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"A Historic Place of Peace and Reflection": A Critical Analysis of Digital Methods in the Recovery of Forgotten Black Cemeteries

Sofia M. Almeida
University of South Florida

"A Historic Place of Peace and Reflection":

A Critical Analysis of Digital Methods in the Recovery of Forgotten Black Cemeteries

by

Sofia M. Almeida

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Major Professor: Philip Levy, Ph.D
Davide Tanasi, Ph.D
Brian Connolly, Ph.D

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Abstract

This thesis is a critical analysis of digital methods employed as part of a growing movement to identify, record, preserve, and research historic Black cemeteries. Through the joint partnership of the Black Cemetery Network (BCN) and the Institute for Digital Exploration (IDEx), a digital public mortuary archaeology approach was applied to digitally preserve Mount Carmel Cemetery in Pasco County, Florida. The digitization project resulted in the production of digital images, 3D models, and updated site maps of the cemetery and the memorials within. In all, ten gravestones in various conditions were identified, digitized, and turned into 3D models. The remains of a wooden structure and a memorial plaque were also digitized and made into 3D models. I utilize the case study of the digitization of Mount Carmel Cemetery as an entry point to consider the implications of this and anticipated future digitization projects of historic Black cemeteries as projects of historical recovery. Through a critical engagement with digitization, I read and interpret Mount Carmel Cemetery with and against the digital images of the remaining gravestones to argue that while the digital data preserves the physical site through its creation of a database of digital images and 3D models, it leaves the connected histories of the site just as vulnerable, flattening the historical complexities of the site and its significance. I argue that only by combining and contextualizing digital images with historical contexts and the stories of individuals connected with the cemetery can the digital data be made truly productive towards the work of historical recovery.

Introduction

If you find yourself driving down US 41 in Florida, you will encounter a two-lane county road called Ehren Cutoff. If you follow the winding road lined with thickets of pine trees, punctuated by an amalgamation of new suburban residences, dilapidated businesses, and cow pastures, you will encounter vestiges of a time long gone. These remnants mostly reveal themselves in the form of street names and developments such as Ehren Cutoff, Gulf Cypress Avenue, Nickel Lane, Ten Cent Road, Woodmen Hall Drive, Timber Ridge Way, Pine Knot Lane, and notably the neighborhood Ehrens Mill. However, a few physical remnants remain in the landscape as well. As you continue driving, you will soon pass the ruins of the Dupree Gardens ticket booth, one of the first major tourist attractions in the area. Touted as a 'botanical beauty' and 'Blossom Center of Florida' it attracted some 30,000 visitors at its height before ultimately fading away, like many of Florida's roadside attractions, following WWII. Only the name of the Dupree Garden Estates development recalls the fields of bloom that once drew in visitors from far and wide.

If you continue through these traces of an almost forgotten past, you will eventually reach an open patch of road with trees on one side and a series of open fields leading up to wire fences on the other. If you park on the dry overgrown grass immediately to the side of the road, to your left and right you will find open swaths of land enclosed in barbwire fences. Your attention might turn to the roughly one-acre field ahead of you, sunlight dappled through a motley collection of towering trees that stand in contrast against the open fields encircling them. As you walk toward the entrance, you are met by a stained wooden arch with white lettering reading "Mt Carmel

1890 Cemetery" decorated with a simple white cross atop the lettering. Below this the entrance is secured by a simple metal gate, the padlock and chain link hang limply on one of the wooden posts connected by loose chicken wire fencing marking a rough rectangular perimeter. The fence, buried beneath mossy overgrowth, is drawn taut but is defenseless against fallen tree limbs and the sprawling foliage within. One of the first things you may notice in this seemingly quiet hammock is that for a cemetery, there are hardly any *visible* grave markers. The gravity of this realization seeps in slowly as you take in more of the landscape and begin to walk through the grounds accompanied by the dry crunch of leaves and brush beneath your feet. To the right, beyond the historical marker, is a line of trees and an open clearing. However, the clearing is not entirely open.

The ground is compact and outlined by the remnants of a wooden structure, planks of wood with rusted nails protruding from various angles mark the outline of a building. You walk across to the left side, minding the gopher tortoise dens and the depressions in the earth and curious plantings like palmettos and bright red flowers that seem intentionally placed, perhaps marking burials along with the rectangular outlines of PVC piping dotting the landscape. Towards the left edge of the fence is a dip in the ground covered by a smattering of broken stone with faint hand carved lettering "--G. Bo--" amongst the rubble. The other letters of this once large stone are scarcely legible beneath the beds of moss and leaves that have overtaken them. Moving along the left, between a small group of trees lies a cluster of gravestones and PVC pipes marking the perimeters of various depressions. The most legible freestanding gravestone sits on a carved concrete base and reads, "Eddie/ Son of/ R.M. & M.V. Lewis/ Born/ Mar. 17 1892/ Died/ Nov. 8. 1906." The lettering is crisp and clear, carved by an expert on the otherwise unadorned smooth stone tablet. The other legible headstone also appears expertly carved but is detached

from its base and is instead propped up against a termite eaten tree and reads, "Infant/ Dau. Of/ T.&.M. Horton/ Born/ Dec. 23. 1903." Your heart twinges knowing that these children died so young yet appear to have the most visible presence within the grounds.

You then turn your attention to a grouping of various stones without headstones or any inscriptions. There is a large base comprised of two concrete slabs which may have held the tablet of a gravestone, perhaps one of the few that remain leaning against the base of trees. There is a flatter concrete base which also appears to have had its stone tablet broken off. Adjacent to this are three brick shaped stones with a metal hinge wedged between them, perhaps also a support feature or once a carved marker itself. In the next cluster of trees is a faded concrete tablet with handwritten letters leaning against a tree that reads, "Lidia Gibbs/ Born----/1861." Next to the tree is a free-standing block of concrete with the handwritten inscription that reads, "W.G./Gibbs/Dec 27/1935." Between these stones are parts of other markers that may have been in the vicinity including the base of a gravestone and pieces of stone and concrete long overcome with mossy exteriors. Leaning against another tree is a very weathered concrete tablet with faint horizontal lines running across the top to help space out the handwritten inscription which reads "Har--." There may have been more written (or at least planned to be), however, nothing else appears legible to the naked eye. Beyond this is one of the largest remaining markers, though it now lies broken into several pieces leaving the concrete exposed, the back partially buried in the ground, and the inscription eaten away. What remains of the inscription reads, "—nie Blocker/--11, 1876/--26, 1954." Though broken, the stone reveals much about the landscape.

From research conducted by the Black Caucus of Pasco County from 1995-2005, spearheaded by its president Blanch Benford, we know that this stone was used to mark the grave of Minnie Blocker, born June 11, 1876, and died July 26, 1954, and is considered the last

known burial in the cemetery. The landscape reveals through depressions in the earth and modifications such as remnants of stone, clearings, plantings, and PVC piping from a 2006 Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) study, that there is more than meets the eye in the grounds and constructed space of the cemetery.[1] This survey revealed that there are more graves in the cemetery than what is visible aboveground. This information, coupled with Benford's advocacy for the abandoned cemetery, was critical to change the perception of the landscape from an overgrown cow pasture and party spot, following the deterioration of the cemetery, into a county recognized historical and memorial site. Towards the front left of the cemetery is a bench and what appears to be a concrete gravestone, however, the gravestone is actually a memorial to Benford following her death in 2012 and contains a simple plaque and two inscriptions. The first reads, "'Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly.' – Langston Hughes." The second inscription below it reads, "Blanch's dream to preserve Mount Carmel Cemetery created a lasting legacy for future generations: a historic place of peace and reflection."

<div align="center">***</div>

The cemetery is a powerful memory space and the remnants within are powerful anchors of memory. Throughout the landscape's many iterations, from local burial ground to graveyard and church, to community cemetery, to party spot and cow pasture, to overgrown lot at risk of development, to community cleanup project, to historic site, the perception of the place, of the grounds of the cemetery, has impacted the way the space and its significance was understood. There are numerous ways to apprehend these changing perceptions, but one of the most significant has come from the nascent approach of digital public mortuary archaeology, which

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[1] GPR is the use of digital methods to locate features in the ground without excavation.

applies digital imaging technologies to visualize mortuary contexts. Under the joint partnership of the Black Cemetery Network and the Institute for Digital Exploration (IDEx) at the University of South Florida, we have created digital images, 3D models, and maps to visualize the aboveground state of Mount Carmel Cemetery and other local cemeteries. While preservation is certainly one aspect of these digital projects, such acts of preservation and the digital form they take need to be critically and historically addressed. Such methods beg the question: How do the digital models of the cemetery and the gravestones impact the perception of the place, of the grounds of the cemetery, and the way the space and its significance are understood today?

I argue that the landscape offers a unique and critical glimpse into the abstract histories it has come to represent and the racial logics that structured them which is both complemented and complicated by the creation of digital models.[2] The digital data set, once created, ceases to change over time. It preserves the site of the cemetery at the time of its digital rendering. And yet, the digital data certainly changes the meaning of the original materials just as the original materials, as they continue to change over time, change the meaning of the digital data. In this case, the digital data preserves the physical conditions of the site precisely through its derealization while leaving the connected histories of the site just as vulnerable. Only by understanding that digitization does not preserve 'the entire site' (i.e. - the physical site and its associated history and historical contexts as they have changed over time and led to the current physical state of the site), can the digital data be made truly productive towards the work of historical recovery, of site and its history. Thus, the methods of preservation, in order to realize their purported aims, require critique. In the charged contexts of our present political moment, I believe this distinction is important to faithfully carry out the work of historical recovery in order

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[2] By racial logics I mean the way in which a civilization categorizes and organizes human beings by race and implicit attributes of race.

to truly recenter, or more directly, place these historical sites of public memory more resolutely within conversations of local, state, and national history.

In addition to the historical work of reconstituting the history of the cemetery and its surroundings and the digital work of preservation, there are several critical frames through which to apprehend the project in order to understand the idea that digitization does not preserve 'the entire site.' First, the power of images is a useful lens to understand that images are not neutral. By digitizing Black cemeteries in the present moment, we are making a statement that 'these places of public memory matter' because we are taking the time to preserve them virtually. In this sense, the digital record of the cemetery is an artifact of the present, an index of discourses around race and historical preservation in the twenty-first century. In that sense, it must be thought of in relation to the overlapping histories of Jim Crow, of rural poverty, of development and land speculation, that shaped the history of the cemetery itself. In this manner, attending to the power of images allows us to consider how the creation of images of these sites impacts the meanings already associated with the sites themselves. The past racial dynamics of separation and implicit inferiorization of Black history, during Jim Crow and its afterlives, marked by the economic implications of this racial division, such as the dispersal of descendent communities and lack of maintenance of the site over the years, left an indelible mark on the physical site and its position in public memory, most notably physically demonstrated through the visible deterioration of the site that has necessitated its physical preservation today, and most notably archivally and historically, in a documentary and material culture sense, has impacted the knowability of the associated histories today. Further, the images of the historical site today and the project of 3D digitization, recall the shifting racial logics of the present towards such projects of recovery to recenter marginalized history.

Second, entanglements of space is a useful lens to understand a bit more deeply what the power of images has unveiled, that there is an evocation of racial logics, past and present, happening simultaneously, through the production of digital models. I use the term racial logics to refer to racial discourses characteristic of a particular historical moment.[3] It is helpful to think of racial logics on a kind of timeline, which denotes the collection of behaviors and attitudes that frame political, economic, and social consequences of discourses around race both within a particular historical moment and as connected as part of a larger and longer dynamic.[4] The entanglements of race and place reveals more of the nature of these racial frameworks through the understanding of spaces. Creating digital models of the historical site of the Black cemetery creates a new set of data, a digital representation of the physical site, it creates a digital space. This digital space is governed by contemporary racial logics towards recovery, even as it recalls both past and present iterations of the site it represents and the racial logics that contextualize it. Additionally, it is not just the images that recall past and present racial logics, it is the space of the historic site that recalls them. This orientation is particularly central to our conceptualization of the historic site because part of our understanding of the significance of the cemetery is grounded on the racially based organization of the space historically and the 'separation by race' policies during Jim Crow under which the site and its historicity can be contextualized. I utilize newspaper articles to reveal how historically racialized bodies, within these segregated spaces, were treated/positioned in life and death and how the present state of the cemetery and the knowability of its associated histories both contextually and through the stories of individuals,

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[3] The term racial logics might further be defined as the systemization of racial thought within a particular historical moment. Even as these racial logics are historically defined, they are connected and draw from previous iterations.
[4] Tuttle, Steven. "Towards a Theory of the Racialization of Space." *The American Behavioral Scientist* (Beverly Hills) 66.11 (2022): 1526–1538.; Wynter, Sylvia. "Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience, and What It Is Like to Be "Black". "In *National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America.* edited by Gomez-Moriana, Antonio., and Mercedes F. Durán-Cogan. New York: Routledge, 2001.

reflect the afterlives of the particular iteration of racial logic that manifested as the 'organization/separation by race' policies and practices of Jim Crow. The use of digital methods today reflects the present shift in discourses around race towards projects of recovery and in that vein, presents an opportunity to contend with previous iterations and consequences through this critical reflection on the production of images, the entanglements of space, and the lived experience of individuals who are buried within it.

Chapter 1: Contextualizing Cemeteries

In the following sections I seek to provide important contextual information to orient my arguments to view the cemetery and its digital simulacra in order to understand the idea that digitization does not preserve 'the entire site'. I first outline how cemeteries as landscapes have changed over time and where Mount Carmel Cemetery and its history fits into this timeline. I then discuss how studies of cemeteries have changed over time and discuss some contemporary trends leading to the application of digital imaging technologies to study cemeteries. I then outline the local (and national) contexts in which this work of historical preservation through digital imaging is occurring as well as outline the specific application of digital methods in the case of Mount Carmel Cemetery. I conclude that this thesis adds to the literature by considering not only digital methods to study and preserve historic Black cemeteries in Florida, but also thinking about the implications of such digitization for projects of historical recovery in the current political moment through a critical digital humanities lens.

Landscapes of Death and Historical Memory

"Every life holds an epic tale, even if no one alive remembers it."[5]

Cemeteries as repositories for the dead and for the memories of the living have long captured the attentions of artists, poets, and historians alike.[6] One can see this in a variety of places, from the Gothic imaginings of Washington Irving's "The Legend of Sleepy Hollow" to

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[5] Melville, Greg. *Over my Dead Body: Unearthing the Hidden History of America's Cemeteries*. New York: Abrams Press, 2022.

[6] See for example: Seeman, Erik R. *Death in the New World Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492-1800*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010; Laqueur, Thomas W. *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015.; Roach, Joseph R. *Cities of the Dead: Circum-Atlantic Performance*. Twenty-Fifth Anniversary edition. New York: Columbia University Press, 2022.

poetic renditions offered by Robert Lowell and Allen Tate, to the historical interpretations of

Monticello's enslaved burial ground and the controversy over the burial rights of Jefferson's

descendants through Sally Hemmings.[7] However, it is also useful to recognize how the cemetery

as a space and place of death has changed over time. This section briefly outlines the history of

cemeteries in America focusing on how they have changed as physical landscapes over time. It

then discusses how different scholars have approached the cemetery as an object of study

beginning in the 1920s through the present. The section ends by suggesting that digital methods

in combination with interdisciplinary approaches, such as historical analysis and Black Studies,

are essential today to move cemetery studies forward to visualize and preserve cemeteries in a

new way, to recast cemeteries as significant sources of historical information and landscapes of

memory that reveal broader historical contexts, and to commit to projects of historical recovery.

Landscape includes physical, cultural, and memorial features that work to normalize

power relations at the same time that they create them.[8] Cemeteries are potent and complex

landscapes reflecting geographic and spatial arrangements that reflect and reinforce society's

social (and power) arrangements.[9] The geography of American cemeteries has always reflected,

"race, class, age, gender, and religious distinctions" with "hierarchy and marginality," very much

on display through representations reinforced by topographic boundaries.[10] Further, the

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[7] For a deeper discussion of this historical controversy and the entanglements of family, race, sex, and power see: Gordon-Reed, Annette. *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings: An American Controversy*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997.
[8] Mitchell, William John Thomas, and William John Thomas Mitchell, eds. *Landscape and Power*. University of Chicago Press, 2002.
[9] Seidemann, Ryan M., and Christine L. Halling. "Landscape Structural Violence: A View from New Orleans's Cemeteries." American Antiquity 84, no. 4 (2019): 669–83.; Francaviglia, Richard V. "The Cemetery as an Evolving Cultural Landscape." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 61, no. 3 (1971): 501–9.
[10] Kruger-Kahloula, Angelika. "On the Wrong Side of the Fence: Racial Segregation in American Cemeteries." in History *and Memory in African-American Culture*. Fabre, Genevieve, and O'Meally, Robert, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1994. p.135. See also: Seeman, Erik R. *Death in the New World Cross-Cultural Encounters, 1492-1800*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2010.

organization of cemeteries has changed over time along with attitudes towards death and cultural

transformations. For example, burial grounds in the colonial period were more commonly

graveyards, in that they were usually established near churches or other places of worship. A

famous early example would be Burial Hill in Plymouth, Massachusetts which was established in

the seventeenth century and features an array of carved headstones and memorials dating to the

late 1600s. It is part of what may be called the 'New England Cemetery Belt' that captivated

historians and archaeologists in the 1960s and 1970s. Early burial grounds in colonial America

corresponded to the location of settlements, whether Spanish, French, or English, and usually

were shroud burials or simple pine boxes with wooden or stone markers.[11] There were four

common burial places: pioneer settlements, family farms, churchyards, and town potter's fields.[12]

In more urban New England, burials were often in churchyards, whereas domestic burial grounds

were more popular in the more rural South and out West.[13] In the South, these domestic burial

grounds were family plots that were often on plantations, with White families occupying the

highest, well-drained lands secured by an enclosure, while the burial grounds of enslaved people

were often relegated to unseen and undesirable land and restricted in their commemorative

expressions.[14] Even in these early iterations of burial grounds, the landscape was segregated in

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[11]For more on gravestones see: Yalom, Marilyn. *The American Resting Place: Four Hundred Years of History Through Our Cemeteries and Burial Grounds*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2008.; Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.; Hijiya, James A. "American Gravestones and Attitudes toward Death: A Brief History." *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 127, no. 5 (1983): 339–63.

[12] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.p.13.

[13] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.p.14-15.; In New England communities were larger and more concentrated than the dispersed settlements of the South or the pioneer settlements of the West. For more on the history of the churchyard see: Laqueur, Thomas W. *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015.p.112-210.

[14] Brooks, Christina. "Enclosing Their Immortal Souls: A Survey of Two African American Cemeteries in Georgetown, South Carolina." *Southeastern Archaeology* 30, no. 1 (2011): 176–86.; Holloway, Karla F. C. *Passed On: African American Mourning Stories: A Memorial*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2002.

some capacity, whether, free vs enslaved, rich vs poor, white vs nonwhite, or living vs dead. As

racial logics in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century solidified around the color line, the

segregation of cemeteries, like many other spaces, reflected this organization geographically,

often with internal sections or separate cemeteries altogether.[15]

In the nineteenth century, burial practices changed along with relationships to landscapes

and the dead, as a result of industrialization and overcrowding in cities. Echoing a similar

overcrowding crisis in Europe, famously the Pére Lachaise cemetery in Paris, America's burial

grounds and graveyards slowly evolved into cemeteries or 'sleeping chambers', located outside

of cities, marking a clear distinction of cities for the living and cities of the dead.[16] The creation

of Mount Auburn Cemetery in Massachusetts became one of the first examples of the rural

cemetery movement to address logistical and moral concerns of urbanization.[17] Rural cemeteries

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For more on the segregation of burial grounds see also: Rainville, Lynn. Hidden *History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia.* Charlottesville, VA: University Press of Virginia, 2014.; Fletcher, Kami, Editor. *Grave History: Death, Race, and Gender in Southern Cemeteries*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2023.; Rainville, Lynn. "Protecting Our Shared Heritage in African-American Cemeteries." *Journal of Field Archaeology* 34, no. 2 (2009): 196–206.; Kruger-Kahloula, Angelika. "On the Wrong Side of the Fence: Racial Segregation in American Cemeteries." in History *and Memory in African-American Culture*. Fabre, Genevieve, and O'Meally, Robert, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1994. p.138.; Crist, Thomas. "Empowerment, Ecology, and Evidence: The Relevance of Mortuary Archaeology to the Public 101." In *Public Benefits of Archaeology*. ed. by Barbara Little. United States: UPF, 1998.; Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.p.15-17.; Lemke, Ashley. "'Missing Cemeteries' and Structural Racism: Historical Maps and Endangered African/African American and Hispanic Mortuary Customs in Texas." *Historical Archaeology* 54, no. 3 (2020): 618.; King, Charlotte. "Separated by Death and Color: The African American Cemetery of New Philadelphia, Illinois." *Historical Archaeology* 44, no. 1 (2010): 125–37.

[15] Kruger-Kahloula, Angelika. "On the Wrong Side of the Fence: Racial Segregation in American Cemeteries." in History *and Memory in African-American Culture*. Fabre, Genevieve, and O'Meally, Robert, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1994. p.138.; Du Bois, W.E.B., & Marable, M. (2004). *Souls of Black Folk* (1st ed.). Routledge.p.88; Baker, Lee D. *From Savage to Negro Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.; Lemke, Ashley. "'Missing Cemeteries' and Structural Racism: Historical Maps and Endangered African/African American and Hispanic Mortuary Customs in Texas." *Historical Archaeology* 54, no. 3 (2020): 617-618.; Fletcher, Kami, Editor. *Grave History: Death, Race, and Gender in Southern Cemeteries*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2023.

[16] Baugher, Sherene, Richard F. Veit, and Michael S. Nassaney. *The Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*. University Press of Florida, 2014.p.127. See also: Laqueur, Thomas W. *The Work of the Dead: A Cultural History of Mortal Remains*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015.p.211-361.

[17] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.

were characterized by their unique incorporation of elaborate memorials, nature, and experimental horticulture into the landscape creating a park of the dead for the living.[18] The ostentatious memorials reflected a growing consumer culture while the picturesque landscapes reflected an American romanticization of death that valued a return to nature amidst the bustle of industrialization and reflected optimistic religious views that viewed death as sleep and transition to eternal life.[19] The landscape of the cemetery also revealed race and class distinctions with clear displays of materialism and consumer culture in monuments and markers juxtaposed with wooden crosses or other ephemeral markers in less affluent sections/cemeteries as well as separate cemeteries.[20] Cemeteries were also separated along racial lines, especially following the end of Reconstruction and the rise of Jim Crow.[21] As the long nineteenth century continued and the twentieth century began, Americans retreated from the sentimentality of death and moved towards a secular professionalization. The rural nature park cemeteries evolved into lawn parks in which the vegetation was minimized, burials were more organized (often in grids), and the memorials were homogenized.[22] The twentieth century cemetery reflected softened language of death from 'died' to 'sleep' as reflected in the landscape of memorial parks and included subtler

[18] Sloane, David Charles. "Memory and Landscape: Nature and the History of the American Cemetery." *SiteLINES: A Journal of Place* 6, no. 1 (2010): 3–6.

[19] Smith, Jeffrey. *The Rural Cemetery Movement: Places of Paradox in Nineteenth-Century America*. Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books, 2017.; Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991. Note: It is also around this time that the term 'cemetery' from the Greek 'sleeping chamber' comes into popular use to distinguish between burial grounds and large funerary gardens.

[20] Baugher, Sherene, Richard F. Veit, and Michael S. Nassaney. *The Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*. University Press of Florida, 2014.p.168.; Rainville, Lynn. Hidden *History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia*. Charlottesville, VA. University of Virginia Press, 2014.

[21] See: Stringfield, Margo S. "'Sacred to the Hart': Identity and Dignity as Reflected in the Memorial Landscapes of Postemancipation African Americans in Pensacola, Florida." Social Science Quarterly 102, no. 3 (2021): 1056–73.; Kruger-Kahloula, Angelika. "On the Wrong Side of the Fence: Racial Segregation in American Cemeteries." in History *and Memory in African-American Culture*. Fabre, Genevieve, and O'Meally, Robert, eds. New York: Oxford University Press, Incorporated, 1994. p.138.; Lemke, Ashley. "'Missing Cemeteries' and Structural Racism: Historical Maps and Endangered African/African American and Hispanic Mortuary Customs in Texas." *Historical Archaeology* 54, no. 3 (2020): 617-618.

[22] Sloane, David Charles. *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991

monuments, however class distinctions were still evident.[23] The racialized logics of segregation become codified through the establishment of separate cemeteries. Over time, the racial logics of separation and the devaluation of racialized bodies compounded by other structural factors such as economic disparities and the dispersal of descendent communities, have led to the deterioration of the physical site of these cemeteries and the erasure of them in public memory. Today, the consequences of 'forgetting' Black cemeteries and the destruction of sacred spaces and community spaces as result of economic development, have marginalized Black history. Their rediscovery presents an opportunity to shift our focus onto the importance of these sites of historical memory.

Historical Background of Mount Carmel Cemetery

Mount Carmel Cemetery traces its origins to the late nineteenth century and is thus marked by some of the key features of that era in the history of cemeteries. Located in a wooded rural area, in what would later become Pasco County, it began as a rural community burying ground in the late 1800s for African American settlers in the area, many of whom worked on surrounding farms or turpentine stills.[24] These earlier burials were likely exclusively marked with wooden crosses or other ephemeral markers, but their locations are unknown today. The space eventually evolved into a graveyard with the addition of the Mount Carmel African Methodist Episcopal Church around 1890 following the creation of Pasco County. As the population steadily grew, coinciding with railroad expansion and rapid land speculation marked by exploitative and extractive economies such as lumber, the surrounding area became known as the town of Ehren, meaning 'place of honor,' which got its name from well-to-do German immigrant

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[23] Baugher, Sherene, Richard F. Veit, and Michael S. Nassaney. *The Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*. University Press of Florida, 2014.

[24] MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.90.

Fredrick E. Müller, who after purchasing much of the surrounding land, named it after his hometown.[25] The town was known for its major industries as a sawmill and turpentine town, situated conveniently along the Atlantic Coast Rail Line.[26] Besides a moniker, Müller also sustained one of the major industries in the area through the Ehren Pine Company Sawmill, which would have been located somewhere along what is now County Road 583. According to a 1915 Directory of American Sawmills, the Ehren Pine Company Sawmill, at its height, produced 20,000 board feet per day of yellow pine and cypress, making it a substantial milling operation for the area.[27] In addition to the sawmill, Müller owned significant portions of land and built several key features of the town including a tram road for logging, mill worker houses, a post office, a hotel, and a commissary.[28] These developments made the sawmill, turpentine, and railroad industries central to the social fabric of the community of Ehren. Undergirding these economic opportunities and the organization of the town was the infrastructure of Jim Crow.[29] Following the 1896 decision of *Plessy v Ferguson* and the ruling of 'separate but equal,' racial separation and discrimination became legally codified, continuously practiced, and violently

[25] Drobney, Jeffrey A. *Lumbermen and Log Sawyers: Life, Labor, and Culture in the North Florida Timber Industry, 1830-1930*. Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1997.; MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.37.

[26] MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.83-90.

[27] United States Bureau of Foreign and Domestic Commerce, Jesse Charles Nellis, Albert H Pierson, and United States Forest Service. *Directory of American Sawmills*. Washington, Govt. print. off, 1915.

[28] United States Census Bureau. "United States Census, 1930." Database with images. FamilySearch. Pasco County, Florida. Enumeration district 8; NARA microfilm publication T626. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration.; MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.83.

[29] Given that Mount Carmel Cemetery was active from the late 1800s to the 1950s, I refer to this period of Jim Crow policies and practices, but these collections of policies, practices, attitudes, ideas, and behaviors, have a long and strange career. See: Woodward, C. Vann. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. Commemorative ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.

reinforced throughout the South, including Florida.[30] The organization of spaces along the color

line, Black/White, not only shaped patterns of living and being but also manifested

geographically. For example, in the case of Ehren, the railroad tracks formed a racial divide, with

'Old Ehren' to the north of the railroad occupied by white people and 'New Ehren or South

Ehren' to the south of the railroad occupied by Black people.[31] Many of the Black sawmill,

turpentine, and railroad workers lived in the twenty to thirty company houses on the south side of

the tracks, just west of the sawmill.[32] These industries were also structured by the racial logics of

segregation, with Black laborers often exclusively assigned to the most intensive labor such as

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[30] Note we should also understand, that though the racial logics manifested via segregation practices and policies, that this iteration was not inevitable but tenuous, relying not only on the recapitulation of "Old South" ideas and racial stereotypes but on their continued reinforcement and construction.
For more on how the color manifested in Jim Crow see: Baker, Lee D. *From Savage to Negro: Anthropology and the Construction of Race, 1896-1954*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998.; Guffey, Elizabeth. "Knowing Their Space: Signs of Jim Crow in the Segregated South." *Design Issues* 28, no. 2 (2012): 41–60.; Davis, Jack E. "'Whitewash' in Florida: The Lynching of Jesse James Payne and Its Aftermath." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 68, no. 3 (1990): 277–98; Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. First edition. New York, New York: Pantheon Books, 1998.; Litwack, Leon F. *Trouble in Mind: Black Southerners in the Age of Jim Crow*. 1st ed. New York: Knopf, 1998.; Fields, Karen Elise and Barbara Jeanne Fields. *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*. London: Verso, 2014.; Dailey, Jane Elizabeth, Glenda Elizabeth. Gilmore, and Bryant. Simon. *Jumpin' Jim Crow: Southern Politics from Civil War to Civil Rights*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press, 2000.; Rothstein, Richard. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America*. First edition. New York; Liveright Publishing Corporation, a division of W.W. Norton & Company, 2017. For more on Jim Crow in Florida see: David R. Colbourn, "Rosewood and America in the Early Twentieth Century," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 76, no. 2 (Fall 1997): 175-192.; Shofner, Jerrell H. "Custom, Law, and History: The Enduring Influence of Florida's 'Black Code.'" *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 55, no. 3 (1977): 277–98.; Dye, R. Thomas. "Rosewood, Florida: The Destruction of an African American Community." *The Historian* 58, no. 3 (1996): 605–22.; Ortiz, Paul. *Emancipation Betrayed the Hidden History of Black Organizing and White Violence in Florida from Reconstruction to the Bloody Election of 1920*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005.; Connolly, N. D. B. *A World More Concrete: Real Estate and the Remaking of Jim Crow South Florida*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014.; Mormino, Gary R. "GI Joe Meets Jim Crow: Racial Violence and Reform in World War II Florida." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 73, no. 1 (1994): 23-42.; Coller, Salena. "The Faces of Racism: Jim Crow in Florida." In *Florida Studies: Proceedings of the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Florida College English Association*, p. 135. Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009.
[31] MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.83.
[32] MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.89.

chippers (slash pines) and dippers (collect resin from the slashed pines) in turpentine work,

cutting railroad ties, and hauling lumber and other dangerous labor roles at sawmills.[33]

The racial logics of segregation extended well beyond places of labor, including to the

organization of the dead. As one would expect, the cemeteries of Ehren shared features with late

nineteenth century cemeteries elsewhere. From the remaining stones it is likely that Mount

Carmel Cemetery was not a gridded system but more likely a family centered enterprise,

organized around familial plots and congregational holdings, though with the absence of other

markers it is difficult to determine any spatial patterns with certainty.[34] There were two separate

cemeteries in the town of Ehren, the white cemetery, called Ehren Cemetery, and the Black

cemetery, called Mount Carmel Cemetery. While both of these cemeteries function as historic

sites today, the residue of racial discrimination has and continues to impact the allocation of

resources for their preservation. As a Black cemetery, Mount Carmel Cemetery served as a

reinforcement of the color line while simultaneously reinforcing community ties and identity.[35]

Today it is a potent artifact of segregation, revealing that the color line was perpetuated even in

death and its afterlife has impacted public memory.[36] Hence the compelling question of historic

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[33] For works discussing segregated labor and its effects, mostly in lumber, see: Jones, William Powell. *The Tribe of Black Ulysses: African American Lumber Workers in the Jim Crow South*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005; Drobney, Jeffrey A. *Lumbermen and Log Sawyers: Life, Labor, and Culture in the North Florida Timber Industry, 1830-1930*. Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1997.; Howard, John C. *The Negro in the Lumber Industry*. Philadelphia: Industrial Research Unit, Wharton School of Finance and Commerce, University of Pennsylvania, 1970.; Drobney, Jeffrey A. "Where Palm and Pine Are Blowing: Convict Labor in the North Florida Turpentine Industry, 1877-1923." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 72, no. 4 (1994): 411–34.; Shofner, Jerrell H. "Forced Labor in the Florida Forests 1880-1950." *Journal of Forest History* 25, no. 1 (1981): 14–25.

[34] As noted earlier, a 2006 GPR survey indicated that there are at least thirty burials within the roughly 1.02 acres of the cemetery, however the associated markers are no longer visible in the landscape today.

[35] Wright, Roberta Hughes, and Wilber B. Hughes. *Lay Down Body: Living History in African American Cemeteries*. (Detroit: Visible Ink Press: 1996); West, Carroll. "Sacred, Separate Places: African American Cemeteries in the Jim Crow South." In *The Changing World Religion Map*, 669–85. Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 2015.

[36] Young, Joseph A., and Jana Evans Braziel. "Erasing Public Memory: Race, Aesthetics, and Cultural Amnesia in the Americas," 1st ed. Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 2007.

preservation that has surfaced as more of these historic Black cemeteries come to be reclaimed spaces of historical memory.

Approaching Cemeteries—From Death Heads to the Digital

Studies of cemeteries have also changed over time. Early cemetery studies were largely the purview of genealogists and local historians focused on epitaphs, tracing lineages, and art. The first major scholarly monograph was Harriette Merifield Forbes's *Gravestones of Early New England and the Men Who Made Them 1653-1800*, published in 1927. In it, she approached gravestones as historical sources and through a photographic catalog of gravestone art demonstrated that the gravestones were made by local craftsmen as opposed to being imported, changing long-held conceptions about the production of death ways in early America.[37] Despite this early work with gravestones, academics largely neglected the study of cemeteries until the mid-twentieth century and the rise of material culture studies. Cemetery studies in the 1960s and 1970s such as those famously conducted by James Deetz and Edwin Dethlefsen were grounded in historical archaeology, placing an emphasis on material culture coupled with written records where available to decode messages of objects and their users.[38] Deetz and Dethlefsen examined gravestones across New England from the late seventeenth century to early nineteenth century and identified four motifs carved on gravestones to represent attitudes towards death: death's head, cherubs, urns, and willows.[39] They argued that the changes observed in gravestone iconography were indicative of religious changes over time, from the harsh grim realities of

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[37] Baugher, Sherene, Richard F. Veit, and Michael S. Nassaney. *The Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*. University Press of Florida, 2014.

[38] Deetz, James J. F. *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life*. 1st ed. Garden City, N.Y: Anchor Press/Doubleday, 1977. p.37.

[39] Dethlefsen, Edwin, and James Deetz. "Death's Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries." *American Antiquity* 31, no. 4 (1966).

Puritanism to the Great Awakening and the rise of Unitarianism and Methodism.[40] However,

their views did not go unchallenged but instead sparked a more serious consideration of

cemeteries and their material culture and what we can learn from them. As the field of cemetery

studies and mortuary archaeology grew and solidified, several other scholars such as David Hall

and Peter Benes called Deetz and Dethlefsen's equation of iconography and religious ideology

into question. Hall argued that the death heads in early American gravestones were not indicative

of Puritanism but of an earlier concept of memento mori (remember you will die), as messages to

the living rather than commemorations of the dead.[41] Similarly, Benes countered that death heads

continued to be carved even as the predominant style of grave markers shifted, complicating the

straightforward explanation of religious attitudes alone accounting for the expression of

particular styles.[42] These early studies, in combination with the development of *The Annual

Journal of the Association for Gravestone Studies* in 1977, contributed to the professionalization

of studies of cemeteries and their memorials within history and adjacent disciplines.[43] In general,

cemetery studies in the 1960s-1980s were characterized by materialist perspectives. They

explained cultural changes in early America via symbolic/structuralist and economic/material

shifts and investigated the linkages between religious iconography and ideology. These studies

were predominantly centered in the New England area, leaving the rest of America largely

understudied.

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[40] Dethlefsen, Edwin, and James Deetz. "Death's Heads, Cherubs, and Willow Trees: Experimental Archaeology in Colonial Cemeteries." *American Antiquity* 31, no. 4 (1966).p.508.
[41] Hall, David. "The Gravestone Image as a Puritan Cultural Code." In *Puritan Gravestone Art*, edited by Peter Benes, Boston University Press: Boston. 1976.p.23-32.
[42] Baugher, Sherene, Richard F. Veit, and Michael S. Nassaney. *The Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*. University Press of Florida, 2014. See also: Stannard, David E. "Death and Dying in Puritan New England." *The American Historical Review* 78, no. 5 (1973): 1305–30.
[43] Baugher, Sherene, Richard F. Veit, and Michael S. Nassaney. *The Archaeology of American Cemeteries and Gravemarkers*. University Press of Florida, 2014.p.87-93.

The focus of studies relating to African American cemeteries also shifted in the 1980s as a result of these thematic developments. For example, generally literature on African American cemeteries prior to the 1980s investigated burial practices with the express purpose of cataloging practices that were considered African and attempting to track changes as these cemeteries transformed from 'African' burials to 'African American' practices.[44] Many studies of African American cemeteries have focused on enslaved burial grounds and plantations and have largely been archaeological.[45] In the 1990s-2000s, cemetery studies began to expand thematically and regionally to examine not just material culture and gravestones via above-ground mortuary archaeology, but also intersections of race, ethnicity, gender, class, and commemorative practices in the context of broader cultural landscapes.[46] For example, Christina Brooks examined two African American cemeteries in Georgetown, South Carolina and explored not only the material culture of the cemeteries but also its relationships with the spatial layout of the cemeteries and African American ideologies about death.[47] A well-known cemetery study, that addresses the issue of erasure along racial lines was the African Burial Ground in New York (1991). This study not only highlighted the study of African American mortuary remains and contexts but also grappled with racial inequalities made evident via osteological markers and the erasure of the

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[44] See for example: Wright, Roberta Hughes, and Wilber B. Hughes. *Lay Down Body: Living History in African American Cemeteries*. (Detroit: Visible Ink Press: 1996);

[45] Some examples of cemetery studies on plantations and freeman sites include: Rainville, Lynn. Hidden *History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia*. Charlottesville, VA. University of Virginia Press, 2014.; Jamieson, Ross W. "Material Culture and Social Death: African-American Burial Practices." *Historical Archaeology* 29, no. 4 (1995): 39–58. Garman, James C. "Viewing the Color Line through the Material Culture of Death." *Historical Archaeology* 28, no. 3 (1994): 74–93.

[46] Some examples of studies that deal with the intersections of race include: Brown, Vincent. *The Reaper's Garden: Death and Power in the World of Atlantic Slavery*. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2008.; Garman, James C. "Viewing the Color Line through the Material Culture of Death." *Historical Archaeology* 28, no. 3 (1994): 74–93.; Wright, Elizabethada A. "Rhetorical Spaces in Memorial Places: The Cemetery as a Rhetorical Memory Place/Space." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 35, no. 4 (2005): 51–81.

[47] Brooks, Christina. "Enclosing Their Immortal Souls: A Survey of Two African American Cemeteries In Georgetown, South Carolina." *Southeastern Archaeology* 30, no. 1 (2011): 176–86.

cemetery itself.[48] For example, by examining the skeletal remains of several individuals researchers were able to determine that the individuals endured strenuous labor activities for an extended period of time as evidenced by fractures to vertebrae and evidence of muscle tears.[49] Further, the example of the African Burial Ground study countered erasure by engaging with descendant communities throughout the research process and reframing the narrative of the space by erecting a public memorial at the site to honor the memory of the dead and educate the public about death ways in early America and unequal living conditions of enslaved individuals.[50]

In general, cemetery studies have mostly concentrated in the New England area, leaving a significant gap in terms of mortuary studies in other regions of America. This trend is slowly changing with notable regional additions such as Lynn Rainville's *Hidden History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia* (2014) and Ryan Smith's *Death and Rebirth in a Southern City: Richmond's Historic Cemeteries* (2020).[51] Mirroring larger thematic trends in mortuary studies, these books explore cemeteries in Virginia through a variety of lenses including archaeology, public history, and the impact of race and economics on the construction and memory of these complex landscapes. Another important addition to the field is *Grave History: Death Race and Gender in Southern Cemeteries* (2023).[52] This essay volume uses southern cemeteries as analytical tools to interrogate racial segregation, power relations,

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[48] Mack, Mark E., and Michael L. Blakey. "The New York African Burial Ground Project: Past Biases, Current Dilemmas, and Future Research Opportunities." *Historical Archaeology* 38, no. 1 (2004): 10–17.

[49] Mack, Mark E., and Michael L. Blakey. "The New York African Burial Ground Project: Past Biases, Current Dilemmas, and Future Research Opportunities." *Historical Archaeology* 38, no. 1 (2004): 12.

[50] La Roche, Cheryl J., and Michael L. Blakey. "Seizing Intellectual Power: The Dialogue at the New York African Burial Ground." *Historical Archaeology* 31, no. 3 (1997): 84–106. See also: Rainville, Lynn. "Protecting Our Shared Heritage in African-American Cemeteries." *Journal of Field Archaeology* 34, no. 2 (2009): 196–206.

[51] Rainville, Lynn. Hidden *History: African American Cemeteries in Central Virginia*. Charlottesville, VA. University of Virginia Press, 2014.; Smith, Ryan. *Death and Rebirth in a Southern City: Richmond's Historic Cemeteries.* Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2020.

[52] Fletcher, Kami and Ashley Towle. *Grave History: Death Race and Gender in Southern Cemeteries*. Athens: University of Georgia Press. Dec. 15, 2023.

community formation, and historical memory, diversifying the regional focus of cemetery studies as well as opening up possibilities of different approaches to the study of cemeteries.[53] More recently, studies of cemeteries have taken on more interdisciplinary bends, including digital applications. For example, there are a growing number of studies that are applying noninvasive digital methods such as Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Ground Penetrating Radar (GPR) applications in remote cemeteries in the Midwest and the South to locate and document unmarked cemeteries.[54] The use of digital methods such as GIS and GPR allow researchers to visualize and analyze spatial arrangements within and around these mortuary contexts. For example, GIS technologies were used to map the location of gravesites, both marked and unmarked, in East End Cemetery in Richmond, Virginia, including the Colored Paupers Cemetery section. The project resulted in the documentation and location of previously unknown gravesites which in combination with an open digital archive of historical documents, newspapers, etc., helped recenter the underfunded Black cemetery within the memorial landscape, local history, and national narratives of the history of the American South.[55] A powerful example of the application of other digital technologies for documenting and

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[53] Fletcher, Kami and Ashley Towle. *Grave History: Death Race and Gender in Southern Cemeteries*. Athens: University of Georgia Press. Dec. 15, 2023.p.2; Of note, southern cemeteries include examples in: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, and Virginia. Further it should be noted, that though the title says southern cemeteries, the volume exclusively focuses on historically Black cemeteries to interrogate racial segregation and its afterlives.

[54] See for example: Spera, Stephanie A., Matthew S. Franklin, Elizabeth A. Zizzamia, and Ryan K. Smith. "Recovering a Black Cemetery: Automated Mapping of Hidden Gravesites Using an sUAV and GIS in East End Cemetery, Richmond, VA." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 26, no. 4 (2022): 1110–31.; Khan, Ayesha, "Finding Lost Voices: An Archaeological Study of Historic, African American Burial Sites in North Georgia." Thesis, Georgia State University, 2022.; González-Tennant, E. "Recent Directions and Future Developments in Geographic Information Systems for Historical Archaeology." *Historical Archaeology,* 50, no 3 (2016): p. 24–49.; Conyers, Lawrence B. "Ground-Penetrating Radar Techniques to Discover and Map Historic Graves." *Historical Archaeology* 40 (3) 2006: 64–73.; Malloch, Hayden, Stephanie L. Shepherd, Lorraine Wolf, and Meghan Buchanan. "Ground-penetrating radar (GPR) survey and spatial analysis of the George and Addie Giddens Cemetery, Opelika, Alabama." *Southeastern Archaeology* (2023): 1-12.

[55] Spera, Stephanie A., Matthew S. Franklin, Elizabeth A. Zizzamia, and Ryan K. Smith. "Recovering a Black Cemetery: Automated Mapping of Hidden Gravesites Using an sUAV and GIS in East End Cemetery, Richmond, VA." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 26, no. 4 (2022): 1128.

preserving marginalized history is the recent study of the Rosewood Massacre in Florida through the construction of a virtual Rosewood cemetery.[56] Applying an interdisciplinary approach, the project combined GIS, GPR, 3D modeling, and digital storytelling with historical research and oral history work to create a virtual reconstruction of the African American town of Rosewood prior to its destruction as well as a virtual reconstruction of the grounds of the cemetery today.[57] The project speaks to the power of digital tools to visualize data for both preservationist and interpretive ends and gestures towards the necessity of combining digital archaeological investigations with other knowledge pathways such as oral histories and the documentary record, however fragmented, to contextualize such difficult histories and their legacies within the memorial landscape today. These studies can be classified as examples of digital public mortuary archaeology.

Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology

Digital public mortuary archaeology has arisen due to the increased application of digital technologies to research, interpret, and preserve mortuary remains, contexts, and material culture and further to engage the public.[58] Digital public mortuary archaeology, like its branched disciplines of digital archaeology and digital humanities includes a variety of resources and approaches that can be difficult to neatly encompass in a single definition. For example, points of engagement can range from summaries, reports, blogs, social media, websites, and other digital media such as e-books, journals, archives, et cetera, related to the dead.[59] A working definition of

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[56] González-Tennant, Edward. "The Role of Digital Technologies in Unearthing the Rosewood Massacre." In *Difficult Heritage and Immersive Experiences*, pp. 60-79. Routledge, 2022.
[57] González-Tennant, Edward. "The Role of Digital Technologies in Unearthing the Rosewood Massacre." In *Difficult Heritage and Immersive Experiences*, pp. 60-79. Routledge, 2022.
[58] Richardson, Lorna-Jane. "A Digital Public Archaeology?" *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 23, no. 1 (2013): 1–12.
[59] Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." *Internet Archaeology,* no. 40 (2015).

digital public mortuary archaeology is the application of digital tools to engage with an assortment of mortuary content such as remains and memorials.[60] Digital public mortuary archaeology is less a nascent field than a useful approach to encapsulate the digital preservation of cemeteries. Digital public mortuary archaeology is concerned with a collection of issues including an overwhelming focus on bio-archaeology and the spectacle of human remains, a lack of theoretical scrutiny, minimal public centered platforms, and few engagement opportunities.[61] One of the critical concerns with digital public mortuary archaeology is the question of digital representation. Digital representation includes concerns regarding how mortuary material is presented, both technologically and discursively, and further which cultural heritage is represented.[62] For example, sharing mortuary material through a blog or crowd-sourcing platforms is a much different visual and affective experience than sharing that same information through images or 3D models.[63] In regard to the creation of visualizations of cemeteries, a major issue with how mortuary materials are presented, especially in the realm of 3D visualizations, is that there is often no contextualizing data accompanying models.[64] For example, Priscilla Ulguim, a leading scholar in digital public mortuary archaeology, concluded that on popular databases like Sketchfab that host an assortment of digital models including and especially related to mortuary materials, that researchers have consistently failed to include contextual

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[60] Ulguim, P.F. "Digital Remains Made Public: Sharing the Dead Online and Our Future Digital Mortuary Landscape." *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology* 8(2) 2018:153–176.
[61] Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." Internet Archaeology, no. 40 (2015). See also: Williams, Howard, and Melanie Giles. *Archaeologists and the Dead: Mortuary Archaeology in Contemporary Society*. Edited by Howard Williams and Melanie Giles. First edition. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2016.
[62] Ulguim, P.F. "Digital Remains Made Public: Sharing the Dead Online and Our Future Digital Mortuary Landscape." *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology* 8(2) 2018:153–176.
[63] Ulguim, P.F. "Digital Remains Made Public: Sharing the Dead Online and Our Future Digital Mortuary Landscape." *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology* 8(2) 2018:162.; See also: Ahmed, Sara. "Affective Economies." *Social Text* 22, no. 2 (2004): 117-139.
[64] Ulguim, P.F. 2018. Models and Metadata: The Ethics of Sharing Bioarchaeological 3D Models Online. *Archaeologies* 14(2):189–228.

information or safeguard data.[65] The failure to include contextual information can be attributed to the rapid development of digital applications in preservation work and a lack of knowledge of historical contexts to accompany models.[66] Creating uncontextualized models raises numerous ethical issues because it divorces digital representations of mortuary materials from cultural and historical contexts undermining efforts to afford respect to past people and contemporary communities.[67] A lack of contextual information also obscures the complex historical realities out of which the mortuary materials and contexts have arisen and from which digital representations were created. Without engaging with historical realities and their afterlives, the significance of mortuary sites and materials is obscured. In the case of historic Black cemeteries, not acknowledging the historical realities that structured the creation of the mortuary/memorial sites not only obscures/silences the significance of such sites and their erasure, but also reinforces dominant historical narratives and perpetuates a lack of representation of African American heritage in America's heritage/commemorative landscape.[68] It is thus critical to recognize that how we share 3D models and what we communicate about them is crucial to creating contextualized digital representations and facilitating ethical engagement.[69] Thinking critically about digital representation may be one way to recenter underrepresented histories through projects of historical recovery, by bringing attention to the structural realities and historical contexts through visualizations provided by digital technologies.

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[65] Ulguim, P.F. 2018. Models and Metadata: The Ethics of Sharing Bioarchaeological 3D Models Online. *Archaeologies* 14(2):189–228**.**
[66] Ulguim, P.F. 2018. Models and Metadata: The Ethics of Sharing Bioarchaeological 3D Models Online. *Archaeologies* 14(2):189–228**.**
[67] Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." Internet Archaeology, no. 40 (2015).
[68] Linn-Tynen, Erin. "Reclaiming the Past as a Matter of Social Justice: African American Heritage, Representation and Identity in the United States." In *Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage: Construction, Transformation and Destruction*, edited by Veysel Apaydin, 255–68. UCL Press, 2020.
[69] Ulguim, P.F. 2018. Models and Metadata: The Ethics of Sharing Bioarchaeological 3D Models Online. *Archaeologies* 14(2):191.

The emphasis on human remains in digital public mortuary archaeology engagements leads to a skewed engagement with the broader field of mortuary archaeology.[70] Engagement with human remains is popular because it is visually intriguing, creating an obsession over bodies and skeletons that obscures the larger contexts in which they are embedded.[71] As a result, studies of graves, cemeteries, memorials, monuments, cultural death ways, and landscapes in which the dead are interred are downplayed or absent.[72] It is important to recognize these trends in digital public mortuary archaeology because ultimately every visualization used to distribute information about mortuary remains and materials plays a role in the management and construction of knowledge and the concept of heritage which impacts historical narratives and living communities.[73] The field of digital public mortuary archaeology could be broadened by critically expanding the scope of public engagement from an emphasis on human remains to an emphasis on other mortuary components such as material culture, mortuary space, and memorials, allowing for the public to engage with a greater range of historic sites.[74] For example, focusing on mortuary contexts in the case of historic Black cemeteries, allows for the consideration of not only material conditions of remaining and erased memorial sites, but also an examination of spatial arrangements and how these various elements are entangled with race, power, memory, and place.[75] For instance, one important way this digital preservation project

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[70] Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." Internet Archaeology, no. 40 (2015). See also: Williams, Howard, and Melanie Giles. *Archaeologists and the Dead: Mortuary Archaeology in Contemporary Society*. Edited by Howard Williams and Melanie Giles. First edition. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2016.
[71] Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." Internet Archaeology, no. 40 (2015).
[72] Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." Internet Archaeology, no. 40 (2015).
[73] Cook, Katherine. "Open Data as Public Archaeology: The Monumental Archive Project." *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology* (2018): 177-194.
[74] Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." Internet Archaeology, no. 40 (2015).
[75] Alderman, Derek H., and E. Arnold Modlin Jr. "The Historical Geography of Racialized Landscapes." *North American Odyssey: Historical Geographies for the Twenty-First Century* (2014): 273-290.

expands the potential of digital public mortuary archaeology is through the creation of 3D models of gravestones and a virtual site map of Mount Carmel Cemetery, which offer a visually engaging and contextualized database that the public and researchers can access and interact with as well as highlight the presence/existence of the cemetery and the stories of individuals buried within. The emphasis of digital public engagement is on memorials and the mortuary landscape, drawing a greater attention to Mount Carmel Cemetery as a space and place, as well as its intersections with public memory, memorialization (of individuals and of the site), and the historical contexts in which this site and images of it are embedded.

Local Contexts, Local Projects

Over the course of the past few years, the Tampa Bay area has grappled with the erasure of Black histories and Black cemeteries. One of the notable examples of this confrontation was the discovery of the Zion Cemetery located underneath the Robles Park Village Housing Complex.[76] The discovery was a catalyst for the identification and documentation of Black cemeteries across the state, and nationally, to resist further erasure, particularly following research on Zion Cemetery (Tampa, FL) as well as Oaklawn, Evergreen, and Moffet cemeteries (St. Petersburg, FL), led by Dr. Antoinette Jackson and the African American Burial Ground Project. Building on the work of the University of South Florida African American Burial Ground and Remembering Project (AABG), the Black Cemetery Network (BCN) was founded on June 15, 2021, as a call to action to raise awareness about Black cemetery erasure and

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[76] "Zion Cemetery — Black Cemetery Network." *Black Cemetery Network*, January 2023. https://blackcemeterynetwork.org/bcnsites/zion; See also: Vine, Michael. "Finding Zion: Spectral Intimacy and State Indeterminacy at an Erased American Cemetery." *History and Anthropology*, 2023, 1–17; Guzzo, Paul. "A Complete Timeline of Tampa's Erased Zion Cemetery." *Tampa Bay Times*, August 26, 2020. https://www.tampabay.com/life-culture/history/2020/08/26/a-complete-timeline-of-tampas-erased-zion-cemetery/.

preservation challenges.[77] Housed within the University of South Florida College of Arts and Sciences Living Hertiage Institute (LHI), the Black Cemetery Network serves as a national platform highlighting activities to identify, interpret, preserve, and record African American burial grounds and their histories. The Black Cemetery Network "connects living records of forgotten histories through *research*, *advocacy*, and *collaboration*" and has amassed a crowdsourced digital archive of over a hundred Black cemeteries from across the nation.[78] Anyone accessing the website can submit a form to add a site to the Black Cemetery Network database and, if approved by the team of USF researchers, gain access to resources hosted by the Black Cemetery Network and African American Burial Grounds Project that connect site managers to other community leaders. In turn, they will be provided with the Black Cemetery Network virtual toolkit, community forums and regional dialogues, and the online database of historic Black cemeteries and sacred spaces.[79] As a result the archive continues to grow and serve as a hub for "locating, preserving, and recording black cemetery sites" and centering their histories.[80]

    While the Black Cemetery Network is the locus of this recovery and memorialization project, there are other, adjacent projects. In June 2023, the Tampa Bay History Center launched a permanent exhibit "Travails and Triumphs," centering Black histories within state history with

[77] See: *Living Heritage Institute*. "USF Living Heritage Institute website" Accessed April 2024. https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/institutes/living-heritage-institute/index.aspx; *African American Burial Ground Project*. "The African Ameri an Burial Ground Oral History Project (AAGP) website." April 2024. https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/african_american_burial_grounds_ohp/; *Black Cemetery Network*. "The Black Cemetery Network (BCN) website." Accessed April 2024. https://blackcemeterynetwork.org/.
[78] "What We Do — Black Cemetery Network." *Black Cemetery Network*. https://blackcemeterynetwork.org/whatwedo. See also: BCN Archive. "New Archive — Black Cemetery Network." *Black Cemetery Network*. Accessed August 16, 2023. https://blackcemeterynetwork.org/new-page.
[79] Black Cemetery Network. https://blackcemeterynetwork.org/submityoursite
[80] Vision Statement. "Who We Are — Black Cemetery Network." *Black Cemetery Network*. https://blackcemeterynetwork.org/whoweare.; As of February 2024, the archive lists 142 registered Black cemetery sites, 26 of which are located throughout the state of Florida.

institutions across the state following suit.[81] Further, the recent law HB 49 (Abandoned and Historic Cemeteries), which went into effect July 1, 2023, and builds on the work of stakeholders and previous legislation, created the Historic Cemeteries Program within the Division of Historical Resources of the State of Florida to "research, identify, and record abandoned cemeteries, with an emphasis on abandoned African American cemeteries."[82] One of the responsibilities of this state sponsored research is to, "coordinate with the University of South Florida's Black Cemetery Network to facilitate the inclusion of abandoned African American cemeteries in the Black Cemetery Network," and create a repository of information and facilitate engagement with descendent communities and the general public.[83] It is clear that the Black Cemetery Network plays a central role in fulfilling the duties funded by the new law and fueled by communities across the state, making the question of how to conduct this recovery work of historic Black cemeteries worth serious consideration.

One approach that we as researchers working jointly from the University of South Florida's Institute of Digital Exploration (IDEx) Lab and Black Cemetery Network, have proposed is the digitization of the historic Black cemeteries recorded on the Black Cemetery Network. In accordance with the new law, digitization is one method to help the Black Cemetery Network fulfill its role to research, identify, record, and preserve these historic spaces. The proposed linking of IDEx generated 3D models of artifacts and gravestones and maps of cemeteries to the Black Cemetery Network database would serve primarily to preserve and disseminate, creating educational opportunities for the public and researchers. The digitization of

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[81] Tampa Bay History Center. "Travails and Triumphs | Tampa Bay History Center." June 5, 2023. https://tampabayhistorycenter.org/exhibit/travails-and-triumphs/#events.

[82] CS/CS/CS/HB 49: Abandoned and Historic Cemeteries. Part e, Lines 56-57. The Florida Senate.

[83] CS/CS/CS/HB 49: Abandoned and Historic Cemeteries. Part d, Lines 53-55 https://www.flsenate.gov/Session/Bill/2023/49/?Tab=BillHistory; The bill has a slotted appropriation of $1,254,454 to conduct this preservation and recovery work.

cemeteries is part of digital public mortuary archaeology and presents an innovative way of visualizing and preserving cultural heritage and mortuary landscapes through the application of digital imaging technologies to create maps, 3D models, and digital images.[84] However, as noted above, digital public mortuary archaeology has been developing rapidly in the past few years and as such has received little theoretical scrutiny.[85] As local and national government entities invest in digital projects of historical preservation in the charged contexts of our present political moment, it is important to turn critical attention to what digitization *does* and how it both compliments and complicates the work of historical preservation and historical recovery of Black history. These projects of public archaeology and public history are not just about working with descendant communities and facilitating educational engagement, they are about the management and construction of knowledge and the concept of heritage.[86] As guides through conversations on the lingering effects of racial discourses made evident by the rediscovery of and silencing imposed on historic Black cemeteries, historians need to take a critical approach not only to how we are creating digital data but also how we are sharing it and what we are conveying about the digitized material culture and its historical contexts.

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[84] Some key works in Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology include: Williams, Howard, and Alison Atkin. "Virtually Dead: Digital Public Mortuary Archaeology." Internet Archaeology, no. 40 (2015); Williams, Howard, and Melanie Giles. *Archaeologists and the Dead: Mortuary Archaeology in Contemporary Society*. Edited by Howard Williams and Melanie Giles. First edition. Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 2016.; Ulguim, P.F. "Digital Remains Made Public: Sharing the Dead Online and Our Future Digital Mortuary Landscape." *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology* 8(2) 2018:153–176.; Ulguim, P.F. 2018. "Models and Metadata: The Ethics of Sharing Bioarchaeological 3D Models Online." *Archaeologies* 14(2):189–228**.**

[85] Richardson, Lorna-Jane. "A Digital Public Archaeology?" *Papers from the Institute of Archaeology* 23, no. 1 (2013): 1–12. See also: Richardson, Lorna-Jane. "Ethical Challenges in Digital Public Archaeology." *Journal of Computer Applications in Archaeology* 1, no. 1 (2018): 64–73.

[86] Linn-Tynen, Erin. "Reclaiming the Past as a Matter of Social Justice: African American Heritage, Representation and Identity in the United States." In *Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage: Construction, Transformation and Destruction*, edited by Veysel Apaydin, 255–68. UCL Press, 2020.; Richardson, Lorna-Jane, and Jaime Almansa-Sánchez. "Do You Even Know What Public Archaeology Is? Trends, Theory, Practice, Ethics." *World Archaeology* 47, no. 2 (2015): 194–211.

The Digitization of Cemeteries

The proposed digitization of historic Black cemeteries listed on the Black Cemetery

Network can be used to generate knowledge and advance research related to digital public

mortuary archaeology, the sites, and their histories. Visualizing cemeteries is not a new endeavor

for the USF Institute for Digital Exploration (IDEx) lab. One of the first projects the institute

undertook was the 2019 digitization of the historic Tolomato Cemetery in St. Augustine, FL. The

site was in use as a cemetery from the eighteenth century until the late nineteenth century and

serves as a concentrated example of St. Augustine and early Florida history through Spanish and

British occupation, US territory days, and early statehood.[87] More recently, USF IDEx has

undertaken the digitization of Burial Hill Cemetery in Plymouth, Massachusetts to help record,

monitor, and preserve the site. To digitize the sites, terrestrial laser scanning was used to capture

present conditions for future monitoring and cultural heritage preservation.[88] Digital

photogrammetry was also used to digitize and generate 3D models of gravestones and

memorials.[89] What these previous cemetery digitization projects demonstrated was the successful

application of digital technologies for cultural heritage preservation with public outreach

components.[90] Both projects presented unique ethical challenges such as entanglements with

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[87] "3D Collections." Tolomato Cemetery | IDEx | College of Arts and Sciences | University of South Florida. Accessed July 18, 2023. <https://www.usf.edu/arts-sciences/institutes/idex/3d-collections/tolomato-cemetery.aspx>

[88] "3D Collections." Tolomato Cemetery | IDEx | College of Arts and Sciences | University of South Florida. Accessed July 18, 2023. For more articles that discuss the use of TLS for whole site digitization see: Tanasi, Davide, Kaitlyn Kingsland, and Michael Decker. "Digitizing John Ringling's Wisconsin Train Car at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, Florida." In *Visual Heritage Conference on Cultural Heritage and New Technologies (CHNT)*, vol. 23, 2018.

[89] "3D Collections." Tolomato Cemetery | IDEx | College of Arts and Sciences | University of South Florida. Accessed July 18, 2023. For more articles discussing the uses of digital photogrammetry see: Kaitlyn Kingsland. "Comparative Analysis of Digital Photogrammetry Software for Cultural Heritage." *Digital Applications in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage* 18 (2020): e0015; Tanasi, David; Hassam, Stephan; and Kingsland, Kaitlyn, "Virtual Karam Collection: 3D Digital Imaging and 3D Printing for Public Outreach in Archaeology" (2018). *History Faculty Publications*. 309.

[90] In this case success is defined as the creation of accurate 3D renderings of memorials and the landscape in conjunction with public outreach components such as including volunteer care societies throughout the process.

histories of colonization and defining shared authority that IDEx navigated and learned from.[91]

Given previous project experience, the digitization of historic Black cemeteries seemed an apt

place for IDEx to lend its skills to bring these histories to communities in more accessible,

visible, and inclusive ways.

A Case Study of Cemetery Digitization – Mount Carmel Cemetery

In April 2023, the USF IDEx Lab and the Black Cemetery Network undertook the

digitization of Mount Carmel Cemetery in Pasco, County Florida. The previous endeavors by

USF IDEx to digitize cemeteries provided helpful models to apply to the logistical side of

digitizing and visualizing historic Black cemeteries such as the historic Black cemetery of Mount

Carmel in New Port Richey, FL. Over the course of three non-consecutive field days, the

landscape of the cemetery was digitized using terrestrial laser-scanning (TLS) and the memorials

and other features of the site were captured using terrestrial digital photogrammetry and

structured light 3D scanning.[92] In all, ten headstones in various conditions were identified,

digitized, and turned into 3D models as well as the remains of a possible wooden structure. The

models include the ten remaining visible memorials, seven of which have at least partially

legible inscriptions, in addition to the memorial plaque honoring Blanche Benford for her work

advocating for Mount Carmel Cemetery to be recognized as a historical site by Pasco County.

The remains of a wooden structure, thought to be remnants from the Mount Carmel African

Methodist Episcopal Church that once stood on the grounds, were also captured.

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[91] See: Kerri Knigge Klein, Kaitlyn Kingsland, Davide Tanasi, and Sofia Almeida. "Best Practices for Historical Cemetery Digitization Standardization: The Tolomato and Burial Hill Cemetery Digitization Projects." Institute for Digital Exploration University of South Florida. Publication forthcoming.
[92] For more details see: 3D Digitization of Mount Carmel Historical Cemetery (Pasco County) FINAL REPORT. September 29, 2023.

Figure 1 Overlay of updated plan of the site of Mount Carmel Cemetery

Mount Carmel Cemetery serves as a case study to demonstrate the feasibility of

conducting digital preservation of historic Black cemeteries with similar levels of extensive

physical deterioration and dispersal of descendant communities. While the physical site was

recorded, the stories of individuals buried within remain just as vulnerable. To not attend to the

historical contexts in which historic Black cemeteries are embedded is to further obscure/silence

the historical significance of these sites that perpetuates the physical and symbolic erasure of

Black history.[93] While digital public mortuary archaeology can be a useful avenue for gathering

more information, making it more accessible, and preserving cultural heritage, without taking a

critical approach to digitization, there is risk of replicating old patterns of erasure in historical

production. In other words, while there is merit to projects of digitization of underrepresented

groups and their cultural heritage, it is a further disservice to digitize but not use the data to

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[93] Trouillot, Michel-Rolph and Hazel V. Carby. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.p.48.

dismantle racist systems by contextualizing and thinking through the implications of digital data

for historical narrative production.[94]

Figure 2 Visual map of all the features identified on site.

[94] Noble, Safiya Umoja. "Toward a Critical Black Digital Humanities." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019*, edited by Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein, 27–35. University of Minnesota Press, 2019. See also: Gallon, Kim. "Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2016*, edited by Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein, 42–49. University of Minnesota Press, 2016.; Trouillot, Michel-Rolph and Hazel V. Carby. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework—Critical Digital Humanities

While digital public mortuary archaeology is a useful methodological framework, a major limitation of this approach is that there is not a solid theoretical position to orient research and further to guide engagement with memorial contexts and the public. In the chapter that follows I argue that there are lenses through which to view the cemetery and its digital simulacra in order to understand the idea that digitization does not preserve 'the entire site.' I first outline the power of images as not neutral representations of the historical site of the cemetery. I then outline how it is not only the images that recall past and present racial logics but also the space of the historical site of the cemetery. I then conclude by outlining how racial logics are evident in the landscape and their digital representations using newspaper clippings. Through the consideration of these lenses, I suggest something of a critical digital humanities framework from which to apply and consider the implications of digitization for projects of historical recovery.

The Power of Images

The landscape of historic Black cemeteries offers a unique and critical glimpse into the histories it has come to represent and the racial logic that structured them and led to present projects of recovery. Understanding how racial logics are evident in the landscape invites a critical consideration of the erasure of historic Black cemeteries. It is helpful to think of racial logics on a kind of timeline, which denotes the collection of behaviors and attitudes that frame political, economic, and social consequences of discourses around race both within a particular

historical moment and as connected as part of a larger and longer dynamic.[95] The digitization of

historic Black cemeteries presents an opportunity to consider the relations of racial logics

implicit in the landscape through the heightened visibility of the physical site offered by digital

representations. This dynamic is evidence of what we may call a *politics of visibility*. The politics

of visibility gets at the idea that images are not neutral. As Brian Creech rightly notes, "social

reality is deeply connected to the way that things are perceived, and that perception is tied to

technologies and practices of seeing."[96] In the context of the preservation of historical Black

cemeteries, the politics of visibility is demonstrated through the ways in which these cemeteries

are represented or not represented, whether in landscapes, historical narratives, or digital images.

The state of Black cemeteries today reflects the consequences of the impacts of intangible

notions such as heritage, race, identity, socio-historical conditions, and memory which have

shaped the positions of Black history and landscapes within historical narratives and public

memory.[97] The contemporary intersection of digital technologies and historical representation

reasserts the perceptibility and positionality of the sites of historic Black cemeteries within

spaces of public memory and historical consciousness. For example, on a fundamental level, the

creation of digital images and 3D models can serve to bring new visibility to these places that

have been historically marginalized by producing visualizations of the landscape. Digital images

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[95] Tuttle, Steven. "Towards a Theory of the Racialization of Space." *The American Behavioral Scientist* (Beverly Hills) 66.11 (2022): 1526–1538.; Wynter, Sylvia. "Towards the Sociogenic Principle: Fanon, Identity, the Puzzle of Conscious Experience, and What It Is Like to Be "Black". In *National Identities and Sociopolitical Changes in Latin America.* edited by Gomez-Moriana, Antonio., and Mercedes F. Durán-Cogan. New York: Routledge, 2001.

[96] Creech, Brian. "Exploring the Politics of Visibility: Technology, Digital Representation, and the Mediated Workings of Power" *Semiotica* 2020, no. 236-237 (2020): 127.; Benjamin, Walter. "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." In *Illuminations*. Edited by H. Arendt. New York, NY: Schocken Books. 1968. pp. 217-252.

[97] Linn-Tynen, Erin. "Reclaiming the Past as a Matter of Social Justice: African American Heritage, Representation and Identity in the United States." In *Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage: Construction, Transformation and Destruction*, edited by Veysel Apaydin, 255–68. UCL Press, 2020.; Trouillot, Michel-Rolph and Hazel V. Carby. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.

can also help create a lasting impact by bringing awareness to the ongoing struggle to identify, record, research, and preserve historic Black cemeteries and their attendant histories, both nationally and locally. In the example of the digitization of Mount Carmel Cemetery, the creation of 3D models of the remaining visible gravestones and the creation of a site map visualize the heritage site in a striking new way by creating a visual database of memorials and the landscape as they stand today.

We might ask however, what exactly is being visualized? On the surface, there is the seductively 'easy' explanation that the cemetery and the gravestones are being visualized. From this perspective, there is one layer that to have a visual referent makes it difficult to deny the existence of historic Black cemeteries. The other layer is that *the way* we look at images, as artifacts of segregation, as evidence of marginalized history, as memorial landscapes, is important for setting the tone of future engagement and further invites historians to contend with the dynamics of forgetting and reclamation within the landscape and public memory. For example, if we look at the images, we might get lost in the idea that visualization is knowledge or the idea that 'it is here so it exists/existed,' which alone risks reducing the cemetery and the gravestones, and their digital simulacra *as simply* objects or evidence. By extension, the fixation on visualizations may risk reproducing an 'accumulative logic' to compile a corpus of evidence of Black history via 'erased/abandoned' cemeteries, thereby valuing sites by virtue of their evidentiary status as 'silenced histories' or as digital models rather than investigating sites and their histories to contend with the consequences of racial logics and further re-center Black history through the re-orientation of historical narratives.[98] Not to contextualize the images we

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[98] Connolly, Brian. "Against Accumulation." *J19: The Journal of Nineteenth-Century Americanists* 2, no. 1 (2014): 172-179.; See also: Noble, Safiya Umoja. "Toward a Critical Black Digital Humanities." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019*, edited by Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein, 27–35. University of Minnesota Press, 2019;

further obscure the cemetery and its history, and the individuals associated with it as well as larger historical narratives of Black history of Florida, thus engaging in what Michel-Rolph Trouillot calls formulas of silence that reproduce relations of ideology and power that objectify, racialize, and erase marginal history and Black bodies and spaces.[99] To counter such an accumulative empiricist impulse and resist reproducing silences marked by ideology and power, it is important to recognize that, "every note, photograph, 3D model, and map has the potential to impact living communities," and that digitization remains one knowledge pathway to create historical narratives in projects of historical recovery.[100] We need to understand that digitization creates a new set of information about a site even as it wrenches the digital representations of that site from its material contexts.[101] Recentering these narratives via the digitization of cemetery landscapes calls for the contextualization of the historical significance of the sites themselves and the histories they have come to represent. In other words, is the need to contend with racial logics which are represented in and undergird the materiality of the cemetery and the affective resonances of the images.[102] It is the need to recognize that how we visualize and what we convey utilizing those visualizations impacts historical narratives and perceptions of the past and present ways of being in the world.

Trouillot, Michel-Rolph and Hazel V. Carby. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.p. 96.; Fuentes, Marisa J. *Dispossessed Lives: Enslaved Women, Violence, and the Archive*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, Inc, 2016. Both Trouilot and Fuentes offer examples of interrogating the epistemological consequences of the archive and reproductions of power for historical narratives.

[99] McKittrick, Katherine. *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.; Trouillot, Michel-Rolph and Hazel V. Carby. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.p. 96.

[100] Cook, Katherine. "Open Data as Public Archaeology: The Monumental Archive Project." *AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology* (2018): 190.

[101] Baudrillard, Jean. *Simulacra and Simulation*. Translated by Sheila Faria Glaser. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1994.

[102] Ahmed, Sara. "Affective Economies." *Social Text* 22, no. 2 (2004): 117-139.

Drawing inspiration from Tina Campt, I think that what is necessary in the image-based engagement of digital public mortuary archaeology is to be critical of *the way* we look at digital models and look beyond the images to consider the entanglements of power, ideology, and race represented by the landscapes and memorials and images of them. In other words, when we digitize, we need to not just look at but *listen to* the images that we create to foster, "a deeper engagement with the forgotten histories and suppressed forms of diasporic memory" that the images represent and transpose virtually.[103] But, what does this look like in practice? Campt argues that 'listening to images' is, "a conscious decision to challenge the equation of vision with knowledge" and uses concepts of quiet and quotidian in order to attend to the fugitivity and futurity of Black subjects implied in images.[104] Utilizing a series of identification photo collections, she takes a counterintuitive approach to viewing the collections that were meant to surveille and calls us to draw in to listen to the images by utilizing other senses to get at the messages made implicit by the image, refuse the logic of racial subordination, and attend to the subtle ways of resistance and refusal within to interrogate systems of dispossession and negation.[105] While there are no Black individuals pictured in the digital images created by this twenty-first century project of digital preservation, I think that Campt's concept of 'listening to images' can be extended to these images of the physical site and memorials to challenge the notion that digital preservation preserves the entire site, by calling us to look beyond the images to the historical contexts in which the cemetery is embedded and to the stories of individuals buried within.

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[103] Campt, Tina. *Listening to Images*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.p.6.
[104] Campt, Tina. *Listening to Images*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.p.6.
[105] Campt, Tina. *Listening to Images*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.

In the case of Mount Carmel Cemetery, listening to the images means not only contextualizing 3D models of gravestones and the cemetery with critical metadata, but also considering the historical contexts, racial dynamics, and stories of individuals brought to the surface via images. For example, take the image of Minnie Blocker's gravestone. It shows a large broken stone with partial lettering and dates.
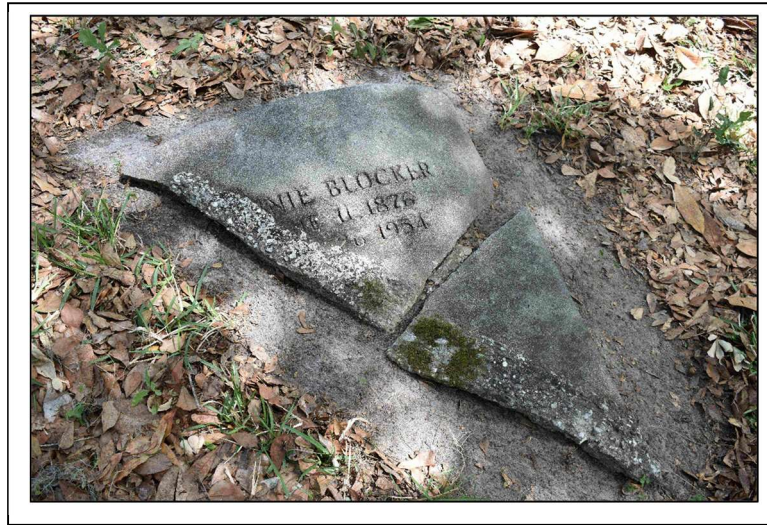
Figure 3 Image of the gravestone of Minnie Blocker
in Mount Carmel Cemetery.

Though the image captures the physical state of the gravestone, it obscures much else, excluding physical and textual contexts, exclusively framing the gravestone and its digital representation. While this derealization is helpful for creating a database of the physical state of the memorial at the time of rendering, with the implied purpose of maintaining that representation for posterity as a record, we need 'to listen' to the image and go beyond the immediate knowledge it provides to uncover the resonances of meaning it contains such as historical contexts and individual biographies. For example, what does the image of Minnie Blocker's gravestone reveal about the racial logics implicit in the physical and memory landscape? Listening to the image of the memorial calls for its contextualization. If we zoom out

beyond the lens of the camera, we can expose a bigger picture of the meanings held in the memorial by situating the space and place of the cemetery in historical context as well as attending to the stories of individuals. For instance, if we situate Mount Carmel Cemetery in the social fabric of the community of Ehren during its height in the early 1900s, we reveal how the cemetery was a locus of both community identity and a reinforcement of racial logics which point to the marks of racial segregation that extended beyond the organization of the dead to other aspects of daily life such as places of labor. For example, work at the sawmill, one of the main economic centers around which the town was organized, assigned more intensive labor to Black workers and managerial positions to white workers. These inequalities and intersections of social space and geographic place marked by the color line are referenced/echoed by the present material reality of the cemetery. Listening to the image of the memorial also allows us to shift our focus to the life of Minnie Blocker, who provides insight into individuals operating within these marked spaces, adding texture to our understanding of the past. For example, she provides a unique window into life in Ehren because her life encompasses much of the community's history. During the early 1900s, Minnie Blocker worked as a 'washer woman' for the sawmill. She earned a wage likely washing the clothes of workers in the company houses that Mueller owned and her brother Tal Humphrey and son Doc found work at the mill and on the railroad. Her life also provides insight into social connections. After the death of their husbands, Minnie and her sister Pauline moved in together with their families and took in lodgers and eventually their mother Lydia and her second husband W.G. Gibbs, pointing towards the strategies people adopted in the face of inequalities and limited economic opportunities in the area. Minnie witnessed the changing economic opportunities of Ehren as its major industries transformed from sawmills, turpentine, and railroads to citrus and commercial agriculture and the social

ramifications of these transitions, such as the dispersal of the Black community of Ehren which

factors into its present physical deterioration. In that sense, her life serves as a window into the

history of the town and how people operated within it. While the ramifications of these realities

need to be more deeply addressed, they begin to help contextualize the present state of the

Figure 4 Image of gravestone of Lydia Gibbs (left); Image of WG Gibbs gravestone (right)

cemetery and the impetus towards its recovery as a historical site of marginalized history.

Similarly, take the images of these gravestones. At first glance, it is clear that these

gravestones are extremely weathered with limited legibility and that they were made of concrete

and hand inscribed. The digital images help preserve the gravestones at the time of capturing,

creating digital representations that allow us to preserve the current legibility of the stones as

they face continued environmental threats from storms and the passage of time. However, when

we listen to the images, and move beyond them to begin to trace out the historical realities and

stories of the individuals beneath the stones, we get a much more textured image of the past. For

example, drawing from census records we learn that Lydia Gibbs and W.G. Gibbs (Wallace) were

in fact married. This changes what we see in the image, not just two weathered gravestones but

perhaps a family plot. Going beyond the image we also learn that as a result of the closure of the

mill, Lydia and Wallace likely moved around to find work or medical care, after living with Lydia's widowed daughters. Both ultimately succumbed to illnesses in their old age, Wallace of tuberculosis and Lydia of the flu. Their stories help us interpret past economies of care and the spatial layout of the cemetery.

Figure 5 Unknown, various remnants of memorials.

There were also four gravestones, or remnants of them, of unknown individuals that dot the landscape today. While the identities of the individuals whose burials were once marked by these stones is today unknowable, these images can still be listened to. What might we hear if we expand our parameters? In the case of these unknown individuals, we can listen to the affective registers within the image and held in the landscape to think more deeply about the work of digital preservation and historical recovery writ large for historic Black cemeteries. For example, we might ask: how are the state of these gravestones emblematic of the state of other historic

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Black cemeteries in the present commemorative landscape? Locally? Nationally? What are the consequences of this? The physical destruction of the memorials and unknowability of these individuals speaks to the consequences of racial segregation such as lack of resource allocation and a devaluation of Black life (and memorials to it), transforming economic structures, and the dispersal of descendent communities. As a result, there is little representation of Black histories in the commemorative landscape save for these sites which have been historically marginalized.

Listening to images allows us to think critically about the impacts of digitization bringing visibility to the site which also presents an opportunity to situate the site and the histories of the community within larger narratives of Florida history and further consider the role of racial logics in shaping not only the history of the cemetery and the role of the Black community but also memory of them. It means attending/listening to the digital distortion, the 'noise' that the technologically sophisticated facsimile attempts to suppress, i.e., the consequences of racial logics, historical contexts, and stories of individuals implicit in the landscapes and images. The work of digitization is a starting point that creates a visual surrogate of the site which reproduces and generates new relations that must be critically approached. What the act of digitizing these objects does is differ (or distort) the relation of the space and place out of which these objects emerge, which, following Tina Campt, we should understand that what is often understood as auxiliary to the image (ie.-resonances of historical contexts and entanglements of race, space, and place) is essential to the work of a critical praxis in digital public mortuary archaeology, memory, and history.

When analyzing images of historic Black cemeteries listening to images means approaching these images with a 'critical eye' to be attentive to the ways in which the historical contexts and racial realities are embedded in the visual landscape and the image which in turn

shape their position in public memory. For example, some helpful questions to consider include: how do the material conditions of the site such as the visibility or absented presence of graves and their markers and the condition of the remaining memorials and the surrounding landscapes reflect this history of discrimination and marginalization? How does a 'Black' cemetery function today, as an artifact of segregation and heritage site? We should also note the historical context of the cemetery and the stories of the people buried there. For example, for Mount Carmel Cemetery, how did the extractive economies of Florida development, such as the lumber industry, and intangible notions of racial logics, heritage, and memory shape the physical maintenance of the cemetery and its place in public memory, both historically and contemporarily? How did the color line manifest in daily life? Can we recover stories of people buried there or who might have lived in the town? It could also mean looking for signs of resistance or resilience within the visual landscape. For example, the memorial plaque erected in Blanch Benford's honor for her advocacy to protect Mount Carmel as a historic site is a material reminder of local efforts to restore and preserve the cemetery in the face of erasure. I think that through the juxtaposition, contextualization, interrogation, and reframing of images and their invisible and inaudible affective registers, we can destabilize systems of dispossession that have physically and symbolically marginalized Black landscapes and history. In essence then, listening to images allows us to excavate the power dynamics at play in the representations of the landscape and analyze the historical forces and racial logics that shaped the cemetery. By choosing to listen to images we challenge dominant narratives and assumptions about Black history by recentering and reconsidering the landscape and its representations as a memory place made visible (again) via the image.

In other words, listening to the images means, "being attuned to the connections between what we see and how it resonates" and the implications of this for historical narratives that arise from digitizing historic Black cemeteries in the current political moment.[106] If the state of Florida wants to invest in the preservation of historic Black cemeteries, what does it mean for/what are the implications of digitization to be used as a tool towards that project? While impossible to know entirely, Tina Campt provides a useful caution that images are technologies of power.[107] Thus, digitization for the sake of digitization has merits up to a point, however, an uncritical digital public mortuary archaeology practice does nothing but reproduce the very systems of power it claims to repel through its visualizations. This is not to say that entities and institutions intend to (re)enact Jim Crow racism through digitization, however, by framing these projects as projects of historical recovery, and not further contextualizing them, the historical complexities of these sites of public memory become flattened. To go back to the idea of the politics of visibility, making the presence of historic Black cemeteries known along with preserving them is important work, however, the obfuscation that occurs from physical erasure gets recommitted symbolically when we digitize uncritically, when we fail to also contend with the racial logics that underpin the histories of the landscapes, the daily lives of individuals, the public memory of the site, and further the very practices of history. To document the physical site is a vehicle towards a public history project of recovering information about the site and the communities it served, but it remains one part of a larger project confronting how this case study is symptomatic of larger national narratives of forgetting and reclaiming Black history sites as the historical referents of the communities they once served. What drawing from Tina Campt to approach the images produced from the digitization of Mount Carmel Cemetery provides then, is a critical

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[106] Campt, Tina. *Listening to Images*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.p.33.
[107] Campt, Tina. *Listening to Images*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2017.p.106.

digital humanities approach that has the potential to "recover alternative constructions of humanity that have been historically excluded" by considering entanglements beyond the image.[108]

Entanglements of Race, Space, and Place

In that vein, now we must turn our attention from the technology of rendering (the image) to the subjects rendered via the image. The focus of digital preservation of historic Black cemeteries is on the sites themselves, the physical landscape and the memorials. A landscape can be understood as both geographic and cultural space, of which cemeteries are one powerful example.[109] The landscapes of cemeteries are heterotopias, part of and apart from society, mirroring categories and organizations.[110] In other words, landscapes are produced and are instruments of power, implying that they also convey and are created by the shifting categories and organizations of racial logics.[111] This means that the landscape of cemeteries are both reflections and accumulations of these categorizations and the social practices that "contribute to how we organize, build, and imagine our surroundings."[112] Cemeteries are also what Pierre Nora calls lieu de mémoire, or memory places.[113] In this sense, cemeteries are not static places but possess a "capacity for metamorphosis" in their meaning.[114] Framing cemeteries as lieu de mémoire is to understand that they are concentrations of memories, histories, and racial logics

[108] Gallon, Kim. "Making a Case for the Black Digital Humanities." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2016*, edited by Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein, University of Minnesota Press, 2016.p.44.
[109] Seidemann, Ryan M., and Christine L. Halling. "Landscape Structural Violence: A View from New Orleans's Cemeteries." *American Antiquity* 84, no. 4 (2019): 669–83.
[110] Foucault, Michel, and Jay Miskowiec. "Of Other Spaces." *Diacritics* 16, no. 1 (1986): 22–27.
[111] Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. First edition. New York, New York: Pantheon Books, 1998.
[112] McKittrick, Katherine. *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.p.xiv.
[113] Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations, 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory* (Spring 1989): 7.
[114] Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations, 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory* (Spring 1989): 19.

and their consequences. It is also to understand that the meanings of these accrued concentrations are not static but change over time. Thus, it is not just the images that recall past and present racial logics but the space of the historic site that recalls them.

Some central questions this lens of entanglements prompts, inspired by James Young in his analysis of memorials and their meanings, include: "how does a particular place shape our memory of a particular time? And how does this memory of the past time shape our understanding of the present moment?"[115] In the case of Mount Carmel Cemetery, part of our understanding of the significance of the site is grounded on the racially based organization of the space and place historically, during Jim Crow policies of 'separation by race' under which the cemetery and its historicity can be contextualized. The site then serves as a heuristic through which to understand the historical contexts, racial logics and local history undergirding it. This understanding should not be taken lightly in projects of digital preservation that purport to perform historical recovery work because through such projects we are shifting the narrative, the perceptibility, of what is recognized as places of historical memory in popular historical consciousness.[116] To not attend to these layers, to the entanglements implicit in the landscape, is to (again) erase the significance of these sites.

The erasure of historic Black cemeteries is a form of landscape structural violence and is a reinforcement and consequence of discourses on race during Jim Crow and its afterlives. Landscape structural violence can be defined as structural violence expressed through inequalities in the landscape to reinforce pre-existing social prejudices.[117] Arguably then, the

[115] Young, James Edward. *The Texture of Memory: Holocaust Memorials and Meaning*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994.p.15.

[116] Linn-Tynen, Erin. "Reclaiming the Past as a Matter of Social Justice: African American Heritage, Representation and Identity in the United States." In *Critical Perspectives on Cultural Memory and Heritage: Construction, Transformation and Destruction*, edited by Veysel Apaydin, 255–68. UCL Press, 2020.

[117] Seidemann, Ryan M., and Christine L. Halling. "Landscape Structural Violence: A View from New Orleans's Cemeteries." *American Antiquity* 84, no. 4 (2019): 671.

rediscovery of historic Black cemeteries is evidence of landscape structural violence because the necessity of reclamation is evidence of the denial of the legitimacy of Black humanity within landscapes and history, it is evidence of the silencing of memories through the destruction and marginalization of Black spaces/places where there is a trace of Black presence.[118] It is important to pay attention to this dynamic of 'forgetting' and 'reclaiming' these sites because though the dead do not *feel* the violence, "their descendants and surviving communities receive the messages of exclusion communicated by these acts" and perpetuated in historical interpretations and technologies of recovery.[119] Hence the need to pay attention to the racialization implicit in landscapes and reproduced in images to avoid recommitting such acts of silence.

For example, in the example of Mount Carmel the racialization of space can be understood through an examination of the economic infrastructure of the railroad, turpentine, and sawmill industries in the town of Ehren. In the case of the railroad industry, this racialization is evident through the railroad itself and the labor used to construct it. For example, the railroad tracks split the town, into 'Old Ehren' to the north of the railroad occupied by white people and 'New Ehren or South Ehren' to the south of the railroad occupied by Black people.[120] Many of

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[118] See: Seidemann, Ryan M., and Christine L. Halling. "Landscape Structural Violence: A View from New Orleans's Cemeteries." *American Antiquity* 84, no. 4 (2019): 673.; McKittrick, Katherine. *Demonic Grounds: Black Women and the Cartographies of Struggle.* Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006.; Trouillot, Michel-Rolph and Hazel V. Carby. *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History.* Boston: Beacon Press, 2015.p. 96.

[119] Seidemann, Ryan M., and Christine L. Halling. "Landscape Structural Violence: A View from New Orleans's Cemeteries." *American Antiquity* 84, no. 4 (2019): 671.; See also: Noble, Safiya Umoja. "Toward a Critical Black Digital Humanities." In *Debates in the Digital Humanities 2019*, edited by Matthew K. Gold and Lauren F. Klein. University of Minnesota Press, 2019.p.27-35.

[120] MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.83;89. Note however, that in an interview with Flurine Marshall, daughter of Christopher Columbus Marshall one of the preachers at Mount Carmel AME Church, that the divide was socioeconomic, that Old Ehren was where everyone owned their own property, hinting at the earlier presence of the African American community in the area. See: MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, Susan A. MacManus, Richard Mathews, Ana. Montalvo, Sharon D. Ostermann, and Elizabeth Riegler MacManus. *Going, Going-- Almost Gone: Lutz-Land O' Lakes Pioneers Share Their Precious Memories*. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 2011.p.137.

the Black sawmill, turpentine, and railroad workers lived in the twenty to thirty company houses

on the south side of the tracks, just west of the sawmill.[121] Many of these workers were young,

single, men in their early twenties, however, some of the boarders included married men and

their families.[122] In laying railroad tracks labor was also segregated. Black workers were given

intensive and dangerous jobs such as cutting railroad ties and laying tracks, while white workers

were employed as section bosses, railroad agents, and engineers, positions of authority which

were denied to Black laborers. In turpentining, a similar pattern is evident. Black laborers were

employed as chippers and dippers, while white laborers held less intensive positions such as

'woodsriders' that oversaw the operations of stills.[123] Chippers had the grueling work of hacking

narrow strips of bark into 'v' shapes or 'catfaces' onto pine trees to collect resin. The dippers

came and collected the buckets of resin, or the gum, that dripped out from each tree into fifty-

pound barrels that were taken to the turpentine still and processed into products like resin and

used as an additive in pharmaceutical and household products.[124] In Ehren, the sawmill also

relied on a segregated labor force. The Ehren Pine Company Sawmill was a major employer for

the area and as such many of the town's features such as housing, the post office, the

commissary, schools, and cemeteries, were built in the surrounding area. This organization was

typical of 'cut-out-and-get-out' schemes that capitalized on the 'pine belt' of the South, relying

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[121] MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, and Susan A. MacManus. *Citrus, Sawmills, Critters & Crackers: Life in Early Lutz and Central Pasco County*. 1st ed. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 1998.p.89.
[122] "United States Census, 1900." Database with images. *FamilySearch*. National Archives and Records Administration.
[123] Lauriault, Robert N. "From Can't to Can't: The North Florida Turpentine Camp, 1900-1950." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 67, no. 3 (1989): 310–28.
[124] Lauriault, Robert N. "From Can't to Can't: The North Florida Turpentine Camp, 1900-1950." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 67, no. 3 (1989): 310–28.; See also: Drobney, Jeffrey A. "Where Palm and Pine Are Blowing: Convict Labor in the North Florida Turpentine Industry, 1877-1923." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 72, no. 4 (1994): 411–34.; Shofner, Jerrell H. "Forced Labor in the Florida Forests 1880-1950." *Journal of Forest History* 25, no. 1 (1981): 14–25.; Drobney, Jeffrey A. "Company Towns and Social Transformation in the North Florida Timber Industry, 1880-1930." *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 75, no. 2 (1996): 121–45.

on exploitative and segregated labor practices in the extractive economy of the lumber industry.[125] Many Black workers were employed as common laborers at the mill, while white workers held supervisory positions such as foreman, sawyers, firemen, and millwrights.[126] The centrality of this enterprise is evident throughout the history of the town and illuminates part of why Mount Carmel Cemetery became a nearly lost site of historical memory. For instance, after one of the many times that the sawmill had burned down, the *Dade City Banner* reported, "With the sawmill gone there is little left of Ehren, and its future will depend largely upon whether Mr. Muller and his associates rebuild or not."[127] While after this particular instance, Müeller did decide to rebuild, the quote highlights how central the sawmill and the segregated labor force was to maintaining the basic infrastructure of the town. Sometime later in the late twenties or early thirties the mill burned once again, but was not rebuilt, thus, in combination with other factors such as the Great Depression, the shift to an agricultural economy, and a growing white middle class, many members of the Black community were dispersed to surrounding towns in the area, leaving Mount Carmel Cemetery to deteriorate. Given the impact that these economic realities had in the town, our present understanding of Mount Carmel Cemetery should consider these entanglements of place, race, and space. While a deeper analysis of segregated labor and conditions of daily life is beyond the scope of this thesis, it is important to understand how segregation structured spaces such as the cemetery and structured the lived experiences in the town of Ehren through the examples of this racialization of space, labor, and bodies.

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[125] Jones, William Powell. *The Tribe of Black Ulysses: African American Lumber Workers in the Jim Crow South*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2005.

[126] United States Census Bureau. "United States Census, 1910." Database with images. FamilySearch. Pasco County, Florida. Enumeration district 8; NARA microfilm publication T624. Washington, D.C.: National Archives and Records Administration; See also: Drobney, Jeffrey A. *Lumbermen and Log Sawyers: Life, Labor, and Culture in the North Florida Timber Industry, 1830-1930*. Macon, Ga: Mercer University Press, 1997.

[127] "Ehren Saw Mill Burned Last Sunday." *Dade City Banner*. April 2, 1920. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. <https://original-ufdc.uflib.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00285/pdf>

Understanding the racial organization of social spaces helps contextualize the cemetery as a site of historical memory today. This is evident through three newspaper clippings. In the first clipping, J.D. Moore, the principal of the Ehren Colored School, published a letter in the *Dade City Banner*, thanking white town folk for donating to the Ehren Colored School, writing, " January 1, 8:30pm at the A.M.E. Church…join *us* in celebrating the anniversary of Emancipation, one of the greatest contributions of the Caucasian race to human progress."[128] This letter reveals that while racial logics of separation structured daily life (Mr. Moore makes the distinction to thank *white* folk for their generosity) there is also evidence of interracial cooperation and interaction, implying fluid social boundaries. The historical-racial logic of segregation then to, "control both the geographical and the representational" boundaries of nonwhite bodies was not permanent but permeable and produced.[129] At the same time, there were instances in Ehren where the racial logics were violently enforced. For example, there was an instance reported that a "white Largo youth" was driving through the "Negro section of the mill quarters in Ehren" when a fight broke out which left the white man with a slashed throat and Frank Philips, a prominent member of the Black community and informant/undertaker at Mount Carmel Cemetery, in jail and the other person, who cut the man's throat, "*hunted* for by the sheriff's forces."[130] This instance of racial violence broke out because the created geographical and symbolic boundaries of the color line were crossed and was addressed through the imprisonment and hunting down of Black bodies to 'realign' the constructed racial hierarchy of

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[128] "Principal of Colored School Asks Co-Operation." *Dade City Banner*. January 5, 1926. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00597> Emphasis mine.
[129] Hale, Grace Elizabeth. *Making Whiteness: The Culture of Segregation in the South, 1890-1940*. First edition. New York, New York: Pantheon Books, 1998.p.8. See also: Woodward, C. Vann., and William S. McFeely. *The Strange Career of Jim Crow*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, USA, 2001.
[130] "Largo Youth Badly Hurt at Ehren Sunday When Negro Curses Him." *Dade City Banner*. May 15, 1925. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. <https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00546> Emphasis mine.

Jim Crow.[131] These examples highlight geographical markers of segregation in the town and

provides some insight into the complexities of navigating socially within them.

Another instance of how the color line manifested geographically is revealed in an article

describing 'Old Ehren' and its "small settlement of colored people."[132] In this clipping, the

journalist essentially singles out prominent members of the Black community of Ehren, such as

Byrl Dawkins, a preacher at the Mount Carmel African Methodist Episcopal Church located in

the cemetery and ties their notability to the productive capacity of their land. For example, he

writes that Dawkins has, "vegetables for peddling in town and at the Dowling log camp" and that

"he has something growing and to sell nearly every month in the year."[133] Though the journalist

introduces Dawkins as one of the ministers for the AME church, he emphasizes his productive

capacity over his individuality. In another example, the journalist writes, "Edna Humphrey,

colored, has good crops of cane and peas coming out."[134] This is all the information we get on

Edna, the fact that she was 'colored' and had 'good crops.' Similarly, he writes, "Effie Marshall,

colored, is managing a small place while her husband works as a blazer at the Dowling log camp.

She is a hard worker and her two or three acres has good crops of corn, cane and sweet potatoes

growing."[135] The examples noted here, and the example of A.D. Boatright, "one of the fast

disappearing old time negroes," are highlighted in the article on the town of Ehren as "credit[s]

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[131] Fields, Karen Elise and Barbara Jeanne Fields. *Racecraft: The Soul of Inequality in American Life*. London: Verso, 2014.

[132] "Ehren—Sawmill Town in the Center of Pasco County." Written by C.B. Taylor. *Dade City Banner*. May 19, 1922. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00393

[133] "Ehren—Sawmill Town in the Center of Pasco County." Written by C.B. Taylor. *Dade City Banner*. May 19, 1922. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00393

[134] "Ehren—Sawmill Town in the Center of Pasco County." Written by C.B. Taylor. *Dade City Banner*. May 19, 1922. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00393

[135] "Ehren—Sawmill Town in the Center of Pasco County." Written by C.B. Taylor. *Dade City Banner*. May 19, 1922. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00393

to the settlement."[136] In this case, the members of the Black community are notable insofar that they possess a significant productive capacity and operate within expected roles. These examples are also evidence of the re-inscription of the racial hierarchy of white supremacy in which the distinction of race is made if the individual is colored but not if the individual is white. For example, one vignette reads, "Louis Mueller has as fine a ten acre seedling grove as can be found any where."[137] In these cases, the whiteness of the individual is assumed because no distinction is made otherwise. This newspaper article essentially serves as an example of the singling out of Black individuals. These descriptions provide concrete examples of manifestations of the color line and the racialization of Black bodies and spaces that the landscape reinforces and that the images of the landscape reinscribe. The newspaper clippings reveal how people operated within these segregated spaces in which Mount Carmel is situated and its historicity can be traced. This insight is lost in a project of historical recovery which produces an engagement that focuses solely on the physical site and images of it and fails to look beyond them to the implicit historical realities and connected histories in which they are embedded.

Another way to understand the entanglements of race, space, and place is to utilize the notion of artifacts of segregation. I draw inspiration from Antoinette Jackson who uses exclusionary theory to analyze processes in which racial segregation was utilized to exclude Black people from travel, leisure, and US National Parks and how this impacts the construction of public memory of and within those spaces/places.[138] She defines artifacts of segregation as,

[136] "Ehren—Sawmill Town in the Center of Pasco County." Written by C.B. Taylor. *Dade City Banner*. May 19, 1922. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00393

[137] "Ehren—Sawmill Town in the Center of Pasco County." Written by C.B. Taylor. *Dade City Banner*. May 19, 1922. University of Florida George A. Smathers Libraries: Digital Collections. https://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00028981/00393

[138] Jackson, Antoinette T. "Remembering Jim Crow, Again - Critical Representations of African American Experiences of Travel and Leisure at U.S. National Park Sites." *International Journal of Heritage Studies: IJHS* 25, no. 7 (2019): 671–88.

"things, ideas, people, groups, institutions, social structures and norming practices intended to mark, signal, flag, or enforce the singling out of one group of people from another group based on or because of race."[139] Artifacts of segregation can reveal underlining issues of racial exclusion, relationships of power, and the need for more critical interpretations of heritage sites by emphasizing points of historical erasure. I use the notion of artifact of segregation to call attention not only to physical remnants associated with historic cemetery sites but also to draw attention to the larger structural orderings that racialized spaces and constructed racial categories that led to their creation and silencing within public memory.

While not explicit artifacts of segregation, the names of the local roads surrounding the cemetery such as Ehren Cutoff, Gulf Cypress Avenue, Nickel Lane, Ten Cent Road, Woodmen Hall Drive, Timber Ridge Way, Pine Knot Lane, and notably the neighborhood Ehrens Mill, harken back to the historical heyday of the town of Ehren and Mount Carmel Cemetery. Implicit in this evocation beyond the names of the roads is the historical contexts in which Ehren, Mount Carmel, and sawmill labor organization are situated. Understanding that what these names are recalling is the historical contexts in which the organization of space and society is based on segregation and the racialization of Black bodies is useful for more fully understanding the positionality of the site in public memory today. The road names and neighborhoods that organize the area today echo the organization of the area at the height of Mount Carmel Cemetery during Jim Crow. What does it mean if developers chose to 'honor' this history by specially recalling names that would evoke the segregated nature of the labor force and the town? It is this inherent echo then that subtly functions as an artifact of segregation. These

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[139] Jackson, Antoinette T. "Remembering Jim Crow, Again - Critical Representations of African American Experiences of Travel and Leisure at U.S. National Park Sites." *International Journal of Heritage Studies: IJHS* 25, no. 7 (2019): 672.

echoes mirror how the economic structure of the sawmill in Ehren, which followed the 'cut-out-and-get-out' schemes of the early twentieth century and relied on segregated labor forces with Black workers often occupying dangerous hard labor positions, pervaded the socioeconomic setup of the town so much so, that this economic exploitation, manifested in the landscape not only in the form of segregated spaces such as separate company housing and cemeteries, but also in ordering relations surrounding those spaces to further map the territories and set them apart while reinforcing larger infrastructural racial logics. These expressions in turn have shaped the historical memory of Mount Carmel Cemetery and the contexts in which it was/is embedded.

Another artifact of segregation is the cemetery itself. There are two main reasons that Mount Carmel Cemetery is an artifact of segregation. Firstly, Mount Carmel Cemetery is itself evidence of the ordering of physical and social spaces based on race during the Jim Crow period. For example, in the landscape, there is evidence not only of the Black cemetery, but also of a white cemetery further down the road. We can further assume that if there was a Black church within the cemetery, that there also would have been a white church somewhere in the town as well to serve the needs of the respective congregations. These social institutions, echoed in the landscape today, reinforce the reality that Ehren operated under segregation based on the color line, characteristic of the nineteenth and twentieth century. In our present turn towards the recovery of the historical site of Mount Carmel Cemetery, we cannot overlook the fact that the cemetery is evidence of this organization since the historicity of the site and our understanding of it are grounded in this reality and the consequences of this for its positionality within historical memory today. Secondly, Mount Carmel Cemetery as a memory place where memory, "crystallizes and secretes itself," offers a unique and critical glimpse into the histories it has

come to represent and the racial logics that structured them.[140] For example, from the remaining memorials we can compile information from census records to try to piece together the lives of some of the individuals interred there and how their lives would have been entangled with race, space, and place. For example, though the memorial is in large fragments today, the memorial of L.G. Bowen reveals the interconnected nature of social networks in the community.

Figure 6 Image of remnants of Bowen gravestone (left); Screenshot of 3D model of remnants of Bowen gravestone (right).

Lonnie Goodman Bowen (L.G. Bowen) started as a young man working in turpentine, married to his wife Georgie Washington Bowen in 1901. The couple came to Ehren shortly after 1920, and buried one of their young sons, just nine days old, in 1924 in Mount Carmel Cemetery, though the memorial is not visible today. The Bowens were a well-known Black family in the Ehren community, with Lonnie Goodman Bowen (L.G. Bowen) serving as a school trustee for the Ehren Colored School along with Frank Phillips, an undertaker for Mount Carmel Cemetery and the same man mentioned in the earlier newspaper clipping. By 1930, Lonnie age 55, was working as a laborer doing odd jobs, but living in a house he owned with his wife Georgie age 45, while his son Leo age 21 worked as a laborer on the railroad, and his youngest children,

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[140] Nora, Pierre. "Between Memory and History: Les Lieux de Mémoire," *Representations, 26, Special Issue: Memory and Counter-Memory* (Spring 1989): 7.

daughter Mozelle age 13, son George age 11, and daughter Catherine age 9, attended school. In addition to being a school trustee and doing odd jobs around the community, L.G. Bowen also connects with other members of the community. For example, his wife, Georgie Washington Bowen, was the sister of Effie Washington Marshall, who was the wife of one of the pastors at Mount Carmel AME church noted on the historical signage, Christopher Columbus Marshall. This Effie Marshall was the same person mentioned in the 1922 *Dade City Banner* article on the Black community of Ehren. The Marshalls seem to have been in Ehren since 1900, with Christopher initially working in the turpentine industry as a chipper. By 1910, Mr. Marshall age 41 was working as farmer and a preacher at the AME church and his wife Effie age 36 had ten children with five surviving: Elephine age 16, Beulah age 14, Annie age 10, Flourine age 6, and Hattie age 4, all daughters. Additionally, a death certificate of George Washington, an elderly widowed farmer, lists Christopher Columbus Marshall as the informant and reveals an unexpected kinship. George Washington was the father of Georgie Washington, wife of L.G. Bowen, and Effie Washington, wife of Christopher Columbus Marshall. Though his memorial is not visible today, George Washington is likely buried in Mount Carmel Cemetery. Even in this brief sketch entanglements of race, space, and place emerge. For one, all these stories center around the place of Mount Carmel Cemetery, as the locus of both community identity and a reinforcement of racial segregation. Secondly, these connections point to the marks of racial segregation in the social fabric beyond the cemetery, such as Ehren Colored School, the AME church, and the available labor roles that these individuals were able to inhabit. These entanglements both within and beyond the space and place of the cemetery help contextualize not just the history of the cemetery itself but also how the entanglements led to the deterioration of the physical site and its position in historical memory which have prompted its preservation

today. In this case, Mount Carmel Cemetery serves as a heuristic through which to understand underlying effects of racial logics, local history, and social networks and experiences of individuals. The current shift towards projects of historical recovery has the opportunity to highlight these connections if they engage not only with the site and images of it, but also with the larger historical realities and stories of individuals that add texture to the historical significance of Mount Carmel specifically and harken us to recenter similar stories at other historic Black cemeteries nationally.

This dynamic is both complemented and complicated by the digitization of the cemetery and its memorials. For instance, the 3D models of Mount Carmel Cemetery and its memorials have the potential to make artifacts of segregation visible however they should also give us pause to critically address the realities of how space was organized and the afterlives of this organization on public memory. In other words, as the digital brings a new/virtual visibility to the cemetery, it must simultaneously engage the artifacts of segregation and accompanying racial logics within the presentation and interpretation of the site. The creation of digital models can be seen as 'artifacts of the aftermath of segregation.' The marginalization of Mount Carmel Cemetery over time reinforced by messages of exclusion impacted the condition of the site and public memory of it. Shifting racial logics of the present towards projects of recovery of marginalized history have led to the present project of digital preservation. To resist further obscuring the history of the site, these digital images must be used to also engage with the entanglements of race, space, and place which have impacted, and continue to impact, the memory and meaning of the remaining gravestones and the state of the cemetery today.

Chapter 3: Historical Narratives

The power of images and the entanglements of race, space, and place reveal that how we visualize and what we convey utilizing those visualizations impacts historical narratives and perceptions of these historic sites and the meanings already associated with them. The notion that digital preservation preserves 'the entire site,' place and significance, needs to be critically and historically addressed. While the digital data preserves the physical site through its derealization, creating a recorded database of the physical conditions of the memorials at the time of their rendering, the stories of individuals memorialized by these stones are the very things that get left out of digital preservation projects. Thus, the methods of preservation, in order to realize their purported aims of recovery, require critique. To be truly productive towards the work of historical recovery, of site and history, we need to enact a double visibility, through the combination of digital images and textual sources. The digital images alone produce a new visibility of the sites, reasserting the perceptibility and positionality of the physical site in historical consciousness but leave out the impact of racial logics, historical contexts, and the stories of the individuals buried within it. The stories of individuals are central to understanding the historical site of Mount Carmel Cemetery, and if we do not connect them with digital images of the site, we allow their memories to remain buried. By leaving out the stories of individuals and not attending to the entanglements of race, space, and place within the landscape and reproduced by the image, this act of preservation also becomes an act of erasure that further obscures the historical significance of these sites. For example, images obscure social and

familial connections that are no longer preserved in the landscape today. Images also omit connections between the site of the cemetery and the racial organization of the dead and how this racial organization was expanded beyond the cemetery. The entanglements of race, space, and place both within and beyond the cemetery help contextualize not just the history of the cemetery itself but how these in turn have impacted the position of the site in historical memory and led to its deterioration, which have prompted its preservation today. In essence, a lack of contextual information obscures the complex historical realities out of which the mortuary materials and contexts have arisen and from which digital representations were created. As guides through conversations on the lingering effects of racial discourses made evident by the rediscovery of and silencing imposed on historic Black cemeteries, historians need to take a critical approach not only to how we are creating digital data but also how we are sharing it and what we are conveying about the digitized material culture and its historical contexts. These narratives extend the visibility of the image to make the stories of these invisible people explicit in our understanding of the cemetery. Only by combining and contextualizing digital images, historical contexts, and the stories of individuals connected with the cemetery can such projects be made truly productive towards the work of historical recovery. Thus, to truly perform the work of historical recovery through the production of visibility afforded by digital images, we need to understand that the landscape and images of them recall past and present racial logics, historical contexts, and local history. We then need to make these implicit connections within the landscape and images of them known in order to build our present understanding of the past and its contemporary consequences for historical memory.

People of Mount Carmel Cemetery

In the following sections I offer vignettes of some of the individuals buried in Mount Carmel Cemetery whose memorials remain visible in the landscape today. I also offer vignettes of individuals who are known to be associated with the Black community but whose markers are no longer visible. The aim of these vignettes is an effort of recuperation even as it comes to terms with the reality that it cannot redeem or rescue the stories of the recorded individuals any more than it can those that have been left unrecorded in archival sources and who are invisible in the mortuary landscape today. Engaging with these stories of individuals helps to extend the project of digital preservation towards a project of historical recovery that contextualizes the historical significance of Mount Carmel Cemetery and recenters narratives that have been historically marginalized.

Minnie Blocker (1876-1954)

*Figure 7 Image of gravestone of Minnie Blocker (left);
Screenshot of 3D model of gravestone of Minnie Blocker (right).*

Minnie presents us with a unique window into life in Ehren because her life span encompasses much of the community's history and she is the last known burial in Mount Carmel Cemetery. Before coming to Ehren, Minnie Blocker was born Minnie Humphry to Lydia Walker

Humphry (later Lydia Gibbs) and Doc or Ruf or Rough Humphrey in Monticello in Jefferson County, Florida. She was one of at least four other children, including a sister Pauline Humphrey married to a man named Henry Hardy who worked as a farm laborer, and brother Tal Humphrey. According to the 1900 US Census, her father owned his own home and worked the land as a farm laborer selling crops to provide for the family and make a living. The family seemed to be doing well for themselves and a year later in 1901, Minnie was married to a Saul Blocker in Jefferson County and the couple moved to Lamont. By 1910, the couple had four children: Lyda (Lydia) Blocker, daughter, born in 1901 age 9 in 1910, Hardie Blocker, son, born in 1906 age 4 in 1910, Alton Blocker, son, born in 1908 age 2 in 1910, and Ruth Blocker, daughter born in 1910, age 0 in 1910. Saul, Minnie, and Lydia worked as farm laborers though Lydia had attended school at some point since September 1909. Sometime between 1910 and 1920 Minnie and her children moved to Ehren, Florida and her husband Saul died. In the 1920 census Minnie is listed as the head of household living with two of her children, ten-year-old son Allen and seven-year-old son Doc, as well as her sister Pauline who is listed as single. Her other children seemed to have either moved out or died. Her daughter Lydia was married to Solomon Boatright, son of A.D. Boatright, on February 4, 1923, in Pasco County, Florida, where the young couple continued to live. Tragically, three years later, January 2, 1926, their son Solomon Boatright Jr. was stillborn and just two years later October 15, 1928, Lydia died at the age of twenty-eight, leaving her husband, mother, and other family to mourn her. According to death certificates, Lydia and her baby are buried in Mount Carmel Cemetery likely near Minnie and her parents in the suspected family plot.[141] By 1930 Minnie in her forties was listed as widowed, living with her son Doc aged sixteen who started working as laborer at the railroad. Her sister Pauline was

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[141] The exact location and extent of this family plot is unknown today, but current spatial layout in combination with census, marriage, and death records and common practices at the time suggest such an arrangement.

listed as the head of the household and was also widowed and living with her working as a cook likely in town. Now Pauline owned the house on Ehren Cutoff, and it was valued at $200. It seems Pauline was able to read/write but neither Minnie nor her son Doc were able to though this seems to change census to census.[142]

In 1940, Minnie is listed as a lodger along with her sister Pauline in the house of William Moore Brown, a grove worker along with his fourteen-year-old grandson Calvin Phillips. As she entered her seventies, Minnie did not appear to be working, at least according to the census. It is likely that she may have been active in the social workings of what remained of the Black community as they adapted to the changing economic structures in the area exacerbated by WWII and the transformation of the state. In 1950, roles seemed to be switched, with Pauline listed as the head of household, and William Moore Brown and Minnie listed as the lodgers.[143] William Moore Brown is now listed as working as a laborer at the 'Gardens Tourist Attraction.' Given the layout of the area and the changing economic centers of the town, it is likely that this garden attraction was none other than Dupree Gardens, a bit up the road from Mount Carmel Cemetery. Dupree Gardens was a major tourist destination for the area and attracted many visitors for its many botanical gardens. Minnie's work status is categorized as a 'U' which meant she was unable to work. We do not know why Minnie was unable to work, at least in a capacity that the census enumerator recognized, but perhaps it was old age. We do know that in 1954, Minnie passed away and was laid to rest as one of the final burials in Mount Carmel Cemetery.

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[142] In some census records Minnie is listed as a 'graduate' but in others such as the 1940 US Census the highest grade of school she is listed as completing is zero. These discrepancies may imply a difference between formal education standards over time structured by segregation of Jim Crow.

[143] William Moore Brown would later marry Pauline in November 1964 and then pass away February 9, 1965, at the age of sixty-one. He is suspected to be buried in Mount Carmel Cemetery, though the final resting place of him and Pauline remains unknown.

Minnie endured segregation, WWI, the Great Depression, WWII, rapid industrial and

economic development in the South, the Florida land boom and bust, as well as structural

inequalities and personal difficulties such as a lack of educational and occupational opportunities

structured by Jim Crow racism, the loss of her house and the death of loved ones such as her

husband, her children, and friends and family. She witnessed the changing economic

infrastructure of Ehren as its major industries transformed from sawmills, turpentine, and

railroads to citrus and commercial agriculture from the early to mid-1900s and witnessed the

social ramifications of these transformations that resulted in the transplantation of Ehren's Black

community to surrounding towns as they became pushed out by industries and a growing white

middle class. By 1950, the sawmill had long burned down, citrus groves and cow pastures now

punctuated the landscape where great pines and cypress once grew, the Mount Carmel African

Methodist Episcopal Church lay in wooden heaps in the cemetery, the Ehren Colored School and

Oak Grove Baptist church were gone, forcing students to be bussed and parishioners to move to

Dade City until desegregation in 1964. At the time of Minnie's death in 1954, the town she had

lived in most of her life ceased to exist. The fragments of the past became incorporated in a

collection of small towns known as Land O Lakes.

Lydia Gibbs (1861-1936) and W.G. Gibbs (Unknown-1935)
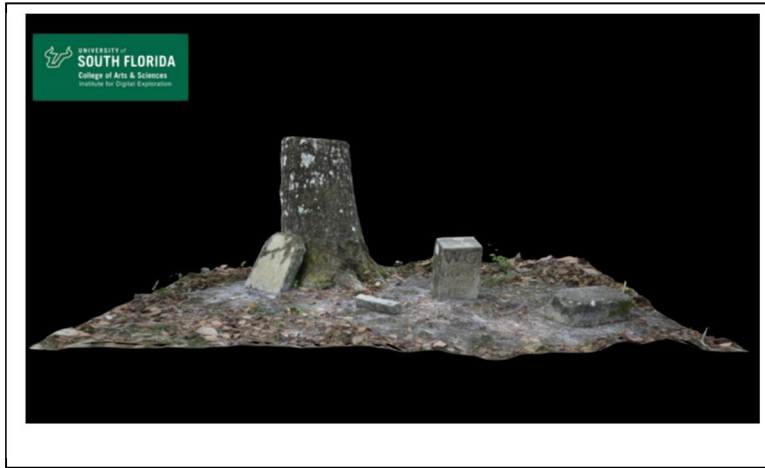
Figure 8 Screenshot of 3D model of gravestones of
Lydia Gibbs and W.G. Gibbs.

Lydia Gibbs was born in 1861 in Jefferson County, Florida as Lydia Walker. She is listed as having married Rufus Humphrey in 1879 according to a marriage license. In the 1885 Florida Census, she is listed as the 28-year-old wife of farmer Ruf Humphrey age 36, with daughter Minnie age 8, son Tall age 6, daughter Paul age 5, and mother Camilia Walker age 60. This Minnie would grow up to be Minnie Humphrey Blocker of Ehren, Florida. In 1900 the family was in Lamont, Jefferson County, Florida an area known for its freedmen contracts and sharecropping ventures to support the region's agriculture.[144] It appears that Rufus worked as a farm laborer but did so on land that he owned as opposed to working under contract. Shortly thereafter, Ruf must have died as he is not listed in future census records. The children seemed to have grown and moved out though the 1900 census does indicate Lydia lost at least one child. When Lydia was older, she married W.G. Gibbs though it is unclear when.[145] W.G. Gibbs or Wallace G. Gibbs was born in South Carolina likely into slavery as there is no mention of parents

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[144] State Library and Archives of Florida. "Jefferson County Freedmen's Contracts." *Florida Memory.* https://www.floridamemory.com/discover/historical_records/freedmen/.
[145] Lydia and Wallace likely married sometime between 1900 and 1920, as the 1920 US Census shows them living together with Minnie.

or family in census or death records.[146] In the 1920 US Census Lydia and Wallace are listed as living with Minnie as she is head of household.[147] Lydia age 60 is listed as working as a 'washer woman' at the sawmill and Wallace is listed as a laborer at the sawmill.[148] There is no trace of Lydia and Wallace in the 1930 US Census in Ehren, however, the pair appear in the 1930 US Census for Tarpon Springs, Florida. This migration appears typical for many of the Black residents in Ehren who became dispersed into surrounding towns following economic depression and the closure of the sawmill. Wallace is listed as working in a wood yard possibly as a proprietor. The couple also appear in the 1935 FL Census for Clearwater, FL. Wallace is listed as a laborer and Lydia as working at home. It is difficult to say why the older couple moved around, perhaps because of waning economic opportunities or perhaps it was for medical care near cities that would treat Black patients. According to his death certificate Wallace died December 27, 1935, of Tuberculosis. Lydia soon followed him dying March 27, 1936, of the flu. The two are commemorated with hand inscribed rectangular blocks of concrete in Mount Carmel Cemetery. The position of the memorials today suggests that they were buried near one another and close to Minnie, suggesting a family plot.

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[146] There appear to be few records of W.G. Gibbs prior to 1920 and his marriage to Lydia.

[147] Of note, the enumerator listed Minnie as male which at first made me think this was not the same Minnie I had been following, however, there are too many overlapping details, her children and sister, for this to be a different person. It may just be an error on the enumerator's part or an act of bias to not list a woman (a widowed woman at that) as head of household. In fact, Wallace Gibbs is listed as a second head of household under the same roof, while Lydia is listed as mother.

[148] Of note, Minnie is also listed as a 'washer woman' at the sawmill. I am not sure what they were washing at the mill, perhaps they were washing the clothes of the men who were living in the company houses since most of the boarders were single young men who given their long work hours may not have had time to wash. Minnie and Lydia were listed as wage workers so Müeller must have been paying them just like any other sawmill worker.
Other Black women are listed as 'washer woman' but for a 'private family' which given the economic structures of the town, were likely wealthier white families either in town or from one of the surrounding towns.

Infant Horton Daughter (1903)

Figure 9 Image of gravestone of Horton Infant (left);
Screenshot of 3D model of gravestone of Horton Infant (right)

The infant daughter of T and M Horton was born December 23, 1903, and we can assume died shortly sometime after. In a sad irony, one of the individuals with the shortest life has come to have one of the more permanent markers in the cemetery. There are no corresponding death or census records for the baby girl or her parents, presenting us with a handful of different scenarios. One the one hand, her parents may have arrived in Ehren before the US 1900 Census and left before the US 1910 Census. They may have also been young or newlywed, explaining a lack of a joint trace in previous census records. What we can learn about the Hortons, we can learn from their daughter's memorial. She was loved and the family chose to express, and had to the means to express, that love through the commission of the carved gravestone.

Eddie Lewis (1892 – 1906)

Figure 10 Image of gravestone of Eddie Lewis; Screenshot of 3D model of gravestone of Eddie Lewis (right).

Edward 'Eddie' Lewis was a young boy of fourteen years when he passed away. It is unclear what claimed Eddie's life so soon, as there are no corresponding death records. We do know from census records that Eddie was part of a large family. In the 1900 US Census, the Lewis family included: father Robert Lewis age 33, mother Jane Lewis age 28, daughter Ida Lewis age 13, son Robert Lewis age 10, son Edward Lewis age 8, son Motine age 5, and son Abraham age 3 months. The family rented their home with Eddie's father working exclusively in the log yard at the sawmill to support the family. Eddie's father, mother, and older sister could all read and write at least speaking to some education prior to arriving in Ehren. It seems the family after Eddie's death decided to leave Ehren. The 1910 US Census puts the family in Clearwater, with Eddie's father now working as a blacksmith with his own shop, his mother as a laundress, his brother Robert age 20 working as a laborer at a sawmill, his brother Motine age 18 as a laborer doing odd jobs around town, his brother Abraham age 10 in school, and there is also a younger brother John age 6 in 1910, making him just two years old when Eddie died. Jane Lewis is listed as having seven children with five alive at the time of the 1910 census. We know Eddie

had since passed, so perhaps the other child was his older sister Ida, though since she was older, she may have been married off and the other death may be a different sibling for which we have no record. What we do know is that while the family's time in Ehren may have been brief, the memorial they left to commemorate Eddie has remained and stands as a testament to many a forgotten story.

The Bowens and the Marshalls

While there is not a clearly visible gravestone in Mount Carmel Cemetery today, there are fragments of a memorial evident with letters that suggest there was once a plot to commemorate one of the Bowen family members, if not the family.[149] The Bowens were a well-known Black family in the Ehren community, with Lonnie Goodman Bowen (L.G. Bowen) serving as a school trustee along with Frank Phillips for the Ehren Colored School.[150]

Figure 11 A photocopy of school registration at the Ehren Colored School for 1930-1931 is mostly comprised of Dawkins, Marshalls,
and Bowens children along with the granddaughter of Frank Philips.

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[149] See Figures 10-11.
[150] The Ehren Colored School was created in 1901 after the community petitioned the school board for a school to teach the children of what was at the time a larger Black population tied to work at the Ehren sawmill. A photocopy of school registration at the Ehren Colored School for 1930-1931 is mostly comprised of Dawkins, Marshalls, and Bowens children along with the granddaughter of Frank Philips. See MacManus, Elizabeth Riegler, Susan A. MacManus, Richard Mathews, Ana. Montalvo, Sharon D. Ostermann, and Elizabeth Riegler MacManus. Going, Going-- Almost Gone: Lutz-Land O' Lakes Pioneers Share Their Precious Memories. Tampa, Fla: University of Tampa Press, 2011.p.208.

The 1930 US census lists Lonnie age 55, working as a laborer doing odd jobs, wife

Georgie age 45, son Leo age 21 working as a laborer on the railroad, daughter Mozelle age 13,

son George age 11, and daughter Catherine age 9, all living in a home that Lonnie owned. The

1950 US census lists Lonnie as a seventy-five-year-old farmer. Lonnie Bowen would pass away

just a year later likely from old age. The Bowens family also reveals the interconnected nature of

social networks in the town. For example, the wife of L.G. Bowen, Georgie Washington Bowen,

was the sister of Effie Washington Marshall, who was the wife of one of the pastors at Mount

Carmel AME church noted on the historical signage, Christopher Columbus Marshall. The

Marshalls seem to have been in Ehren since 1900, with Christopher initially working in the

turpentine industry as a chipper. By 1910, Mr. Marshall age 41 was working as farmer and a

preacher at the AME church and his wife Effie age 36 had ten children with five surviving:

Elephine age 16, Beulah age 14, Annie age 10, Flourine age 6, and Hattie age 4, all daughters.

Christopher Columbus came to own his own farm according to the 1920 census and continued to

preach and work labor jobs with the sawmill. Tragically, according to his death certificate, he

was killed crossing the road while building the Number 5 Highway in 1925, leaving his wife

Effie to work their family farm and raise their seven surviving daughters and one son.

Figure 12 Picture of Byrl Dawkins circa 1940s on his vegetable cart, selling his produce in town. (No photo credit available, original image from Black Cemetery Network Mt. Carmel Cemetery page.)

Though there is no gravestone memorializing the Dawkins family in Mount Carmel, Bryl Dawkins is memorialized on the historical signage as one of the reverends in the Mount Carmel African American Methodist Episcopal Church which is said to have been adjacent to the cemetery, but which is no longer standing today.[151] Byrl and his wife Mary moved to Ehren in 1918 and had eleven of their thirteen children there. According to the 1920 US census Edward age 37 worked as a farmer on his own land and lived with his wife Mary age 27, son John age 13, daughter Drucilla age 9, son Bryl age 7, daughter Ellvera age 5, son Edward age 3, and daughter Evangelina age 1. By 1940, most of his children had grown or died, but Byrl and Mary continued to live and work on their farm with the youngest children, daughter Mary Lee age 19, son Reuben age 13, son Robert age 12, daughter Minneola age 9, daughter Nellie age 7, and daughter Ola Mae age 4. Byrl Dawkins provides a unique insight into some of the economic and

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[151] See appendix for visual and link to 3D model of a wooden structure which is presumed to be the remains of the church on the cemetery grounds today.

social structures of Ehren. For example, he came to Ehren and started working in the sawmill for a dollar a day to support his family. He eventually saved up money and bought land valued at $150 and began farming to supplement his income. He eventually left the sawmill and became a farmer full time while also preaching at the Mount Carmel AME Church and other churches in the area. He was known to drive a wagon into town and go house to house selling his produce to neighbors and millworkers. Dawkins continued to live and work in Ehren until his death on June 18, 1953, but was survived by his wife Mary Dawkins who lived to 101, until passing April 12, 1992, and several children and their families. Descendants still live in the area today.

Conclusion

The proposed digitization of historic Black cemeteries listed on the Black Cemetery Network is an exciting path forward to continue to identify, preserve, research, and recenter these sites, contexts, and communities. The digitization of Mount Carmel Cemetery demonstrated the feasibility of conducting digital preservation work of historic Black cemeteries with similar levels of extensive physical deterioration and dispersal of descendant communities. This digital public mortuary archaeology approach, while a valuable tool for preserving and cultivating an understanding of the histories of Black cemeteries, must be understood critically to bring an awareness to its implicit prescriptions of value and meaning to ensure that the marginalized histories of historic Black cemeteries are respectfully represented. Moving forward, through continued collaborations and the combination of a digital public mortuary archaeology and critical digital humanities approach, we can place historic Black cemeteries which have been historically marginalized places of public memory, more resolutely within conversations of local, state, and national history, by combining digital tools with historical research to resist their erasure and preserve these sites and attend to their histories and the stories of individuals buried within.

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3D Digitization of Mount Carmel Historical Cemetery (Pasco County) FINAL REPORT.

       September 29, 2023.

Appendices

Gravestone Model	Legible Text	IDEx Code	Sketchfab Unique Links
	Eddie/ Son of/ R.M. & M.V. Lewis/ Born/ Mar. 17 1892/ Died/ Nov. 8. 1906	MCC23.001	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-eddie-lewis-mcc23001-542d3951d0484377a6c0190d59ec4c37
	-	MCC23.002	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-unknown-individual-mcc23002-98271615769441a2affbd3f317598ca9
	-	MCC23.003	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-unknown-individual-mcc23003-1705ece1fa554ce789c78701d3fd824e

	Har(d?)	MCC23.004	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-har-mcc23004-049cf0f3aebf49c09db6461d11f190bd
	-	MCC23.005	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-unknown-individual-mcc23005-49b35a0cc937405386bb883e18402aa0
	--G. Bo--	MCC23.006	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-unknown-individual-mcc23006-fb2213008a6b474ba434fec02a502436
	—nie Blocker/--11, 1876/--26, 1954	MCC23.007	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-minnie-blocker-mcc23007-1d7ff707b71f4f47b89a4920b3a0b7b6

		Lidia Gibbs/ Born----/1861 W.G./Gibbs/ Dec 27/1935	MCC23.008 and MCC23.009	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tombs-of-lidia-and-wg-gibbs-mcc23008009-94ec88787ba94ad7a8b9388aa7589a8a
		Infant/ Dau. Of/ T.&.M. Horton/ Born/ Dec. 23. 1903	MCC23.010	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/tomb-of-horton-infant-mcc23010-1e2a98bd8a8b42e3a71535734b249611
		-	MCC23.011	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/wooden-structure-f570285571d6421a9a74f7e03881e05a
		Hold fast to dreams, for if dreams die, life is a broken winged bird that cannot fly.' – Langston Hughes. Blanch's dream to preserve Mount Carmel Cemetery created a lasting legacy for future generations: a historic place of peace and reflection.	MCC23.012	https://sketchfab.com/3d-models/plaque-52e06c64909f421b956c576aa933313c

Appendix B:
Screenshot of Genealogy Chart of
Individuals Buried at Mount Carmel Cemetery