and sustained the impressive and unprecedented interest in Savannah witnessed by increased numbers of tourists and increased tourism revenues. Commercially a success but critically only modestly impressive, these popular culture representations of Savannah have stimulated interest and, it is argued, tapped into specific widely held expectations and assumptions about the South.

In summary, these data and their analysis concern the processes by which a population becomes distinctive, first to itself, in its own view, second, as versions available to outsiders, and finally, as a reconsumed and assimilable version of the groups' identity. Here the ideas of Haym Soloveitchik's discussion of self-evident and self-conscious culture provides theoretical support for my discussion. In his discussion of Borscht Belt Jewish stand-up comedians, Soloveitchik (1994) describes the nature of Jewish identity as self-evident. The Jewishness of these comedians was clear in performance style, in self-presentation, in content of stand-up routines, and readable and understandable to audiences.
In distinction, during the 1970s and 1980s, Klesmer music enjoyed a renaissance of sorts, and an expansion of audience. The musicians who led this musical movement themselves were not particularly Jewish-identified, and yet the music they played and marketed was self-consciously Jewish. In the case of self-evident culture, the markers that establish cultural identity are simply expressed and understood as part of ordinary daily cultural transactions. In the case of self-conscious culture, the markers of identity are deliberately produced, rendering distilled and selected versions of the culture based largely on those items that are most exportable in the form of products and symbols.

My own use of this distinction comes from the dramatic ways in which Savannah's sense of identity and its role as a representative of Southemess have intensified since the tourism boom began after the publication of The Book. In view of the relatively modest literary nature of The Book, in view of the relatively mild plot for a true-crime non-fiction book, the massive appeal and sustained interest in The Book and Savannah provide the catalyst for a series of compelling research questions. How does a version of identity, a local culture, a self-evident culture become self conscious, in other words, what are the specific forces and dynamics that transform a locally understood and shared sense of identity, marked by specific displays and symbols, into a consumable, translated, and meaningful version of such a local identity? How does this identity become a commodity, a set of artifacts, impressions, and images that are easily produced, packaged, and marketed to tourists? To what degree is this packaged identity congruent with or divergent from the self-evident sense of local or regional identity? How would such distances be measured? Finally, is there a process through which regional, perhaps in this case, ethnic identity is sought by outsiders, expressed to locals, understood and interpreted locally, distilled.
packaged, and sold to outsiders in tourism, appropriated and interpreted by outsiders, and, in the last analysis, as a consequence of performing such versions of local identity, ultimately consumed by locals?
1ND NOTES CHAPTER 1

1 For a map of the Historic District and lay-out of the squares, consult Appendix A, Maps, Historic District.
2 For the sake of simplicity and fidelity to local categories, I will adopt this short-hand throughout the dissertation to refer to the book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*. Likewise, I will adopt the locally accepted short-hand, "The Movie," to refer to the motion picture based on Berendt's book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*.
3 A comprehensive list of films and television programs set in Savannah is discussed below. The effects of film location on tourism in particular tourist sites is discussed in Chapter 3.
4 For a discussion of the significance of self-evident and self-conscious culture, see Soloveitchik (1994) and Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1998). This issue is addressed below in Chapters 5 and 6.
5 A comprehensive list of artifacts and publications related to The Book and The Movie is provided in the discussions of data sources in Chapter 4 and the analysis of data in Chapter 5. Appendix D-2.
6 Properties north of Gaston Street have increased in value anywhere from 10% to 300%. One particular property the value of which I have followed over the entire period of fieldwork began in 1985 at $85,00, moved to $115,000 in 1994, and, by 1997 peaked at $250,000. A more conservative average increase identifies the overall increase of Historic District property values at between 25% and 60%.
7 This estimate is verified by my own fieldwork. While it is important to note that my research involved judgment sampling, opportunistic interviewing, and focus on sites related to The Book, data collected since Spring 1994 suggest that, between 1994 and 2000, a range of 47% to 68% of all tourists in my samples report their attraction to Savannah resulting directly from their exposure to The Book or The Movie.
8 The comprehensive list of films and television shows shot in Savannah during the period 1975 to August 2000 includes:

1975 - Gator
1976 - Roots
1977 - The Lincoln Conspiracy
1978 - The Double McGuffin
1979 - Gold Bug
The Ordeal of Dr. Mudd
Orphan Train
Hopscotch
Carny
1980 - The Slayer
White Death
Scared to Death
When the Circus Came to Town
Cape Fear

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<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td>East of Eden</td>
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<td>Mother Seton</td>
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<td>1983</td>
<td>All My Children</td>
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<td>Tales of Ordinary Madness</td>
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<td>1987</td>
<td>Pals</td>
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<td>My Father My Son</td>
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<td>1969</td>
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<td>1988</td>
<td>The Return of the Swamp Thing</td>
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<td>The Judas Project</td>
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<td>1989</td>
<td>The Rose and Jackal</td>
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<td>Flight of the Intruder</td>
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<td>Glory</td>
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<td>1990</td>
<td>Goldenboy</td>
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<td>Love Crimes</td>
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<td>1993</td>
<td>Forrest Gump</td>
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<td>1994</td>
<td>Now and Then</td>
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<td>1995</td>
<td>Something to Talk About</td>
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<td>1996</td>
<td>Wild America</td>
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<td></td>
<td>The Gingerbread Man</td>
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<td>1997</td>
<td>Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Claudine's Return</td>
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*When, on 06 September 1998 *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* fell from the *New York Times* Best Seller List, it had well exceeded any previous record for non-fiction best sellers. In April of 1999, the first paperback edition of the book was released, and enjoyed a long best seller run as well.*
CHAPTER 2
HISTORY, OFFICIAL HISTORY, AND THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

Savannah is absolutely impervious to the outside world.
John Duncan, local historian
(1997: A & E Television)

*Geography, Environment, Climate*

Savannah, Georgia sits on the Atlantic Coast, salt water marshes, the mouth of the Savannah River and a nearly 300 year sweep of United States history. Located at the center of the Coastal Empire, Savannah lies on the thirty second parallel, along with Tel Aviv, Marrakesh, and Nanking (Berendt 1994:38). Savannah is located in Chatham County, Georgia, and, along with Brantley, Bryan, Camden, Charlton, Chatham, Clinch, Effingham, Glynn, Liberty, McIntosh, Pierce, and Ware comprises The Coastal Empire.

Savannah lies at 51 feet above sea level on the Atlantic Coastal Plain, surrounded by marshes to the east and north and partially wooded terrain to the south and west. Semitropical, the average annual temperature is 67° Fahrenheit, with mid-summer temperatures hovering in the nineties and winter temperatures seldom falling below fifty degrees, registering only 30 days annually with freezing temperatures. Summer temperatures average 80° in summer and 51° in the winter. Devastated by hurricanes several times over the last three centuries, Savannah is directly affected by tropical storms only once every ten years. The average relative humidity is 72 percent, with an average annual rainfall of approximately 50 inches. Average annual snowfall is barely traceable, at about 0.1 inches. Each year, 67 days witness temperatures that soar above 90°.
A Brief Outline of Savannah History

Savannah, Georgia stands unique among most major southern cities for a number of reasons. From the founding of the colony of Georgia by James Oglethorpe in 1733, Savannah has been surrounded by myth and fantasy as much as facts of history. Savannah, according to the approved version of history provided by the city of Savannah in its guide book for tour guides, was founded to provide relief for debtors in England, to provide assistance for the poor and unemployed, to provide relief for Jews and Protestants, and, not incidentally, to act as a buffer between South Carolina and Florida from Spanish incursions. Chiefly, Savannah was founded to supply raw materials not available in England and to create markets for English products.

Known for its history of military, financial, architectural, and philanthropic splendor, Savannah's history is condensed, distilled, and packaged in particular confirmations for marketing purposes. What follows is a brief review of the central aspects of Savannah's history as it is reported in tours and tourism literature.

Georgia has been made famous, with certain tongue-in-cheek pride, in its promotional materials and tours for its three original prohibitions: First, the possession, sale, or consumption of any spirits, including rum and brandies, was strictly forbidden. Second, lawyers were prohibited, preferring that each individual represent himself in legal proceedings. Finally, in a law passed in 1735 and repealed in 1751, Blacks or Negroes were prohibited (Albu and Duncan 1993:5-9).

James Oglethorpe arrived on the coast in the spot that would become Savannah on 01 February 1733. He brought with him a city plan that called for a series of squares built
Georgia's Colonial Government
The American Revolution Siege of Savannah
George Washington Visits
The Great Savannah Fires
Savannah's Squares
Forsyth Park
Major Savannah Monuments
Religion and Churches
George Whitefield and the Bethesda Orphanage
Savannah Jewish Community
African American Churches
Civil War in Savannah
Savannah Black History
Buildings and Their Architects
William Jay
Isaiah Davenport
Charles Blaney Clusky
John S. Norris
Detlef Lienau
William Gibbons Preston
Alfred Gibbons Preston
Alfred Eichberg
Henrik Wallin
Hyman Witcover
Other Significant Structures and Sites
Ironwork
The Forts
Cemeteries
Where Are the Plantations?
Historic Preservation in Savannah
Greens and Greeneries
Common Local Trees and Plants
Modern Day Savannah

Required by city ordinance to limit tour narratives to these dimensions and facts, authorized tours present a particular version of Savannah's history and identity. Into this frame all conflicting narratives, all challenges to the official version, and all expectations that deviate from this narrative are fit. The tourism industry in Savannah is strictly governed by this outline of history.

Outline of Savannah's Historic Preservation Efforts
Savannah first became self-conscious about its own history in 1955 with the establishment of the Historic Savannah Foundation. In 1954, the historic city market, built in 1872, was demolished. The parking lot built on its site and the recognition that many historic buildings and squares had already been lost to a variety of urban development initiatives led to a group of concerned society women and a group of men locally referred to as "the bachelors"1 initiated the effort to preserve historic squares and buildings (Historic Savannah Foundation 2000). The efforts to preserve valuable historic sites and buildings catalyzed and has dominated the claim to Savannah's history. As early as 1921 efforts were organized to stop the destruction of parks, with mixed results and punctuated by conflicts and defeats in 1935, 1946 and 1951 (Albu and Duncan 1993:53).

The 1960s saw the formalization of the preservation efforts, with the establishment of a commission of the Historic Savannah Foundation to inventory all buildings in the Historic District2. By the middle of the 1960s, the Historic District had been identified as an official National Historic Landmark District. It is interesting to note that although The Book, through the dialogue of many of its characters, clearly identifies Jim Williams as a central figure in the preservation effort, his name is never mentioned in the official history of preservation. In contrast, one of his rivals and, in The Book, one of his social enemies, Lee Adler, is mentioned as the only individual named specifically who had a significant role in the preservation effort. His attempts to restore and preserve the Victorian District were, at best estimates, mixed. The report in The Book describes Adler as self-aggrandizing, selfish, and opportunistic. This portrait comes not only through the reports of Williams himself but through a number of characters, situations, and anecdotes. In their history of the

26
preservation effort in the Tour Guide Study Manual, Albu and Duncan assert the following about Lee Adler:

Leopold Adler and others tried to rehabilitate the Victorian District in the 1970s, but this effort was not entirely successful, although many houses were renovated and provided much needed housing for people of all economic levels. Adler was presented with the Crowninshield Award by the National Trust for Historic preservation for his efforts.
(Albu and Duncan 1993:54).

Toledano (1997) centralizes the role of a group of seven women whose vision, charity, and contributions of property and buildings initiated the preservation effort. Clearly the drive to preserve historic Savannah, as embodied in its buildings in the Historic District, originated in many individuals and required the coordinated effort of many constituencies. In contrast to near-by Charleston, to which Savannah is unhappy to be compared, the effort to preserve historic Savannah began rather late in its history and appears to be initiated and directed by internal impulses. The historic preservation effort in Charleston faced entirely different circumstances, including the devastation of Sherman's March to the Sea, several destructive fires that nearly leveled the city, and the brunt of several hurricanes over two centuries. The Historic Charleston Foundation was established in 1947, and, from the first, recognized the benefits of attracting tourists to the city. Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr., a noted architect and city planner, spearheaded and engineered the Charleston preservation effort, and he fostered the idea that Charleston should provide main routes of pleasure travel in the city (Weyeneth 2000:26). Charleston, it is said by Savannahians, is overrun by tourists, where Savannah enjoys the company of its visitors. The coming decade will produce many
challenges for the continuing historic preservation effort as the demands of a tourist-driven economy both insist upon and erode historic authenticity.

The Old South Myth as Pernicious Abstraction and as a Contemporary Southern Export Commodity

In his article for the *Atlantic Monthly*, "The Idea of the South," Benjamin Schwarz begins discussion with a quotation from William Faulkner's *Absalom, Absalom*. Quentin Compson, a native Mississippian, is urged by his Canadian roommate, Shreve McCannon, to describe the South for him. "Tell about the South. What's it like there. What do they do there. Why do they live there. Why do they live at all?" (Schwarz 1997:117).

Tourism in Savannah, like tourism throughout the Southeastern United States, exists in part to answer these questions. Tourism is more important to the local economy in the South than any other single industry in the region and more important in the South than it is in any other region in the United States (Smith 1982:22).

The opportunity to travel is both a great equalizer and a great stratifier. It carries the possibility to minimize difference and to enhance mutual understanding. It also carries the possibility to increase mutual misunderstanding and harden mythmaking and stereotyping. The possibilities of both emerge from the process of myth-making central to narrative construction in history and in tourism. Social myth itself is not the product of history, but often the official version of history is the product of social myth.

The variety of specific characteristics that compose the myth of the Old South can be identified through a many sources and can be found in the literature produced by and for both Southerners and non-Southerners alike. An Old South, glorified in myth, fiction, and history, includes the central figure of the Confederate Dead, a glorified and martyred
limitless white landscape of memory. The Old South widely conjures images of passionate devotion to place, ancestral historical continuity, masculinity realized through honor, femininity expressed through beauty, exterior fragility and interior steel, and a context in which being "citizen" means being white. Everywhere the landscape is draped in Spanish moss. Travel brochures advertise the land that "our" ancestors went to war to save (Smith 1982:24).

Attempts to discover some truth about the South are, at worst, misguided and at best doomed to failure (Schwarz 1997:119). C. W. Cash's seminal work, *The Mind of the South* (1941) argues that the South is not so much a physical place or geographic location but a state of mind, and, further, that state of mind is most vividly expressed in the Carolina piedmont, less than 100 miles north of Savannah. The spirit of the Southern mind, according to Cash, is most significantly typified by "the tendency toward unreality, toward romanticism, and, in intimate relation with that, toward hedonism" (1941:44). In other words, by precisely the process of identity fabrication under investigation is the sense of southerness created.

In attempting to discover "The South" or "The Old South," one must ask first which South? Explored by many scholars, novelists, and travel writers the specific locus and characteristics of the South are somewhat difficult to specify. According to White (1996), in her entry in the *Culture Shock!* series on the South, the South can be distinguished along both geographic and sociocultural dimensions. In terms of geographic distinctions, seven distinct versions exist, including The Deep South, The Carolina Piedmont, The Tidewater, The Upland South, The Lowland South, Appalachia, and The Mason-Dixon Line. More relevant for the present discussion are her sociocultural distinctions, including The Old

*Difference, Identity, Place*

The history of Savannah, the official version of history as approved and disseminated through tourism, and the ways in which identity becomes expressed through the production and consumption of knowledge about people and places constitutes one of the major vehicles through which Southern regional and Savannah-specific identity is constructed. The process of identity formation is directly linked to the industrial, commodity-based nature of tourism.

Tourism is, by its nature, predicated on dislocation. In this dislocated condition, identity exists in a somewhat malleable, liminal state. Gupta and Ferguson (1992) address the apparent "isomorphism of culture" (1992:7) as problematic in several significant respects, all of which have bearing on this research. First, there is the issue of those who live along the borders, the strips--literal and figurative--of national, or regional, boundaries. In the context of my own research in the U.S. Southeast, for example, individuals who live in poor or dangerous sections of a region and work in service industry jobs in resorts or resort areas constitute such a population of border crossing workers. At Kiawah Island, South Carolina, a gated resort community, the majority of backstage workers, including kitchen, laundry, and maintenance workers are African Americans, sometimes recent migrants from Gullah-speaking neighboring islands, who work on Kiawah Island and live on John's Island, a small, rural island that intervenes between Kiawah Island and Charleston, South Carolina. In Savannah, similar disjunctures of place and culture are clear in the contrast between tourists, official hosts, tourists, and backstage tourism industry workers.
The presumption of a monolithic Savannahian identity, and the search for such an identity on the part of visitors to Savannah is possible only and precisely because of the shared and implied willingness to ignore the multiplicity of identities made evident by this first problematic category offered by Gupta and Ferguson.

A second problem raised by the mapping of cultures and identities onto places concerns not border-crossing or border dwelling, but the multiplicity of cultures and identities within a specific locality. The relevance of this issue becomes central in Chapter 5, in the analysis of data, where it is argued that the apparent diversity of "characters" is overwhelmed by the unproblematized link between identity and place and the ultimate triumph of a dominant cultural identity, expressed redundantly throughout the text of The Book and The Movie. The dominant identity, roughly expressed as white, middle class, long-term Savannah historically connected, Confederate or Confederate-sympathetic, heterosexual, and highly gendered in ante-bellum conventional gender roles, actually accounts for cultural difference in the locality (Savannah) and, finally, subsumes and controls, co-opts, or eradicates multiplicities. It will be shown in Chapter 5, in a detailed discussion of the plot and characters in The Book and The Movie, that multiple identities attempt to claim the same locality. In other words, among the "characters" and plots presented by Berendt that figure significantly are a white middle-aged gay antiques dealer, his significantly younger lover, an African American drag queen, and an African American voodoo woman. At first glance, Savannah local cultural identity appears to open widely enough to accommodate these representatives of various cultural identities. In the final analysis, the forces of the dominant cultural identity have prevailed in small textual and actual skirmishes and in the larger resolutions of narrative (and real life) social conflicts and
tensions. The resolution of the conflicts among various versions of local identities comes through the subsuming of varieties under a single and singular local Savannahian identity without regard for difference. The dominant identity that emerges, in this case, through reading The Book, viewing The Movie, and Book-related tourism in Savannah, relies entirely on the erasure and absence of difference, is confirmed by asserting and maintaining itself in the context of historical legitimacy and in the context of dynamic tourist reality. Thus, only the received, official version of history or local experience is confirmed and it is this version of history and identity that reduces or eliminates diversity or competing claims to place.

Complicating this picture, Gupta and Ferguson argue that cultural difference or varieties of local identity are represented only in terms of the framing of these identities in terms of the ways in which these differences and varieties are directly related to the dominant identity. Contested authority or claim over place is refused. A hierarchy of organized sites provides another link of place and identity. A portion of the population lays claim to an ancestral connection to a location, as the middle class descendants of the white planter plantation-owning founders of Savannah. Thus, the relationship between identity and place is intensified through such claims of ancestral entitlement and continuity through a legitimate and continuous ownership. The apparent disruption of race stratification, heterosexual normativity, and class hierarchy posed by The Book is realigned in conventional, socially and historically conserving terms.

In his discussion of historical preservation, identity, and The Alamo, Miguel De Oliver extends the arguments outlined by Gupta and Ferguson (1992) in an examination of the role of tourism in the contest of claims of legitimacy of identity in a location in which
multiple identities are presented and consumed (1996). The Alamo, he argues, has been culturally refashioned by specific private Anglo interests to harmonize with notions of Anglo "us" versus Latino "them." This refashioning has been the direct result of the packaging involved in the creation and marketing of a consumable tourist product in which "[T]he economic extension of the Alamo is not simply a strategically located economic zone, but rather an integral component of the contemporary pilgrimage to the shrine of Texas liberty" (De Oliver 1996:18). In Savannah, the simple binaries of North versus South, white versus black, straight versus gay, legitimate versus subversive, institutional versus peripheral are suffused with historical status and contemporary reification. In spite of the dominant presence of the right-hand terms in these pairs throughout The Book, the implied but central nature of the left-hand terms drives the interpretation of the events in The Book.

It will be shown that tourism driven by interest in The Book or The Movie is sometimes articulated by tourists as a fascination with the exotic elements of drag queens, subterranean gay life, and gun play, the Savannah that is presented to tourists acts primarily to express and reify specific elements of The Old South mythology that precisely subvert and overwhelm these apparently significantly challenges to the idea of a homogeneous conservative Southern ideal.

END NOTES CHAPTER 2

1 The term "bachelor" appears repeatedly as a euphemism for "gay man."
2 See Appendix A, Item A-2, for a map of the Historic District.
The significance of the Confederate Dead is discussed in detail in Brundage (2000) in his Introduction. Brundage argues persuasively that this image produces an infinitely regressive historical depth for Southern identity and produces a saturation of this history in any image or event to which this image is linked.


The concepts of "backstage" and "front stage" as they apply to social spaces is derived from Erving Goffman's seminal work, The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life (1959), and is discussed in greater depth in Chapter 3.

Official hosts includes tour operators, tour guides, hotel front stage personnel, and wait staff in restaurants. Although The Book is non-fiction, and most of the individuals represented in The Book directly or indirectly represent real individuals, these individuals are typically referred to as "characters" even by the real-life individuals represented in The Book.
CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

As seen from the economic point of view, leisure, considered as an employment, is closely allied in kind with the life of exploit; and the achievements which characterize a life of leisure, and which remain as its decorous criteria, have much in common with the trophies of exploit.

(Veblen 1994 [1899]:44)

The discussion that follows surveys a range of literature in anthropology, sociology, and literature on the subject of travel and tourism. From the religious pilgrimages to the Grand Tour to packaged mass tourism, the act of travel entails a number of sociocultural dimensions. Tourists, like anthropologists, stand at the interface between cultures. Tourists, like anthropologists, return to their homes not simply refreshed and re-energized, but equipped to both report on their encounters and to examine their own society anew.

At its center this research is about identity. It explores the ways in which movement of people, objects, and ideas between cultures, between regions, between borders, between segments of society provide opportunities to negotiate aspects and versions of identity in tourist encounters. This dissertation is about the dynamic movement, internally and externally inflected, of concepts of self and cultural identity. Cultural identity in this sense refers to a postmodern interpretation that entails an expansive set of personal and social characteristics that include nationality, regional afiliation, gender, class, and sexuality. In particular, this research addresses some of the ways in which the reiterative quest for identity is explored and satisfied through travel and tourism. As Clifford (2000) suggests, it

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is especially in the work that treads between travel, ethnography, and identity that we find some of the major political and intellectual struggles of the 19th and 20th centuries, and find the new, interstitial frontiers opened in the post-modern 21st century. The literature that bears directly on this research concerns identifying, describing, and understanding precisely these kinds of identity quests among and between hosts and guests.

The field of anthropology of tourism emerged as a coherent systematic body of theory, method, and research problems during the 1970s and, over the last thirty years, has produced some of the most complex and interesting contemporary research in anthropology. It is possible to review the history of the anthropology of tourism in terms of its chronology, beginning with some of the most widely recognized earliest formal anthropological studies of the meanings and effects of tourism, tracing the research through time, noting branching interests that diverge from the original central research problems, and accounting for the introduction of methods and theories from other areas of anthropology. In this case, the history of the anthropology of tourism might be understood as beginning with Nelson Graburn's "Tourism: The Sacred Journey" (1977) and continuing through a great diversity of themes and approaches across many disciplines in the present.

It is also possible to understand the anthropology of tourism in terms of major themes in the research. In this frame, a broad inventory of themes includes: the paradox of being local (or traditional or ethnic) in a global world; tourism and ritual; tourism as both mythological and as adventure; tourism and social change; the search for identity (both identity of the visited and the self-actualization of the tourist); the search for the exotic cultural other; the search for authenticity; tourism as heritage activity; and, the multiple levels on which anthropology and tourism share methods and objectives.
The literature discussed in this chapter is divided into four sections. (1) The first section outlines some of the major concerns in the history of the anthropology of tourism. This is followed by a brief survey of some of the major assumptions that organize and some contemporary controversies that characterize the anthropology of tourism of particular relevance for this dissertation; (2) In the second section, the major theoretical material that informs this analysis is discussed, focusing on the relationship of tourism to identity, ethnicity, and authenticity. (3) The third section reviews significant literature movie on induced tourism. Of particular interest here is the question of the measurable effects of pull factors and their impact on tourist expectations the tourism industry at a particular site; (4) Finally, a fourth section discusses relevant scholarship on the rapport between literature, travel writing and ethnographic writing. Among the issues covered in this section are the ways in which literature and ethnographic writing, tourism and ethnography are guided by some surprisingly similar motivations, goals, methods, and results.

The Anthropology of Tourism

Beginning in the late 1970s, anthropology began in earnest to explore the nature and impact of tourism on the subjects and locations traditionally their domain of interest. Underlying this movement were two parallel intellectual and political developments in the discipline. First, as globalization and acculturation shifted economic focus from colonialism to other, perhaps less obvious forms of imperialism, the indigenous societies who had been traditionally the subjects of anthropological investigation began to be seen globally as both recreational sites and expanding economic opportunities for the industrialized West in regional and national characteristics of the Third and Fourth Worlds. Second, as anthropology took a reflexive turn during the 1970s, striking similarities between the nature
of anthropological fieldwork and the nature of travel and tourism began to attract substantial intellectual interest and introspection in the discipline. Such similarities stimulated considerable consternation as well as productive research.

As travel in the traditional sense moved toward mass tourism, tourism fell under intense criticism in the academic world. Tourism, in this view, became part of the global economic forces that eroded the integrity of traditional cultures. Regarded as debased, cheapened, and inauthentic, tourism was seen as exploitative and superficial. The historian Daniel Boorstin, in a widely-read 1964 essay entitled, "The Lost Art of Travel," summarizes these views (Boorstin 1964). Similarly, the sociologists McHugh, Raffel, Foss, and Blum (1974) describes the modern tourist as a traveler who moved from Hilton to Hilton, without ever encountering the local population. In this sort of experience, it is argued, travel cannot broaden, cannot contribute to the tourist's understanding of the culturally different. In part, initial anthropological interest in tourism responded directly to such assertions about tourism, and attempted to situate tourism in its larger social structural and symbolic contexts. Early research in the anthropology of tourism focused on tourism as ritual, as leisure, and as quasi-religious experience for the tourist. Somewhat later, the anthropology of tourism took on the assertion that the tourist settles for an inauthentic version of the exotic other, proposing that the tourist precisely seeks authentic experiences. Boorstin argues that modern tourists relinquish the genuine experiences that had previously been achieved through traditional travel, substituting, perhaps preferring instead the packaged superficial and contrived experiences offered by tourism. For Boorstin and others, travel had been, in previous times, motivated by curiosity, by desire to genuinely experience that which is beyond one's immediate universe of experience. Travel allowed the traveler to
escape boredom, elude the familiar, and discover the exotic. Travel, in the traditional sense, allowed the traveler to encounter and experience the natives. Modern travel is organized in precisely such ways as to protect the tourist from the natives. Modern travel had become a cheapened, diluted, fabricated, contrived experience.

During the early 1970s, anthropologists interested in tourism sought to complicate Boorstin’s somewhat decisive, extremely judgmental assessment of tourism. Several issues formed the center of the social science response to such arguments. First, the focus on the supposed motivations of the traveler renders invisible the salient historical and economic facts that surround the relationship between the traveler’s home society and the host society. Travel, in the sense Boorstin nostalgizes, was possible largely as a result of historically colonial relationships in which the host culture had come to be understood as an extension of the economic and cultural resources available to the traveler’s society. Second, phrased in terms of the loss of some idealized traditional culture, with agency attributed exclusively to the tourist, these early commentaries on modern tourism overlook the economic self-determination that often underlies emergent tourism industries, as a result of deliberate local efforts to engineer a form of autonomy. Third, such analysis fails to grasp the significance of tourism for both hosts and guests, in terms of identity and ethnicity. Tourism allows guests to re-evaluate and experience their own senses of cultural identity, while, at the same time, providing for the host society a set of opportunities for conservation, preservation, and re-definition of ethnicity. Each of these anthropological responses is examined below.

Rather than regarding tourism as symptomatic of alienation, rampant capitalism, and exploitation, many scholars sought the deeper meaning and significance of tourism for both hosts and guests. Victor Turner (1967) for example, and Turner and Turner (1978) situate
tourism as a ritual and transformative experience, a modern-day manifestation of religious pilgrimages. Among the early significant contributions to the emergent field of the anthropology of tourism is Dean MacCannell's discussion of authenticity and tourism (1973). Derived in part from Talcott Parsons's (1937, 1964) push to integrate the analysis of social structure with social behavior and belief, and on Erving Goffman's distinctions between front and back areas in public spaces (Goffman 1959), MacCannell argues that the study of tourism allows for precisely the study of social institutions in which the relationship between specific beliefs and behavior are evident in specific social situation. Particularly, MacCannell and Nelson Graburn (1989 [1977]), at this time, pick up the strains of Turner and emphasize the quasi-religious and ritual aspects of tourism, focusing on the ritual aspects of the tourist experience and arguing that tourism "absorbs some of the social functions of religion in the modern world" (MacCannell 1973:589). Graburn describes tourism as "a sacred journey," authorized by both actual religious purposes and by a shared moral justification for pursuit of self-interested recreational activity.

Two major papers summarize the orientations and foci of research in the anthropology of tourism. Dennison Nash (1981) sets out a comprehensive statement of definition and scope of the anthropology of tourism. The anthropological approach, to that date, emphasized historical and cross-cultural approaches, focusing on the meanings, the causes, and the consequences of tourism. Nelson Graburn (1983) subdivides these interests further, organizing anthropological tourism research in the following categories: (1) tourism as ritual and play; (2) tourism and pilgrimage; (3) varieties of tourism in terms of class; and (4) the dynamics of change.

The sociology of tourism traces its history along generally parallel lines.
Cohen (1984) outlines the previous twenty years of the sociology of tourism, tracing the major conceptual and theoretical approaches and principal themes. Conceptual approaches include emphasis on: (1) tourism as commercialized hospitality; (2) tourism as democratized travel; (3) tourism as modern leisure activity; (4) tourism as a modern variety of the traditional pilgrimage; (5) tourism as an expression of basic cultural themes; (6) tourism as evaluative process; (7) tourism as a type of ethnic relations; and, (8) tourism as a form of neocolonialism. Major issues and themes in the sociology of tourism include emphasis on: (1) the tourist; (2) the relationships between tourists and locals; (3) economic development and the structure of tourist systems; and, (4) the social and economic impact of tourism. A somewhat more complex accounting of the sociology of tourism produced by Dann and Cohen (1991) offers a slightly different framework, emphasizing the following theoretical approaches: (1) the developmental (evolutionary) perspectives; (2) neo-Durkheimian perspectives, including here Dann's work and the significant paradigm shift offered by MacCannell (1973, 1999 [1976]) and the contributions of the anthropologists Turner (1967, 1973) and Graburn (1989); (3) conflict and critical perspectives, such as those offered by Turner and Ash (1975); (4) functionalist perspectives; (5) Weberian perspectives; (6) formalism, phenomenology, and ethnomethodology; and (7) symbolic interactionism. Cohen's earliest contributions (1979) distinguish types of tourism, arguing that the search for the authentic (ex., MacCannell 1973) and the pursuit of pilgrimage (ex., Graburn 1989 [1977]) fail to adequately account for the motivations and characteristics of the modern tourist experience. Cohen's model of five types of tourism attempts to provide a phenomenological typology that better describes the range of travelers and destinations than earlier models had done. Cohen's models of tourist experience emphasize the "different
meanings which interest in and appreciation of the culture, social life and the natural
environment of others has for the individual traveler" (Cohen 1979:183).

During the early years of the anthropology of tourism much attention was devoted
to definitions of tourism, tourist, and hosts. Valene Smith (1977) defines tourism as a
function of three key elements: leisure time, discretionary income, and positive local
sanctions. Dennison Nash (1981) offers a definition of tourism that proposes that tourism
results from:

the intersection of the histories of two or more cultures or subcultures. Seen in this
way, it becomes a process involving the generation of tourists, their travel, and
their subsequent encounter with people in some host society. Such an encounter
implies transactions between tourist, their agents, and hosts which affect the people
and the culture involved.

(Nash 1981:463)

Persistent among major themes of interest in more than thirty years of research in
the anthropology of tourism, and among the most salient for my research are the aspects of
life that provide contrasts between the tourist and the host. Distinctions between tourist and
host include: alienated work life vs. authentic existence; access to discretionary income vs.
lack of sufficient money for travel; cultural self-confidence vs. absence of broader cultural
exposure and education; and, in general, cultural inversions of the ordinary daily life of the
tourist (Passariello 1983). Passariello’s work is especially interesting in the ways in which
it relies on empirical research based on her fieldwork on middle-class Mexican resort
tourism. Based on her observations of tourists’ patterns of motivations and experiences,
Passariello proposes that the search for inversions motivates tourists, wherein individuals
are able to transform significant aspects of their behavioral repertoire. Transformations are
across dimensions of environment, class and lifestyle, “civilization,” formality, and health
and experienced on continua such as winter–summer, simplicity–self-indulgence, urban–nature, sexual restriction–sexual license, and stress–tranquility (see Burns 1999:87-90).

Among the theoretical approaches and principal issues in the anthropology and sociology of tourism the following are of greatest relevance for this dissertation.

*Ethnicity, Re-constructed Ethnicity, and Authenticity*

The literature relevant to this discussion involves a variety of disciplinary and theoretical perspectives. The sociologists Erving Goffman (1959), Dean MacCannell (1976), and Erik Cohen (1972, 1979, 1988), the historian Daniel Boorstin 1972), the geographer George Hughes (1995), and many anthropologists whose research is discussed in the following pages have explored the relationships between hosts and guests in terms of two major considerations: the negotiation of cultural identities and the search for cultural or human authenticity. These two themes in the anthropology of tourism constitute the theoretical basis of my research. Each of these issues, ethnicity and authenticity, has a long and extensive body of empirical and theoretical literature in anthropology and sociology, and each has direct and specific application to my research on tourist expectations and encounters in Savannah, Georgia.

*Ethnicity and Reconstructed Ethnicity*

Ethnicity in tourism begins with consideration of the nature and content of the specific expectations tourists bring to the site and how their expectations are shaped, modified, and transformed as consequences of their actual discoveries. As they move through a series of face-to-face encounters with hosts, as they explore sites and pursue secondary discoveries, their initial expectations, potentially, change in response to the social and symbolic realities they confront.
From the early 1980s continuing through present research, much tourism scholarship has focused on the ways in which identity figures significantly in the worlds of hosts and guests and in the extraction, packaging, and marketing of tourism products by the larger tourism industry and related concerns. The expression, self-awareness, display, and modification of identity in ethnic tourism is a dialectical process, shaped by the mutually stimulating presentations and experiences of tourists and locals. Tourists and hosts are in a constant, dynamic press of negotiating identities. Tourism produces change of many sorts.

In the words of McHugh, Raffel, Foss, and Blum "the idea of travel as a source of change converts the idea of change into noticing what was unnoticed, where what was unnoticed was not the grounds of change itself but the various things which now become visible, given the security of those grounds" (1974:149). Tourists come to their experience with some sense of a core, stable understanding of who they are, in terms of gender, race, class, sexuality, regional identity, and a variety of major and minor markers of social location. Their encounters might disrupt or challenge their identities, or their encounters might serve to intensify and reinforce their previously established senses of themselves.

Likewise hosts have a fairly stable core of components of identity that form the nucleus of the product or performance they sell to tourists. The assumptions about these components are arrived at through both explicit tacit agreements, whether through guidelines and provisions established by tourism bureaus or government agencies or determined through consensus and practice. There is, however, some fundamental variation in the versions of the official story, and some margin of discretion in which individual tour guides, merchants, and brochure authors create specifically tailored extractions of local history, events, and identity. This variation allows a tourism industry to serve a range of
expectations, desires, and needs of a range of constituencies. In Savannah, for example, the tourism and tourism-related industries effectively serve white tourists who might seek a nostalgic glimpse into an ante-bellum world of rigid race, gender, and class stratification as well as African-American tourists interested in cultural heritage tourism. Gay tourists and true crime enthusiasts alike find arrangements and elaborations of the elements of The Book from identical tours, products, and publications. Similarly, as individual tourists exhaust their interest in one specific interest in locally available attractions, for example, Savannah’s Civil War history, they can move to other spheres of activity easily, for example, to Revolutionary War history in Savannah. In each case, the tourist is subtextually or overtly asked to accommodate new material into the ongoing narrative constructed as a result of tour planning and direct experience. There are, presumably, numerous combinations of sites, sights, events, activities, and encounters available to any individual tourist. Combined with the range of pre-trip exposure, investigation, and the specific content of the tourist’s individual expectations, the combinations and possibilities of constant reorganization of the tourist’s narrative become numerous indeed.

The discussion in this section concerns literature that explores the ways in which identity is expressed by hosts, experienced by tourists, and re-constructed and re-packaged by hosts, re-interpreted by tourists, and assimilated by both hosts and guests. The argument advanced in this research departs significantly from most tourism research on ethnicity and identity in fundaments respects. In general, ethnic tourism has been understood to refer to cultural experiences entirely outside of the tourist’s society or country. The concept of ethnicity in tourism research, in general, has designated Third and Fourth World societies and cultures, and has generally been reserved to describe colonial- or post-colonial
sociocultures, with few exceptions, such as Esman's excellent and provocative discussion of Cajun ethnic preservation and tourism (1984). Typically discussions of ethnicity in the anthropology of tourism focus on "exotic cultures," which, in general, has meant non-Western, non-European, non-industrial, non-urban people. The research presented in Chapter 5 applies the concept of ethnic tourism to an example in the United States, and argues that specific historical, economic, cultural, and symbolic characteristics warrant such application.

*Ethnic Tourism and Cultural Tourism*

In her Introduction to the important collection of essays, *Hosts and Guests* (1989), Valene Smith distinguishes types of tourism and describes the differences between ethnic tourism and cultural tourism. Ethnic tourism, according to Smith, typically describes tourism marketed to the public on the basis of the "quaint" customs of exotic people. The quaint exotics sought by tourists are typically off the beaten path, and, in every respect, attract tourists because of the authenticity they appear to represent.

Cultural tourism refers to tourism that markets vestiges of vanishing traditions and styles of "the folk." The Elko, Nevada, Cowboy Poetry Gathering, for example, and the Cuyahoga Folk Festival stand out as cultural tourism events. Festivals, folklore performances, and peasants around the world become the tourist sites themselves. In *Cultural Tourism: A Strategic Focus*, Alf Walle (1998) outlines specific criteria aimed at cultural tourism professionals and designed to develop and enhance cultural tourism. Central to Walle's discussion is his persuasive argument that cultural tourism is a profession that bridges a number of disciplines and goals. A version of both liberal arts social sciences and aggressive capitalism-driven cultural production, cultural tourism relies
on anthropology, sociology, history, and the arts, as well as principles of policy making and scientific management. Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett (1988) argues that cultural tourism must be more than a watered-down version of academic versions of the same history or anthropology. In other words, cultural tourism involves the explicit production of culture, of image, of life ways and the direct targeted marketing of these products.

Fundamentally, the concept of ethnicity in tourism finds its origins in a conventional understanding of ethnicity in anthropology, such as that articulated by Keyes (1976) and van den Berghe (1981), wherein ethnicity generally refers to an understanding of identity in terms of shared common descent. In this conventional formulation, specific distinguishing attributes are less important than the assumed structural oppositions between two groups who understand their relationship as an “us-them” distinction (MacCannell 1984). Current application of this concept in the anthropology of tourism adds three specific embellishments. First, ethnicity is understood chiefly in terms of overt and concrete markers that distinguish groups (van den Berghe and Keyes 1984). In this sense ethnicity refers more to the visible signs of ethnicity that are readable by an outside audience that to an internal, experienced sense of identity or belonging. Second, the anthropology of tourism understands ethnicity as constructed, in other words, it involves the self-aware and deliberate selection of specific features by the ethnic group itself, considered to be characteristics “correct” and indexical of ethnicity. For example, the indianness of Indians and the southerness of Southerners are self-conscious abstractions of ethnicity (MacCannell 1984:382-383). Finally, the ethnicity of a group is understood in terms of its juxtaposition against some other base, in terms of what it is not. In the case of Savannah, the Southern or Savannahian qualities of ethnicity are characterized in part by the ways in
which they are not the same as the northern tourist's identity, inflected through markers of speech or dress or cuisine or appearance or monumental or architectural features of the environment. Ethnic tourism is characterized by basic properties, outlined by van den Berghe and Keyes (1984). (1) it entails a superficial, instrumental type of interaction; (2) largely negative stereotypes arise from these truncated interactions; (3) these interactions are characterized by deceit and manipulation and by a general lack of mutual trust, particularly true because the tourist is, definitionally, transient; (4) the tourist is both affluent, typically coming from a position of greater wealth and sense of entitlement than the locals, and, at the same time, is culturally ignorant in context, and thus exploitable; (5) in addition to the asymmetries of wealth and information, the tourist-local relationship is intrinsically imbalanced because the tourist is locked into the role of spectator and the local in the role of spectator or performer.

MacCannell's seminal work on ethnicity, focused on ethnic identity in Third World communities, emphasizes the constructed nature of ethnicity, ethnicity as behavior, artifacts, and interactions that are produced through tourism (MacCannell 1984). The central thesis of MacCannell's argument is that modern tourism and associated institutions are powerful shapers of ethnic identity (1984:375). According to MacCannell, ethnic tourism is a type of tourism in which the exotic ethnic identity of some cultural other is the primary commodity sought by the tourist. Modern mass tourism in this analysis functions in ways similar to the strategies of ethnic separatist movements such as the leader of the American Indian Movement, Russell Means, in which the distinctiveness of a group is intensified and maximized in order to distinguish and separate it from other groups. In the case of political movements, aggressively distinctive ethnic images are created, in MacCannell's language,
constructed, as oppositional to forces of assimilation in colonial situations. In the case of
ethnic tourism, tourism itself "promotes the restoration, preservation, and fictional
recreation of ethnic attributes" (MacCannell 1984: 377).

In the production of ethnicity in tourist encounters, according to MacCannell's
model, two dimensions, structural superiority-inferiority and rhetorical association and
antithesis form the over-arching framework. From this framework, four basic relationships
are revealed in ethnic tourism: (1) an inferior group attempts to associate itself with a
superior group; (2) the inferior group defines itself in opposition to or as the antithesis of
the superior group or the superior group as the antithesis of itself; (3) a superior group
attempts to associate with and copy the ways of an inferior group; and, (4) a superior group
defines itself as the antithesis of an inferior group or vice versa (MacCannell 1984: 383).

For MacCannell, constructed ethnicity, the result of the cultural contact of
colonialism and imperialism, is only the beginning of the production of ethnicity in tourism.
Reconstructed ethnicity refers to the maintenance and preservation of distinctive ethnic
forms for the purposes of entertaining the ethnically different cultural other. In other words,
where ethnicity generally describes the sense of solidarity of those who share common
descent, and constructed ethnicity refers to the processes through which identities emerge
through opposition and assimilation during the colonial phase of Western history and in the
new, more recent "internal" colonial period (MacCannell 1984: 376). Reconstructed
ethnicity describes the many processes that produce ethnic identities. The process of
ethnicity reconstruction is possible, according to MacCannell, only after certain
conditions are in place. That is to say:
once almost all the groups in the world are located in a global network of interactions and they begin to use their former colorful ways both as commodities to be bought and sold and as rhetorical weaponry in their dealings with one another, suddenly it is not just ethnicity anymore, but it is understood as rhetoric, as symbolic expression with a purpose or a use-value in a larger system.

(MacCannell 1984:385)

Reconstructed ethnicity, as a function of ethnic tourism, amounts to the fabrication, packaging, marketing, and selling of a version of cultural identity to some superior group. In essence, ethnic groups themselves and ethnicity itself are turned into tourist attractions. Gamper (1985) points out that the process described by MacCannell of the commodification of ethnicity in tourism is not always detrimental for the host community. Typically the host community has experienced a history of economic subordination and deprivation, and, throughout the development of industries that have made development possible for Western societies, local economies have seldom benefited from the economic growth of local outposts of multinational corporations. Likewise, in tourism, economic growth generally accrues to the so-called middle-men, the cultural brokers who mediates between tourists and locals, who, in van den Berghe's language, "peddles cultural values" (1984:347) and actively encourages the staging of ethnic displays.

The analysis of ethnic tourism, in general, describes at least two significant benefits for local communities that result from re-constructed, or secondary ethnicity. First, ethnic tourism often stimulates ethnic self-consciousness. Graburn, for example, discusses the constructive effects of tourism in its stimulation to preserve, invest in, express pride in traditional expressions of art (1976). Deitch, in her discussion of Native Americans in the Southwest United States demonstrates that "massive in-migration and mass tourism have not been disruptive. Rather, the contact with Anglo society offered extended markets that
served to heighten artistic productivity and to revive old traditions" (Deitch 1977:235). Esman (1983) discusses the maintenance and preservation of ethnicity among Cajuns in Louisiana as a direct result of the effects of tourism on creating and intensifying cultural distinctions between Cajuns and non-Cajun tourists.

A second potential benefit to locals that results from ethnic tourism is economic. Boissevain (1979), among others, for example described increased economic opportunities for the local population of the island of Gozo. Although seldom a development solution and frequently resulting in unequal distribution of wealth, the self-conscious, self-directed export of culture as a commodity is a varied and complex set of phenomena.

**Authenticity**

The notion of authenticity can be traced to several intellectual sources, most notably Veblen (1994 [1899]), Boorstin (1961) and Heidegger (1962 [1927])⁷. In the context of tourism research, the concept of authenticity has been used to describe both enhanced self-actualization and a concern with encountering authentic human experience.

In tourism research conditions of modernity create the context in which tourism is sought, made possible, experienced, and interpreted. Erve Chambers (2000) suggests that among the characteristics of modernity, two are most salient for tourism: reason and commodification. Reason, here refers to the Enlightenment concept of reason and scientific rationality. Travel, the forerunner of tourism, thus became grounded in the possibility of experiencing first-hand the cross-cultural context of emergent Western European, British, and United States national identities. Travel functions then to confirm for the traveler the natural place in the cross-cultural order of the nation, understood as measurable through markers of nineteenth century ideas of progress. At the same time, travel provides vivid
contrast for such travelers whose lives appeared to become more and more alienated and inauthentic. Travel allowed nineteenth century proto-tourists the opportunity to both experience an intensified sense of national identity and justification and, at the same time, momentarily enjoy a brush with a more authentic life.

Authenticity, a dimension of both the analysis of and motivations for tourism is first described and elaborated by MacCannell (1973). MacCannell's argument derives from two sources. First, MacCannell turns to the sociologist Erving Goffman for his inspiration. In his analysis of social space and the structuring of beliefs, Goffman describes the structural division of social spaces into "front" and "back" spaces. The division and inhabitation of these spaces emerges from performance.

Given a particular performance as the point of reference, we have distinguished three crucial roles on the basis of function: those who perform; those performed to; and outsiders who neither perform in the show nor observe it . . . the three crucial roles mentioned could be described on the basis of the regions to which the role-player has access: performers appear in the front and back regions; the audience appears only in the front regions; and the outsiders are excluded from both regions.

(Goffman 1959:144-145)

In his expansion and development of Goffman's ideas, MacCannell introduces a second concept that leads rapidly to another extremely productive line of tourism research. Although this idea becomes elaborated in Nelson Graburn's (1977) work on the resemblances of tourism to religious pilgrimage, it is from this insight that the concept of authenticity in tourism research finds its original inspiration. The tourist, MacCannell claims, like the religious pilgrim, seeks authentic experience. Motivated by the hope of experiencing a life that in which the worker is not alienated from labor, in which the tourist
can experience the actual lives of real people, tourists attempt to move from the front region
to the back region, penetrating the back region. The tourist's desire to reach into the back
region combined with the host's commercial need to create marketable tourist sites results in
the phenomenon MacCannell calls "staged authenticity" (MacCannell 1973, 1976) in which
staged, manufactured back stage regions are made available to tourists who accept them as
authentic back stage regions.

Donald Redfoot (1984) offers some precisions of the authenticity concept, creating
a typology of four orders of tourists, each associated with various versions of the quest for
touristic authenticity. First-order tourists violate the "reality" of the touristic adventure by
surrendering the immediate experience of being to the past expectations molded by official
authenticators (such as tour books, brochures, and travel agents). Second-order tourists are
characterized by a high degree of anxiety and desperation in their search for "it"--the
genuine present experience with the exotic. Such anxiety emerges from the paradox of the
ecstasy that comes from the encounter with "it" and the panic about rushing home to
recount the accumulated stories of the encounter. Third-order tourists is the category into
which anthropologists themselves fall. In this category, angst results from a paradox
related to that of the second-order tourist. Here the panic results from having encountered
"it" and knowing that modernity has, by one's very presence in the situation, encroached
upon "it." The third-order tourist is driven to record, film, document, and otherwise attempt
to preserve the "it." Fourth-order tourists are those who permanently bridge the distance
between the exotic "it" and oneself by going native. The anxiety stirred by the tourist's
quest for authenticity, perhaps, as Lionel Trilling has suggested, (1972) might be endemic to
modernity.
Pearce and Moscardo (1986) outline a scheme of nine classification of tourist encounters in terms of authenticity. The first classification involves tourists encountering backstage people in a backstage region where importance is placed both on the people and the environment. The second classification describes tourists encountering front stage people in a front stage region. A third possible alignment involves tourists meeting front stage people in backstage regions, as, for example, in encounters assisted by tour guides. A fourth classification concerns tourists meeting backstage people in a front stage region. Fifth, tourists might encounter backstage people without particular reference to the environment or setting. Sixth tourists might encounter front stage people without particular emphasis on setting or environment. A seventh classification emphasizes the environment, and involves tourists exploring a backstage region. Eighth tourists encounter a front stage region but place little emphasis on the people in the setting. In the ninth and final category, authenticity is regarded as just one aspect of tourists’ experiences, and the question of front stage and backstage regions figure into only some of their travel experiences.

The Pearce and Moscardaro (1986) typology adds to the discussion of authenticity because it accounts for the tourist’s perceptions of authenticity in any encounter. Additionally it provides a basis for empirical testing of the relevance and significance of authenticity from the tourist’s point of view.

Erik Cohen (1988) takes up the question of authenticity in terms of commoditization and culture. Here, somewhat in contradiction of much foundation literature on the commoditization of culture through tourism, Cohen argues that commoditization does not necessarily result in cultural destruction or the debasement of cultural material products. Indeed, mass tourism, because it allows quite wide margins of what constitutes
"authenticity" is both successful and pleasurable in ways, Cohen suggests, that anthropologists and other intellectual experts cannot enjoy because of their narrowly conscribed understanding of authenticity.

Movie Induced Tourism

Among the sub-specialties in the anthropology of tourism with particular relevance for my research is the literature that discusses movies as pull factors in attracting tourists. In this research, the publication of the book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, and the subsequent filming and release of the motion picture of the same name provide the basis of the dramatic growth of tourism and related industries.

Some scholars observe the metaphorical relationship between the spectator-spectator relationship between movie goers and movies on the one hand, and tourists and locals on the other (Riley, Baker, and Van Doren 1998:919). Following the work of John Urry (1990), this research relies on the idea of the tourist's gaze and the power that underlies and the pleasure that derives from the positions of spectator. Like much research in the anthropology of tourism, movie induced tourism research is composed heavily of specific site cases (Datton 1995; Mayfield 1993) and collections of state-by-state, site-by-site travel guides (Gordon 1995; Barth 1991). Little theoretical or systematic analysis had been offered beyond Ritchie's attempt to define hallmark events and assess their impact on tourism (1984). Recently Riley and Van Doren (1992) and Riley, Baker, and Van Doren (1998) developed a comprehensive review of data at 12 locations over a four year visitation period.

Ritchie's work on hallmark advances definition, offers a classification scheme, outlines types of impact, establishes criteria for "hallmark events," and suggests
measurements of impact. In his classification of hallmark events, Ritchie includes the following categories: world fairs and expositions; unique carnivals and festivals; major sports events; significant cultural and religious events; historical milestones; classical commercial and agricultural events; and major political personage events. Offering an innovation over most simple economic impact assessments, Ritchie suggests that hallmark events have both positive and negative impacts, and that the impact of hallmark event tourism can be assessed across many dimensions, including economic; commercial; physical; sociocultural; physical; psychological, and political. For each dimension, Ritchie proposes a set of specific variables to measure for impact assessment and commentary on the unique methodological and interpretive difficulties posed by each variable. For example, in his discussion of the physical impact of hallmark event induced tourism, Ritchie measures data in terms of facilities development and environmental impact. Specific variables include development of specific recreational resources, infrastructural development, physical degradation of the environment, and overcrowding of the area or facility. Difficulties of collecting data and interpretation in this category include lack of clear evidence, difficulty in distinguishing between generating development and simply accelerating development, and distinguishing between real and perceived change.

Embellished and applied to movie induced tourism, Ritchie's model provides a basis for research in that location shooting of movies fulfills Ritchie's criteria for a hallmark event defined as:

Major one-time or recurring events of limited duration developed to primarily enhance the awareness, appeal, and profitability of a destination in the short and/or long term. These events rely for their success on uniqueness, status, or timely significance to create interest and attract attention.
(Ritchie 1984:4).

Location shooting of movies is clearly not designed to attract visitors to a site; they
do produce a series of events rather than a single event, including the actual shooting, the
release of the film, the release of the home video version of the film, and the television
broadcast of the film. In the case of Savannah, the same series of events, beginning with the
release of The Book, produces a set of "recurrent events" (Riley, Baker, and Van Doren
1998:922) and a greatly protracted period of exposure. Midnight in the Garden of Good
and Evil was first published in 1994, the movie shot in Savannah in 1996 and released in
1997, the cable television and video release in 1998, and these reiterative events continue to
produce measurable effects on tourism in Savannah six years after the initial event
occurred.

*Literature, Tourism, and Ethnography: Processes and Products*

A recent print advertisement for Hyatt Hotels and Resorts presents a dramatic black
and white double-page spread showing, on the right hand page, an older woman wearing
some version of an Hawaiian print dress, wearing a lei and playing a ukelele. The left-hand
page of the spread declares, in dramatic white type on a black background: "Tourists come
home with souvenirs. Explorers return with stories" (New Yorker Sep 18 2000: 10-13).
Although it might be true that souvenirs are the traditional tangible evidence of tourism, it is
certainly not the case that tourists return only with souvenirs. It is also not the case that
"explorers" are the only travelers who return with stories. Indeed, the anthropologist's job is
to travel and return with a coherent story about the trip.

The literature reviewed in this section explores some aspects of the relationships
among fiction, non-fiction, ethnography, travel writing, anthropological fieldwork, and
tourism. This discussion is broad and general, and provides the foundation for one of the central arguments in this dissertation.  

*Anthropology and Tourism: Uncomfortable Reflections*  

The anthropologist Michael Harkin notes:

Tourism and anthropology interpenetrate in substantive, pragmatic ways. Anthropologists inevitably begin their fieldwork as (or as if) tourists. The first leg of the journey is taken by airplane, that touristic space par excellence, with the prospective fieldworker sharing much of the anxiety and anticipation of her (his) fellow passengers... Elite tourist buy safari suits and pith helmets—still associated with anthropology in the popular imagination. (1995:651)

Erik Cohen observes that anthropologists are "paradigmatic of the modern tourist" in that they belong to a wider category of alienated intellectuals who, perhaps, have chosen their very profession precisely because of their alienation from modernity (1988:375-376).  

Dennison Nash, in a rejoinder to Harkin's "Modernist Anthropology and Tourism of the Authentic," (1995), summarizes the sentiments expressed in much of the literature on anthropologists and tourists: "Something like an ultimate insult has been the comparison of anthropologists with tourists...who, along with missionaries, were once considered by many anthropologists as being beyond the pale" (Nash 1996:691-692).  

James Clifford, in his attempt to clarify the "crucial and ambivalent anthropological legacy" of the role of travel, displacement, and temporary dwelling as the constitutional basis of both fieldwork and tourism, situates anthropological fieldwork as part of a relatively continuous set of Euro-American travel practices that have structured the very notion of
fieldwork. Finally Clifford urges an examination of disciplinary norms, definitions, and axiomatic traditions, recognizing the central role of displacement and spatial practices in anthropology and, at the same time, alert to the historical and political predicaments therein entailed.

The subjective worlds of anthropology and anthropologists have been, for nearly thirty years, a conspicuous part of a reflective turn in anthropology in which the motives, the experiences, the methods, and the products of anthropological fieldwork have fallen under direct anthropological scrutiny (Nash 1996:691). From Nash and Winrob's discussion of self-consciousness (1972) to Marcus and Cushman's (1982) introduction of the concept of ethnographies as texts, the nature of anthropological writing has become as central a concern as the actual conduct of fieldwork.

As anthropology has been traditionally the medium through which cultural variety and cultural difference are expressed and understood, so, too, tourism has become a strategy for framing and interpreting cultural difference (Harkin 1995:650). Harkin continues to explain the tight connections between the sociocultural anthropologist and the tourist:

In formal terms, the tourist and the sociocultural anthropologist share a common filiation, one that includes the explorer, the crusader, the missionary, and the trader... The spatiotemporal strategy of 'exotopy,' to employ Bakhtin's term, is common to them all: to leave a bounded region designated as 'home,' to come into contact with a cultural other, and to return with some sign of gain (or loss) reflecting the experience...

(Harkin 1995:650-651)

Literature and Anthropology

In his 1996 paper "Habits of Thought and Cultural Tourism," Alf Walle urges a greater rapport between literary criticism and anthropology, demonstrating that:
The field of literary criticism has increasingly operated as a social science which examines a society's literary heritage in order to better understand specific cultures and the people which comprise them. In such cases, literary achievement becomes empirical evidence to use when coming to grips with those who create and/or consume such artistic and intellectual products.

(Walle 1996:889)

The discussion in this section concerns the ways in which literature can sometimes act as ethnography, in which anthropology can sometimes act as literature, and the close connection between the literary, ethnographic, and touristic enterprises.

The anthropologist Georgios Anagnostu, in his discussion of literature and anthropology and Greek-American fiction, describes two interrelated components central to the understanding of the relationships between literature and anthropology. First, Anagnostu argues, anthropological theory can be used to interpret literary texts. In this consideration, anthropological theory makes possible interpretation "by translating the text's inscribed social realities and processes, and well as its cultural logic and values into an anthropological idiom" (1993:196). A second consideration involves the similarity between the literary and anthropological projects. A class of novels serve as cultural commentaries according to Anagnostu, whether through their contribution to maintaining the social structure in the reinvention of ethnicity. Anagnostu's final point provides a significant point of departure for the present research. "The relationship between anthropology and literature can be extended, then, in the ethnographic documentation of just how textually inscribed discourses are reproduced, negotiated, or resisted in everyday practice" (1993:197).

Much attention has been drawn to questions of ethnography as literature. More to the concerns of the present problem is an understanding of how literature can act as
ethnography, and how both certain kinds of literature and certain kinds of ethnography, both in terms of process and product, are similar to tourism.

One hundred and fifty years ago the French poet Charles Baudelaire developed a new genre of writing, a hybrid of poetry and journalistic writing. Walking among the poor, the crippled, the starving, those engaged in sexual perversity and illegal activity, Baudelaire acted as a cultural broker, an intermediary who observed, at comfortable distance, the decadent and debased underside of Parisian life and reported on it, in luxurious poetry and prose, to the middle classes who were able to experience vicariously the thrill of proximity to a world they would never know. In Tableaux parisiens, for example Baudelaire uses the city itself not a mere backdrop for action, but rather "a fact and a vision, reality and a dream" (Carter 1977:95).

In his prose poem, "The Eyes of the Poor" (1925 [1857]:44-45), Baudelaire describes a poor family passing diners in a café. This prose piece is perhaps the quintessence of flâneurisme. He provides a literary bridge between his readers and the seedy underside of the city. He makes a career of gazing at those who are precisely supposed to be ignored. He is urbane, educated, sophisticated. He travels among the poor, the homeless, the disenfranchised not simply for the experience of doing so but for the express purpose of reporting back to his readers. Given the background, position, and access he commands, it is interesting that he prefers to spend all his time in pursuit of the violent, the criminal, the desperate, the urban world of vice and perversion. Baudelaire, therefore, acts as a kind of ethnographer, a kind of tourist, and a kind of a travel writer.¹¹

Summary and Conclusions

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In summary, the literature reviewed in this section has direct application to the Savannah research discussed in subsequent chapters. First, the models of ethnic tourism provides the central theoretical perspective for discussion of tourism in Savannah. Although most anthropology of tourism research that concerns identity concerns Third World and Fourth World societies, an argument will be advanced in Chapter 5 that the sociocultural situation in Savannah and between Savannah and its visitors provides structural justification for such an application, particularly where the concept of re-constructed ethnicity is applied to the problem.

Second, many scholars have explored the relationships between local identity and the identities of visitors, commenting on the ways in which cultural identities are dynamic and constantly re-examined in the context of new cultural situations. A major theme of my research concerns the cultural identities brought to Savannah by tourists, their expectations about the cultural world they intend to encounter, and the ways in which such encounters act to challenge and confirm cultural identities for both hosts and guests.

Third, the question of authenticity is of particular interest in the anthropology of tourism in the Southeastern United States. Tourists to Savannah, my research demonstrates, arrive with clearly understood expectations that they will see in Savannah something of "the real South." In addition, those tourists whose travel has been entirely or partly motivated by their reading of The Book or their viewing of the movie based on the book come with the clear expectation that they will see the sites where the true life action detailed in The Book took place, and that they will walk on the same spaces where the movie was shot. Authenticity in my research exists as a concern on both these dimensions of tourist expectations and experiences.
Finally, my own research emerges from first my own tourist experience of Savannah and a gradual movement into formal ethnographic research. Additionally, the central subject of this dissertation, the effects of a true crime non-fiction partial travelogue on tourism in Savannah, introduces questions about the relationships between ethnographic fieldwork and tourism and between literature and ethnography. Many anthropologists and literary critics provide the theoretical and methodological points of departure for my research in the discussion of the articulation of literature, whether fiction, non-fiction, or travel literature and ethnography.

END NOTES CHAPTER 3

1This follows Burns's (1999) adoption of Maslow's final stage in the hierarchy of needs that requires individuals to provide a balanced state of well-being (1962). Burns (1999) notes the specifically American, capitalist approach that underlies the idea of the self-actualized individual.
2MacCannell's work on authenticity is discussed in detail later in this chapter.
3The notion of cultural inversions and their expression in Savannah tourism will be explored in Chapter 5 in detail.
4Much of the cornerstone literature on the anthropology of tourism has been charged with being insufficiently grounded in empirical observation and derived too heavily from speculation and philosophical reflection. Passariello's research is distinguished by its empirical origins and theoretical contributions to the literature overall.
5Chapter 5 outlines the ways in which field data reveal the ongoing dynamic presentation and modification of identities, in both hosts and guests in Savannah tourism.
6These characteristics are phrased in "non" terms to emphasize the specific ways that the exotic nature of the tourist encounter depends less on the characteristics of the hosts than it depends on the ways in which the hosts are specifically not the guests in visible, conspicuous ways.
7Pearce and Mascardo (1986) provide an excellent summary of the history of the concept of authenticity in philosophy and in the anthropology of tourism.
8The relationships between anthropology and tourism will be explored in some detail below.
9The relationships between the publication of The Book, the filming of the movie and the release of the movie based on the book and tourism in Savannah are discussed in detail in Chapter 5.
10Roughly, the argument that will be advanced in Chapter 5 includes a discussion of the quasi-ethnographic, apparently authoritative nature of Berendt's descriptions of Savannah. Part travelogue, part ethnography, part true crime book, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil.
11The ways in which John Berendt can be understood as a modern-day flâneur will be discussed in Chapter 5.
CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY AND DATA SOURCES:
PERFORMING SAVANNAH

It is argued here that present forms of leisure, recreation, and tourism display a multiplicity of facets and features, some of which are ambiguous or even contradictory in nature. In addition, the researcher is confronted with a number of general difficulties such as tourists may not wish to reflect on real travel motives; tourists may be unable to reflect on real travel motives; tourists may not wish to express real travel motives; tourists may not be able to reflect on real travel motives. (Hartmann 1988:89)

Heritage is produced through a process that forecloses what is shown. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1998:159)

This chapter describes the various sources of data, explains the strategies employed in data collection, and outlines the basic strategies of data analysis.

The primary research questions that motivated this study emerge directly from my own experiences and observations in Savannah, first as a tourist and then as a fieldworker. A variety of specific empirical observations, and a vast collection of concrete data stimulated a larger interest, first in developing the theoretical context for understanding the emergence of regional cultural identity, then, in a formal assessment through the subdiscipline of a turn the anthropology of tourism. The theoretical considerations and innovations that inform this research, then, are derived from the data themselves, outlined in Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5. This inductive, rather than deductive approach, is largely consistent with recent research in the anthropology of tourism, in which greater emphasis is placed on
methodological rigor, methodological pluralism, and concrete empirically derived data (see, for example, Dann, Nash and Pearce 1988, and Hartmann 1988).

The analysis of data in Chapter 5 begins with a detailed discussion of The Book, using this text as both the basis of the argument and the point of departure for discussion of the inventory of corollary materials listed below. The following list represents the principal sources of data, organized in terms of venue, beginning with material collected during fieldwork and ending with the texts of The Book and The Movie. Materials are drawn from the following major sources:

A. Data derived from on-site fieldwork
   1. participant observation
   2. informal interviewing
   3. collection of artifacts from stores specializing in The Book and from local retail stores that serve the tourist economy
   4. archival research at the Georgia State Historical Society
   5. archival research and interviewing with the Savannah Visitors and Convention Bureau over a four-year period, from 1996 through 2000.

B. Data derived from internet sources
   6. internet responses to three postings made and maintained over a period of five years. These postings resulted from links introduced on the Ultimate Midnight Web Site and the Amazon.com reader review web site.
   7. collection of reader reviews from The Ultimate Midnight Web Site and the Amazon.com reader review web site

C. Secondary print media sources
11. reviews and discussions of The Book and The Movie, including reviews that appeared in popular magazines such as Time and Newsweek.


13. a ten-year subscription to Savannah Scene, a bi-monthly publication produced by Island Communications, 1990-2000;

14. a ten-year subscription to Savannah Magazine, a monthly publication produced by the Southeastern Newspaper Corporation;

15. the entire collection of tour brochures available through the Savannah Visitors Center during the period 1984 to 2000;


17. travel guides and tour books, both regional and Savannah-specific

18. the autobiography of The Lady Chablis, Hiding My Candy

D. Additional radio and television sources of data

19. A documentary film produced and broadcast by the Arts and Entertainment Network, entitled Midnight in Savannah, broadcast first on November 11, 1997, and re-broadcast five times during the following three years. The home video version of this program is available for purchase from A & E.

20. Television broadcasts of The Oprah Winfrey program in which the "cast" of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil were featured;

21. Television broadcast of The Oprah Winfrey program featuring The Lady Chablis;

22. Television broadcasts of Good Morning America featuring the author of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, John Berendt;

E. Primary textual sources

24. the complete text of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*;

25. the complete text of the film, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*;

26. the complete audio cassette version of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, including a 20 minute discussion by John Berendt about writing The Book, his time in Savannah, and the aftermath of the publication of The Book.

**Issues and Limitations of Field Research**

In a general sense, this research demonstrates explicit links between tourist motivations and expectations, on the one hand, their pre-travel experience with the book, *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* or the movie based on the book on the other hand, and the ways in which these expectations are fulfilled or disappointed in their actual travel experiences. In a more specific sense, the center of these issues concerns the ways in which tourists understand their own cultural identities and the cultural identities of the representatives of the host community of Savannah whom they encounter, and the ways in which these identities are expressed and translated throughout the entire travel experience, including the pre-travel construction of ideas, the actual experiences during travel, and the post-travel recollection and reconstruction of the events and experiences.

Much of the research in the anthropology of tourism to date has focused on the actual behavior of tourists; that is to say, what tourists do during their stay. These are data generally accessible. Where tourists stay, where they eat, where tourists go, what they see,
how they spend their money, how much they tip, and how they interact with local people have been and continue to be the subjects of significant tourism research. Many areas of investigation, however, remain relatively unexplored. Why tourists travel, how they select the destinations they choose, and what determines their choices of events and sites once they are established at their destination are questions more difficult to frame and more difficult by far to investigate. Tourism research has recently devoted attention to the questions of "push" and "pull" factors. Here, Nash (1981), in particular, has cautioned social scientists that the study of tourism involves not only the site or host situation, but the home situation of the tourist; that is, the context in which the desire to travel, the selection of destination, and the expectations were formed. My own research suggests that an additional significant dimension of the home situation involves the reflections of tourists, returned to their daily lives, at some remove from the travel experience.

Beyond this level of investigation are other, larger questions emergent from these empirical data and which form the basis of my own research. What do tourists actually see when they visit a site? What do tourists understand about the version of a place they encounter, whether those versions include conversations with locals, guided tours, or casual self-directed observation. What cultural assumptions and bodies of knowledge underlie the tourist's experience of a site? How do tourists interpret and assimilate these encounters? How do they understand their own sense of cultural identity in the new context of the tourist encounter? How do local populations understand, interpret, and provide for tourists versions of their cultural products that are meaningful and consumable? Finally, what relationships obtain between these versions of performed and produced culture and the local population itself?
Graham Dann (1981) and Dann, Nash and Pearce (1988) discuss some of the strengths and limitations of the reliance on surveys, questionnaires, and the intensive interview format for field data collection. In a field that has been criticized as relying too heavily upon philosophical considerations and abstract theoretical propositions, Dann, Nash and Pearce urge greater methodological rigor and sophistication in the anthropology of tourism. Following their suggestion to distinguish techniques for data collection from analytical techniques, the discussion in this chapter is confined to an outline of sources of data and descriptions and comments on the techniques employed in their collection.

Because the objectives of this research pose certain specific field research challenges, a variety of collection and analysis techniques are involved. This research is designed to investigate potentially sensitive areas of inquiry such as sexuality, race, and cultural identity; reliance on long-term field work, multiple methods, and a variety of documents, artifacts, and other documents is crucial in order to develop the fullest understanding of the many dimensions of presentation, performance, and experience involved in addressing these questions. Participant-observation, for example, yielded considerable valuable data concerning the culture of tourists to Savannah, but alone provided little insight into the intellectual and emotional processes of tourists. Interviewing tourists allowed for direct interaction with visitors in a variety of venues and formats but presented additional obstacles to direct questioning about potentially sensitive topics. Close textual analyses of The Book and The Movie provide considerable insight, but such analysis alone offers no insight into context and audience. Multiple methods provided the maximum collection of data and offered the greatest possibility for a comprehensive understanding of
the Savannah tourist experience. Ultimately, the analysis rests on a semiotic analysis of the brochures, artifacts, material culture, and tour narratives that emerge from The Book.

Data Collection

Following is an outline of principal data sources, organized in terms of the categories named above, a brief description of the data source itself, and a discussion of the salient facts or issues surrounding the collection, the selection, and the use of this source of data.

A. Data derived from on-site fieldwork

1. *long-term participant observation*

   The field research for this dissertation is based in a combined sixteen years of participant observation. My site location for each trip\(^1\) was Tybee Island, formerly known as Savannah Beach, a small island ten miles east of the city. From this vantage point, I was able to maintain some critical distance from the activities of the Historic District. In addition, this strategic location provided access to large numbers of tourists who had not necessarily chosen Savannah as a travel destination because of their exposure to the city through The Book. Overwhelmingly, tourists in my total sample in the Historic District cited The Book or The Movie as significant in their motivations to travel to Savannah\(^2\).

   My participant observation emphasized participation in the official and formal tourist venues, most specifically the variety of tours sponsored by tour companies and approved by the City of Savannah. These tours range from Civil War historical tours to Old South tours to ghost walking tours. I participated in every tour offered, including self-guided walking tours, candle-light night tours, and dolphin boat tours of local marshes and the Savannah River. Over the sixteen years of research, the specific nature of tours, the
number of tour offerings, the diversity of cultural interests, and the redundancy of tours varied substantially. On average, 15 different tours were available during any year.

Although participant-observation does not constitute the primary methodology used in this analysis, it serves a vital role in helping define the subculture of tourists in Savannah over a long period of time, encompassing both pre- and post-publication of The Book. My role as participant observer was confined to active engagement in the entire array of activities and behavior typical of Savannah tourists. Often this entailed having iced tea, lunches, and dinners with fellow tourist. Always it involved following the flow of traffic, allowing my own activities and decisions to be governed by those I observed around me. As part of my activities as a participant-observer, I collected a large inventory of brochures and material culture. I interviewed a number of tourists and individual involved in the tour industry and in the retail sales sector of Savannah’s economy, and participated in tours, lectures, museum tours, and a variety of other activities suggested by local publications such as Savannah Scene.

During my two-, three-, and sometimes four-time annual trips to Savannah, I was able to spend focused and unstructured time observing the flow of traffic, the conduct of business, and the daily unfolding of the lives of both tourists and residents in Savannah. This kind of observation relied heavily on walking the city. I began with tracing the routes recommended by walking tours and self-guided tours and expanded my universe to include all squares, the River Street, Forsyth Park, the Victorian District, and local shopping malls. My regular observation points included coffee shops, restaurants, bars, souvenir shops, churches, art galleries, and the Visitors Center.
My central objective in this informal observation was to understand the flow of traffic, seek opportunistic encounters with tourists, cultivate rapport with local merchants and tour guides, and to become a familiar part of the landscape for regulars and residents in the immediate vicinity.

2. informal interviewing

 Judgment sampling

 Individuals were selected based on their demonstrable interest in tourism activities, with particular emphasis on activities related to The Book (Bernard 1999; 2000). This technique of purposive or judgment sampling is useful when the fieldworker knows precisely what specific purpose informants will serve and seeks these informants. In the case of this research, I had primary interest in informant who were attracted to Savannah specifically because of their previous exposure to The Book or The Movie. I had secondary interest in talking with informants whose self-described motivations for travel to Savannah were entirely independent of Book-related interests. The ability to engage in purposive or judgment sampling emerges out of the field experience itself, as the units of analysis become clear and the target sources of data emerge. This strategy is particularly useful in an intensive study such as this involving a special population.

 Informal Interviewing

 Over the course of sixteen years of formal and informal fieldwork, 250 informants were interviewed informally and anonymously, and the results of these informal interviews were collected and analyzed. These interviews were both structured and unstructured, and
conducted in the context of tourist activities such as tour bus excursions, refreshment opportunities at tour sites, The Bookstore, a store dedicated to the sale of products related to The Book, and the Visitors Center. In general, initial questions were:

Is this your first trip to Savannah?

Have you read it [The Book]?

Have you seen it [The Movie]?

What else have you seen [suggesting tourist attractions]?

Subsequent questions were developed in the context of specific informal conversations. In each case, I attempted to create a context in which informants were able to narrate their own motivations and impressions rather than supply answers to questions I had devised in advance of our conversations. Because my ultimate interests were located in the potentially sensitive domains of class, race, sexuality, and cultural identity, it was necessary to exercise diplomacy, patience, and willingness to end a conversation rather than to probe beyond a comfortable and productive point.

3. collection of artifacts from stores specializing in The Book and from local retail stores that serve the tourist economy

Artifacts and Book-related products

Since the publication of The Book and the proliferation and elaboration of its related commercial enterprises, a number of products and specialty stores have appeared throughout the Savannah retail landscape. Gift shops at the Hamilton-Turner House, along River Street, and in several squares developed as rest stops for several tour lines. Perhaps most significant among these specialty shops is The Book Gift Shop, located on "historic" Calhoun Square, proclaimed as "The Official Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil"
Headquarters" (see Appendix E). The Book Store, owned and operated by Deborah Sullivan, first opened in 1991 as a small generalized gift store specializing in southern and Savannahian books and objects. In 1995, after the publication of The Book, the store underwent a radical shift that involved devotion of the entire store to The Book. A recent interview with an employee of The Book Store revealed that during the first two years of operation, between 1995 and 1997, The Book Store steadily sold 20-30 copies of The Book a day, with an average of 250 customers daily. During the early months of operation, customers bought large numbers of small items, such as postcards, candles, ornaments, and T-shirts, with a per customer average expenditure estimated at $30.00 per person per visit, exclusive of the $25.00 per copy of The Book. Recently, walk-in traffic has slowed, in part as the seasonal change from Fall to Winter always brings slower business, but interest in The Book, as described by Shane and Deborah Sullivan remains fairly steady. The current best-selling item is a 28" replica in cast resin of the Bird Girl Statue, retailing at $299.00, excluding shipping and handling. The Bookstore also acts as headquarters for The Midnight Fan Club, which, at the height of its popularity, had more than 350 dues-paying members. A brochure from The Book Store is reproduced in Appendix E, as items E-1 and E-2. Other specialty gift stores are sometimes incorporated as part of actual tours. In one case, Pat Tuttle, owner and operator of Hospitality Tours (see brochures in Appendix C, items C-1 and C-2), also owns and operates a gift store that is a stop-over on the tour itself (see Appendix E, Items E-7 and E-8).

Among the artifacts examined or collected for this research are:

*hand painted Christmas tree ornaments
*a variety of paintings, including paintings of Mercer House and Bonaventure Cemetery
• a complete line of "Bird Girl" jewelry, including necklaces, bracelets, earrings, pins, cufflinks, and tie tacks
• a series of Savannah cookbooks and "Savannah style" food items
• aprons, T-shirts, chef hats, and holders
• dozens of postcards in color and black and white, depicting Mercer House, Jim Williams, Joe Odum, Emma Kelly, The Lady Chablis, and selected items and locations from The Book
• Afghans crafted especially for The Book Store, depicting scenes from The Book
• sweaters bearing reproductions of icons from The Book
• note cards and prints that bear the Bird Girl likeness
• prints of a painting of Jim Williams
• an assortment of maps that guide the tourist through the significant locations in the book
• a series of ghost books that provide self-guided walking tours of haunted sites and several collections of stories ghosts and supernatural reports in Savannah
• autographed copies of The Book
• disposable cameras wrapped in antique green Spanish moss motif, depicting the Bonaventure Cemetery and the Bird Girl
• CD's and cassette tapes of the music of Emma Kelly, pianist and singer who specializes in singing Johnny Mercer songs
• antique mahogany furniture

These and many other products and artifacts establish several avenues of exploration. For example, the sale and purchase of "Savannah style" food items, such as peach flavored basting sauce or candied pecans, has no direct relationship to the action, plot, or individuals in The Book but connects The Book to a larger narrative of The South, typically understood vividly in culinary terms. The sale of "antique mahogany furniture" provides a link for the tourist/consumer with the site of the murder, study in Mercer House, and relies only on the adjective "mahogany" as a connection from Berendt's description of the appointments in Jim Williams's study. The items detailed above create for the tourist/consumer a tangible and meaning-imbued set of connections to The Book. This manufactured version of authenticity is not a re-written version of history, as discussed by De Oliver (1996), nor the creation and distribution of fakes, in the sense in which David
Brown (1996) discusses the fundamental differences between tourism and pilgrimage which are typified, in part by issues of authenticity of artifacts. Rather this invention of a Savannah legacy and mythology, as embedded in certain artifacts, follows Lévi-Strauss's (1970) concept of *bricolage* and Baudrillard's (1994) concept of simulacrum.

*Bricolage* is a concept widely used in semiotic analysis, first described by Lévi-Strauss (1970). *Bricolage* refers to historical context and cultural process, describing the cultural routes toward explaining the way things are and making sense of on-going day-to-day life. The *bricoleur*, or mythmaker, provides explanation through analogy and appeal to previous shared experiences. The device employed by the *bricoleur* is the narrative. Applied to this research, the *bricolage* narrative that serves the process of mythmaking is that complex whole of the history, geography, and material culture, both self-evident and self-conscious, both natively produced and consumed and that which is produced and sold to non-natives. This complex whole includes, and, perhaps is poignantly illustrated by the nature and varieties of artifacts available at The Book Store.

*Bricolage* becomes significant in this research in a number of respects. The image, the character, the identity of Savannah that becomes constituted, packaged, and sold to tourists is a form of mythology, in the sense developed in Roland Barthes's "Myth Today" (1972). According to Barthes,

Semiology has taught us that myth has the task of giving an historical intention a natural justification, and making contingency appear eternal. . . . the world supplies . . . an historical reality . . . and what myth gives in return is a natural image of this reality.

(Barthes 1972:142)
The particular forms of mythology salient in tourism in Savannah begin with conventions of the South, or the Deep South, or the Ante-Bellum South. In turn, each of these is itself a construction rather than a set of self-evident facts. So, as O’Brien has described, the distinctive characteristics of the South in popular mythology, a picture of a Southern legend emerges that is fiery, decadent, and nationalistic. Following Greenberg’s discussion of the “honorable gentlemen who ruled the Old South” additional characteristics includes honor as a central defining characteristic (1996:xii). Cobb (1999) elaborates on the crucial characteristic of whiteness as definitional to the idea of Southern. Winter (1996) names several popular culture sources of widely shared conventions about Southerness, including television programs such as “The Beverly Hillbillies,” “Green Acres,” Petticoat Junction,” “Gomer Pyle,” and perhaps the progenitor of them all, “The Andy Griffith Show.” Between television, popular motion pictures, advertisements, and literature (such as Gone With the Wind and To Kill a Mockingbird, often cited by tourists as literature that embodies the South with the authenticity The Book), one of the prevailing sets of stereotypes is derived from images of the aristocratic Old South, in which manners, duty, intensified conventional gender roles, decadence, and something of a moral taint associated with old money. All of these features come into play in the expectations tourists derive from their reading of The Book and their tourism experiences in Savannah.

As Barthes (1996) has said of myth, it hides nothing and flaunts nothing,, rather it distorts. Myth is neither lie nor confession but inflexion, the vehicle through which intentional and shared concepts of identity are transmitted. In this sense, and in the Lévi-Straussian sense of bricolage, tourism in Savannah is an entreprise which is, on some level, entirely devoted to mythologizing.
In this case, simulacrum refers not to deception or pretense or dissimulation, but rather to the creation of copies of things for which no original exists. Simply selling "antique mahogany furniture" in no way refers directly to authentic Savannahian interior design style, nor does it actually represent replicas of specific items in Mercer House, but rather it draws from the text of The Book the image of "antique mahogany furniture" and extends it and situates it in a larger context of artifacts that reflect authentic connection to The Book, to the city, and to The South. In a semiotic sense, the mere coincidence and colocation of these artifacts and their situation in a specialty store that deals in objects about The Book in some sense confers upon all of the objects a kind of authenticity that reflects on all other objects so situated.

The collection and consideration of these objects contributes to an overall understanding of the larger process of tourism derived from The Book. These objects, their production and sale, and their consumption and collection by tourists reveals something of the major themes of this research--ethnicity, authenticity, and authority. More to the point, they represent specific points in a process of identity formation, manufacture, and consumption of both hosts and guests.

In a discussion of museum objects and authenticity, Edward Bruner (1994) distinguishes four senses of the concept of authenticity, stimulated by the concept of "authentic reproductions," the creation and circulation of copies and originals in American culture. The first sense of authenticity, based on verisimilitude, refers to an object's ability to be convincing and credible. Reproductions of paintings, furniture, and a variety of other objects in museum collections can be said to be authentic in this sense. The second sense of "authentic" refers to the process of simulation, the immaculate and exact copy of
something that actually exists. In this sense, authentic means genuine. A third sense of
"authentic" describes the original nature of the authentic. In this meaning, no copy can ever be authentic. In its application to this research, this third sense of authentic describes the original Bird Girl statue, now removed from Bonaventure Cemetery and housed in the Telfair Museum. The copy that stands in the Visitors Center cannot, in this third sense of authentic, be said to be authentic. It is a copy, just as those sold by Signals and Wireless distributors are copies.

The final sense of "authentic" discussed by Bruner is the sense of particular interest for my research. In this sense, authenticity is a property conferred upon an object by forces and individuals authorized to do so. Among these four senses of authenticity of objects—verisimilitude, genuineness, originality, and authority—it is authority that provides the basis for the attraction and power of the dozens of artifacts emergent from The Book industry.

In the case of both these processes, bricolage and simulacrum, and the role of authenticity where the authorized objects from The Book are concerned, the issue involves the production of a complex, integrated, comprehendable narrative that focuses on The Book as a point of entrance but relies for its symbolic meaning and power on a vastly larger narrative of history of The South, tourism in The South, and tourism in Savannah.

4. archival research at the Georgia State Historical Society and The Savannah Morning News

The research done at the Georgia State Historical Society and the archives of The Savannah Morning News entailed attempts to uncover the truth about some of the presumed mythology presented in The Book and elaborated by both hosts and guests. The quest for
the "truth" here has little to do with challenging or disputing claims asserted in The Book or in the officially authorized tours, but rather in making comparisons between the official and market versions of various stories and the recorded versions of those stories as they occurred.

5. archival research and interviewing with the Savannah Visitors and Convention Bureau over a four-year period, from 1996 through 2000.

Data derived from many conversations and interviews with representatives of the Savannah Visitors and Convention Bureau and access to their internal documents provides yet another dimension of this research. Using these data I was able to develop an understanding of the history of the tourism initiatives in Savannah, the self-conscious construction of an official history, the development of a marketable identity for the city and the transformations in the official and institutional response to The Book and its local effects. Considerable effort has been made and documented by these official sources to establish a history of deliberate tourism initiatives that antedate the publication of The Book and that continue to build on a predicted trajectory independent of what is regarded as a momentary flurry of activity resulting from attention to The Book.

B. Data derived from internet sources

6. internet responses to three postings made and maintained over a period of five years. These postings resulted from links introduced on the Ultimate Midnight Web Site and the Amazon.com reader review web site.

7. collection of reader reviews from The Ultimate Midnight Web Site and the Amazon.com reader review web site
8. A collection of comments from fans of The Book, including visitors to Savannah as part of their engagement with The Book, found at the web site, Midnight In the Garden.com.

Internet sources

Most cities and most tourist attractions have well-established web sites that provide references, resources, video tours, and the opportunities to book reservations and find accommodations. Several official and many unofficial web sites for Savannah and for The Book exist. My use of these internet sources is confined to the comments from visitors to Savannah and audiences of The Book and The Movie.

The internet data under consideration come from three major sources. First, reader reviews from the Amazon.com web site were collected for a three-year period, from 1996 through 1999. Second, I made three separate postings designed to solicit comments and to stimulate internet conversation with readers of The Book, audiences of The Movie, and potential travelers and veteran travelers to Savannah. The three postings I made read as follows:

Hello: As a long-time traveler to the South and a reader of 'Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil,' I am interested in finding out about other people who read the book... and I saw the review you posted on the Amazon.com web site. Have you ever been to Savannah? Before or after reading the book? How do they compare? Does the book convey the real 'southern' way of life? Anything else you'd want to say about the South, Savannah, the book, the movie, I'd like to hear your opinions and observations.

Has anyone traveled anywhere after reading a novel or history account of a place? Did it make the book all the more real? I went to Savannah after reading 'Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil,' and I found the city truly enchanting. And listening to Berendt's descriptions while driving around downtown at night was absolutely chilling.

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Has anyone out there read Berendt's book AND visited Savannah, Georgia? Actually, I'm fascinated with the idea of visiting the location of the story, and I would like to hear what other people think about the city in general, and as a plot-driving space for the book in particular.

These three internet postings over three years yielded 154 responses. These responses were sorted and compiled, then analyzed in terms of their representation of the themes of ethnicity (Southerness) and authenticity.

A second source of internet data came from reader reviews of the Book posted on the Amazon.com website. From this source, a total of 347 reader reviews were collected and analyzed for themes, descriptions, and their concordance with the categories of ethnic (Southerness) distinctiveness and authenticity.

A third source of internet data came from the Ultimate Midnight Site, produced by the official city of Savannah website. Here, 261 sets of comments and traveler/reader responses were collected and sorted and analyzed in the same categories described above.

Finally, a total of 15 travel agents, whose names were developed from internet tourism and travel agency sites around the United States, in Germany, France, and England were contacted through the internet and inquiries were made aimed at determining specific packaging and marketing of travel and tourism to Savannah, especially where connections to The Book might be involved. This technique yielded disappointing results, with only 7 total responses, none of which offered specific insight into the marketing of Savannah as a tourism destination.

C. Secondary print media sources

11. Reviews and discussions of The Book and The Movie, including reviews that appeared in popular magazines such as *Time* and *Newsweek*.
locations featured in The Book, and additional background and history on the city itself provide another source of relevant material for my analysis. Among these materials, most useful are those commentaries that specifically address issues of southerness, authenticity, and the so-called "seamy underside of Savannah" which is often described with reference to "decadence."

Over the period of my research in Savannah I have maintained subscriptions with local publications and with publications designed expressly for tourists. To these ends, The Savannah Morning News, Savannah Magazine, and the bi-monthly tourist publication, Savannah Scene provide detail on local events, controversies concerning recent development issues, such as the opening of a Westin hotel on River Street, and provide a continuous history of the city's presentation of itself to a wide tourist market.

Tour brochures themselves constitute sufficient data to understand the dynamic process of identity construction and marketing. William O'Barr's (1994) discussion of the representations and, thus, constructions of "otherness" through print advertising provides a basis for discussion of images in this collection of tour brochures. Buck's (1977) early contribution to this literature on the analysis of the tour brochure proposes a taxonomy of brochures, including (1) the staged attraction, (2) the managed tour, (3) the map of significant sites, and (4) the hotel and restaurant brochure. An examination of Appendices B and C reveal my emphasis on the first three of these categories, discussed in detail in Chapter 5. Graham (1993, 1996) elaborates the analysis of tour brochures in his discussion of the brochure as a set of images that contain selected features aimed at a targeted audience. The tour brochure outlines for the tourist the universe of what is beautiful, what should be experienced and with whom, and with whom one should interact.
Finally, Echtner's (1999) discussion of the semiotics of travel brochures provides the most productive theoretical outline, discussed below.

D. Additional radio and television sources of data

18. A documentary film produced and broadcast by the Arts and Entertainment Network, entitled *Midnight in Savannah*, broadcast first on November 11, 1997, and re-broadcast five times during the following three years. The home video version of this program is available for purchase from A & E.

19. Television broadcasts of *The Oprah Winfrey* program in which the "cast" of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* were featured;

20. Television broadcast of *The Oprah Winfrey* program featuring The Lady Chablis;

21. Television broadcasts of *Good Morning America* featuring the author of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*, John Berendt;

22. Radio broadcasts from National Public Radio, including the programs, *Fresh Air* and *Morning Edition* that feature interviews with John Berendt;

*Television and Radio Sources of Data*

Since 1984, John Berendt has been a guest on many television talk shows, including *Good Morning America*. The "cast" or real-life individual who populate *The Book*

The A and E Television documentary *Midnight in Savannah* (produced by Hafner and Lusitana: 1997) provides yet another source of material in which contested claims are asserted and challenged. This documentary, designed to provide viewers with the true story behind *The Book*, includes extensive local footage, dozens of interviews with individuals from *The Book*, tour operators, and many representatives of the more traditional, conservative segment of Savannah society that disavows *The Book*, declaring that it is both inaccurate and indecent.
The independently produced video tour, hosted by Nancy Hillis, a.k.a. "Mandy," A Tour of Good and Evil, takes the viewer through the actual bus tour designed and operated by Nancy Hillis, includes extensive interview material with many of the "characters" in The Book and provides considerable back stage footage of many key sites connected to The Book. According to The Book Store, this video is one of the most popular items purchased by tourists.

Since the 1994 publication of The Book, John Berendt has been a frequent guest on morning television programs such as The Morning Show, The Today Show, and Good Morning America. In addition, he has been heard several times on NPR programs, such as Fresh Air. The Lady Chablis has emerged as a media figure as well, appearing on The Oprah Winfrey Show and a number of radio programs.

E. Primary textual sources

23. the complete text of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil;

24. the complete text of the film, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil;

25. the complete audio cassette version of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil, including a 20 minute discussion by John Berendt about writing The Book, his time in Savannah, and the aftermath of the publication of The Book.

The Book and The Movie

The text of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil provides the major element of the analysis. It is in this text that the primary expression of the themes of Southerness, authenticity, and dominant cultural identity are expressed. The Book was analyzed in terms of narrative structure, plot, character, and themes. Of particular interest in the organization of The Book into analytical components were sections in which cultural identity, race, class,
and sexuality were at issue. Similarly, The Movie was reviewed, sorted into scenes that specifically address issues of cultural identity, class, race, and sexuality were particularly well elaborated. The Movie has been shown to match The Book closely in many respects, and, importantly, to depart from The Book in significant ways, including the extra dimension of the visual narrative.

Closely following the predictions derived from Gupta and Ferguson (1992) and De Oliver (1996), The Book and The Movie detail potential contesting claims to cultural identity in Savannah. It will be shown that these claims are ultimately re-absorbed into the master narrative in which dominant cultural identity is privileged.

The Book, now available in translation in thirteen languages, as an unabridged and abridged audio cassette recording, in a large print edition, and in a paperback edition, provides the foundation for this analysis. The outline of the plot is straightforward. The author, never named but providing the first-person narration, travels to Savannah on a lark and falls in love with the city. Soon he encounters the elegant Jim Williams, who we later learn is gay and closeted but whose sexuality is, in the early chapters of the book, merely suggested, for example, through his association with a handsome, highly sexualized young man who would be otherwise inappropriate in Williams's social circle. After the hostile, volatile, childish nature of this young man, Danny Hansford, is established, the reader is introduced to a violent confrontation between Williams and Hansford that ends in the shooting death of Hansford by Williams. The major action of the novel concerns Williams's four trials for this shooting, charged as murder rather than some lesser and perhaps more appropriate charge. In the course of establishing the context and characters, Berendt introduces several major recurring themes embodied in central characters. The
major character during the first half of the story becomes not Williams but the city of Savannah itself. The principal issues concern not the murder but social tensions surrounding cultural identity, race, class, and sexuality. The foundation provided for this analysis provided in The Book across these issues and elaborated in the themes of cultural identity (ethnicity) and authenticity is both supported by the existing structures in the tourism industry (outlined in the materials described above) and, in turn, catalyzed by tourism itself.
1 Over a period of sixteen years, I traveled to Savannah at least twice annually, with stays of up to two weeks. During one year, I made three trips. One week was the shortest duration of a visit. Travel covered every season, with particular emphasis on peak Spring and Summer tourist activity. I attempted to include significant tourist attractions outside of Book-related activities, for example, the annual tour of homes, the opening of the beach season, and St. Patrick's Day as part of my own annual trips.

2 See discussion of data by source, below.

3 The Hamilton-Turner House figures significantly in The Book as a primary home-base of Joe Odum and his manufactured tourism enterprise. The house has since been sold and converted into a luxury hotel/inn.

4 Telephone interview with Shane Sullivan 20 December 2000.

5 According to Sullivan, the Bird Girl replica statue has been the overwhelming best-selling item since September 2000.

6 The "Bird Girl" refers to the statue of The Bird Girl, photographed by the Savannah photographer Jack Leith. The statue itself has become such an appealing attraction that it was moved from the cemetery to the Telfair Museum because the constant stress of rubbing and chipping away at the surface for souvenirs began to severely compromise the statue. A resin cast replica stands in the Visitors Center. The Bird Girl statue replicas have been sold well beyond Savannah, appearing in the Signals and Wireless catalogues for several years. Only last week I was in the Clark County Public Library in Springfield, Ohio, and, to my amazement, saw a full-size replica of the Bird Girl Statue on the Reference Desk.

7 These cookbooks have no direct connection to the plot, characters, or action of The Book, but serve to make deliberate links between The Book and its situation in the larger cultural context of Savannah.

8 The item and price list from the Midnight.com website is reproduced in Appendix E, Item E-13.

9 The concepts of *bricolage* and simulacrum are discussed in some detail below, in the outline of the theoretical matrix for the analysis.

10 Please consult the Bibliography for website addresses.

11 In their own rights, these websites constitute enough material for additional research on the electronic version of Savannah tourism, both authorized and unauthorized, including lesbian and gay websites and resources, discussed in Chapter 5.

12 This phrase is used frequently in interviews with John Berendt, John Duncan, and a variety of other local individuals, and appears in the A & E documentary and several radio interviews. The phrase has become a code-word for "gay" in most instances, rather than criminal.

13 Appendix B contains 18 items, each representative of the specific themes of cultural identity and authenticity. Appendix C contains 6 items, all of which concern tours of important sites from The Book.
CHAPTER 5
ANALYSIS OF DATA

"And read about the trial in front of the courthouse ..."
(from The Book Tour, Summer 1998)

"And all the stories are true"
(John Duncan, local historian, from the A & E documentary)

The multiple strategies for data collection and the multiple sources of data outlined in Chapter 4 provide the basis for the following analysis. At issue are three major issues, each articulated as a claim about the data and demonstrated through the analysis of a variety of data. Longitudinal participant-observation, interviewing, and informal observation provide the ethnographic context for this research, but the analytic focus rests on The Book and the products and industries therefrom derived, with particular attention to tours, brochures, and artifacts.

Two central and related arguments are advanced in this section. Each of these major issues deals with the principal categories outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 concerning cultural identity, both a sense of Southerness and of Savannahian identity and the analytic category of authenticity. The first argument addresses the nature of the appeal of the book, Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil. I contend that there exists a covert narrative, slightly beneath and parallel to the major narrative elements of plot and character. Although The Book is, on many levels, a true-crime story of some eccentric characters in a remote, somewhat obscure southern city, the meaningful narrative contained in The Book concerns
cultural identity, class, race, and sexuality. More importantly, these distinctions of stratification are constructed in The Book and in the related tourism industries in such ways as to confirm to, rather than to challenge, non-southern tourists' expectations about the South as a historically and culturally exotic part of the United States. In addition, the expectations of cultural identity, class, race, and sexuality hierarchies extant in Savannah society, brought to Savannah by tourists, and expressed through Book-related industries are continuously and redundantly reiterated throughout tourists' experiences in Savannah beyond and outside of their Book- or Movie-related encounters. A tourist drawn to the city because of The Book or The Movie will find many sources of confirmatory evidence to support the social organization represented in the book.

The second argument advanced in this chapter concerns the ways in which The Book gains authority as an accurate and authentic representation of Savannah, and, reciprocally, the ways in which actual sites in Savannah become authentic because they are authorized and verified by The Book. Several issues emerge from considerations of authenticity. Many tourists report traveling to Savannah to see the spots where The Book or The Movie took place\(^1\). There is strong desire as well to obtain photographs and objects that themselves contain the experience the tourist has of a location. Here, the concept of authentic copies, whose value is conferred by the authorized creation and distribution of these copies, makes them valuable (see Bruner 1994). Discussion of this argument considers data drawn from interviews, internet materials, The Book, and selected artifacts.

A third issue is addressed at the conclusion of this chapter that draws upon the discussion in Chapter 3 that links literature, tourism, and anthropology.
Analytic and Interpretive Strategies

Each array of data in this research demands a somewhat specific set of practices for collection and analysis. Following is a brief discussion of the semiotic approach, widely used in the analysis of tourism and literary texts, with particular emphasis on its applications for the materials outlined in Chapter 4.

Particularly useful for this analysis is the semiotic approach, employed extensively in the anthropology of tourism, exemplified in the work of Echtner (1999), Dann (1996), Kaushik and Sen (1992), Mick (1986), Culler (1981), MacCannell (1989), Thurot and Thurot (1983), and Cohen and Cooper (1986). Echtner (1999) provides perhaps the best summary of this approach. Her discussion is particularly useful because it outlines the process of semiotic analysis as follows:

1. Select a representative, closed corpus of data in order to apply a synchronic analysis. Applied to this research, such a corpus of data can be understood as The Book and The Movie, or the totality of travel and tour brochures distributed through the Visitors Center, or travel guides for Savannah, or the totality of Savannah tourism materials, including but not limited to those named above.

2. Specify and segment the relevant elements or units of analysis. This research is particularly focused on words, phrases and visual images that represent Southern cultural identity and challenges to conventional understanding of that identity.

3. Inventory the occurrence of the elements. In this research such an inventory includes the sorting and coding of interview data, internet data, and the texts of The Book and The Movie as sources of primary data. Artifacts and tour materials related to The Book are of secondary significance.

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(4) Examine the relationships among these elements. The objective here is not simply the understanding of the individual parts but rather an understanding of the relationships between the parts and the structure of the whole. The governing themes of cultural identity, race, class, and sexuality provide the overarching structures in which these relationships are organized. In semiotic analysis, this analysis is accomplished through syntagmatic and paradigmatic structures. Syntagmatic structure is concerned with the creation of meaning through combination. For example, the phrase "genteel Old South hospitality" the relationship between the adjectives "genteel" and "Old South" and the noun "hospitality" is syntagmatic. Paradigmatic structures concern meaning created through selection. In the example above, each of the elements is considered in terms of other possibilities, such as "Northern," as such choices operate to convey meaning.

(5) Create a comprehensive taxonomy of possible elements and understand the system of rules by which they are combined. Here, the analysis is sensitive to the recurrences and patterns of images, phrase, words, and other symbols.

(6) Penetrate the surface meanings (or mere descriptive, denotative meanings) and extract underlying meanings (or interpretive, connotative meanings). Connotative meanings are neither distinct nor absolute and they rely on interpretation corroborated by discussion in the context of its relevance to existing data.

Themes Articulated in The Book

The analytical categories established in the foregoing discussion emergent from the research traditions in the anthropology of tourism emphasize cultural identity (southern cultural identity) and authenticity. In addition to these categories and underpinning these categories, are the dominant narratives of class, race, and sexuality such that both the
categories of ethnicity and authenticity are inflected through the prism of class, race, and sexuality. In the dominant cultural narrative reflected in the official history and in the many agencies and objects generated by the tourism industry, Southerness is understood as white, as heterosexual, as male, and as largely aristocratic. The plot and characters presented in The Book appear to defy these assumptions about normative social categories in its depictions of gay relationships, the world of a drag bar, and the ascent of a man from working class origins in Gordon, Georgia, to the inner circle of Savannah society. In actual and literary fact, the presentation of exotic characters and disruptive categories and behavior serves not to subvert the dominant cultural narrative but to intensify it through this apparent challenge. In the following discussion of specific data in terms of the major categories of analysis, these narrative themes of race, class, and sexuality will be examined.

*Ethnicity, Southerness, and Cultural Identity*

The first issue concerns ethnicity, and the ways in which The Book and its related industries and products have led tourists, in effect, cultural consumers, to understand the view of Savannah and the South as reflective of Southern identity. More to the point, the ways in which Savannah has self-consciously created its image, particularly in the context of the tourist expectations derived from their exposure to The Book and The Movie, and the ways in which the advent of The Book has constituted a set of opportunities for the creation of a certain, self-conscious cultural identity. Tourists travel to Savannah from all regions of the United States and from dozens of countries throughout the world. A dialectical relationship emerges in tourist encounters in which both hosts and guests express, interpret, and understand their own identities and the identity of the other in terms of the available signs and symbols. The discussion of ethnicity in this chapter particularly concerns two
elements: (1) the ways in which Southerness is communicated and understood; and, (2) the particular roles of race, class, and sexuality in articulating identity, otherness and cultural difference.

Tourism in Savannah is ethnic tourism, in part, because of the conspicuous display of specific markers of Southern cultural identity and, in part, precisely because it is conspicuously not Northern. The creation and display of ethnicity in this sense is a form of communication between the group and some other group or the larger system. In order for tourism to genuinely function as ethnic tourism, clear boundaries between the tourist and the native must be erected and maintained.

Perhaps the most distinctive source of data in which Southerness is articulated and confirmed is the variety of images—visual and verbal—circulated through tour brochures. Appendix B includes 18 items for consideration.

Appendix B-1 shows covers from two tourist promotional publications, each advertising the 1996 Summer Olympics yachting events held in Savannah. Promising to be a major source of tourist influx and revenue, this venture failed to generate the interest predicted. Of interest in these illustrations is the adjective "historic" as a modifier in each use of the noun "Savannah," thus establishing the deeply-rooted nature of the city and, without specifying such details, evoking the many connotations and denotations associated with the use of the term "historic" and its juxtaposition with the name of a southern city. Items B-2 and B-3 illustrate special attractions offered by the city, including the famous St. Patrick's Day celebration and the use of Savannah's squares and distinctive benches in the motion picture, Forrest Gump.
Appendix Items B-4, 5, and 6 illustrate a further elaboration of the theme of historical roots and depth of connection of the present to the past. The repeated phrases, "Old South" and "Old Savannah" are deployed even when history is not at issue. Intensifying the effect of this language is the visual icon in Item B-6, showing the silhouette of a gentleman and a lady, posed in bow and curtsy posture, drawing the viewer to an earlier time when manners and gender roles were clearly delineated.

Appendix Items B-7, B-8, and B-9 feature a range of imagery associated with Savannah, including several major themes that dominate Savannah tours: (1) Savannah is a walking city; (2) Savannah is a drinking city; (3) Savannah is a spectral city with connections to ghosts and the supernatural; (4) Savannah is connected to churches and religious traditions; and (5) Savannah is a city of Southern belles. More importantly, the history that enshrouds Savannah is not dead but a living history, and one that the tourist can relive. Continuing these motifs, Items B-10 thorough B-15, introduce a variety of tours, specialized and, in some cases, personalized to suit the particular interests and needs of the individual tourist.

Appendix B Items 16 and 17 present interesting evidence for the cultural identity issue. Item B-16, a brochure from Charleston, South Carolina rather than Savannah, is included here to illustrate the "us" and "them" distinction that rests at the center of articulations of Southerness. In this instance, the reference to Carpetbaggers, the worst kind of Northerner during Reconstruction, is used in a playful and self-conscious way to underscore the almost neo-colonial access to and attitude that "damnyankees," as they are called, have toward their travel to the South. Item B-17 shows two bumper stickers rather than tour brochures, available at many gift stores throughout Savannah\(^2\). These images and
verbal expressions rely on a complex reading and translation process, ultimately expressing a supreme white southern identity, and seeking solidarity with this viewpoint. These bumper stickers are not connected to The Book in any literal or figurative sense, but are sold in the same retail stores that sell images and icons connected to The Book. They are understood as a legitimate, perhaps humorous approach to expressing a dominant cultural identity.

The last item in this section, B-18, describes Ghost Tours, and provides links between contemporary and historical experiences with the supernatural and transcends racial divisions in its inclusion of "ghost tours," a term usually used only to describe white experiences with the supernatural, with "voodoo," generally reserved to describe African American experiences with the supernatural. Assumptions and implications about white and black connections to the supernatural, links between Savannah and the supernatural, and the link between the past and the present provided by ghostly inhabitation provide important aspects of Southern exoticism, Savannah local identity, and specific aspects of The Book. The connection of Jim Williams to the supernatural is made explicit in Item D-15 and elaborated during The Hospitality Tour when tourists are invited to listen to an excerpt from a radio interview with Jim Williams from the 1970s in which he speaks at length about his experience with a haunted house he restored some time earlier. The positioning of ghost tours, ghost stories, and belief in supernatural forces is constructed as somewhat marginal, beyond the realm of polite, white, middle class concerns but the appropriate subject for a momentary diversion on a tour. By situating Jim Williams in this realm, his marginality and intermediacy are reinforced.
In my participant-observation and informal interviewing sample, the issues of cultural identity, Southerness, and Savannahian identity were explored through a number of observations and interview strategies. Among 250 total interviewed informants, including tourists, back stage workers, and so-called "middle men" who act a cultural brokers visible to tourists but situated between the site and the tourist, formal and informal interviews were designed to explore the subject's understanding of the concepts of southern cultural identity and Savannah distinctiveness, both in the context of tourism and, more specifically, in the context of their experiences with The Book. The following questions were posed in order to develop an understanding of expectations and experiences about Southerness. Questions designed to produce conversation about cultural and regional identity varied depending upon the context and content of the overall interview or conversation. Following is a sample of what proved to be the most effective interview questions for generating discussion of Southern identity as it is connected to The Book and The Book tours. These question were posed to tourists only, excluding from this sample cultural brokers, retail merchants, and other residents. Of the total interview population of 250 respondents, these exclusions left 197 individuals, all of whom were non-residents, all of whom were identified through their participation in one or more tours or shopping in Book-related specialty stores, and who self-identified as tourists.

1. Is this your first time in Savannah?
2. Have you traveled in other parts of the South?
3. Where are you from?
4. Did you imagine what [the South/Savannah] would be like before you came?
5. What about The Book do you think is distinctly Southern?
6. Can you think of a few words that come to mind when you think of the South?

Of the 197 individuals with whom I spoke about their ideas and impressions about Southern cultural identity, 146, or 74%, commented in some detail on their strong and vivid ideas about the South, and the degrees to which their hopes and expectations were fulfilled by their visit to Savannah. Perhaps most striking among these interview data are the responses to question 6 above. In general, respondents who answered this question (130) used language strikingly similar to the language of the tour brochures, relying on adjectives such as "slow," "genteel," "old," and "historic."

In the collected internet data from various sources, the theme of distinctiveness Southern and Savannahian identity appears more frequently than any other theme. A total of 347 reader response comments were collected, and an additional 154 direct responses to my postings and as part of comments invited on Book-related web sites, for a total of 501 separate sets of responses from internet sources. Data for identity issues were sorted based on the following key words:

captures (Southern life/culture)
Southern living
Southern culture
eccentricity
(the best things) about the South
(Southern) quirkiness/quirky Southern characters
(Southern) romantic notions
(Southern) haughtiness
(the city is) so Old South
(the South is in a) time warp
(this is) a Southern thing
charm and beauty of the South
typical Southern social conflicts
Southern lifestyle
truthful observations about [Savannah/Southern] life
facts behind the pseudo-modern South
a good/accurate view of Savannah/the South
accurate/vivid description of life in the South/Savannah
I am a true Southerner and this is the real thing
I know this (Southern) story and it is real
like a (magical) trip (home) for me

Of the total 501 responses from internet sources, 427, or 85% of all responses included some specific reference to Southern identity, Savannah identity, or other dimensions of regional distinctiveness, falling into at least one of the phrase patterns described above.

Themes of Cultural Identity Expressed in The Book

The Book presents a very specific set of images concerning ethnicity, regional distinctiveness, and Southerness. The construction of Southerness in The Book emerges from several primary characters, most notably Mary Harty, Berendt's first tour guide through the city, Joe Odum, a non-practicing lawyer of considerable charm and uncertain sexuality, the upper strata of Savannah society represented most vividly by The Married Woman's Club, and Jim William himself.

Berendt's own introduction to the city comes through his encounter with Mary Harty, an elegant, older white Savannah native who instructs him on local history, lore, and custom. Berendt and the reader gradually become exposed to Savannah culture simultaneously, and learn early that Savannah derives much of its sense of identity from its uniqueness and its cultivated sense of cultural and geographic remoteness. When asked by the narrator (Berendt) whether Savannahians feel cut off, she replies, "Cut off from what?" (Berendt 1994:30). The remainder of this second chapter of the book, entitled "Destination
Unknown," serves to establish Savannah as part of the South but quite distinct and removed from everything else in the region. At the end of this chapter, Berendt comments:

I suspected that in Savannah I had stumbled on a rare vestige of the Old South. It seemed to me that Savannah was in some respects as remote as Pitcairn Island, that tiny rock in the middle of the Pacific where the descendants of the mutineers of the H.M.S. *Bounty* had lived in inbred isolation since the eighteenth century. For about the same length of time, seven generations of Savannahians had been marooned in their hushed and secluded bower of a city on the Georgia coast.

(Berendt 1994:36)

In Chapter 3, "The Sentimental Gentleman," in which the reader meets Joe Odum, Joe's rules for successful living in Savannah are expressed:

Rule number one: always stick around for one more drink. That's when things happen. That's when you find out what you want to know... Rule number two: Never go South of Gaston Street... Rule number three: Observe the high holidays--St. Patrick's Day and the day of the Georgia-Florida football game... Georgia men grow up understanding the seriousness of that one game.

(Berendt 1994:50-51)

The Southern identity created and conjured in *The Book* draws on some of the standard ethnographic realities, mythic characteristics, and stereotypes discussed in Chapter 2, including the sense of the eternal and fallen hero, the romantic figure, the patriot (which, in Southern terms, refers not to the federal government of the United States but to the abstraction of the Confederate States of America), and the aristocratic gentleman planter. Most striking in *The Book* are several vignettes that illustrate the operation of these cultural properties, both by their assertion and their juxtaposition against contrasting elements.

*Southern Identity as a Function of Class*
1. Jim Williams living as an aristocrat without being an aristocrat
2. The Married Woman's Club
3. Jim Williams's Christmas Party
4. Class contrasts between Danny Hansford and the rest of Williams's social circle

*Southern Identity as a Function of Race*

*Race as Discussed in Interview and Internet Data*

In the entire sample of internet materials, including reader comments and responses to postings, not one respondent named or discussed race as a variable or consideration of interest.

*Race as a Dimension of Identity in The Book*

Several key plot lines, characters, and events in The Book most clearly embody the dimension of race as a salient issue in cultural identity. These elements of the book are most visible where African American characters and events are central to a chapter or section.

*Black Characters as "Pretenders to Whiteness*

The Alpha Phi Alpha-sponsored Black Debutante Ball (Chapter 24)

*Black Characters as Travel Guides and Mediators Between Worlds*

Chablis and Minerva both function as mediators between worlds. In the case of Chabils, she acts as a guide and translator between the white and black world in Savannah, between the gay and straight world, and between the respectable middle class and the seamy underside of the city. In the case of Minerva, she acts to bridge the world of the living and the world of the dead, the world of the rational and the world of the superstitious, and the world of the moneyed white social elite and the world of the rural black underclass.
In other recent films, similar roles have been played by African American characters and actors, including Whoopi Goldberg in *Ghost*, Will Smith in *The Legend of Bagger Vance*, Scatman Cruthers in *The Shining*.

*Black Characters as Bicultural and Culturally Mobile*

In her autobiography, *The Lady Chablis* produces a serious challenge to conventions of Southerness. For the purposes of this discussion, only the illustrations from this book will be considered, shown in Appendix E, Items E-1 and E-2 (several illustrations are contained under E-2), in addition to portions of The Book that concern Lady Chablis.

In a reversal of traditional expectations, Chablis represents herself as hypersexualized, hyper-realized white and black cultural icons. In the first item in Appendix E-2, Lady Chablis is photographed in a faux modest pose, covering her genital area and thereby drawing specific visual attention to her "candy." The title of the book, *Hiding My Candy*, works on several semiotic levels. This expression, common among drag queens to describe the preparations necessary to create a convincingly feminine silhouette, appears to conceal something—her genital area, her underlying identity as male, the treat made available for the chosen few—but, in actuality thereby reveals and intensifies that which is intended to be concealed. The second illustration shows Chablis as Scarlet O'Hara, attended by an inversion of the traditional Mammy figure in the use of an African American woman with extremely light complexion, in contrast to expectations and in contrast to Chablis's own relatively dark complexion. In this illustration, Chablis becomes not just the "heterosexual white woman" she claims to be in her nightclub routine (Berendt 1994:95-128). The next illustration depicts Chablis juxtaposed against a plate of fried chicken, a traditional racial signifier associated with both positive and negative valence, depending on the control of the
terms of signification. Posed in an apron and captioned with the question, "Breast or thigh," convention is reversed by the position of a white man gazing admiringly, perhaps longingly at Chabils who ignores his attentions. The third illustration shows Chablis in front of Mercer House. Of particular interest in this illustration is the fact that Chablis in reality had nothing to do with the real-life Jim Williams. Her positioning in front of Mercer House manufactures a connection, replicates a connection that never existed. Similarly, the fourth illustration, Chabils in the kitchen at Clary's restaurant, manufactures a connection between Chablis, a "character" in The Book with other individuals, events, and locations in The Book unrelated to her subplots. The fifth illustration shows Chabilis in a seductive executive pose at the Hamilton-Turner House, the site of Joe Odum's genuine fake tour business, later the site of Nancy Hillis's tour business and gift shop, and more recently a hotel. Again, in the pose in the sixth illustration, in front of the fountain in Forsyth Park, Chabils becomes situated in Savannah and in the context of sites featured in The Book but not intrinsically part of Chablis's own life except as it is inflected through the sites and actions of The Book.

*Southern and Savannahian Identity as Function of Sexuality*

*Gay Themes in the Book*

Gay themes in the book have, until 2000, been officially ignored. Recent publications have specifically addressed gay and lesbian issues raised by The Book and direct tourists to sites of interest5. The Third Edition of Frommer's *Portable Charleston and Savannah* includes an entire page of information on lesbian and gay bars, and makes direct reference to *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* (Porter and Prince 2000:191).
The very nature of the real story upon which The Book is based introduces the
dimension of sexuality. Jim Williams, the reader learns, is gay, but gay in a way that has
never disturbed or interested his society friends. This is the subject of considerable
discussion in the A & E documentary, *Midnight in Savannah*. Like his class ascent, his
gayness is tolerable when inconspicuous but poses significant problems of friendship and
fidelity when made visible as it was after he was charged in the shooting death of Danny
Hansford and the full nature of their relationship was revealed. However, in addition to the
relatively straightforward, if problematic, nature of Jim Williams's sexuality and the local
understanding and interpretation of gayness, Berendt loads the text with several crucial gay
subplots and characters. On one narrative level, these plots and characters contribute to the
eccentric and exotic nature of The Book. On closer inspection, however, the specific natures
of gay characters and plots reflects both textual and social tensions and ambivalence, the
resolution of which is found in a re-assertion of heterosexual normativity. Several episodes
from The Book illustrate this argument.

1. Jack the One-Eyed Jill--Chapter 4
2. The Ranger Case--Chapter 15 Civic Duty
3. Berendt's/The Narrator's ambiguous sexuality
4. The Lady Chablis--her subplots and dialogue--Chapter 7

Gay characters in an assortment of popular culture perform roles similar to the roles
assigned to African American characters, acting sometimes as mascot and sometimes as the
voice of wisdom, the narrator of the gay or straight world, respectively, for different textual
purposes, and as having nearly mystic intuition. Chabils plays this role in *Midnight*
looking at African Americans and gays as exotic tourism
Gay Themes Expressed in Other Sources of Data

1. Travel guides intended for non-gay audiences and lesbian and gay travel guides
   Increasingly, since the publication of The Book and the release of The Movie, Savannah has
captured the express and direct attention of lesbian and gay travelers. Frommer’s guide to
Charleston and Savannah (Porter and Prince 2000) contains a specific and designated
section of travel hints and places of interest for the lesbian and gay tourist to Savannah.
Likewise, Fodor’s Gay Guide to the USA (Collins 1998:18-22) describes many of the
“mesmerizing” sites of the city typically described in generic travel guides but calls
specific attention to clubs, bars, restaurants, and lodgings that are known to be gay-themed
or gay-friendly.

2. The gift store owned and operated by Pat Tuttle as part of Hospitality Tours
   The gift store that is incorporated as part of the Hospitality Tours (see Appendix C, Book
   Related Tours) features an unmistakable gay icon in its window of a rainbow flag.
   Otherwise not marked as a lesbian or gay site, the deployment of this icon links The Book,
   the tour, and the tourist in a gay-related signification system.

3. Faces and Club One
   These gay bars became popular as the real-life settings of much of the action described by
   Berendt in The Book, and currently host more non-gay visitors than gay and lesbian
   tourists. Weeknights still tend to attract a large clientele of gay locals, but weekend business
typically is dominated by non-gay tourists. The Lady Chablis occasionally performs at
   Club One.

4. The Lady Chablis’ autobiography, career on television talk shows, and on tour
The Lady Chablis has built a second career from her popularity derived from The Book. Her autobiography, *Hiding My Candy* (1996) and her many radio and television appearances are typically subtitled or themed from issues raised in the book. Appendix G provides a range of illustrations, from the cover to interior photography that depict The Lady Chablis at a number of locations from The Book, including Clary’s Diner and Mercer House and other sites which have nothing intrinsic to do with her own life and career but are contingently linked with her by virtue of their shared presence in The Book.

5. Felicia’s web site

Felicia’s is a web site devoted to information and communication for and among lesbian and gay travelers to Savannah. The following is a typical posting:

Hi, we’re just a couple of travelling fags looking to stay in Savannah on our way home to Toronto. Any suggestions? I did spend a great weekend in Savannah in Spring 1992 but stayed at an up-tight B & B. Any help is appreciated.

Hello—Miss everyone
Just a quick note (sic) to say hello and that I (sic) hope everyone is doing great—Mama I miss you every Friday 9(sic) night—my dressing room in Greenville is awfully (sic) lonely without some one (sic) “gawjuss” to make it lively! See you August 6, 7, and 8 for Miss Coastal Empire Sentinals! Better luck this year huh! Well gotta run—notice the new e-mail address!


The Fall 2000 publication of a gay novel by Donald Porter makes direct links with the city of Savannah, The Book, and many of the sites, characters, and themes of action of The Book, including Danny Hansford, Lady Chablis, Bonaventure Cemetery, and Club One. Described on the back cover by the Georgia Literary Association, *Midnight in Savannah*
fulfills many of the requisite characteristics for Southerness and adds the gay quotient deliniated by The Book.


(Porter 2000:back cover)

Appendix G shows the cover of this new entry into the assortment of products derived from The Book. The cover illustration draws directly on the Jack Leith photograph of the Bird Girl statue that become the famous cover of The Book. Appendix E, Item E-4 juxtaposes the covers of the two books, making the comparison of elements clear. In Porter's book, a naked young white male figure stands in a posture similar to the pose of the Bird Girl, holding dishes that might be bird bath trays or balances. He is surrounded by a snake, entwined around his neck, shoulders, and arms, and a disembodied hand reaches up between his legs to cover his genital area.

7. Gay and lesbian publications that devote attention to The Book and The Movie After the publication of The Book and the release of The Movie, many national lesbian and gay publications took notice of the explicitly and consistently gay content in The Book. The Lambda Rising Book Reports, for example, ran reviews of The Book and Lady Chablis’s autobiography. The Advocate ran reviews of The Book and The Movie and a feature story about Clint Eastwood, the director of The Movie (see Appendix G).

A second major concern in this discussion is the question of authenticity and the ways in which tourism presents the authorized version of history and sociology to tourists. In the case of Savannah, the role of The Book and its derived and related industries and products, the voice of John Berendt assumes authority and the nature of the texts themselves
assume the credibility of ethnographic reports that provide true, accurate, and authentic representations of daily life in Savannah.

*Tours, Gift Stores, Objects and Artifacts and Their Claims to Authenticity*

Following Bruner's (1994) discussion of the four senses of authenticity, and the discussion of the interpretation and application of these four senses to the data considered here, a few items of particular interest are reviewed for their attractiveness based on one or more sense of authenticity.

1. The statue of The Bird Girl

The image of The Bird Girl statue is among the most reproduced, most sought-after, most commodified, and most directly linked with The Book. Appendix E describes and illustrates a number of manifestations of The Bird Girl, including candles, stained glass windows, and statues available for purchase. Appendix E also describes the items available from the Book Gift Store, including a range fo Bir Girl imagery items such as a special key lime cookies tin. The image of The Bird Girl presents an interesting challenge for the analysis of authenticity. The statue itself was an inconsequential piece of statuary in Bonaventure Cemetery before the publication of The Book. Not at all part of the grave sites of any of the major characters, including even peripheral individuals names throughout The Book, such as Conrad Aiken, Johnny Mercer, and Juliette Gordon Low, the statue caught the eye of the local photographer, Jack Leith, whose several book-length collections of his photography and his gallery across from Oglethorpe Cemetery had already earned him a considerable regional reputation. His original photography, selected by Random House publishing for the cover of The Book, abstracted from any character or plot connected to The Book, has become a major icon associated with Savannah and *Midnight* authenticity.
2. Emma Kelly CDs

Emma Kelly, a local and regional entertainer and a major figure in The Book, has released several CDs of her renditions of Johnny Mercer’s music. A highly desirable marker of a trip to Savannah, these CDs, as her regular appearances at local clubs and piano bars, provide yet another link for tourists/consumers to Savannah authenticity.

3. Joe Odum's NSF check

Joe Odum, a central character in The Book and one who serves in something of a liaison role between the diurnal and nocturnal worlds of Savannah, becomes notorious in Savannah history and in the text for his unorthodox financial dealings that include "floating paper," or depending on cash from checks the funds of which have not yet become available. His centrality to the plot and his highly eccentric business strategies become embodied in this replica of one of his many Not Sufficient Funds checks.

4. The Official Midnight Tours

Brochures advertising The Book tours, collected in Appendix C develop additional aspects of authenticity, relying on The Book as the point of articulation of markers of authenticity. In many items in Appendix C, tours are endowed with credibility based on their fidelity to The Book, and assume authenticity precisely and entirely through their guarantee of authority.

5. The invention of the authentic in Midnight-related products

Data from Interviews and Internet Sources Concerning Authenticity

From my interview and participant-observation sample of respondents, 197 individuals from my total sample of a total of 250 informants in my study were appropriate subjects to interview and converse with about issues of authenticity. Concerning issues of
the quest for authenticity based on the book, 182, or 92% of my respondents expressed their motivation or satisfaction deriving from finding the original, the genuine, or the authentic location of action in The Book or The Movie. Following is a selection from field notes of interview and informal conversation responses:

I loved the book and had to see where it took place

There is nothing like reading the part about the trial right in front of the (Chatham County) courthouse.

The book came alive when I came to Savannah.

I imagined how this all would look before we came. It's more beautiful than I imagined.

My favorite part was Bonaventure Cemetery. I could just about hear Danny talking to Corrine.

I listened to the book (on audio cassette) and walked around the squares. I could almost see Jim Williams standing at the window when I stopped at Mercer House.

Likewise, reader comments and responses to internet postings reflect the desire to make direct connection to the authentic sites described in The Book.

If you've never been to Savannah you'll feel like you're there.

I lived in Savannah at the time that all of this took place, I remember this trial! I was there. I still have friends in Savannah that know (or knew) characters that appear in this book.

Every time I open my copy it's just like I received a free plane ticket to Savannah and I still hope to go there one day!

John did a wonderful job of telling the tale of real Southerners. Although not all of us are that eccentric (sic).

The old south is captured with all it's (sic) eccentricities! I thought the book was well researched and I loved the way the author just 'hung out' with all the characters, with no class distinction. This is the way to find the
most amazing characters, especially in the old south, and believe me, being a southerner myself, he left no stone unturned!!

I grew up in another Southern backwater coastal town (Pensacola, Florida) and its (sic) just the same! All sorts of characters living out their lives with surprising variety.

Having been in Savannah several times I think the author was dead solid perfect in his narrative of a murder in Savannah.

The author seemed more like a conduit than an author while the subjects in the book revolved and evolved through him rather than from him.

I did not read this book, but rather, saw, felt, and tasted it. It was one of the most sensual books that’s ever crossed my path. The colors, aromas, sights and sounds just reeked of Savannah.

I visited Savannah after reading the book. I went with a friend who had also read the book and we went to the cemetery to look for the statue that was on the front cover of the book. We found Johnny Mercer’s grave.

I never visited Savannah, but I read the book and took the on-line tour. I intend to buy the video tour of Savannah and the places in the book.

**Literature and Ethnography**

Finally, the third concern of this analysis involves the relationship between literature and ethnography, and examines the narrative structure and rhetoric of The Book, sold as a non-fiction work, a true crime book, and a travelogue, and the ways in which these components of The Book contribute to its authority.

**The Book as Ethnographic Authenticity**

The opening pages of Malinowski’s *Argonauts of the Western Pacific* sets the tone for understanding and expectations about ethnographic writing in general.

Imagine yourself suddenly set down surrounded by all your gear, alone on a t
tropical beach close to a native village, while the launch which has brought you sails away out of sight... Imagine yourself then, making your first entry into the village, alone or in company with your white cicerone. Some natives flock round you... The first visit leaves you with a hopeful feeling that when you return alone, things will be easier (Malinowski 1984 [1922]:4-5).

The question of ethnographic authenticity and tourism in Savannah centers on two major elements: the search for genuine Southerness and the pursuit of the actual sites described in The Book and the film. Harkin (1995) describes the tourist's quest for authenticity in his fieldwork in Le Marais section of Paris. Tourists in Paris are attracted to the Louvre because they know the Mona Lisa is the original, not a reproduction. The visit the Effiel Tower, both the most visited and most reproduced architectural structure in Paris. Of particular interest for this project is Harkin's observation that apartments on the Rue de Rivoli, the location of Victor Hugo's modest apartment, have become a tourist mecca since the success of the Broadway musical, Les Miserables. Similarly, the major draw of authenticity in Savannah revolves around the possibility of standing in the spots that the individuals/characters did in Midnight.

Berendt's book poses interesting challenges for anthropological analysis. It is not an ethnography but follows many conventions of conducting fieldwork and presenting ethnography in narrative form. For example, Berendt's descriptions of his preliminary preparations, his discovery of Savannah, his decision to stay and conduct research in Savannah, and his pursuit of research in a fairly conventional, if superficial version of participant-observation is reminiscent of many introductions to many ethnographies. His structure of the first half of The Book, particularly where establishing history and context are concerned, and his reliance on key and primary informants do not mimic ethnography in the formal and professional sense, but derive some claim to authority precisely because of
their resemblance to the conventions of ethnographic writing. His authenticity and ethnographic authority are further established and reinforced through his reliance on detail and hyper-realism, literary conventions well-known in ethnographic writing (Marcus and Cushman 1982).

It is represented as a non-fiction work, as a true crime factual story, yet many details of the crime, the sequence of events, the characters, and the setting are liberally modified and rearranged for narrative fluidity and dramatic effect. Although it is not considered travel literature, it has provided the impetus and social cartography for millions of tourists to Savannah. It appears to be a story of a shooting death and the many local real-life individuals who orbit the central characters and action, and yet the city of Savannah itself is perhaps the most significant character in the narrative. Berendt begins his relationship with Savannah and his narration of the story as a one-time then some-time visitor and rapidly becomes a literary participant-observer fieldworker. The text appears to function simultaneously as an ethnography, as a novel, and as a travelogue.

John Berendt, in this sense, can be understood as a postmodern flâneur willing to walk through the seedy underside of the city and report on it for the middle class who can live vicariously through these images and be titillated by the lives of people whom they would, in reality, avoid. The reader can sample violence, sexual perversion, illegal activity (such as drug use), and vices of various sorts. In this sense, as with the poetry of Baudelaire, the pleasure is derived not only from seeing those less fortunate than oneself, but from understanding oneself as not them. In this way, Berendt is, indeed, the new flâneur, creating a new, interstitial genre which is by turns ethnographic, journalistic, and novelistic. His purpose is to report on the seedy underside of aristocratic Savannah for a
middle class audience. Berendt, like Baudelaire, is a gentleman, educated, urbane with certain access to the higher echelons of Savannah society. He prefers to spend his time slumming, and not slumming simply for his own pleasure, but for the benefit of his readers to whom he will report.

Summary of Analytical Issues

In particular, the following issues have been considered:

1. The Book has had a profound and sustained effect on tourism in Savannah for reasons beyond its literary appeal and the appeal of Savannah as a destination.

2. Tourism in Savannah, like tourism in the South (especially the Deep South) has traditionally relied upon explicit and tacit narratives of race, gender, and class stratification, variously disguised as "traditional" and the like.

3. In spite of the apparently sexy subjects of The Book, in spite of the apparently subversive nature of the plot and characters of The Book, the overall effect, in a literary and historical way, is to conserve traditional lines of stratification, status, and role. In part the action of the story concerns individuals who transgress boundaries, who attempt to move up or around and ultimately get undone or punished.

4. Overall, this chapter aims to demonstrate the major themes outlined in Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 (ethnicity, authenticity, and literature and anthropology) and to do so through the many sources of data outlined in Chapter 4, beginning with but not limited to The Book.

5. This chapter illustrates the ways in which The Book encourages, insists upon two kinds of tourism authenticity: First, there is the drive to see the exact sites where the
action of The Book took place. Second is the drive to find the true Savannah, the "true South" or, at least, the decadent South in Savannah. There is much in The Book itself that invokes or compares the nouveau South, riche, etc. to the genuine thing, or that distinguished Charleston from Savannah, or that aligns Savannah and some abstracted quintessence of the South with true Savannahians. Also, there are lots of elements that distinguish "true" Savannahians from others—Lee Adler is a Jew and therefore never a true Savannahian. Another Jewish man, who is descended from the first immigrants on the first boat that landed in Savannah is likewise marginalized. Of course, this works for African Americans as well. The point, then is not just about race and stratification, but about authenticity, about being genuinely Savannahian. This is a thread that is traced throughout, including in the description of Sonny Seiler (genuine Savannahian) vs. John Wright Jones (outsider) as defense attorneys.

END NOTES CHAPTER 5

1A summary of field and internet data follows below.
2It is important to note that these items were never seen in any of the Midnight stores.
3An effective question in this case in understood as a question or statement that produced more than a single sentence response and that clearly opened a respondent to further conversation on the subject. These questions, or selections from them, or questions patterned in similar ways, were posed to all tourist interview subjects.
4The terms and phrases listed in this discussion occurred at least four times in the total sample in order to be included as meaningful and part of a pattern. Many other idiosyncratic descriptors were excluded from this analysis because they did not fit well into a pattern with other responses.
See Appendix E and Appendix F.

Felicia's is a gay-themes web site that features comments from lesbian and gay travelers to Savannah and posts announcements of events and sites of interest.

See Appendix D, Item D-12.

See Appendix D, Items D-1 and D-2.
CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS AND DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:
THE ANTHROPOLOGIST AS TOURIST, THE TOURIST AS ANTHROPOLOGIST

I know it won't ruin Savannah. Savannahians are impervious
to outside influence. They call themselves 'the hostess city
of the South,' and they are welcoming and cordial, and you
feel as though you are the only important person to visit
Savannah, but they're happy to see you leave.
John Berendt in an NPR interview on Morning Edition,
22 September 1995

General Considerations

This research has grown in much the same way the tourism industry in Savannah
itself has grown. Beginning with small, situationally-driven questions, it has assumed
somewhat epic proportions, engaging material from fully 25 distinct sources, relying on
methods of field data collection, semiotic analysis, and literary content analysis. Questions
have generated more questions rather than answers. The fundamental issue of what has
made this book attractive to readers and tourists alike appears to be the most difficult
question to address directly.

In many respects this work has emerged in the tradition of a variety of anthropology
of earlier times, when a relatively unselfconscious fieldworker became immersed in a culture
over a long period, observed regular patterns of action and interaction, developed theories,
and entered the field with well-articulated research problems. I began this work before it
was work, in the personage of a tourist, and, for a long period of time felt comfortable in that
role. Gradually I developed a sense that this site and this moment would allow me to
investigate questions that long had interested me. My previous research has concerned the
formation, expression, and commodification of identity in country music, and the processes underway in Savannah in the early 1990s seemed another excellent proving ground for working out these ideas and attempting to answer these questions.

How do a people know who they are? In part, they recognize themselves in the stories they tell themselves about themselves in order to continue being more like themselves. In part a people understand who they are from the stories that others tell about them. The specific interplay of self-generated mythology internalized from outside origins depends on the nature of the cultures in contact, the nature of the contact, and the content of the stories. In learning about the US South, more and more evidence pointed to the suggestion that the South was regarded as and understood itself as a kind of internal, domestic Third World society. In this dynamic, to some degree, the Third World society is confronted not by images of its own creation but by representations of itself created by the dominant culture that controls it. Ranging from passive acquiescence to active interaction with such images, the Third World society accepts these stories and begins to perform the identities presented in them. Ultimately, the culture assimilates as real, as genuine, as authentic the versions of cultural identity they have performed.

The appeal and, perhaps the cultural significance of The Book to Southern history and culture and to the wider national and international audiences whose sustained attention it has engaged, is rooted by threads that connect deeply to Southern history, in the realities of race and racism in the United States, in the processes of the construction of race as a category, in the contemporary cultural discourse on gay identity, and on the cords of memory and mythology that create a Southern cultural identity.
The tremendous influx of tourist interest and financial investment in the city of Savannah over the past decade, with intensification over the past six years, has changed the city profoundly. The population size has increased, revenues from tourism and related industries are significantly up, new house building has increased substantially, and Savannah continues to attract large numbers of tourists and considerable local, regional, national, and international attention.

Cultural wisdom claims that travel broadens. In many respects, individuals and institutions operate on the assumption that the opportunity for travel and the exposure to people and ways of life different from one's one will have the effect of de-exoticizing "the cultural other." Travel, it is argued, produces a kind of democratic universalism in which travelers better understand the hosts and more like themselves. A discovery revealed in these data is that travel might, and, indeed, does have the opposite effect in certain, perhaps predictable circumstances. Rather than producing the benefits of mutual recognition and leveling of cultural difference, tourism in Savannah has acted to promote, intensify, and, to specific measurable extents, manufacturing cultural difference. Tourism acts to heighten local self-awareness, first in self-evident categories of meaning. As Esman (1989) has suggested, tourism becomes a way to stimulate local, native interest in local, native culture. Indeed, efforts to conserve local cultural identity sometimes emerge from precisely the external interest brought by tourism or other forms of intense culture contact.

As tourism in Savannah began to develop and expand during the early 1980s, reflection in the city's history, its public image, and its presentation of self began in earnest. Sometime during the early 1990s and emergent fully by 1995\(^1\), local identity became self-consciously aware of touristic images of Savannah and Savannahians. The fairly informal
approach to tourism that characterized Savannah and distinguished it from Charleston, South Carolina, gradually transformed into a self-conscious performance of culture, framed in expectations outlined in The Book. The specific characteristics of Savannah's history and heritage, the more general connections to Southern heritage, and the contours organized by touristic expectations began to take shape and become visible throughout the city by 1996. Savannah began to perform Savannah, and Savannah became the leading export product for the local economy.

Bruner, among others, cautions that tourism research need not conceptualize cultures as static and pristine before tourism contact, somehow existing in "an original, pure state . . . like the ethnographic present . . . as if history begins with tourism, which then pollutes the world" (Bruner 1994:408). Self-evident culture is Savannah, and, for that matter, throughout the South, has been throughout its history the dynamic product of internal reflection and creation and culture contact. To understand the effects of tourism on Savannah as somehow ruining an undiscovered, untouched snapshot of an earlier time is, itself, a construction derived from antecedent and metadiscursive processes in which the assumed pristine culture was the result of complex symbolic negotiations. This is not to say that the current state of affairs in Savannah is unperturbed by outside contact.

Tourists in my research report a variety of motivations for travel to Savannah, including personal heritage and family connection, business, interest in an inexpensive beach vacation, a generalized interest in history, and, overwhelmingly, an interest in seeing the actual sites where Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil took place. Even in the face of lukewarm critical reception and strong protests from the SCVB that the increase in tourism is significant but does not depart from the planned, projected steady increases
already underway before the publication of The Book, most residents and business people in Savannah directly or peripherally related to tourism agree that The Book has transformed the city in the six years since its publication. Small businesses, such as Clary's diner, have assumed near cult status as places to visit. Ordinary people who might appear on one page in The Book are demanded celebrities at book signings. New house construction, as well as new hotel and condominium construction have reached record levels in Savannah. Jobs in the service sector of the Savannah economy continue to increase in numbers as do tax revenues from tourism. What was expected to be a momentary spike in interest in Savannah has become a sustained and branching transformation of the city, from its infrastructure to the deliberate manufacture and circulation of symbols, icons, and signifiers that identify Savannah to the outside world.

Located in the subdiscipline of the anthropology of tourism, with reliance on scholarship on place, cultural identity and the politics of representation for its theoretical basis and semiotics as its primary analytical strategy, this research explores the multiple opportunities created by this flux in Savannah. Cultural identity which had been largely self-evident and well-articulated has become self-conscious and has created a kind of adaptive radiation of markets, developing and exploiting a seemingly endless series of marketing niches related to The Book and Savannah lore. The opportunities of particular interest are those that involve the deliberate construction of cultural identity and the development of strategies and products designed to convey this identity. Of particular significance in this research are the many processes by which locals, or, in the context of tourism, hosts actively participate in the fabrication of self-image.

Conclusions
The Book concerns a fairly straight-forward plot of intrigue in which a prominent but closeted gay antiques dealer is accused of homicide in the shooting death of his young lover. Convicted three times and tried four, Jim Williams finally won his freedom after eight years of legal battles that depleted his financial resources and diminished his health. He died in his home a few weeks after his release. But the appeal of The Book comes from the exotic array of secondary characters and subsidiary plots. The Savannah presented through the life and words of The Lady Chabils, an African American drag queen, or Minerva, an African American voodoo woman from nearby Beaufort, or Danny Hansford, the young, poor hustler who died in Mercer House, is a Savannah very different from the city presented in the official tours. The apparent challenge to the normative order of intense race, class, and sexuality stratification is, however, overwhelmed by the force of the dominant local cultural identity that privileges white, upper middle class, heteronormativity. Detailed analysis of tour narratives, travel guides, tour brochures, as well as interview and internet data and analysis of The Book reveal the strong forces that subsume all challenges and that interpret all manifestations of difference and cultural variety in terms of the dominant cultural identity.

This research shows significant relationship between tourists' expectations based on their exposure to The Book and the movie based on Berendt's book and their activities in Savannah. Tourists have been attracted to Savannah in substantially larger numbers since the 1994 publication of The Book and have been found to confirm or construct their ideas about the city of the Savannah in particular and the US southeast in general based on their book-inspired tourist experiences.

*Directions for Future Research*
Following is a summary of specific aspects of tourism in Savannah that are understudied. In each case, these underdeveloped areas reflect gaps in the current state of the anthropology of tourism itself. As Dann, Nash and Pearce (1988) have argued, more deliberate and concrete efforts must be undertaken to develop tighter connections between theoretical concepts and methodological realities. To date, most literature in the anthropology of tourism focuses on large, theoretical questions or on the minutiae of daily life at a tourist site. Many of areas I wish to develop in my own research are connected to this fundamental lack of precision in the field.

In addition, the systematic study of lesbian and gay tourism, now in its infancy, will find an ideal context for fieldwork in Savannah. The lesbian and gay interest in the city resulting from The Book, from Lady Chablis's autobiography, and from the contingent discovery of gay life in Savannah have introduced large numbers of lesbian and gay tourists to the city. In this consideration, there is a need for both the study of the gay tourist and the politics of representation of gayness or gay life in Savannah. As gay identity and gay culture become increasingly visible in society in general, the terms of signification of gay identification, the cultural markers of identity, and the access to sites and activities primarily of interest to lesbian and gay populations rearranges the terms and dynamics of recognition, interaction and recreation. As Southerners become more southern in the face of Northern intrusions, so non-gay tourists in Savannah, confronted with abundant gay themes and imagery as a result of certain plots in The Book, straighten themselves in the face of displays of gayness. Formal attention to lesbian and gay tourism is gradually increasing. Savannah currently provides the perfect landscape for this research.
Likewise, the nature of African American tourism in Savannah is understudied. The Savannah Visitors and Convention Bureau has targeted African American tourists as a prime market segment for the next phase of tourism development. As in the case of gay tourism, the two dimensions of tourist and representation must be considered. Narratives of Savannah history, indeed any aspect and any version of American history, cannot ignore the dimension of race. Race is typically rendered invisible as a meaningful category unless race conflict is an immediate issue. In the case of tourism in Savannah, The Book as a point of departure provides abundant opportunities to explore the ways in which African American tourists understand the black characters in The Book, the motivations for African American tourism in Savannah, and the pro-active construction of African American heritage and historical tours.

Methodological Issues in Future Research

Development of more reliable and valid instruments and techniques for investigating tourist motivation

Development of more reliable and valid instruments and techniques for investigating post-travel processes

Issues of Public Understanding of Savannah Through History, Literature, and Tourism

Development of Fuller Context of the History of Tourism and Public Image of Savannah Before The Book

Focused Analysis of the Representations of Savannah in Literature

Future research is called for to provide a fuller understanding of the ways in which identities are negotiated in Savannah, now at the distance of some six years after the publication of The Book. An inaccessible segment of the relevant population but one whose contributions figure significantly into this research is constituted by the self-identified Old

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Guard, the members of which are distinguished by their social and economic status, their control over the dominant narrative, and whose reception of the attention derived from The Book is a matter of considerable distaste. As discussed in Chapter 5, several such individuals appeared in the A & E documentary, *Midnight in Savannah* in the hopes of marginalizing interest in The Book and in an attempt to disavow a number of the claims asserted by the plots and "characters" presented by Berendt. Ultimately, focus discussion groups, were they possible, could provide insight into the full range of cultural tensions that actually exist in Savannah society.

In addition, the notion of unmarked or self-evident culture and deliberate or self-conscious culture provides a potentially powerful framework for a range of tourism research, perhaps that based on event-induced or movie-induced tourism. To date, this is the only research that merges these research interests.

Finally, the underexplored role of the anthropologist as tourist and the tourist as anthropologist suggests itself as a vital area of discussion in the midst of the current crisis of representation and confidence faced currently in anthropology.

END NOTES CHAPTER 6

¹The year 1995 is generally recognized as the first full year in which the effects of The Book were realized in Savannah.
APPENDIX
REGIONAL MAPS AND DESCRIPTION OF SQUARES

A-1  South Carolina and Coastal Georgia (Porter and Prince 2000)
A-2  Downtown Historic District (Savannah Scene Spring 2000)
A-3  Narrative Description of Savannah’s Squares (Savannah Scene Spring 2000)
SAVANNAH’S HISTORIC SQUARES

Savannah’s squares are often considered the city’s primary landmarks. Each of the 22 squares has its own history and a personality, although they are all grazed by a similar form and similar trees. Some squares are monuments, and others have ornamentation. But each of these squares has a story to tell, and visitors are encouraged to explore them all.

GREENE SQUARE
Named in honor of General Nathaniel Greene, who freed Georgia from British occupation in 1782, Greene Square is a beautiful example of the city’s early architectural design. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

CHIKERIA SQUARE
Named in honor of the American victory in the Battle of Cowpens during the War of 1812, the square is graced by a beautiful and historic monument dedicated to the fallen.

COLUMBIA SQUARE
Named in honor of the United States, this square is a popular gathering place for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

CRAWFORD SQUARE
Named in honor of President James Madison, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

FRANKLIN SQUARE
Named in honor of Benjamin Franklin, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

MADISON SQUARE
Named in honor of President James Madison, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

WASHINGTON SQUARE
Built to commemorate Washington Square, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

REYNOLDS SQUARE
Named in honor of General James Oglethorpe, the founder of Savannah, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

MONTEREY SQUARE
Named in honor of the city’s founder, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

TELFAIR SQUARE
Named in honor of the Telfair family, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

MONTECRUCCHIO SQUARE
Named in honor of the city’s founder, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

OLIVER SQUARE
Named in honor of the city’s founder, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

WASHINGTON SQUARE
Built to commemorate Washington Square, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

OLIVER SQUARE
Named in honor of the city’s founder, this square is a popular spot for locals and visitors alike. The square is surrounded by elegant homes and offers a peaceful respite from the bustle of the city.

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APPENDIX B
Tour Brochures, Southern Post Cards, and Advertisements

B-1  Covers of tourism material depicting the 1996 Summer Olympics
B-2  Savannah Scene issue featuring St. Patrick's Day
B-3  The Forrest Gump Bench
B-4  Old Savannah Tours featuring Mercer House
B-5  Echoes of the Past
B-6a  Old South Tours
B-6b  Old South Tours with Jim Williams
B-7  Savannah Walks
B-8  Relive the Past
B-9  Old Savannah Tours
B-10  Tour descriptions
B-11  Savannah's Other Best Seller
B-12  Hidden Treasures
B-13  Tapestry Tours
B-14  Victorian Lady Tours
B-15  Carpetbagger Tours
B-16  Confederate bumper stickers
B-17  Ghost Tours
B-18  Cotton Picking Postcards
B-19  Ghost Tours
B-20  The Garden Club of Savannah N.O.G.S. Tours
The Forrest Gump Bench
UNLIMITED ON/OFF PRIVILEGES

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912-443-0450
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- 1 p.m.
- 2:45 p.m.
- 4:15 p.m.
- 6:45 p.m.

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- 293-438-2511

**TOUR HIGHLIGHTS**

- City Market
- River Street
- Colonial Cemetery
- Bonaventure Cemetery

**Reservations**

- 1-888-438-2511

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with Savannah's only video enhanced,
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with
pictures of
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characters so
you can
place a face
with a
name.

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$1 discount

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Historic Tours

Free
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Waving Girl

Mickve Israel

The splendid fountain of Forsyth Park

The Green-Midtown House was Sherman's headquarters during his occupation of Savannah.

Andrew Low House is where the Grey Girl Scout Meeting was held in 1912.

Colonial Park Cemetery is filled with Revolutionary War Heroes & Statesmen.
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- "The Book"
- Land & Sea
- Ghost Tours
- Dolphin Watch
- Beach/Fort
- Candlelight
- Low Country
- Private/Group

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Tour I
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This fully narrated tour carries you through the old City Market, the Riverfront and deep into the Historic and Victorian Districts. Discover cobblestone streets lazing beneath moss-draped oaks and thrill at the many treasures peeking out from private courtyards. This tour includes your admission into TWO of Savannah’s historic sites.
Tour is approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes.
Adults $18.00 * Children $7.00

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Come, join “Historic Walking Tours of Savannah” for a walk through history. We start our journey from 1733 when James Edward Oglethorpe landed at Savannah and continue through the Civil War era to the present day. On your walk you will discover the splendor of historic mansions, churches and squares. Your enthusiastic and professional guide will answer all your questions and will enhance your visit to this wonderful city.
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...Afternoon Tour

Your leisurely afternoon includes a delicious lunch, several points of interest in the Victorian District, magnificent oaks and houses in Ardsley Park, romantic and haunting Bonaventure Cemetery, The Garden of Good and Evil, Fort Pulaski, a fascinating place in history; then Tybee Island, lighthouse and museum...a stroll on the beach...and Thunderbolt...shrimp boats and small town charm and the enchanting drive along the Isle of Hope...with a look at Wormsloe.

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The Southeast Low Country
Beaufort, Beaufort Historic Site, Tybee Island.

The Northeast Low Country
Beaufort and Hilton Head Island.

The Colonial Coast
Coastal Gardens, Ft. McAllister, Sea Island.
Village, Motion Sickness, Midway, Darien, and the
Golden Isles.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Guided Tour Vans</th>
<th>People</th>
<th>Cost/ Hour</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Walk, your car/ van/ minivan coach</td>
<td>1-2</td>
<td>$45</td>
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<tr>
<td>My car</td>
<td>3-9</td>
<td>$70</td>
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<td>Limousine</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tour-bus</td>
<td>2-20</td>
<td>$125</td>
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recommend your services to anyone!"
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"...a personal tour, not just run-of-the-mill. The
group was thrilled and recommended we use you
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APPENDIX C
THE BOOK TOUR BROCHURES

C-1  Hospitality Tours
C-2  Talk of the Town
Hospitality Tours

featuring the

ORIGINAL "By the Book" Tour
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DISTRICT

The Savannah
Shadows
GHOST
TOUR

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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

"Book" Tour

BASED ON "MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL"
See all the locations mentioned in this best seller written about Savannah. This is a specialized tour of Savannah's Historic District that includes an interesting book review with a local perspective on all the colorful characters involved. See such places as the Hamilton-Turner Mansion, the Mercer Home and Hannah's East...just to mention a few.

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Experience one of our newest and most unique tours yet!

Departs Visitor's Center • 10:00 am & 2:00 pm daily • Reservation required
Adults: $17 Children: $7
Includes Bonaventure Cemetery
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Savannah

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There is a day and night difference with Old Savannah Tours. Experience an exciting evening of Low Country food, drink and live entertainment. Leave the driving to us. Your professional guide will escort you through the Historic District and Riverfront, catering to your individual group requests. You select the restaurant and/or night spot while we provide free pick-up at the local Hotels and Inns. Please call for reservations, recommendations and further information. A minimum of 8 passengers is needed to operate this tour.

Non-stop - Adults: $16/Children: $8
With Stop - Adults: $21/Children: $10
Includes Tax and Preservation Fees
APPENDIX D
MAPS OF THE BOOK TOUR

D-1 The Best Book Tour
D-2 Midnight Sites
The Best 'Book Tour'

Old South Tours offers the only "Book Tour" that allows you to see all of the actual characters from John Berendt's best-seller "Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil." This two-hour tour winds through the majestic squares of Historic Savannah and includes a ride out to Bonaventure Cemetery. Join our guides as they bring "The Book" to life.

Adults: $16  Children under 12: $11
(Includes ticket Museum and the "Bird Girl" cruise, additional $4)

Tours Highlights
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Sweet Georgia Brown's • Bonaventure Cemetery

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For reservations and free Historic District pickup, call
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Southside pickup and boat tours to Hilton Head
APPENDIX E
BOOK RELATED MATERIALS

E-1  The Gift Shop
E-2  The Gift Shop products list
E-3  The Bookcover
E-4  Mercer House
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The Midnight Newsletter

A newsletter about the book Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil

"Midnight" has changed the face of Savannah

by J. M. Sommers

In October 1992, John Berendt sent the finished manuscript of Midnight to his New York literary agent, a well-known superagent whose name he is too much of a gentleman to reveal. The agent sent the manuscript back. She rejected it. She said it was delightful to read, but "too local." She said she didn't think she could interest a publisher in taking a chance on a book of this kind.

We are happy to report that she was wrong. Berendt sent the manuscript to Suzanne Gluck at ICM Literary Agency. Ms. Gluck loved it. She set up an auction with four publishing houses bidding, and Random House was the lucky winner. The rest is history.

Is Midnight too local? We don't think so. To date, the book has been on The New York Times bestseller list for three years and is currently in its 81st American printing. Foreign rights to the book have been sold in nineteen countries and eleven countries already have the book in print. ICM reports that sales are brisk everywhere and it has made the bestseller list in a number of countries, reaching the number-one spot in England and also in South Africa. If you happen to be traveling abroad, you can find a copy of the book in France, Norway, Portugal, Japan, just to name a few places.

Tourism in Savannah has increased 146%, since the publication of The Book. As it is referred to locally, Thousands of people from all over the world have come to discover the charms of Savannah Streets in the Historic District. All but dazzling a few years ago, are once again busy and thriving. Real estate prices have skyrocketed. Cottage industries have sprung in willing of "Midnight" souvenirs ranging from T-shirts, posters and mugs to extraordinary artwork. Tour buses can be spotted on city squares telling visions to local folklore that teems in the supposedly quiet Southern port city. Too local? Indeed.

Was Jim Williams An Anti-Semite or just angry?

by George Sommers

Jim Williams frequently made the local news in Savannah. He had been a pioneer in the restoration of downtown Savannah's finest homes and his knowledge of antiques and history was limitless. He had owned a haunted house.

His parties were the talk of the town; to be on Jim's annual party list was considered crucial by the elite of Savannah.

However, one morning in 1979, Jim Williams caused a stir in Savannah of a different nature. He draped a Nazi banner over his balcony at Mercer House and exposed a different side of his personality. Jim made the news again, but not on the society pages.

In 1979, a production company came to town to film a TV movie, "The Trial of Dr. Mudd," depicting the story of the physician who helped treat Abraham Lincoln's assassin. Monterey Square was always considered one of Savannah's most beautiful landmarks. Jim Williams took his home, Mercer House, six see Flag page........6

* "MIDNIGHT" TOUR MAP INSIDE*

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That's What Friends Are For

By Gordon Gardner

Joe Odom was out of town somewhere when he called advertising and publishing executive Frank Mullis. He told Mullis that the chancellor of the university system was planning to visit Sweet Georgia Brown's that night, but there was a problem—the club's electric bill was past due and power would be cut off if the bill was not paid by 5:00 that afternoon. He told Mullis the bill was about $300 and Mullis agreed to pay the bill with the understanding that he would be reimbursed the next day. When Mullis went to the electric company, he found out that the bill was closer to $900, but he paid it anyway. Mullis didn't hear from Odom the next day, or for many days after that, so three or four months later he confronted Odom. "What luck, Frank," Odom said with a winning smile. "Today's my birthday, and my mother told me I could write a check on her account for whatever I wanted. Here's a little extra for you for being so nice." With that, he handed Mullis a check for $1,000. Mullis still has the check, and will accept bids starting at $1,000.

Courtesy of The Midnight Newsletter

Backyard Publishing Co., Inc.
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"Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil" Newsletter  $4.00
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$45.00
S/H
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Description</th>
<th>Price</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited &quot;Bird Girl&quot; Cookie Tin with Key Lime Coolers</td>
<td>$10.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Bird Girl&quot; Mug, white &amp; green</td>
<td>$7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&quot;Midnight&quot; Afghans (these are Beautiful!) - green</td>
<td>$59.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emma Kelly, Lady of &quot;Six Thousand Songs&quot;</td>
<td>$18.95</td>
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<td>&quot;The Midnight Movie&quot; Soundtrack:</td>
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<td>Compact Disc</td>
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<td>Cassette</td>
<td>$24.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Midnight In The Garden of Good and Evil Video</em></td>
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Shipping and Handling charges: usually 15% of cost. Please allow at least two to four weeks delivery. (Georgia Residents must include 6% tax)

** Please Note: Returned items are subject to a 25% restocking fee. Returns for Store Credit Only. Prices are subject to change without further notice.

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But how unfortunate not to expose it to a "starlet gardener." The supper crowd at Addis' is filled with them down at the police station. It will not be spent anywhere.


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Price: $250.
'Midnight' mystique
Eastwood falls under the best seller's spell

A gritty realism: Director Clint Eastwood, known for realistic screenplays such as 'The Lady Chablis,' playing herself, below left, with the pros, clockwise: Kevin Spacey, left, and John Cusack.
ANOTHER 'MIDNIGHT' STORY AND SOME PHOTOS TOO

THAT'S WHAT FRIENDS ARE FOR

BY GORDON GARDNER

Jim Odom was out of town somewhere when he called advertising and publishing executive Frank Mullis. He told Mullis that the chancellor of the university system was planning to visit Sweet Georgia Brown's that night, but there was a problem—the club's electric bill was past due and power would be cut off if the bill was not paid by 5 o'clock that afternoon. He told Mullis the bill was about $300, so Mullis agreed to pay the bill with the understanding that he would be reimbursed the next day. When Mullis went to the electric company, he found out that the bill was closer to $900, but he paid it anyway. Mullis didn't hear from Odom the next day, or for many days after that, so three or four months later, he confronted Odom. "What luck, Frank," Odom said with a winning smile. "Today's my birthday, and my mother told me I could write a check on her account for whatever I wanted. Here's a little extra for you for being so nice." With that, he handed Mullis a check for $1,000. Mullis still has the check, and will accept bids starting at $1,000.

COPY OF CHECK UP FOR BIDS

DRIGGERS' POISON
Midnight Madness

John Berendt's *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil* brought Savannah out of its long, self-induced slumber. The story—about an older gay antiques dealer named Jim Williams who shot a young hustler named Danny Hansford, and the colorful, eccentric characters that populated their world—isn't the type that usually appears on the best-seller list. Published to critical acclaim, *Midnight* landed a fairly permanent spot on the *New York Times* best-seller list. At press time, the book has sold some 1.5 million copies in the United States alone—and that's hardcover only; there are 19 foreign editions.

The wildly successful best-seller spawned a mediocre movie. When Hollywood came calling, Berendt turned down the screenwriting job, but he was lucky (unlucky?) enough to secure Clint Eastwood as the director of the film. While critics raved over Kevin Spacey's performance as Jim Williams, the movie itself was widely panned.

Today the city is overrun with hustlers hawking *Midnight* items—everything from cookies to T-shirts. There's even a Midnight fan club (contact the Book Gift Shop and Museum, 127 E. Gordon St., 912/233-3867), and there are several Midnight Web sites (see "Internet Web Sites," above). This book even sketches out a walking tour that encompasses many of the famous sites from the book (see chapter 5).

Savannah's old-time aristocrats take a strong stance against the book; they feel Berendt invaded their privacy and published their dark secrets for the world to read. Jim Williams's sister, Dorothy Williams Kingery, occupies Mercer House today and isn't too happy over the hysteria surrounding the book, either. She hired an attorney to secure her trademark on the facade of Mercer House that would prevent artisans from depicting the mansion on souvenirs without first obtaining a licensing agreement.

The *Washington Post* has declared that *Midnight* is "well on its way to becoming an American classic." In the same vein, Random House has announced that *Midnight* has joined its Modern Library series, a rare distinction for a living author.
JIM WILLIAMS’ INTEREST IN THE SUPERNATURAL WAS GENUINE AND PART OF HIS LIFE PHILOSOPHY

BY MARGARET DEBOY

To those of us who knew Jim Williams before the death of Danny Hamilton changed our lives forever, his interest in the occult is a strange one to square with his man of the world image. He had a serious hobby of all types of psychic phenomena, and kept copious notebooks on the subject. Perhaps it was at least partly because he had once lived in what is still considered to be the city’s most haunted house.

The 1796 home at 507 East St. Julian Street near Washington Square was the scene of one of the city’s most well-known and documented ghost stories. It was built by Houstoun Lilliebridge of Bridge Island, who incorporated the Yarnia architectural heritage of a high gabled roof and steep doormills into the townhouse which he used when he was not at his Sea Island plantation.

Jim’s troubles began when he was moved from Reynolds Square. In the process, part of the roof collapsed, and one of the workmen was killed. There was already the story of the sailor who hanged himself on a high brass headboard, while the place was being boarded. It is said that he was in love with his landlady, and distraught when she tried to end the affair.

I was leaving for London just as it was built, and when I came back, it was covered over again."

Jim told me of the way in which the story of the sailor was known to the neighbors. A local girl was found murdered, an angry mob killed a man, who died from his wounds. Jim told me of the eerie sound of the door, which seemed to be opening by itself. Or was he? Did they bring him secretly here, where his lonely soul still haunts the street?

Jim talked of his affair with St. Julian Street. He experienced in NBC Radio, in a haunted house, narrated by Savannah hauntsman Bill Worrick. They included seeking strange figures looking out the windows of a supposedly empty house, lights that turned off and on by themselves, and voices and footsteps in vacant rooms.

At first some Southerners scoffed at the idea of ghosts in the house, and even accused Jim of wanting publicity for his growing antique business. But some who went there as skeptics, came away as believers. One was a television anchorman, who went with his cameraman to get a feature story on the haunted restoration.

"There was no one around when we went in, and the place was wide open," he said. "He walked across the bare floor, stepping over bits of building supplies, and walked into the house. "Half the time they were listening instead of working," Jim complained to me in telling the story.

During an interview at Carter’s Restaurant, which was on Drayton Street where Churchill is now, he told of the discovery of an empty crypt in the basement. It was made of tallow, a mixture of lime and sulfur that was widely used in Colonial times. It was discovered by the restorers, and all the rest of the story ends with the house being left to the public.

Two more restoration projects were under way in Savannah. One was the Blue House, which is now the site of the Savannah History Museum. The other was the Hamilton-Turner House, which is now the site of the Savannah History Museum. The other was the Hamilton-Turner House, which is now the site of the Savannah History Museum.

The Hampton Lilliebridge House 507 E. St. Julian St.

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The Hampton Lilliebridge House 507 E. St. Julian St.
Savannah's 'Midnight madness'

264-year-old Southern city has big plans

Tourists flock to locales made famous by 'Garden of Good and Evil'
APPENDIX F

BOOK COVERS AND MOVIE ADS

F-1  The dust jacket from the hardcover edition of Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil
F-2  Cover from Porter's (2000) Midnight in Savannah
F-3  Illustration showing comparisons between the two book covers
F-4  Advertisement for The Movie which appeared in The New York Review of Books
MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVIL

JOHN BERENDT
MIDNIGHT In Savannah

DARWIN PORTER
APPENDIX G
GAY-RELATED MATERIALS

G-1  Cover of The Advocate from 11 November 1997
G-3  Map of Midnight Sites
G-4  Photography from Hiding My Candy (The Lady Chablis 1996)
Why did this macho gunslinger make a film about closeted gays and drag queens?

Clint Eastwood

Behind the scenes of *Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil*
MIDNIGHT In Savannah

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Adults: $16  Children under 12: $11
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THE UNFORGETTABLE LIFE STORY OF THE
FABULOUS DRAG QUEEN FROM THE BESTSELLING
MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVII

WITH THEODORE BOULOUKOS

HIDING MY CANDY

INTRODUCTION BY JOHN BECKETT
I'VE GOT'CHA NUMBER.
(AT THE HAMILTON TURNER MANSION, SAVANNAH)
IF Y'CAN'T TAKE THE HEAT...
(IN THE KITCHEN AT CLARY'S, SAVANNAH)
MURDER, HE WROTE—SAVANNAH'S MECHER HOUSE.
THE SCENE OF THE CRIME IN JOHN BERENDT'S
MIDNIGHT IN THE GARDEN OF GOOD AND EVII.
MY WORLD AND WELCOME TO IT!
(THE FOUNTAIN IN FORSYTH PARK, SAVANNAH)
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