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Bombarding the City of the Dead: who has a right to the past?

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BOMBARDING THE CITY OF THE DEAD: WHO HAS A RIGHT TO THE PAST?

A Thesis

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts

In

The Department of Geography and Anthropology

By
Corey David Hotard
BA., Louisiana State University, 1999
May 2003
Dedicated
To My Late Grandparents
Constance Broussard Hotard
And
Stoney Francis Hotard, Sr.
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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the relationship between tourism and archaeology at Saint Louis Cemetery Number One in New Orleans, Louisiana. In the past two decades, the discipline of archaeology has been thrust into the gaze of the public. The Information Age has led to the increased accessibility of archaeological sites to anyone who may have an interest. Due to this increased accessibility, professional archaeologists have turned to public archaeology in order to satiate the public’s curiosity.

Although public archaeology is a growing field, a good bit of the subject still deals mainly with legislation and preservation rather than direct contact with the public. Industries such as tourism have sometimes been seen as an adversary to archaeology because they can lead to the destruction of sites thus hindering the legislation archaeologists worked hard to have passed.

By studying tours at a historic cemetery in New Orleans, archaeologists can get a clearer picture of how their research could benefit the public and in turn help archaeology. In doing this, archaeology can aid in disseminating accurate information to the public while the public can see the need for archaeology in the modern world. With this mutual understanding between the public and archaeology it can be deduced that the past belongs to everyone and the benefits are boundless.
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Figure 1-1. A typical tour group resting from the heat in Saint Louis Cemetery Number One.

I. Introduction: The Authority

One Sunday afternoon while on a tour, similar to the one shown in figure one, through Saint Louis Cemetery, I noticed that for once I was not the only person on the tour taking notes. Two teenage girls were writing vigorously everything the tour guide was saying while one of their two chaperones took pictures of the tombs that were being discussed. When it was pointed out by the tour guide that I was writing my thesis on the cemetery, the two girls and their chaperones pointed at me and began whispering among themselves. Trying not to feel uncomfortable or like an academic over-achiever, I dismissed their actions and continued to jot down various notes on what was being said.
After leaving the cemetery the foursome approached me and asked questions about my area of graduate studies and my research in the cemetery. Not wanting to go into too much detail about my thesis for fear they might not understand, I told them I was working on my master’s degree in archaeology and that I was interested in its interactions (or lack thereof) with tourism. They were immediately excited and bombarded me with questions. I was surprised to learn of how much the chaperones knew about cemeteries in general. They even provided several web links they thought might be helpful in my research.

The older female chaperone told why they were writing notes in the cemetery. The two girls were juniors in a San Antonio high school. They had won a scholarship to write essays about various art motifs in the world and the girls had decided to do part of their work on the architecture of Saint Louis Cemetery Number One. One of the chaperones asked if they could have my e-mail address so that the students could write me for advice on their papers. I agreed but explained to them that I was not an art historian and so I did not know how much I could help them with their studies. To this, the chaperone replied as follows: “But you study this stuff, you are the authority.”

Oddly enough, this experience was not the first time someone on a tour had told me that I was the “authority” or the “expert.” Tour guides (at least the ones who knew I was doing research) usually singled me out as someone who was doing “scholarly” research. Sometimes tourists saw that I was writing notes and asked questions about what I was doing. The San Antonio students were the first tourists who gave me sources to help out in my research. I expected that people taking cemetery tours knew
nothing or very little about New Orleans, Saint Louis Number One, or archaeology. The students and their chaperones showed how wrong I was.

Historically in anthropological archaeology, working with the public is a fairly new approach. Archaeology, as with other fields of study, had its beginning with amateurs amassing a collection of artifacts from various sites (Sharer and Ashmore 1993: 42). In the nineteenth century, the act of collecting artifacts became more refined. Questions concerning the meanings behind these antiquities became subjects for investigations. This led to archaeology as a scholarly discipline (Sharer and Ashmore 1993: 53). With this rise in academic archaeology in the late nineteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, archaeology was considered a subject for scholars. Today archaeological sites are more accessible to the public via travel, tours, and the Internet. This accessibility throws archaeology into the public eye. Archaeologists must deal with the public in some way, whether they want to or not.

In this thesis, I look at how archaeology and the public interact through tourism at a historic cemetery in New Orleans, Louisiana. However, before I examine the specifics of what public archaeology is and how it pertains to my research, the study of death in anthropology and archaeology must be examined since the research focus is a major burial site.

II. The Anthropology and Archaeology of Death

A. Robert Hertz

Each culture in the world has a specific way with which it deals with death. Anthropologists are interested in this cultural diversity of ritual and treatment of the dead. The anthropological study of death cannot be seriously undertaken until there is
an examination of Robert Hertz's work. Hertz is important to the study of death in anthropology because he was the first modern scholar to research the meaning of death and life in a cultural context (Metcalf 1991: 37). He was a student of the sociologist Emile Durkheim. Durkheim, who trained the first group of French sociologists, believed the collective conscious molded the ideas and beliefs of the individual (Evans-Pritchard 1960: 9). Although Hertz lived a relatively short life and died during World War I, his two published essays, “A Contribution to the Study of the Collective Representation of Death” and “The Pre-Eminence of the Right Hand: A Study in Religious Polarity” influenced the thoughts of anthropologists in the latter part of the twentieth century (Evans-Pritchard 1960: 24).

Hertz's major geographic region for his studies was Indonesia (Hertz 1960: 29). In his essay of death, he examines several themes that he believes affect the way death should be studied. These themes include three concepts that are associated with death and funerals, the relationships that arise between the human and spiritual world, and the collective force that is involved in the rites of death (Hertz 1960: 27).

A tripartite schema is developed in Hertz's essay on death (Metcalf 1991: 23), including the body, the soul, and mourners (Hertz 1960: 29-47). The body is the human component of the dead. A corpse is what is left behind once the human body has died (Hertz 1960: 29-34). The soul is the non-human, spiritual part of a person. The soul is tied to the body when the person is alive but is separated at death (Hertz 1960: 34-37). Lastly, there are mourners. Mourners are those living human beings that the body and soul have left when death has occurred. This category included family, friends, and
loved ones. These three components come with taboos and obligations at the time of death (Hertz 1960: 37-53).

Hertz believed that in the non-“civilized” world, death did not occur at an instant (Metcalf 1991: 33). This view conflicts with the Western notion of death of an individual as happening at one moment (Bloch 1982: 13). In Hertz’s study death happens gradually. Body, soul, and mourners are affected over a certain period of time. In this way, relationships are formed among the three components for the death to be resolved culturally. For the mourners, the body cannot go through burial rites until it has decomposed. In another relationship, the soul cannot move on to the next part of its journey until the mourners and other appropriate members of the community perform certain funeral rites. The body, soul, and mourners are intrinsically tied to each other until the death is finished culturally (Hertz 1960: 54-61).

Hertz sees these components of death as a necessary way to keep order in society. When a death occurs, the society is thrown out of balance and rites must be made in order to for order to be restored (Malinowski 1948: 47-53). In the eyes of the society, a death is not just the death of a human being. Rather, death is a loss of a social being which helped make up the society and maintain culture (Hertz 1960: 61-76). A death in society questions the societal views of the realm that exists beyond the reality that can be seen. The material culture of funerary rituals helps to visualize spiritual world and answer the questions of uncertainty that death brings to the society (Hertz 1960: 76-86).

Hertz attempts to understand the world of ideas and its relation to society. For Hertz, although death is a biological event, death also is a cultural construction in which
societies can express their ideas on what is beyond life. Once death is analyzed within a culture, death can then be compared to not only other liminal, meaning threshold, events within culture, such as marriage and birth, and among various other cultures (Metcalf 1991:79-83). This comparative method underscores the search for the functions of cultural phenomena in society. However, Hertz also believes in the cultural relativistic view of death since different cultures do not share these mortuary rituals. Death is a terminal event but the culture decides when cultural death is final (Metcalf 1960: 84-85).

B. Anthropology, Archaeology, and Cemeteries

Anthropologists study death as a metamorphosis from one state to a next (Bloch 1982: 11). Various cultures have ways of judging whether or not death was deserved, justifiable, or not timed correctly (Humphreys 1981: 263). In some cultures, the definition of life and death are blurred which makes studying of death difficult (Bloch 1982: 14). In America and Europe, death is viewed as a quick ending (Bloch 1982: 13). As Humphreys (1981: 265) states, death is “an easily recognizable event that happens suddenly and rapidly.” Death and living in European cultures are considered separate from each other (Bloch 1982: 13). Since death is an idea that has different meanings in various cultures, death is ideal topic to study in anthropology (Metcalf 1991: 24).

Anthropologists tend to focus on death in indigenous cultures. Recently, in the past twenty years, death in non-indigenous cultures has begun to be studied more frequently (Pearson 1986: 1).

The study of death in archaeology is carried out in a cultural study because of the artifacts that are associated with the dead that provide a specific context (Metcalf 1981:}
Skeletal remains can show diet, sex, and age. Artifacts associated with the body can yield information of social status and economic stratification (Owsley 1997: 2). If there is a lack of skeletal remains, other artifacts such as grave goods and coffins can be useful in archaeological investigation of burials (McKillop 1995: 96).

Rituals associated with burying the dead are cultural practices that provide insight into the peoples who were involved in the specific placement of the dead (Pearson 1999: 3). Since cemeteries are crossroads for the dead and the living, they are excellent places for archaeologists to study burial practices and the culture associated with them. Cemeteries have become increasingly important in archaeology because of the data they contain (Beavers 1993: 10). The study of gravestones in cemeteries is a way to test theoretical methods in archaeology (Deetz 1966: 502). Gravestones are also useful to archaeologists because they give insight into the person’s life (such as span of life, name, and religious affiliation) of the interred (Pearson 1986: 1). Full study of cemeteries can lead to greater historical understanding of a culture in general (Bell 1997: 220).

A cemetery is defined in broad terms as a burial ground. The word, “cemetery”, comes from the Greek word “Koiman” which means, “sleeping chamber” (Cronin1997: 19). A variety of information can be obtained from the study of cemeteries including mortuary practices and status of the people who use and inhabit them (Rahtz 1981: 117). Cemeteries communicate to the living relationships between artifacts and culture. In this way cemeteries become a mediating factor between the living and the dead (Meyer 1989: 1).
Over time cemeteries become records of culture and ritual practices of the communities who use them (Meyer 1981: 1). Information such as including social status, difference in gender burial, and ethnic relations in the urban setting can be obtained from cemeteries (Pearson 1999: 3). The material culture that cemeteries yield becomes necessary in studying their importance. Specific time periods can be viewed by looking at styles and dates of gravestones (Meyer 1989: 2). By studying a historically documented cemetery, a comparison can be made with non-historically documented cemeteries in order to provide more cultural information (McKillop 1995: 96). Cemeteries are usually excavated archaeologically when they are threatened by development (Beavers 1993: 10).

A conspicuous aspect of cemeteries is the mausoleum (Rahtz 1981: 127). They are above ground tombs that can have elaborate or conservative architectural designs. They reflect a variety of cultural beliefs through shape, size, and material (Meyer 1989: 9). The name mausoleum comes from the Hellenistic ruler, King Mausolus of Halicarnassus, whose interment dates to 353 BC in a fortress shaped tomb (Cronin 1997: 12).

With the rise of Christianity, in-ground burials became popular, at least until the Renaissance (Cronin 1997: 13). During the Victoria era, above ground tombs became popular in Europe. Plots exclusively for families can be seen in cemeteries during this period (Pearson 1999: 14). People who buried the dead at this time made clear distinctions between adult and children burials showing they belonged to distinct realms (McKillop 1995: 94). In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, cemeteries in the North America began to change and look more like their European predecessors.
American cities, such as Boston, began creating rural or garden cemeteries as public parks where people could leisurely stroll among nature and the dead. Boston’s Mount Auburn became a model for other cemeteries in the nation (Linden-Ward 1989: 293). The nineteenth century also was a time when a public industry based on death and burial began to develop (McKillop 1995: 77).

New Orleans cemeteries both reflect and differ from the early American rural or garden cemeteries (McDowell 1997: 138). Although cemeteries in New Orleans reflect the park-like gentile surroundings, their urban, crowded setting sets them apart from other American modern burial sites so that they resemble Parisian cemeteries (Florence 1996: 1). The urban backdrop of Saint Louis Cemetery Number One makes it a great study opportunity for seeing how the past and the present reflect on each other.

C. Archaeological Research in New Orleans Cemeteries

Archaeology in New Orleans has not always been a high priority due to funding. This lack of archaeological research is surprising because of the cultural and historical significance of New Orleans to Louisiana and the rest of the United States (Beavers 1993: 5). Most of the archaeological work done in New Orleans has focused on the French Quarter and to a lesser extent areas that border the Vieux Carre (Beavers 1993: 5-7). There has been some archaeological attention that has been given to some of the cemeteries of New Orleans. These are St. Peter’s Cemetery, Saint Louis Cemetery Number Two, and the Charity Hospital Cemetery (Beavers 1993: 11-12).

Excavations carried out in St. Peter’s Cemetery and the Charity Hospital Cemetery were undertaken because the sites were impacted by construction (Beavers 1993: 11). Burials from St. Peter’s were found during the building of condominiums
Charity Hospital interments became known through road resurfacing on Canal Boulevard (Beavers 1993: 1). In both cases, construction companies did not realize burials were there although historical documentation indicated where these cemeteries were located but subsequently abandoned. Abandoned urban cemeteries, such as these are usually decimated due to city expansion and are later located due to development (Nance 1999: 1). Although St. Peters’ cemetery was known, no archaeological excavations had ever taken place before (Owsley 1985: 1). Both cemeteries had in-ground interments (Beavers 1993: 11).

The excavations of these two cemeteries presented information obtained from osteological analyses (Beaver 1993: 11, 163). Since St. Peter’s Cemetery was the first official cemetery in New Orleans built in 1725 and remained open for another seventy years, skeletal material aided in examining the health and nutrition of New Orleans’ early settlers (Owsley 1985: 1). Social stratification was analyzed because both white and black people were buried in this cemetery (Owsley 1985: 164).

The Charity Hospital Cemetery, in contrast to St. Peter’s Cemetery, was built in the mid-nineteenth century (Beavers 1993: 2). Instead of New Orleans’ settlers, this cemetery held low-income people during a period of industrialization (Beavers 1993: 5). Since Charity was a cemetery associated with a hospital, skeletal remains presented a physical anthropological view into nineteenth century medical practices as well as providing health information about the lifestyle of the poor during this time (Beavers 1993: 205).

In contrast, the excavations at St. Louis Cemetery Number Two were undertaken because of a grant given to the Save Our Cemeteries organization by the National
Endowment of the Humanities (Pearson 1986: 1). Unlike the St. Peter’s and Charity Hospital cemeteries, St. Louis Number Two has above ground burials (Beavers 1993: 11). The archaeological research here focused on the material remains associated with mourning rituals (Pearson 1986: 2-3). St. Louis Number Two was a good candidate for such a study since so many ethnicities are represented in this cemetery (Pearson 1986: 2). Because this study was focusing on adornments and other material artifacts left at tombs, all of the excavations took place in front of the wall vault tombs that line the walls of the cemetery (Beaver 1993: 11). Several glass and ceramic artifacts were found from these excavations and were used in the analysis of changing cultural mourning attitudes (Pearson 1986: 3). Unlike the other two cemeteries where archaeological research took place, these excavations did not interfere with skeletal remains (Beavers 1993: 11).

Although these investigations were carried out for specific reasons, their findings helped give a better understanding of what life was like in the development of New Orleans. Information about the health, nutritional, and economic status was obtained from the archaeological research conducted at these cemeteries (Beavers 1993: 11). This information was useful in comparing social stratification in the history of New Orleans (Beavers 1993: 5).

III. Public Archaeology

Since its inception, public archaeology, has dealt mainly with laws regarding archaeological sites and antiquities (Clark 2003: www.publicarchaeology.com). Usually, the laws were mainly about the environment with “culture” being part of the wider environment. Culture began to be known as “those parts of the environment to which
people ascribe significance to because of the roles they play in their community and history” (King 1998: 4). One of the laws that had a major impact on archaeological sites in the United States is the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA) that leads to the documentation and preservation of historic properties (King 1998: 9-10).

Archaeology is concerned with Section 106 of the NHPA, which reviews the effects of a federal project on properties that are or can be considered for the National Register of Historic Place (Louisiana Division of Archaeology 2003: www.crt.state.la.us/crt/ocd/arch/homepage/). Compliance with Section 106 led to the rise of Cultural Resource Management (CRM). CRM is a way to evaluate certain sites of significance in where they stand in acquiescence with various federal legislations. Because CRM deals with federal laws, it is very much a part of public archaeology (King 1998: 6).

In recent years, the definition of public archaeology has gone beyond that of just participating in legal matters. Now it is defined more broadly as interacting and teaching the public about archaeology and its importance in researching the past (Clark 2003: www.publicarchaeology.com). Archaeologists in the past have neglected the importance of archaeology to the public (Sabloff 1998: 869).

Public awareness of archaeology has been increasing. Archaeologists work more closely with disciplines such as history and museology in order to disseminate information to the public (Jameson 1997: 11). The need for archaeologists to engage the public benefits both parties. The public can benefit by having a better understanding of its heritage and community history (Little 2002: 8). Archaeologists can benefit by having more support, both monetarily and morally from the public (Sabloff
1998: 873). The more the public knows about archaeology, the more it can do to support archaeology politically, socially, and educationally (Sabloff 1998: 873). With all this in mind, a growing number of American archaeologists recognize the need for public education (Logan 1997: 130).

With the increasing interaction of archaeology and the public, questions are raised as to whether or not all people have a right to the past. Rights to the past can include, but not limited to, ownership and access.

Ownership is one way of looking at having a right to the past. In the last two decades, archaeology has begun to be sensitive to cultural remains of native groups and countries of origin. In other words, archaeologists are beginning to recognize countries of origin as the owners of cultural property (Bahn 1996: 358). Warren uses the “Three R’s Theory” (Restitution, Restriction, and Rights) to explain why countries of origin should own cultural property. The countries believe that they should have restitution for the artifacts if the artifacts were stolen during war or other circumstances. Countries try to have restriction on the import of other countries’ artifacts and the exporting of local artifacts. The rights of ownership should be kept by the relevant parties such as natives of that country (Warren 1987: 23).

There are three arguments that enhance the “Three R’s Theory”. These are the “Cultural Heritage Argument,” the “Country of Origin Argument,” and the “Scholarly and Aesthetic Integrity Argument.” The first argument explains that countries of origin should keep cultural properties because they are part of the national and cultural heritage. This is the argument used by UNESCO, a United Nations agency dedicated to returning cultural objects to preserve the heritage of groups and countries under the
“The Cultural Properties Act of 1970” to which the United States became a signatory in 1982 (Greenfield 1989: 257). The second argument flatly states that the country of origin automatically owns cultural property. Lastly, the “Scholarly and Aesthetic Integrity Argument” states that restriction on the import and export of cultural properties contributes to the breakdown and scholarly value of the material (Warren 1987: 8-10). For this reason, there has been more of a move to return artifacts to the country of origin by setting up legislation to restrict the trafficking of illegal artifacts (Greenfield 1989: 294).

Along with the arguments for the “Three R’s Theory,” there are six arguments against it. The first is the Rescue Argument. This states that archaeologists should rescue cultural property from places where they might be destroyed such as nations warring or from natural elements. This argument brings up two issues: 1. Does it justify taking artifacts from another country? 2. Does this rescue give foreign countries a valid claim to the rescued property? People feel that the rescue argument is justifies because it preserves the values of ancient cultures and that benefits are gained from this practice (Warren 1987: 3-4).

The Foreign Ownership Argument is the second argument against the “Three R’s Theory.” This argument states that the cultural objects were taken legally because the foreigners had a permit to retrieve such objects. The people who removed these artifacts are the ones who own the property (Warren 1987: 4-5). The people who usually do this are private collectors (Bahn 1996: 366). This argument usually raises the question about the ethics involved in removing this property (Warren 1987: 5).
Some people feel that all people should own cultural properties because we are all human and therefore share a common ancestry. In other words, everyone owns the tangible past (Renfrew 2000: 19). This is the Humanity Ownership Argument. However, certain groups, like Marxists or feminists, argue that humanity is not equal because of economic and social differences (Warren 1987: 5-6).

The fourth argument is the Scholarly Access Argument which claims that people who have responsibilities to “promote and transmit” cultural relevance should own cultural property (Warren 1987: 6). These people feel that they should have rights to cultural remains because they are educated and have the knowledge and responsibility to understand the cultural past. However, this argument is weakened by legislation, such as NAGPRA (Native American Graves and Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990) which provides for the return of skeletal remains and grave goods in federally funded institutions in the United States to Native Americans (King 1998: 273).

The Encouragement of Illegality Argument states that the “Three R’s” encourage illegal trade. It does so because by keeping artifacts in the countries of origin, they are wanted more by the international public (Warren 1987: 7).

The most popular argument against the “Three R’s Theory” is the Means-End Argument (Warren 1987: 6). This argues against regulation of the import and export of artifacts because of the benefits gained from the cultural property (Renfrew 2000: 12). These benefits include preservation of artifacts, advancement of education, breakdown of parochialism, and the encouragement of cultural pluralism (Warren 1987: 6). Museums follow federal, state, and international laws pertaining to the acquisition,
display and ownership of antiquities but also have ethical standards such as that of the American Museum Association (McKillop and Huber 2003).

Access is another way to have a right to the past. Access can take the form of visiting museums, looking up information on the Internet, or touring historic sites. Out of these, tourism is a more hands-on approach giving many people access to culture more so than any other media (Chambers 2000: 1). In the past few decades, tourism has stepped to the lead of all other industries in the world (Slick 2002: 219).

Anthropologists have broken the tourism industry down into hosts, those who accommodate tourists, and guests, those visiting other places. Tourism anthropology has studied both the negative and positive sides of this relationship (Chambers 2000: 3). The environment of local communities can be totally decimated by tourism. Also, negative stereotypes could be perpetuated by natives in order for financial gain (Hitchcock 1997: 95). Tourism could be positive in that the industry revitalizes a community’s depressed economy (Smith 1989: 10). In recent times, anthropologists who study tourism have worked for an “Alternative Tourism” in which local communities benefit from tourism and tourists are educated about local communities (Hitchcock 1997: 95).

There are five types of tourism. They include ethnic, cultural, environmental, recreation, tourism. Tourism in archaeology focuses on historic tourism, which puts emphasis on physical accomplishments, such as ruins or architecture, of the past (Smith 1989: 5). Historic tourism is an attraction to tourists because of the entertainment value (Slick 2002: 223). This kind of tourism can lead to stereotypical and romanticized visions of the past (Chambers 2001: 6). Tourism of archaeological
sites can shape accurate or inaccurate national ideologies (Silverman 2002: 897).
Developing tourism around historic preservation creates a new idealized picture of the past (Chambers 1997: 6). For this reason, archaeologists should be more interested in working with local communities in which tourism focuses on historic ruins (Slick 2002: 226). In the past, archaeology has considered tourism an enemy instead of an ally because tourism has led to the destruction of archaeological sites. Working more closely with tourism, archaeology can make the public more aware of issues within the discipline (Slick 2002: 221).

Anthropologists have studied how tourism can be used to change the negative view of the past (Hyland 1974: 148). In the lower Mississippi delta, steps were taken by the tourism industry in order to counter the stereotypical image of the South as being a backwards uneducated racist region to show that it is a region of diverse cultures and multiple ethnicities (Hyland 1974: 158). In archaeology, the excavations that took place in St. Louis Cemetery Number Two enriched the cultural heritage of New Orleans while also giving an interest to the tourists who had never been to the cemetery before by explaining and presenting at the site what was being done with archaeological research (Pearson 1986: 32).

IV. Cultural Concerns

Since this thesis is examining tourism at a historic cemetery in New Orleans, there are two cultural concerns that need to be mentioned. These are the use of the term “Creole” and Voodoo. The two issues go hand in hand in New Orleans and the cemetery because Creole and Voodoo are intrinsically tied to both.
The term “Creole” has an inescapable presence in New Orleans today. Although a word of Spanish origin, historically it has had several definitions. Creole stems from the word “criollo” which was first used by the conquistadors in the colonial New World in order to distinguish between those people (white or black) who were not of native American origin (Tregle 1992: 133). Creole societies became prominent in both the New World as well as African colonies during colonial times (Domínguez 1986: 13). By the nineteenth century, Creole began to denote those people of European origin living in the colonies (Domínguez 1986: 14). Towards the end of the nineteenth century, Creole was exclusive to all those who were of only French or Spanish heritage (Tregle 1992: 132). Today, Creole can mean those of mixed African and European heritage. The modern dictionary has up to eight definitions for the term Creole, many of which are based on race and/or ethnicity (Domínguez 1986: 15).

Voodoo is another aspect of New Orleans discussed on tours of the cemetery. The religion of Voodoo originated in West Africa that is based on animism (Fontenot 1994: 41). This religion was transplanted and adapted by Africans being brought to the New World as part of the slave trade (Haskins 1978: 47). With the intermingling of Africans and Europeans, Voodoo became influenced by Christianity (King 1992: 267). This religion was brought to Louisiana with the influx of Haitians in the early nineteenth century (Hall 1992: 86). Voodoo is still practiced in New Orleans today.

V. Conclusion

Interactions between archaeology and the public are a recent development in the discipline of archaeology. In this thesis I attempt to study this relationship through a series of tours at a historic site in New Orleans, Louisiana. In researching the
relationship of archaeology and the public, I sought to answer several questions: What kind of information is disseminated to the public? Should archaeologists try to work with the public? Did archaeologists add to the information given? Could archaeologists do more in working with the tourism industry? Who benefits in the relationship between the public and archaeologists? Who has a right to the past, archaeologists, the public, or both?

In the following chapters I seek to explore these questions through literary and ethnographic studies. In Chapter two I explain the history of both burials in New Orleans as well as Saint Louis Cemetery Number One. In Chapter three I include ethnographic accounts of the cemetery through the gaze of the tourist. I analyze my findings in chapter four and give an answer to the research questions. I conclude the thesis in chapter five.

This thesis has been the work of two years of library, cemetery, and tour research. The research was conducted in order to get a better understanding of archaeology and finding importance among the public.
CHAPTER 2. HISTORY OF THE CITY OF THE DEAD

I. Introduction

Saint Louis Number One often is compared to its host city of New Orleans. Both contain a unique blend of architecture and people that make them appealing. The evolution of the cemetery is analogous to the development of the city into a modern urban area. The only difference from the two would be that New Orleans is a city of life whereas Saint Louis Cemetery is a city for the dead.

This chapter gives an overview of the cemetery. History, burial types, and the people that are mentioned all have a place in both New Orleans and the cemetery. Although the cemetery is both romanticized in written and oral sources, it is a symbol of what New Orleans was, is, and will be to the inhabitants and tourists alike.

II. History of Burial in New Orleans

New Orleans looked quite different from its present urban sprawl during the eighteenth century. Swamps and marshland surrounded much of the New Orleans settlement. Diseases such as malaria and cholera were common among the French colonizers. Since death is a natural occurrence, a suitable place of burial was needed. The French found banks of the Mississippi River to be an ideal spot to lay bodies to rest (Florence 1996: 2). Although burying on a raised natural levee seemed like a good idea at the time since it was far enough from the settlement, the locale soon proved to be problematic for the settlers. The annual floodwaters of the river would free caskets from the bank cemetery and the dead would float into the busy colony. Therefore, the first New Orleanians abandoned burying along the river and started looking for another alternative (Florence 1997: 3).
St. Peter’s Cemetery became the first permanent cemetery in New Orleans. The cemetery was located between what are now Burgundy and Rampart streets. This cemetery was placed on a stretch of land outside of the settlement staked out by Adrien de Pauger in 1721. The cemetery was planned for outside the city so that if caskets did wash up during floods, they would float away from the city and not towards it. All burials in St. Peter’s cemetery were below ground burials (Cronin 1997: 16). In 1725, the cemetery marked the outermost boundary of New Orleans (Florence 1997: 3). Ditches were made surrounding the cemetery in order to elevate the land on which burials would take place on (Owsley 1985: 1). The church parish of St. Louis administered this cemetery. Africans and whites were both buried in St. Peter’s cemetery (Florence 1997: 3). Not all New Orleanians were buried in this cemetery. Prominent members of the city were buried on the St. Louis church grounds (Huber 1974: 4).

St. Peter’s Cemetery was still active when New Orleans became under Spanish control. In 1784, the Spanish Cabildo stopped all burials, except for very few distinguished colonists, in the church due to the proximity of dead bodies to the general public. People believed that dead bodies were spreading diseases to the inhabitants of New Orleans (Owsley 1985: 162). Four years later, the city of New Orleans’ boundary was close to St. Peter’s Cemetery. Since New Orleans was growing, St. Peter’s Cemetery would have to be closed down and another cemetery would have to be built even further away (Florence 1996: 3).

While part of St. Peter’s Cemetery was being torn down to make way for housing, a new plot of land on the edge the city became set aside to make way for a new cemetery (Huber 1974: 3). The first Saint Louis Cemetery, now known as Saint
Louis Cemetery Number One, was established in 1789 after one of several fires
decimated New Orleans (Florence 1996: 5). Saint Louis Cemetery was not designed in
any particular order. The rows began to resemble the jumbled streets of its host city.
Tombs and monuments were very close to each other like the crowded buildings that
could be found in New Orleans (McDowell 1974: 137). When St. Louis began, St.
Peter’s Cemetery was still in use. The latest burial in St. Peter’s Cemetery was as late
as 1801 (Owsley 1985: 163).

Many of New Orleans most illustrious people of the time, both known and
unknown, found their final resting place in Saint Louis Number One (Huber 1974: 5).
Cultural attitudes led to the different tombs and burials that can be found in the
cemetery (McDowell 1989: 139). Due to epidemics that plagued the city, below ground
burials became outlawed in the nineteenth century. Epidemics in the 1800’s are stated
as one reason for leading to the rise of above ground burials in New Orleans cemeteries
(McDowell 1989: 138). Above ground burials could have also become prominent in St.
Louis Number One and other cemeteries in the city due to the popularity of this burial
type in Europe. To the Creole society of New Orleans, above ground burials were a
way to keep up with their European cousins (Cronin 1997: 16). Whatever the case
maybe, above ground burials became the burial of choice in New Orleans (McDowell
1974: 139).

The city council of New Orleans decided to move the cemetery yet again due to
urban expansion. This move led to the incorporation of Saint Louis Cemetery Number
Two in 1823. In 1826 St. Anthony’s Mortuary Chapel was built near St. Louis Cemetery
Number One and became associated with both Saint Louis Number One and Two
(Huber 1974: 13). This mortuary chapel was constructed in order to facilitate fast burials of the recently deceased in order to stop the spread of diseases to the living (Florence 1996: 5).

There was no segregation based on race in the cemetery. Africans were buried next to wealthy families. However, segregation did take place between Catholics and Protestants (Florence 1996: 45). When New Orleans was Americanized, a sizable amount of Protestants began moving to the city. Since there was no Protestant cemetery in New Orleans at the time, Protestants were buried in the Catholic cemeteries (Florence 1996: 55). Figure 2-1 shows the view of the Protestant section of the cemetery. The in-ground burials are in stark contrast to the rest of the cemetery that is Catholic in Figure 2-2.

Figure 2-1: Protestant section of Saint Louis Cemetery Number One.
Protestants did not like the idea of being buried in above ground tombs. They believed as the bible said that a certain amount of soil must cover the body when interred. Because of this belief, the back third of Saint Louis Number One became the Protestant section. This area housed several prominent Protestants until another cemetery was built for the Protestant population (Florence 1996: 55).

Spanish influence on architectural styles can be found throughout the historic French Quarter in New Orleans (Florence 1996: 5). Since Louisiana was still under Spanish rule at the time of St Louis' inception, Spanish influence can be found throughout the cemetery in the form of wall vaults and plastered brick tombs (Cronin 1997: 17). Although Spanish influence can be seen throughout the cemetery, French style and design also left its mark on the cemetery during the early to mid eighteenth century. One man was elicited to design several of the tombs in both Saint Louis Number One and Saint Louis Number Two, giving these cemeteries part of their appeal and charm. This was JNB de Pouilly, an architect trained in Paris who immigrated to New Orleans (McDowell 1989: 133).
III. JNB de Pouilly

JNB de Pouilly was born in 1804 along the Yonne in France (Long, p. 135). De Pouilly was classically trained in architecture at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris that was revived by Napoleon. De Pouilly’s work was influenced by the French Neogreque School (Long, 1974: 136). In 1833, JNB de Pouilly immigrated to New Orleans and was crucial in developing many styles that permeated through the city (McDowell 1989: 139). At the time of his immigration, the Creole population of New Orleans began a renaissance in public building and civic betterment (Long 1974: 136). Like other architects of his time, de Pouilly utilized Classical, Gothic, and Egyptian revival styles in his designs (McDowell 1989: 140). Between the years 1833 and until his death in 1875, de Pouilly worked extensively in Saint Louis Cemeteries Number One and Two (McDowell 1989: 139). His work reflected his French heritage. He drew from his academic studies in Paris and the mortuary designs found in Parisian Cemeteries (McDowell 1989: 140).

Before De Pouilly’s arrival, few tombs in the cemeteries had significant artistic designs (McDowell 1989: 140). De Pouilly’s brother, Joseph Isidore de Pouilly, joined him in New Orleans in helping with the demand in designing the tombs in the St. Louis cemeteries. Joseph, like his brother, was also trained in architecture at the Ecole des Beaux Arts in Paris. Less known than his brother for his architectural contributions, Joseph handled most of the business details of the work needed to complete the tombs while JNB de Pouilly worked on the artistic and architectural end. Together, they set up a steam mill to produce plaster and stucco for tomb architecture. The partnership lasted until shortly before JNB de Pouilly’s death in 1866. Even after their departure from the
business partnership, they still consulted with one another on tomb designs and architectural work (Long 1974: 136).

De Pouilly’s had a wide range in funerary art and reflected the tastes of his New Orleans clients in how they wanted to be buried. Classical-revival architectural styles were a favorite among those who wanted to “go out in style” during the mid-1800’s (McDowell 1989: 142). De Pouilly also employed the sarcophagi form in some of his styles. At the time, the sarcophagi type was one of the most popular types in local cemeteries as well as a type employed in Parisian cemeteries (McDowell 1974: 78-79). Although many international architectural styles can be found in the St. Louis cemeteries, French styles and tastes dominate (McDowell 1989: 157). New Orleans’ cemeteries show how much de Pouilly was influenced by burial styles from Parisian cemeteries (Long 1974: 135).

IV. Burials In St. Louis

De Pouilly was a major factor in architectural styles that can be found in the St. Louis Number One. However, another major factor contributed to architectural and artistic styles found in the cemetery. Burial types gave some groundwork in not only designing the tombs but also, exactly who could be buried in that tomb. There are five burial types that can be found in New Orleans, four of which were employed at St. Louis Number One. These are coping, step tombs, family and private tombs, wall vaults, and society tombs (Hubard 1974: 24-29).

Coping tombs could be used for multiple burials. An advantage to using these tombs was that they tended not to sink like other tombs due to the high water table. Coping tombs covered a wide surface area so that weight could be more evenly
distributed (Florence 1997: 27). Several empty chambers allowed for reopening for entombment (Florence 1997: 28). This is the only burial type in New Orleans that is not found in Saint Louis Cemetery Number One (Florence 1997: 27).

Step tombs, which can be seen in Figure 2-2, are the oldest tombs in the cemetery (Florence 1997: 23). These burials are considered above ground burials although they are particularly close to the ground (Florence 1997: 24). Step tombs were usually made of brick (McDowell 1974: 73). The coffin was placed on a mound of shell or earth. Then bricks were placed around the coffin. This placing of the bricks around the coffin formed ridges leading up to the smooth table like top. The "step" in "step tomb" refers to the ridges that lead up to uppermost part of the burial (Florence 1997: 27). Step tombs could be reminiscent of the ancient burial practice of placing earth on the corpse thus making a hill/pyramid like appearance (Florence 1997: 24). Until the late nineteenth century, step tombs were popular and were constructed mainly in St. Louis Number One and Two. By the time Saint Louis Number Three became an active cemetery, step tombs ceased to be built (Florence 1997: 27). These tombs have sunk a significant amount into the ground since their construction (McDowell 1974: 73-73).

Figure 2-3. Step Tombs at Saint Louis Cemetery Number One
A major difference between a step tomb and other tombs is that step tombs were for one body whereas other tombs were for multiple burials. Caveaus, or small chambers found in the front of tombs, were placed in burials so that after a certain time period of time (usually a year and a day) a person’s remains could be placed in the caveau and another person could be buried. Family tombs are one such burial in which multiple interments take place. These are the most common burials in the cemetery (Florence 1997: 26). The idea behind a family tomb was that the family that lived together could be together after death. A family owned its own tomb and commissioned an architect to design it. During the 1800’s, the Catholic Church implemented benches so that living family members could go to the cemetery and mourn their dead loved ones (Florence 1996: 22). Family tombs resembled New Orleans city architecture in that the tombs look strikingly similar to the houses New Orleanians resided in at the time (Florence 1996: 18).

During the 1800’s, epidemics were rampant in the city. This usually caused several deaths to take place within a family around the same time. Since New Orleans had a law that stated tombs could not be opened for a year and a day, a temporary burial was needed to place the family member until the appropriate time had passed in order to open up the family tomb for burial. Wall vaults became a temporary storage place for family members until a funeral could take place (Florence 1996: 17). These vaults make up part of the wall of the cemetery. Although people believe that these tombs are above ground because of the high water table, there is evidence to suggest that these tombs probably stem from a Spanish tradition of burial. Wall Vaults served
two main purposes. One of which was to serve as the boundary of the cemetery and the other was as a resting place (Cronin 1997: 16).

Wall vaults are also known as oven vaults because of the amount of heat that can build up in these tombs (Florence 1997: 25). The Catholic Church, until recently did not allow cremation, this was a practical way of decomposing a body quickly in order to place another corpse (Florence 1997: 26). Wall vaults were not only used by families awaiting a proper burial and individuals but also people waiting to be buried in a benevolent society tomb.

Society tombs are probably the most architecturally pleasing to the eye of all the tombs in Saint Louis Number One (Florence 1997: 28). These tombs were started by benevolent societies, usually people of the same ethnicity, as a death insurance policy (Florence 1996: 26). Since burial costs in New Orleans could exceed more than what a middle class family earns, these societies commenced in order to help sway the expense. A member of one of these societies would pay a fee to an organization in order to have a final resting place when they died. Like coping tombs, society tombs have multiple chambers so that multiple funerals could take place and societies could forego the “Year and a day” law. Society tombs in New Orleans could have started the artistic mausoleum movement in the United States (Florence 1997: 29).

Many ethnic groups in New Orleans formed benevolent societies in order to have tombs in St. Louis Number One. These include the Chinese, Portuguese, and French. Probably the most famous society tomb is the Italian society tomb that was designed and built by Pietro Gualdi. Gualdi, an immigrant from Italy, was also the first to reside in the tomb (Florence 1996: 26). The Italian society tomb, which could be considered the
more artistically striking of the tombs, was made famous by the first independent film ever produced, Easy Rider, in which a drug scene occurs on the tomb. After this film, considered obscene by the Catholic Church, movies can no longer be filmed in this cemetery, although pre-approved documentaries are still allowed (Florence 1996: 28).

V. Famous Inhabitants

Every city has past local and national celebrities who are buried in its cemeteries. Saint Louis Cemetery Number One, the city for the dead, is no exception. Several prominent members hold their place in history, scandal, and even religion. People who tour the cemetery visit the tombs that house these people frequently. The inhabitants that can be found in Saint Louis Number One include the famous Creole elite, the first civil rights activist, the person who had the longest Supreme Court case ever in the United States, and the person credited for introducing the game of craps into America (Huber 1974: 8).

The Plessy tomb is a main attraction in the cemetery. Plessy was the first pioneer in the Civil Rights Movement (Huber 1974: 8). Plessy’s Supreme Court case, Plessy v. Ferguson, was instrumental in starting the “Separate but Equal” stance and legal segregation in America (Florence 1997: 55).

Another famous inhabitant who is known for a Supreme Court case is Myra Clark Gaines (Hubard 1974: 8). Gaines was the illegitimate daughter of Daniel Clark, when upon his death, learned of her paternity. Under Louisiana’s forced inheritance laws, she had a right to his estate. However, she had to prove in lengthy court battle that she was in fact his daughter. This case lasted sixty-five years and ended up being the longest running Supreme Court case in United States history. After winning the case, Gaines
was financially destitute but in the end had her “own good name” (Florence 1996: 51-52).

Bernard de Marigny is known for being the last of the Creole aristocracy in New Orleans. When Marigny was a teenager, he inherited a large sum of money that he had squandered away by the time he was in his 50’s. He is famous in New Orleans for introducing the game of craps to the United States and having a section of the city named after him. Streets such as Desire and Love were named for his greatest passions (Florence 1996: 41-43).

A chess set sits outside a neoclassical tomb with a wrought iron gate. This tomb houses Paul Morphy. He was a champion chess player as well as played a pivotal role in the victory of the Union Army during the Civil War (Florence 1996: 57-58).

In the Protestant section of the cemetery there is a tomb that is noticeably slowly sinking into the saturated ground as seen in Figure 2-4). This tomb is the Eliza Lewis Claiborne tomb who was the wife of the first United States governor of Louisiana. This houses the remains of both Mrs. Claiborne and her daughter who died on the same day (Brock 1999: 14). Directly across from this tomb in the Catholic section is Clarice Duralde’s tomb that was Governor Claiborne’s second wife (Florence 1996: 48).

![Figure 2-4. Claiborne/Lewis Tomb in the Protestant Section](image)
New Orleans politics are also represented in the cemetery. Etienne de Bore was the first person to granulate sugar and became New Orleans’ first mayor (Brock 1999: 17). Another mayor and later representative who is buried in the St. Louis Number One is Dutch Morial. He was New Orleans’ first African American mayor and his tomb lies right next to Marie Laveau (Florence 1996: 65).

Marie Laveau is the famous voodoo queen of New Orleans. She had many trades but was a hairdresser for the most part. Her tomb is sought after today as a place of worship and ritual by people of different religious denominations. Many people believe that by performing certain rituals at her tomb, one can acquire anything that is desired. X’s are marked on the front of this tomb as part of this ritual (Cronin 1997: 24). By Marking X’s on Laveau’s tomb a practitioner can invoke her spirit. However, to people in who are working to preserve this cemetery, this practice considered blatant defacement (Florence 1996: 64-65).

Upon entering the cemetery one comes across a pyramid shaped tomb. This tomb is the Varney tomb (Wilson 1963: 4). Although this family is not particular infamous, the eye catching Egyptian shape has made this a popular tomb mainly because this used to mark the center of the cemetery. The Varney Tomb’s location at the entrance also contributes to the high profile of Saint Louis Cemetery Number One (Brock 1999: 11).

VI. Conclusion

Saint Louis Cemetery Number One has an abundance of both culture and history. It invokes everything that makes New Orleans unique from other cities. Saint Louis Number One is a place for the living to visit and experience while on the other
hand, it’s a place for the dead to rest and be mourned. Since the cemetery is so entrenched in everything that makes New Orleans, it is hard to determine what is romantic from what is reality. This also makes the experience of both the anthropologist and the tourist even harder to explain.
CHAPTER 3. TOURING THE CITY OF THE DEAD

I. Introduction

Voodoo is what makes New Orleans so attractive and yet so deadly. It is rated as fifth on the Travel Channel’s top ten list of Creepiest destinations. People flock to New Orleans because the spirits call them from beyond the swamps. There is a strong connection with the undead that is rarely felt in other places. For this reason, St. Louis Number One attracts tourists in order for them to interact with the ghosts of New Orleans. The scariest place to be in New Orleans is among the above ground burials (Travel Channel 2001: World’s Creepiest Destinations)

Saint Louis Cemetery Number One is the oldest extant cemetery in the city of New Orleans. Tours bill it as a metaphor for the one of a kind city that is New Orleans. Like the living city New Orleans, the City of the Dead has a wide variety of people that have helped shape the city into what it is today. Like the city of the living, the cemetery was not built on a grid and can often be a maze of asphalt paths leading to different parts of the burial grounds.

This chapter centers on the fieldwork I conducted during 2001, 2002, and 2003. I was interested in what information tours gave about Saint Louis Number One and how that information corresponded with historical and/or archaeological data. Specifically, I was interested in what information was given to the public.

Information was gathered by attending several tours sponsored by four tour groups on various occasions. These tour groups were the Cemetery/History Tour sponsored by New Orleans Ghost Tours, the Voodoo/Cemetery Tour sponsored by Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries, the Voodoo/Cemetery tour sponsored by Haunted
History Tours, and the St. Louis Number One Walking Tour sponsored by Save Our Cemeteries. Costs ranged from $12 to $20 each. Although tours to the cemetery are given at different times, I usually went on the mid-day tours.

Importantly, I was not seeking any particular account given of the cemetery in these tours. I was interested in the information that was being presented to the public, what was accurate, questionable, or flat out falsities from my literary research. Below are just some of the encounters I had while touring the cemetery.

II. Stories of Old and Modern New Orleans

A. On the Way to the Cemetery: Bringing Out the Dead

Although city brochures and websites recommend visiting New Orleans in the Spring or Fall, Summer is the peak season for tourism in New Orleans. Walking the mid afternoon streets of New Orleans one finds it hard not to notice the various accents of vacationers that are enjoying their time in the Big Easy. At the beginning of tours, tour guides usually ask where people are from. One by one people name various states, most being from northeastern states. Still, some come from other countries including South Africa and England.

There was only one thing that had changed about Christian the second time I encountered him on the Voodoo/Cemetery tour outside of the Reverend Zombie’s Voodoo Museum, Figure 3-1, on St. Peters St. in New Orleans. He still wore his all black attire, sterling silver gothic skull rings on his fingers, and his dark sunglasses. However, his long jet-black curly locks had been shaved bare revealing the natural curvature of his scalp. People began to laugh as he scolded the tour takers on how if it
would not have been for them, he could be at home right now nursing a hangover. This was the second time I had heard the joke and still did not find it all that amusing.

![Figure 3-1. Reverend Zombie’s Voodoo Museum in New Orleans.](image)

Christian began to lead us down the uneven streets of the French Quarter, telling stories of his haunted experiences, him being drunk every time a ghostly experience happened, as we followed to our first destination. We stopped at a wrought iron fence that enclosed St. Anthony’s Garden behind St. Louis Cathedral in Jackson Square. Christian’s voice grew louder then softer as he told the story of a dual that ended in a Creole aristocrats death on one faithful night back during colonial rule of New Orleans. He tapped one of his rings against the fence to emulate the sound of a sword hitting the fence, a sound one can still hear while perusing the French Quarter streets after midnight, evidence the ghost that lost the fight is still there awaiting a rematch with a living passerby. Yet dueling was not always the typical death in New Orleans (Field notes 2001: July 14).
Many people were not immune to the new diseases and parasites that waited them in the New World and therefore, many people died as soon as they made it off the European ships that carried them. The dead, as explained by Christian, did not have a proper place of burial when the French first settled in New Orleans. Burials started on the levee banks of the Mississippi since they were far enough from the settlement as not to spread disease. The French, being new to the area, did not fully understand the yearly flows of the river. The Mississippi would rise and flood over the levees causing the burials to be uprooted from the ground. As Christian said, it was not uncommon to watch your relatives float by down the streets of colonial New Orleans while you and other colonists tried to continue the work in making a viable colony (Field notes 2001: January 11).

Instead of recounting stories of death and drunken escapades in the French Quarter, Greg discussed more of the architecture that lined French Quarter streets. After all, the French Quarter is full of beautiful architectural feats such as wrought iron balconies that facilitated breezes to enter houses during hot New Orleans’ summers. He pointed out the Creole tradition of placing courtyards away from the streets in order to escape the smell of raw sewage that ran rampant in the Quarter. Along the high walls that separated some houses from the open streets were glued broken bottles. Greg smiled as he claimed this was a tradition to stop people from climbing over the walls, something that comes in very handy during Mardi Gras (Field notes 2001: June 30).
Most St. Louis Cemetery Number One tours are not exclusive to the cemetery itself. The tours described here all started at a mutual meeting place in the middle of the French Quarter; three in cafes and one at a Voodoo shop/museum. People on these tours are taken through a maze of French Quarter roads and given tidbits of information that highlight not only the uniqueness of New Orleans as a city but also the strange ways of the people that live and inevitably die there, all leading up to the cemetery which could be considered the epitome of New Orleans eccentricity.

The tour dialogue before getting to the cemetery ranges on different topics depending on the tour guide’s expertise. Tour guide speeches can vary on such themes as architecture, locations where movies were filmed, and various sites of haunting. As one tourist sarcastically pointed out to her companion on one tour, “Great, I needed more useless information to cloud my brain.” (Field notes 2001: June 13) All themes that are brought up before reaching the cemetery eventually make their way back into the dialogue during the tour of the cemetery.

... 

Thomas was English, which I found interesting since he was giving a tour on “Native Creole New Orleans”. He specialized in New Orleans hauntings and had several years of researching paranormal experience in the city. This gave him all the authority to give an authentic Haunted History Tour of Voodoo and of St. Louis Number One tour. The first places Thomas pointed out the homes of Delta Burke and of Lenny Kravitz and also where movies such as King Creole and Interview With the Vampire were filmed. It was fitting that this tour started on Royal Street since this street is known as the movie capitol of New Orleans. Since this was partly a “Voodoo” tour, if these
were haunted places of voodoo spirits or of residents in the cemetery, it was never mentioned.

One place in particular that we stopped to look at on the way to St. Louis Number One was a lingerie shop on Royal Street. Thomas explained that a few years ago, this was not a lingerie shop at all but rather an antique shop owned by a member of one of the richest families in New Orleans, Peter Patout. Although Patout’s shop had antiquities from eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there were several statues and crosses in particular that were being sold to the highest bidder all around the United States and the World.

After an undercover sting operation, it was found out that Peter Patout’s antique shop was a front for selling artifacts from the famous New Orleans’ cemeteries. Although the statues found in Patout’s shop represented most of New Orleans cemeteries, the majority of these came from Saint Louis Cemetery Number One. Patout paid looters to steal ornamental statuary from these heavily touristed cemeteries because of the world’s fascination with the way New Orleanians bury its dead. Thomas explained that many people want a piece of New Orleans’ death. When Patout was arrested, he claimed that he had no idea where the statues had come from, a statement Thomas does not believe (Field notes 2001: June 13).

So many tours are offered in New Orleans that often times, tours run into each other. This especially happens on entering the cemetery (Field notes 2001, 2002, 2003). On one particular tour, we counted six different tour groups trying to enter the cemetery at the same time, each with over 20 tourists (Field notes 2001: July 14).
When tours meet up at the cemetery, usually the tour that arrived last must wait for the first tour guide to finish his or her speech and move on before the next tour may enter the cemetery.

B. Touring the City of the Dead: Heritage, Inhabitants, and Religion

Thomas moved our tour around a tomb that was rather low to the ground in comparison to the other tombs in the cemetery. He had the tour group encircle the tomb as he placed one of his legs on the tomb. The tomb came above the ground in layers, which Thomas explained was a step-tomb. Step-tombs are the oldest tombs in the cemetery as Christian shows in Figure 3-2 and this particular one was a child’s tomb. Thomas explained that in order to make step-tombs, a rather shallow grave would have to be buried and bricks were laid in layers around and above the grave giving it a step shape.

A small piece of iron jutted out of the top of this tomb. Thomas noted that the iron was actually an iron wrought cross that had been stolen from the grave. “Anytime you see a stump or a small piece of iron like this”, Thomas noted, “This is where a statue or cross used to be and was looted by vandals.” After this speech, Thomas began to lead the tourists down another path leading further into the cemetery. As he did this one tourist stayed behind the others at the step-tomb of this unknown child. She bent down cautiously and picked up a shell near the tomb, inspected it, and placed it in her pocket, returning to the group to continue listening to Thomas’ stories of the cemetery (Field notes 2001: June 13).
Once in the cemetery, a tour does not always follow the same path but it can be expected to talk about several aspects of the cemetery that make it unique. These include the types of tombs, religion, and the famous people that are buried in the cemetery. The famous New Orleanians that are buried in the cemetery are more often than not talked about as being Creole.
St. Louis Cemetery Number One is known as a Creole Cemetery. Creole is a term that has had several connotations in New Orleans society. During colonial times, it was a term denoting the people of European decent that were born in the colony (Field notes 2001: January 11). Today it is a word that can mean one who is of mixed race (Field notes 2001: June 30). No where on the tours I have been on has the term “Creole” been used more than in touring the cemetery.

Creoles, although living in the New World, still kept their ties with the old world. Most were born in New Orleans then sent to France to be educated only to come back to become part of the New Orleans aristocracy. Each tour guide had their on take on what Creole meant not only as a word but also what it means to New Orleans. Unbeknownst to me, it was also a term that can raise strong emotions in tour guides of the cemetery.

... 

Just before reaching the cemetery, Christian kept describing many things he showed us as “Creole”. He rambled on about the eccentricities and solidarity of the Creole society, especially when New Orleans became part of America. Not knowing what exactly he meant by Creole since personal research has proven it can have various meanings, I decided to ask him exactly what he meant in using the word, “Creole”.

Trying to do the best I could to not interrupt Christian during his theatrical speeches, I waited for him to take a breath and asked him, “What does ‘Creole’ mean?” Christian, staring at me, became silent for a few seconds. Then, he began to speak both angrily and loudly. Very defensively he said, “What I mean by ‘Creole’ is the
definition of being born in the colonies. Others claim it means other things but they are wrong!” I stayed behind the others in our group for the rest of the tour, never asking a question of Christian again (Field notes 2001: January 11).

After this incident with Christian, I had the opportunity to go on another tour being given by a native New Orleanian who was Creole. Greg was a tall stocky guy with a very tan complexion. This was his first tour he was giving since coming back from his vacation in Buffalo, New York. During his tour through the cemetery, he explained the various meanings of Creole. According to Greg, Creole can mean anyone born in the colony, whites from European nobility, or the culture and food of New Orleans. Greg never explained which definition made him Creole but it made me think maliciously that obviously Christian was not Creole (Field notes 2001: June 30)

... Although Voodoo can be considered part of religious expression, most people connected with the cemetery say its blatant vandalism. It is said that Voodoo practioners jump the high walls of the cemetery at night in order to perform their rituals calling the spirits. Walking the cemetery during tours, tour guides point to tombs riddled with X’s and/or nails hammered into the tombs. It is stated that these “rituals” destroy the integrity of the cemetery.

... Marie Laveau’s tomb is covered in a series of triple X’s. It is one of the most striking tombs in the cemetery, not for any architectural significance, but because of these markings. Thomas explained that the markings were part of a Voodoo ritual in which a person invokes the spirit of Marie Laveau. The ritual involves knocking on the
tomb three times, spinning around three times, making a wish, leaving an offering, and using a brick broken off of a nearby red brick tomb and marking triple X's on the tomb. Thomas explained that most tours recommend against this ritual because of the destruction it not only does to the one tomb that is being marked but also to the tomb one must break a brick off of in order to mark the X's (Field notes 2001: November 17).

Christian had a different opinion and attested to the validity of the ritual. He claimed how well this ritual worked by telling a story in which a woman on a tour completed the ritual and two weeks later, won the lottery in her home state (this story is also recounted on other tours by different tour guides). She owed all her luck and winnings to the spirit of Marie Laveau. Christian actually gave tour takers five minutes to complete the ritual if they chose to do so. (Field notes 2001: January 11).

A few months later Christian had changed his stance. He explained the whole wishing ritual again but this time noted that it was vandalism. Christian told tourists that it was now recommended for people to mark triple X’s on the bottom of the tomb. In this way, the tomb would not be defaced and the ritual could still be practiced (Field notes 2001: July 14).

On a later tour, I noticed that the red brick tomb that was near Marie Laveau’s tomb was being covered over with plaster. Greg told us that this was his family’s tomb, the Perrault tomb. It was being covered in order to stop the breaking of bricks that are so vital in marking Marie Laveau’s tomb. He stated that people now had to find a piece of brick on the ground near Laveau’s tomb in order to complete the wishing ritual to call her spirit (Field notes 2001: June 30).
Is Voodoo a religion? Tour guides seem to disagree on the answer to this question although the majority of them seem to respond in the negative. The majority opinion, however, does not flow with the evidence that Voodoo is practiced in the cemetery.

... 

On a cold November day, Rachel and I decided to go down to New Orleans in order to take pictures of St. Louis Number One. The overcast skies and the late Fall feel of the city seemed to be a perfect way to photographically capture the “City of the Dead”. While walking around Rachel emphasized how she wanted to see the tomb of the Voodoo queen herself, Marie Laveau. Since it was nearing closing time of the Cemetery (and we were almost out of film), we meandered through the maze of above ground graves in order to pay homage to Marie Laveau.

Unfortunately as we approached the tomb we saw that a sizeable tour was already there patiently listening to their guide recount the life of the most famous New Orleans’ woman. Not wanting to disturb the tour (it is considered extremely rude to “drop in” on a tour without paying), Rachel and I stayed in the background looking at other tombs. Our interests peaked, however, when we heard the warmly dressed tour guide exclaim that Voodoo was not a religion but something concocted by African slaves in order to have some (even if minimal) control of their masters and how the slaves were treated. Rachel and I looked at each other partly disgusted and partly confused. Why would a tour guide say this about something that is so important to the heritage of New Orleans? In jest Rachel turned to me and said, “She is lucky someone
who practices Voodoo isn’t listening to this or they would probably put a hex on her ass!” (Field notes 2002: November 16).

Jim seemed to agree with this statement that Voodoo was not a religion. He joked about how slaves made up this “religion” because it scared their masters into treating them better. After all, since all slaves were baptized Catholic before being able to set foot off of the ships Jim questioned how they could be considered part of another religion (Field notes 2003: February 3).

Miss Barbara was a very jolly woman. Her voice, face, and attire personified New Orleans. She was a “true Creole”, having French, African, and Spanish heritage and she was not afraid to remind you of that many times over. Walking around in the June humidity, she was very motherly in telling me, “Child, get under my umbrella, you know it’s hot!” I began to ask her questions about Voodoo and the story of Marie Laveau to which Miss Barbara asked if I was Catholic. Instead of explaining my agnostic views on religion I answered, “I am from South Louisiana so I was raised Catholic”. Being the only Caucasian on this particular tour, Miss Barbara then began to introduce me to everyone as “the Cajun”, never calling me by my first name again, and then she said, “being Catholic then you know how it is!” (Field notes 2002: June 1).

Voodoo is alive and very much practiced in New Orleans, Miss Barbara explained to me. “If you are Catholic, then you are part of Voodoo”, she said. To Miss Barbara, Voodoo and Catholicism were very much the same mainly because they both worshipped the dead and partly because she practiced both. I asked her about Voodoo rituals that go on in the cemetery and Miss Barbara stopped me before I could finish. “That is not Voodoo”, she said, “Voodoo respects the ancestors and the dead, what they
are doing is disrespect (illustrated by Figure 3-3). How can that be Voodoo?” (Field notes 2002: June 1).

![Figure 3-3. Offerings and markings at the Tomb of Marie Laveau.](image)

Saint Louis Cemetery Number One is an active cemetery still owned by the Catholic Diocese of New Orleans. A tour can be ushered out of the cemetery rather quickly by the grounds keeper when a funeral is scheduled to take place (Field notes 2001: June 16). Every New Orleans ethnicity is represented in the cemetery and monumental tombs based on country of an ethnic group’s origin are the most seen in the cemetery. Even though it is still an active cemetery, no new tombs can be built inside Saint Louis Number One. Yet, anyone with the money to buy a plot and tomb could be buried in the cemetery back in the nineteenth century. This included people the Creole’s were known for despising, the protestant Americans (Field notes 2001: June 16).
Thomas led us to back wall vaults pointing various last names connoting several countries represented by the immigrants that were buried in the cemetery. As we approached closer where the back wall vault tombs ended, Thomas stopped and looked at us as if he had a secret he wanted to tell us. He began explaining how the cemetery is known for being non-discriminatory. “Well”, he paused, “the cemetery did not discriminate on race, however, it did discriminate on one premise.” Thomas became silent as he moved beyond the corner to the back of the cemetery with our tour group closely following (Field notes 2001: June 16).

The back third of the cemetery looked quite different from the rest of the burial ground for several reasons. For one, the back cemetery had ample space between burials. Another aspect we quickly noticed were that these burials were in the ground, which contrasted with the above ground tombs a few feet away. “The cemetery”, Thomas continued, “did discriminate on one thing, that is it discriminated against religion.” Thomas recounted the story of how New Orleans had an influx of Americans after the Louisiana Purchase in 1803. Conflicts began between the Creoles and the Americans not only because Americans spoke English (the Creoles spoke French) but also because the Americans that settled the city were Anglican, not Catholic (Field notes 2001: June 16).

At that time, there were no protestant cemeteries in the New Orleans vicinity. As the Americans succumbed to malaria and other diseases, the American death count began to rise. Not having a cemetery it was decided that they were to be buried in the back of Saint Louis Cemetery. Believing that the body of the deceased should be
buried six feet underground, Americans never picked up the Creole practice of above ground burials (Field notes 2001: November 17).

Christian recounted that after Protestants began to be buried in the back of the cemetery, residents who lived near the cemetery began to complain of knocking noises coming from the protestant section. Although some thought the cemetery was haunted by dead Protestants, others sought a more practical answer to the noises. Christian said that one of the reasons Creoles buried their dead in above ground tombs was because of the high water table. Once a grave was dug in the ground, it would fill with water just as soon as it was finished. The Protestants could not grasp this concept and still buried their dead underground. Unfortunately, the grave would fill with water and cause the coffin to knock against the walls of the grave. Protestants tried several ways to make sure the coffin would stay down including filling the coffins with stones or drilling holes in the coffin. None of these devices worked and according to Christian, one can still hear the Protestant coffins hitting the grave walls even in present day when the underground water table gets too high (Field notes 2001: July 14).

... 

C. Restoration, Conservation, and Two Story Condos

Walking around the cemetery, it is hard not to notice the many preservation efforts that are taking place. Various tombs being restored are covered with blue plastic covering with plaques stating “Restoration Work by Save or Cemeteries” or “Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries” located strategically conspicuous on the tombs. In recent years, restoration work has increased on the tombs in the cemetery (Field notes 2003: February 3).
Jim seemed to be full of one liners and funny stories. Through his jokes and endless tales of what would happen to “dear Aunt Lulu if she kicked the bucket” he would emphasize that all the money we paid to go on the Save Our Cemeteries Tour of Saint Louis Number One went directly to restoring and preserving these tombs. Of course he did not call these tombs, “tombs”, rather he referred to them as “two story condos” (Field notes 2003: February 3).

Tombs are usually either cared for by the family of the deceased or, if the family paid $4000, by the Catholic Church. Sometimes, Jim explained, these “two story condos” were for whatever reason abandoned and left to decay through age. Jim recounted how Save Our Cemeteries was trying to get the legislature to pass a law in which if the heirs of abandoned tombs were not found, the organization could place the remains of the tomb in the caveau, restore the tomb, and then resell it to another family. This move has proved to be unsuccessful, resulting in great resistance from both the Louisiana legislature and the Catholic Church. However, Jim illustrated that this did not deter Save Our Cemeteries and that it was still trying to get such a resolution passed.

After the tour I asked Jim about the status of this legislation because having studied the cemeteries, I had not heard of it. Jim explained that he was not sure if Save Our Cemeteries was still pursuing this legislation. “It was a few years ago, I doubt they are still trying to get it passed.” (Field notes 2003: February 3).

…
D. After the Cemetery: Congo Square and Scary Places

Slaves are also buried in Saint Louis Number One. As long as African slaves were baptized Catholic, they had a right to be buried on cemetery grounds. Saint Louis was a fitting place for African slaves to be buried since the cemetery is very close to Congo Square. Congo Square, now named Louis Armstrong Park, was known for its Sunday gathering of slaves. Under New Orleans law, slaves had the Sundays off from working at the plantations. For one day, they were free to practice their indigenous religion without suffering persecution from the white Creole slave owners (Field notes: 2001: January 11). They did this in Congo Square where it was also believed that before the Europeans, Congo Square was revered by Native Americans as a sacred site (Field notes 2001: June 30).

It began to rain as Greg took us to the middle of Louis Armstrong Park to tell us of the importance of Congo Square to the Africans. Over forty African tribes were represented among the slaves in the New Orleans area. On Sundays, Africans would come to Congo Square to dance, sing, gossip, and practice their African religions while whites paid to watch this event from a safe distance. The remnants of what was Congo Square are no longer in existence due to the construction of Louis Armstrong Park. Although Congo Square now rests under the brick paths of Louis Armstrong Park, Greg recounted how it was still an important site for Voodoo practitioners (Field notes 2001: June 30).

Congo Square is not just an important Voodoo site because its roots to African tradition but also because of its location. Christian pointed to across the street from
Congo Square. According to Christian, the abandoned parking lot on the other side of Rampart Street is where Marie Leveau had her hair salon. There she styled the hair of prominent Creole women, listening to their stories of the aristocratic Creole judges. Marie Leveau used the information she overheard from the Creole women to her advantage for although Leveau was known for her Voodoo practices, she was also known for getting what she wanted from New Orleans judges. Christian smiled as he said, “Ladies, it just goes to show you that you should watch what you say when you are around your hairdresser” (Field notes 2001: January 11).

... 

The tours to the cemetery generally last for two and a half to three hours, the last half of the tour being of the cemetery itself. After touring the cemetery, the tour groups are led out of the cemetery and back to the French Quarter so that tourists can find their way back to their hotels or back to Bourbon Street. Usually the tourists give the tour guides tips for their knowledge and/or performance, whichever one was better. However, just in case tales of voodoo or cemetery hauntings did not scare the tourists enough, the tour guides still have one more place to show the people from out of town that is sure to leave them running home or at the very least for another drink (Field notes 2001: June 16).

... 

After three hours walking on the hot concrete, nearly everyone on the tour was drenched in sweat. Some wondered when the tour was going to end while others wondered about this last place Thomas was bringing us. He assured us it was the
scariest place in New Orleans. It is so scary that in fact, he is often too scared to go near it (Field notes 2001: June 16).

As we stopped in front of a typical Creole architectural style house, Thomas reminded us that this was the end of the tour. He hoped that we enjoyed it and started pointing out different directions to various streets in the French Quarter so that people may find their way to where ever they were going next. Then he remembered that he had almost forgot to tell us about the scariest place in New Orleans. He turned around and started describing the person who was born in the Creole house we were facing as one of the most evil people of our day. “Who could it be, you are all wondering?” as he looked in the eyes of each person on the tour, “Why, its none other than the birth place of….RICHARD SIMMONS!” Some people gasped sarcastically, others laughed, while some walked up to Thomas to give a five or a ten dollar bill. Thomas thanked the tour for their attention and offered anyone to join him for a libation in a nearby bar. His work was finished for a day and the heat had caused him to need a beer (Fieldwork 2001: June 16).

III. Conclusion

On one tour I befriended a middle age couple from Los Angeles, California. They were in New Orleans awaiting their cruise to begin the next day. While waiting to leave on their weeklong cruise, they decided to go on a cemetery tour because they heard that burial in New Orleans was very unique in comparison to other cemeteries in the United States. At the beginning of the tour they asked why I was taking notes and I explained that I was a graduate student doing research on the cemetery. This peaked
their interest in the cemetery even more and stayed close to me during the whole tour, asking me various questions throughout the tour when they were confused about what the tour guide had said (Field notes 2001: June 30).

When this tour had ended, they came up to me to ask me of my opinion of this tour. They were asking me this because according to them, I was “the expert”. I explained that I really was not an expert and that I was just interested in what information was being disseminated by tour guides of the cemetery. Again they pressed me and I admitted that out of the sponsored tours I had been on up to that point, this one (sponsored by Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries) seemed to be most accurate. The couple agreed that they enjoyed the historic information given on the tours but were confused as to the place of voodoo on the tour. I explained that the cemetery tours I have been studying are usually combined with voodoo tours. They then thanked me for helping them to understand the tour better and went off to Bourbon Street. I went back to find the tour guide in order to ask him questions but he had already disappeared into the French Quarter on his bicycle (Fieldnotes 2001: June 30).

Although the tours were quite different from what they claimed to be in their brochures, tourists on these tours seemed overall pleased with their experience. This could be seen in their countless questions of the tour guide when he gave an interesting tidbit of New Orleans folklore. The amount of money tour guides received in tips was also an indication of the audience’s appreciation of their expertise.

While tours could differ on what they presented, there seemed to be a central theme. Most of the Tours seemed more centered on romanticizing New Orleans than on what was actually there. Several times when I tried to bring up a point or if I did not
agree with what a tour guide said, my comments were greeted with ugly stares and
sarcastic remarks from the tour guide. That is when I learned to stop asking questions
and to just observe. Some information I did find useful and will use in my analysis in the
upcoming chapter.
CHAPTER 4. TOURISM AND ARCHAEOLOGY

I. Introduction

An interest in the cemeteries of New Orleans peaked when I went on my first cemetery Voodoo tour in New Orleans. On this tour it was discussed how Voodoo practitioners, tourists, and antique dealers for various reasons including spiritual and monetary gains stole statuary and human remains from the cemeteries of New Orleans. This recounting reminded me of all the discussions in archaeology classes and papers I have written on looted archaeological sites all around the world. Since this was a concern of mine, I decided to pursue this interest closer to home.

Starting this project I was more interested with the looting that was going on in the stealing of grave goods from these historic cemeteries. I focused on St. Louis Number One mainly because of its proximity to the French Quarter and the high volume of tourists it receives on a weekly basis. However, my focus shifted to other than looting as I went on more tours of the cemetery. So many people could be seen touring the cemetery and yet little archaeology has been done in New Orleans cemeteries, I began to question archaeology’s role with tourism and history. I realized that my general interest in public archaeology was growing.

The touring of the cemetery began in January 2001 with the Voodoo/Cemetery tour sponsored by the Haunted History Tours. I continued going on tours that focused on St. Louis Number One during the summers of 2001 and 2002, staying mainly with the sponsored tours I mentioned in the previous chapter. The last tour I partook in was on February 3, 2003’s tour sponsored by Save Our Cemeteries. Combined, I went on a total of nine tours all dealing with the cemetery.
These tours could all be considered part of Historic Tourism since they are exploring a specific historic site and recounting the glories of New Orleans’ past (Smith 1989: 5). In this analysis, I divided the tours I went on in two categories: Romantic and Historic, which are represented in Table 4-1. Romantic tours were those tours that tended to elaborate on the unique qualities and stereotypes of New Orleans while the tour guides acted like performers. Historic tours are those that tried to dismiss stereotypes and give a more accurate view of the History of New Orleans.

Table 4-1. Categorization of tours examined for thesis.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Tour</th>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Sponsor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1/11/01</td>
<td>Voodoo/Cemetery Tour</td>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>Haunted History Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/16/01</td>
<td>Cemetery/History Tour</td>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>New Orleans Ghost Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/30/01</td>
<td>Voodoo/Cemetery Tour</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7/14/01</td>
<td>Voodoo/Cemetery Tour</td>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>Haunted History Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/17/01</td>
<td>Cemetery/History Tour</td>
<td>Romantic</td>
<td>New Orleans Ghost Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/1/02</td>
<td>Voodoo/Cemetery Tour</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/22/02</td>
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<td>Romantic</td>
<td>Haunted History Tours</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/03/03</td>
<td>St. Louis Number One Walking Tour</td>
<td>Historic</td>
<td>Save Our Cemeteries</td>
</tr>
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</table>
These are just general groupings of the tours. Obviously there was some overlap between what I consider Romantic and Historic that will be discussed later on. I tried to group the tours in how they were presented overall. Due to conflicts with school and work, only the tours given on weekends were taken. All except two of the tours were taken on a Saturday. The other two were taken on a Sunday. Since the cemetery closes at 3 pm, tours are only offered during the day. There is a choice between going on a morning or afternoon tour. The majority of these tours were taken in the afternoon. Tours on Sunday are only offered in the morning since it is the only day the cemetery closes at 12 pm.

Chapter 3 presents the information given on the tours I went on. Mainly five tour guides were discussed. Here is a brief background of those five tour guides. Christian was the tour guide for the Voodoo/Cemetery tour sponsored by Haunted History Tours. He proclaimed himself as an expert on hauntings and Voodoo for this tour. Thomas is from England and he gave the Cemetery/History Tour sponsored by New Orleans Ghost Tours. He has had several years in dealing with the paranormal in both New Orleans and London that made him an authority on such subjects on this tour. Greg is an archivist who volunteers to give tours for the Voodoo/Cemetery tour sponsored by Friend of New Orleans Cemeteries. Miss Barbara gives guided tours and performs as Marie Laveau. She accompanied Greg on one of his tours. Jim is a historian and preservationist who volunteers to give the St. Louis Number One Walking Tours for Save Our Cemeteries.
II. Romantic Tours

Two out of the four sponsored tours I went on I am considering Romantic tours. By romantic I mean that these tours tended to elaborate on stereotypes of the city and of the burial of the dead. These are the Voodoo/Cemetery and Cemetery/History tours. The Voodoo/Cemetery tour, as shown in Figure 4-1, began at the Rev. Zombie Voodoo shop on St. Peter Street in the French Quarter. The tour starts at 1:15 pm by first watching a film on Voodoo then a quick tour of the Voodoo museum. After this, the tour was led through the myriad of streets leading up to the cemetery. The Cemetery/History tour met at CC’s Coffee Shop on St. Phillip and began at 12:30 pm. Both tours lasted approximately two and a half hours long.

Figure 4-1. Christian on the Voodoo/Cemetery tour.

Certain themes reoccurred by going on these tours multiple times. These included the uniqueness of New Orleans to rest of the world, famous New Orleans people or famous people lived/live in New Orleans and their movies, and religion. The
performance given by the tour guides also added to the romanticism of these tours. Although other themes could be drawn from these two tours, these were the most common.

A. Life and Death in the Big Easy

New Orleans is unlike any other place in the world. Well, that is according to these tours. There is a carefree attitude in New Orleans that makes it such a great place to live and die. Events like Mardi Gras and Halloween are perfect examples of the *joie de vivre* enjoyed by all New Orleanians both past and present. There is no reason to rush life in New Orleans because life is about having fun and you do not want to die from the humidity. Sit down, take a breath, and have a mint julep. This is what New Orleans is about, one big party after another.

Of course, the party does not stop when you are dead! This attitude is obviously carried over to the New Orleans treatment of death. After all, there is no other place in the world where death is celebrated more than it is in New Orleans. In Jazz funerals, people dance and rejoice the life the dead person has led. Death is a time to be happy, not a time for crying. Elaborate above ground burials show just exactly how unique New Orleans is and how much people want to make the transition to death as painless as possible. Above ground tombs reflect the way the people who are in the burials lived their life. The cemetery is a replica of life in New Orleans. For this reason, the cemeteries are referred to as the “Cities of the Dead.”

Sometimes people have such a love for the city that they cannot leave once they have died. The body is just a shell, it’s the soul that lives on. For this reason, their souls are wandering New Orleans. As in life, these souls visit the same places in their
new state. Often one can hear what or see them in the corner of the living’s eye. All these wandering souls make New Orleans one of the world’s top ten most haunted places. Don’t you watch the travel channel?

New Orleans is unlike any other. This is why tourists are warned that although they are visiting they have to take caution. You may come for a vacation and end up staying for an eternity.

B. Famous New Orleanians

Famous people, both living and dead, can be found in New Orleans. Many celebrities have homes in the French Quarter. The Historic/Cemetery tour sponsored by New Orleans Ghost Tours always started with the tour guide pointing out Delta Burke’s home. After that, one could expect a tour of all the places where films such as Double Jeopardy, King Creole, and Interview with the Vampire were made in New Orleans leading up to the cemetery. If one did not know better one would think this was a movie tour instead of a tour of Historic New Orleans. Of course, a stop by Lenny Kravitz’s French Quarter home with a run down exterior look was always a must before venturing into the cemetery (Field notes 2001: June 16).

The Voodoo/Cemetery tour sponsored by the Haunted History Tours tended to focus on the famous dead of New Orleans. When going through the cemetery one could find such tombs that belonged to Homer Plessy who could be accredited for starting the Civil Rights Movement, Myra Clark Gaines who had the longest running Supreme Court Case in American History, and of course a last stop to the famous Voodoo Queen Marie Laveau. All the famous people buried in the cemetery had not only a lasting affect in New Orleans but also a major role in American history.
C. Religion

Religion plays a huge role in past and present New Orleans society. New Orleans is a crossroads for Voodoo and Catholicism. Since the French founded New Orleans and then later governed by the Spanish, Catholicism was the only official religion ever present in New Orleans until America took over in 1803. Slaves from Africa brought their own indigenous religion. It was mandatory for everyone, including slaves, to be Catholic. Slaves got around this rule by blending their beliefs with Catholicism, which spawned Voodoo.

The cemetery is a perfect example of the importance of religion to New Orleans. The cemetery is a Catholic cemetery but it can be seen at certain tombs the influence of Voodoo. Offerings of food and markings of X’s are rampant in the cemetery and point out by tour guides. These two things obviously show how important Voodoo is to its practitioners. They do anything to get into the cemetery after hours in order to have their prayers answered.

These three themes lead to a picturesque view of New Orleans. They gave the impression that New Orleans was one big year long party well both the living and the dead gather to have fun. By changing intonation and performing as actors on a stage, the tour guides added to this. On these tours, tourists were more reactionary than on the Historic Tours.

III. Historic Tours

Historic tours were the two tours that tried to give an accurate portrayal of New Orleans and the cemetery. Friends of the Cemetery and Save Our Cemeteries sponsored the tours I am grouping as Historic. The Voodoo/Cemetery tour sponsored
by Friends of the Cemetery began at Café Beignet on Royal Street in New Orleans and begins at 1 pm with a brief history of New Orleans. The Save Our Cemeteries Tour of Saint Louis Number One only runs on Sundays. People meet at 10 am at Royal Blend Coffee Shop on Royal Street. Like the other two tours, these lasts approximately two and a half hours in length.

In trying to present a more authentic view of New Orleans, the tour guides weave together certain traits between New Orleans and the cemetery. Architecture, dispelling myths, and restoration are among the tools used in giving accurate representations of New Orleans. By presenting these traits, people get a more real account of what New Orleans is all about.

A. Architecture

A major attraction in New Orleans is the architecture. When walking through the French Quarter all one has to do is look up at the balconies to see the beauty and art found on these buildings. Wrought iron balconies served two purposes. One purpose was to facilitate circulation of air after a mid-afternoon shower and the other reason was to be able to walk across to other houses when the streets were too flooded to utilize (Field notes 2003: February 3). Another architectural feat one can see in the French Quarter is the use of space. Since the French Quarter was the city of New Orleans in colonial times, there was no room for yards. Instead, elaborate courtyards were made so that people could enjoy their afternoon. Courtyards were also used in order to separate the slave quarter from the main house. Slaves had their own place because they were to be estranged from the masters. Slave quarter can be distinguished from
regular houses because they are narrow, two story buildings usually in back of the house (Field notes 2001: June 30).

The importance of architecture in New Orleans spilled over into the architecture of the cemetery. Since Saint Louis Number One is mainly an above ground cemetery, ornate tombs were built in order to show opulence and wealth of Creole society. Top architects were hired in order to build such ornate tombs. For those who could not afford to have their own family tomb, societies based on ethnicity or occupation were formed in so that everyone could have a place of final rest. The tomb one was buried in was a direction reflection of who they were and what their socioeconomic status was in the city.

The place in the cemetery that had the least amount of architecture was the Protestant section. This is mainly because Protestants believed they had to be buried six feet underground in order to be accepted into Heaven. These tombs are rather simple and not as complex or beautiful as the tombs in the rest of the cemetery.

B. Dispelling Myths

These two tours pointed out that other tours in the city perpetuate many myths about New Orleans and burials. A main myth that had been told over and over again by other unenlightened tour guides was that the reason New Orleans had above ground tombs was because of the water table. This was not so according to these two tour guides. Water did not come rushing up when someone was placed in the ground. After all, the first burials and the Protestant burials were below ground. The actual reason that people were buried above ground was because of they were emulating the European way of death current at the time. During the eighteenth century, Creoles
were still very much in contact with Europeans. When it became en vogue in Europe to have above ground tombs, Creoles did not want to be left behind. They built above ground tombs, like those found in Parisian cemeteries, in order to keep up with the latest fashion.

Voodoo is another myth that is perpetuated about New Orleans. People do not climb over the walls in the middle of the night to practice Voodoo rituals or to mark up tombs as stated by other tour guides. In fact, some of the offerings and rituals that are in the cemetery are not really offerings at all. They are just placed there by some tour guides in order to incite reaction in the crowds. Of course Voodoo may not even be a religion at all but rather it was a useful way to have some control over the white masters.

C. Restoration

Both Save Our Cemeteries and Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries do restoration work in Saint Louis Number One. Restoration work is badly needed since many tombs fall into disarray because of abandonment and/or looting. Tombs are often forgotten by family memories or a family line may have ended so no one is left to take care of the tombs. The tombs fall apart and are badly needed to be restored. All the money that is made from tourism through these two tours goes directly to help in restoration.

Although people may not climb over walls at night for Voodoo rituals, they have been known to climb over the walls after hours in order to procure artifacts from the cemetery. These artifacts include statuary, wrought iron crosses, and human remains.
When walking in the cemetery if you see an iron stump or a statue missing a head, this is evidence that looting has taken place.

When on a Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries or Save Our Cemeteries tour, the tour guides point out which tombs their respective organization has restored successfully with help from tourism and donations. They also explain that more work desperately needs to be done. By giving these tours they are educating people on how the need for restoration is vital to keeping the beauty and magnificence of the tombs.

By looking at architecture, dispelling myths, and expressing the need for restoration these tours are trying to show how important the cemeteries are to the city of New Orleans and to the heritage of America. Although these tour guides do provide some entertainment, their main focus is to educate people about the truth of New Orleans. They claim that what they present are the facts and that is why they are the most successful tours in New Orleans.

IV. Romantic and Historic Overlap

Although I grouped these tours into categories, however, that does not mean that the Historic tours were completely historic or that the Romantic tours were without historic value. Both tours seemed to have some elements in common. These include the time it takes to actually get to the cemetery, the importance of history and religion, and the tombs that are visited.

Even though all four of the tours were supposed to focus on the cemetery, none of them actually started with the cemetery. Before a tour of the cemetery actually began, a tour of the French Quarter always ensued. While different topics were discussed before getting to the cemetery, interesting facts about the French Quarter
and New Orleans was a must on the way to Saint Louis Number One. On each tour it was calculated that it took approximately forty-five to sixty minutes before actually getting to the cemetery. Save Our Cemeteries’ walking tour was the tour that took the shortest time getting to the cemetery.

All tours all expressed the importance of history and religion to the cemetery and New Orleans. History and religion are intertwined in the cemetery mainly for the people that are buried there and for their religious affiliation. Catholicism, Voodoo, and Protestant all have representations in the cemetery although they may be presented differently. The intermingling of history and religion add to the uniqueness and mysteriousness of New Orleans, making it a city rich in both culture and heritage.

In the same vein of the importance of history and religion it must be noted that all tours have mentioned an interesting sidebar at the tomb of Marie Laveau. It was stated that even though Marie’s name is on the tomb, she might not be buried there at all. There is a heated controversy about the final resting place of her body. Some people believe this is actually her daughter’s tomb and Marie Laveau was placed in a Wall Vault at St. Louis Cemetery Number Two. Whereas all tour guides mentioned this debate, none seemed to agree on where they believed the real Marie Laveau was actually buried.

Once in the cemetery that most of these tours went to the same tombs. Although the order of the tombs visited and which tombs might have changed each tour, the majority of times the same tombs were focused on. In Table 4-2, a list of the major tombs and which tours visited those burials (in no particular order):
Table 4-2: A list of tombs viewed by tour groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tomb(s)</th>
<th>Tour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Varney Tomb</td>
<td>*HHT, NOGT, FNOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wall Vaults</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plessy Tomb</td>
<td>HHT, NOGT, FNOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marigny Tomb</td>
<td>HHT, NOGT, FNOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian Society Tomb</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French Society Tomb</td>
<td>HHT, NOGT, FNOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Battle of 1812 Tomb</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Back Wall Vaults (Plumber’s Tomb?)</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Protestant Section</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Step (Oldest) Tombs</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bore Tomb</td>
<td>HHT, FNO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morphy Tomb</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarice Duralde Tomb</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Claiborne/Lewis Family Tomb</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gaines Tomb</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marie Leveau’s Tomb</td>
<td>All</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morial’s Tomb</td>
<td>HHT, NOGT, FNOC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Abbreviations for Haunted History Tours, New Orleans Ghost Tours, and Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries

The Save Our Cemeteries tour was the only tour that deviated from visiting the same tombs. Mainly because Save Our Cemeteries was more focused on promoting preservation and restoration to the tourists than the other tours.
There are social and political issues in New Orleans society and history that are not mentioned on the tours or they are mentioned briefly. An example of this would be slavery. Slavery is an issue deeply embedded in the history of New Orleans but is not always discussed on these tours. In this way, slavery and other issues like it, becomes “silenced”.

V. Archaeology and the Cemetery

A. Importance of Archaeology

When I first started doing research on this cemetery, I assumed it was an archaeological site. After all, according to all my readings on archaeology of death cemeteries and burials are great sites to get a wealth of information. Since this cemetery is on the National Register of Historic Places, I naturally thought that the State of Louisiana, Division of Archaeology would have it listed as an archaeological site. When I had called the Division of Archaeology to get a copy of the site forms, I was surprised to learn that it was not listed. Does this mean the cemetery has been ignored archaeologically?

While on a Friends of the New Orleans Cemeteries tour, a tour guide began to discuss how archaeologists had excavated part of the cemetery that actually was outside the cemetery walls. Human remains as well as clothing were found. The tour guide expressed how the Division of Archaeology was the excavating agency that did the archaeological work. At the time I was on this tour I actually was working for the Division of Archaeology and I told the tour guide there was no way the Division did the archaeological work since it is not an excavating agency. The tour guide tried to argue with me and tell me that it was the Division and he should know since he was the tour
guide. I then explained to him that the work he was describing that was done resembled CRM work, which is not done by the Louisiana Division of Archaeology but by firms who focus on Cultural Resource Management. He said he would have to check his sources but he was beginning to think he was unsure (Field notes 2001: June 30).

At first I was upset that this tour guide was spreading misinformation to the public. I felt it was my job to correct him since I worked for the agency in question. However, the more I realized how little archaeological/anthropological research had been done in this cemetery I realized that I was directing my feelings towards the wrong outlet. Archaeology had as much blame in that piece of misinformation as the tour guide did.

As shown in the previous chapter, information about the cemetery was given through stories presented by the tour guides. While the chapter could have been filled with much more that was said, I concentrated on the information that seemed to recur through the different tours. Through the literary research I have done, I took the effort in analyzing this information as true, false, or questionable. Table 4-3 demonstrates my findings.

Table 4-3. Information and validity.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tour Information</th>
<th>Validity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hauntings of the French Quarter</td>
<td>Questionable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Above Ground Burials because of Water Table</td>
<td>False</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information on French Quarter Architecture</td>
<td>True</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Table Continued)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Looting of Cemetery Artifacts | True
---|---
Meaning of “Creole” | Questionable
Stories of the Famous Buried in the Cemetery | Questionable
Above Ground Burials in New Orleans as Unique | False
Information on Society Tombs | True
Practicing of Voodoo in Cemetery | Questionable
Validity of Marie Laveau Wishing Ritual | Questionable
“Voodoo” as defacement | True
Voodoo is not a religion | False
Protestant Burials | True
True Burial Place of Marie Laveau | Questionable
Birthplace of Richard Simmons as Scariest Place in New Orleans | Questionable

With so much information on the tours given that is questionable, it is clear to see how information from archaeological research could benefit. The archaeology that has been done in the cemetery has been for Section 106 compliance (as referred to in chapter one), not for information that could be beneficial to the public or academics. In October of 2002, some archaeological documentation was done, yet this was a result of resurfacing work that could have impacted the integrity of the cemetery (Braud 2003: 1). The research that does go on in the cemetery is usually with students, professionals,
and professors in such fields as Architecture, Art History, and Historic Preservation. Unfortunately, anthropological archaeology is not one of the fields represented.

The arguments that were presented in the first chapter of this thesis about ownership of the cultural past can also be used for argue for access to the past. Who has access to the past could be determined on which argument seems to fit in protected sites. It seems that the majority of these argue that people who can best benefit the past should have a right to it. The question posed here is what argument for access to the cemetery best benefits archaeology and the tourism industry? In dealing with archaeology and the public, the Humanity Ownership Argument holds an adequate answer.

The Humanity Ownership Argument contends that all people have a right to the past, not just those who have a scholarly or vested interest in it (Warren 1987: 5-6). Since death and rituals associated with it are shared by all of humanity, how other people have dealt with death becomes a sought after subject. By seeing the number of the people involved on these tours, it is clear that the general public wants to know more about the past. Archaeology is a way to bring history and people together through education.

Archaeology could be used to help in the accuracy of the information given on these tours of the cemetery. The archaeological studies of cemeteries has been shown previously what kind of information can be deduced from investigations of cemeteries and how this research can be beneficial to historic archaeology. Demography, class difference, and health can all be explored with the research of cemeteries. Since Saint Louis Number One is a heavily touristed cemetery, archaeological research would be a
perfect way to reach out to the public via the tourism industry. Also, this research could help in relieving the discrepancies that one can find going on different tours. However, if no archaeology is done, then it cannot be help in educating the public or in presenting the needs of public awareness to archaeology.

B. A Quick Word on Death

The study of death has been studied more in non-indigenous cultures by anthropologists than in western cultures. The main difference in the thought of death in these two societies is that in indigenous cultures death is considered a process while in non-native societies death is seen as an instant (Bloch 1982: 1). It should follow then, that in New Orleans death is also seen as a one quick moment.

According to the tours I have been on, death in New Orleans is seen as a process. As with Hertz’s study on death, the body, soul, mourners are all present for the death experience. The soul departs from the body as the mourners place the body in the cemetery’s tombs. After the placement of the body, mourners are instructed to rejoice the life of the person that was just interred and to celebrate their memory. However, the soul does live on in the cemetery and will be reunited with their loved ones as they die and are also buried in the same tombs.

VI. Conclusion

In the introduction chapter to this thesis, I stated several questions that I was looking to explore. The first question I posed was “What kind of information is disseminated to the public?” I would answer this question by saying a mixture of urban lore, history, and “fun facts” are the information given to the public. Tourists get a variety of legends such as Voodoo and mysteries along with some historical truths as
well as answers to jeopardy questions. Although some information is true, most of what the tour guides disseminate is questionable or straight out falsehoods. Overall the tourists seemed to be pleased with the information they received but as an anthropology student I wondered how much more information could be proven factual if more anthropological archaeological research was done.

The next questions I asked dealt with archaeology. “Did archaeologists add to the information given? Could archaeologists do more in working with the tourism industry? Who benefits in the relationship between the public and archaeologists?”

Clearly, archaeology did not add to the information that was given through the tours and that archaeologists should work more with the tourism industry. By working more with the tourism industry, archaeologists could be better understood and better supported by the public. In doing this, both the public and archaeology benefit since the public gets to learn not only more about a site but also more about what archaeologists do and why archaeology is needed. Gaining more of public interests thus creating more financial and governmental backing benefits archaeology.

Finally, I asked who has a right to the past? To me all who are interested in the past have a right to it. In making this statement I am drawing from the Humanity Ownership Argument. The archaeologist has a right to the past because they are applying their skills to learn more about the past. The public has a right to the past because we are all humans who ultimately share a common ancestry and a common destiny. Archaeologists are not above the public because they have more of an understanding of the past. Rather, archaeologists are equal with the public and both can learn from each other in helping to understand past humans. It is up to archaeology
to make the first move in disseminating information to the public since archaeologists are closer to the past.

Organizations such as Save Our Cemeteries and Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries are good mediators for archaeology and the public since both of these focus on preservation and tourism. Archaeological investigations would be ideal in elaborating on the information given in the tours sponsored by Save Our Cemeteries and Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries and would be ideal in promoting legislation along, with archaeologist, in preserving cemeteries. Of course, these two organizations are only interested in New Orleans cemeteries that are still active.

Burials are not always obvious but sometimes deserted. Several reasons can lead to forsaken burials such as evolving communities and changes in transportation (Nance 1999: 4). Louisiana has legislation that protects burials that are not actively indicated or abandoned. The Louisiana Unmarked Human Burial Sites Act lends protection to those burials and associated artifacts of unmarked graves (Louisiana Division of Archaeology 2003: http://www.crt.state.la.us/crt/ocd/arch/homepage/). Unlike cemeteries such as Saint Louis Number One, these burials do not have entities, such as the Catholic Church or known heirs, to care for them. Although both unmarked and marked burials have equal importance archaeologically, this might be a reason why both are treated differently in legislation.

At Saint Louis Cemetery Number One, archaeological research could be helpful to the tourism industry. However, in order for it to be helpful, the archaeological research should be done. As much as the tour guides express looting and the need of
preservation, it is clear that archaeology should be used in order to help with the restoration, preservation, and information of the site. The first goal should be to at least have this cemetery listed as an archaeological site with the Louisiana Division of Archaeology. It is my hope that before the defense date of this thesis that this task will be done.
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION

Death is a natural process that all living organisms must experience. The treatment of death by humans makes it a cultural practice. For this reason it is a subject of interest to anthropologists and archaeologists. In non-indigenous cultures the dead are buried in communal spaces known as cemeteries that can yield a wealth of knowledge and information.

To the archaeologists, cemeteries are particularly useful because they reflect the culture of the people who utilize them. A variety of information can be obtained by looking at the archaeological record of cemeteries that adds to the accuracy of the historical documentation. Information such as social stratification, health, and customs are all useful in the study of past life ways. Also, the study of cemeteries is a good way to help test theoretical concerns in archaeology.

Figure 5-1. View of Saint Louis Number One in the urban setting.

Saint Louis Cemetery Number One is the oldest extant cemetery in the urban setting of New Orleans, Louisiana (seen in Figure 5-1). This cemetery is a Creole Catholic cemetery with rich architecture and heritage. The cemetery was built in the late eighteenth century due to the growth of the city and the over crowding of the first
cemetery in New Orleans, St. Peter’s, because of death from diseases. Since New Orleans was a French colony governed by the Spanish at the time, many architectural styles in the cemetery took on the current funerary fads that were being used in Europe at the time.

The architecture of Saint Louis Cemetery Number One has influence from several styles. Neoclassical, Egyptian, and Gothic styles are all represented in the cemetery. Families tried to outdo each other with architecturally elaborate tombs while benevolent societies based on ethnicity or occupations gave a decent home to those member who passed that could not afford their own family tomb. Other architectural styles such as wall-vault tombs, for those who wanted to rent space while waiting for an opening in their main tomb, or step-tombs, the oldest burials in the cemetery, are also noticed while walking on the cemetery grounds.

Although no segregation of race took place in the cemetery, segregation of religion is obvious. With the influx of Protestants after the Louisiana Purchase, disease and death left Americans without a place of burial. Giving Protestants their own section of the cemetery solved this problem. The Protestant section is in direct contrast to the rest of the cemetery in both location and burial types. This section is located in the back of the cemetery and it includes in-ground burials. The majority of the rest of the cemetery’s burials are above ground.

The proximity to the French Quarter and the marketing of the burial of the dead in New Orleans makes Saint Louis Number One the most touristed cemetery in New Orleans. People from all over the world come to the cemetery in order to see just how unique burial in New Orleans is as compared to the rest of the world. The number of
people on a tour varies from fifteen to thirty people. During a tour of the cemetery one tour can usually run into several other tours all vying for time at a tomb of interest on a tour.

While on a tour of the cemetery tourists are taken on a historical adventure in which the unparalleled and eclectic culture of New Orleans is revealed. The cemetery is a direct reflection of life in New Orleans and that is why it is referred to as the “City of the Dead.” Famous New Orleanians and historical figures are the most touristed tombs as well as the tombs that have the most architectural significance. These both mirror the originality and party spirit of New Orleans.

Religion is also a main discussion on the tours. It is only appropriate since the cemetery is a Catholic burial ground. The cemetery is crossroads of religion between Voodoo and Catholicism. Unlike the segregation of the Protestants, Voodoo can be seen throughout the whole cemetery through offerings of food, alcohol, or defacement on the tombs. No place in the cemetery is Voodoo stronger than at the tomb of Marie Laveau. Laveau was a free person of color who lived in the nineteenth century. She was known for her political influence and her connection with Voodoo. For this she is still revered by practitioners of Voodoo and is invoked even after her death.

The analysis of this study focused on four particular tours. These included the Cemetery/History Tour sponsored by New Orleans Ghost Tours, the Voodoo/Cemetery Tour sponsored by Friends of New Orleans Cemeteries, the Voodoo/Cemetery tour sponsored by Haunted History Tours, and the St. Louis Number One Walking Tour sponsored by Save Our Cemeteries. The tours were all taken on the weekend between the spring semester of 2001 and spring semester of 2003.
The tours taken were divided into two general groups. These are the Romantic and the Historic groups. The Romantic tours tended to focus on the stereotypes and romanticizing of New Orleans. Three themes including the uniqueness of New Orleans, famous people, and religion arose during these tours. The Voodoo/Cemetery and Cemetery/History tours are the tours that fall into the Romantic tours category.

Friends of the Cemetery and Save Our Cemeteries are the sponsors of the tours that fell under the Historic category. These tours centered on giving a more authentic perspective of the past of New Orleans. The common themes that tour guides discussed on these two tours were architecture, dispelling myths, and restoration. All these added to an accurate portrayal of New Orleans.

Overlapping themes also encompassed the Romantic and Historic tours. The time introducing the cemetery, importance of history and religion, and the specific touristed tombs were present in all the tours. Although all the tours may have had common threads, the overall focus and presentation of the tours is what grouped them as either Romantic or Historic.

Even though archaeologists who have studied death agree that cemeteries can yield a plethora of useful information, little archaeology has been done in this cemetery. Besides a mistaken story recounted by a tour guide, archaeology was not mentioned on the tours. Archaeological research in the cemetery could help in numerous ways. It could help in the preservation/restoration of the tombs, giving more accurate information to the public, and can help the public understand more about what archaeologists do. Since the cemetery is so heavily touristed, it would be a perfect way for the work of
archaeologists to be disseminated to the public thus giving a more positive public view of archaeology and increasing the support for archaeological work.

Public Archaeology is a fairly new concept in the history of archaeological thought. What started out as a way to preserve the past through lobbying of congress and getting laws passed turned into a field of business “CRM” archaeology looked down up on by archaeological scholars. In the recent past, public outreach and education has become a growing trend in the realm of public archaeology. Part of public outreach in archaeology has included the tourism industry. What was once seen as a conflicting relationship, archaeologists have begun to see the importance of tourism in dispersing the message, mission, and importance of archaeology. However as this thesis has shown, there is still more work to be done in dealing with the public.

The past is a concept that is shared by all humans, Figure 5-2 illustrates the public interests in the past. Since archaeology is the study of the past it is incumbent upon the archaeologist to share information gained from archaeological research to the public. The past is part of the legacy of humankind and therefore belongs to everyone, not to just those who study it.

Figure 5-2: Public interest in Saint Louis Cemetery Number One.
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VITA

Corey David Hotard was born on a lovely spring day in April 1977 at Women's Hospital in Baton Rouge, Louisiana. When Mr. Hotard was four, his family moved back to their home parish of Iberia where Corey spent his formative years going to rural elementary and later to junior high school. For his 9-12 grades, Mr. Hotard found himself attending school in the shrimp capital of Louisiana known as the town of Delcambre. Mr. Hotard graduated with honors from Delcambre High School and went on to Louisiana State University in order to complete his undergraduate degree. After receiving his Bachelor of Arts degree in anthropology, Mr. Hotard continued on in graduate school studying classical and near eastern archaeology at Bryn Mawr College outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where he received a full fellowship for his graduate education. After realizing he did not want a career in art history, Mr. Hotard returned to Louisiana State University in order to complete a Master of Arts degree in anthropology, concentrating in archaeology. Mr. Hotard is currently a Master of Arts candidate in the Louisiana State University Department of Geography and Anthropology and is employed as a GIS Technician at Gulf Engineers and Consultants in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.