COLLABORATION AND COMPROMISE: THE EFFECT OF FILM-INDUCED TOURISM ON THE INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC PLACES

by

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(Under the Direction of JAMES REAP)

ABSTRACT

Connections between fictional narratives and real places have been drawn since the earliest days of literary tourism, a phenomenon that has since carried over to the medium of film. These cultural influences can impact the way that visitors perceive and interpret historic sites that have been used by the film industry. This thesis intends to look at the effect of film-induced tourism on historic sites from a preservation perspective using national and international standards for evaluation, and will draw conclusions about the potential benefits and drawbacks thereof

INDEX WORDS:

Historic Preservation, Site Interpretation, Cultural Tourism, Film Tourism, Cultural Landscapes, Integrity, Authenticity, National Register of Historic Places, Senoia, Covington, Georgia, New Orleans, Louisiana, Hermann-Grima House, Gallier House, Newton County Courthouse, Collective Memory, Horror, The Walking Dead, The Vampire Diaries, American Horror Story

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DEDICATION

To my parents, whose unflagging and unconditional support has enabled me to further my education and pursue work about which I am most passionate. To my friends Rebecca McManus, Gina Smith, and Lesa Miller, who tirelessly gave feedback and acted as reliable sounding boards for this thesis. To my high school Western Civilization teacher Tim Hornor, who fostered a deep love of history in me and without whom none of this would have been possible.

PREFACE

This body of work came out of the author's personal experiences working in both the film industry and the field of historic preservation, the primary impetus being the willful demolition of Glenridge Hall in the author's hometown. Built in 1929, the Tudor-style manor was renovated in the 1980s by owner Joseph Mayson, whose intention was to have the house serve the community and act as a historic asset in Sandy Springs, Georgia. The city has lacked a preservation plan before and since its separation from North Atlanta.

Considered to be on the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation's "in danger" list for the last two decades, Glenridge Hall was used as a prominent set piece in the hit television show *The Vampire Diaries* for multiple seasons, serving as the historic home of two of the main characters. In spite of massive public outcry from both preservationists and fans of the show, in 2015 Joseph Mayson's daughter sold the house to a developer, and the estate was razed to become a mixed-use campus for apartments, retail, and a Mercedes Benz headquarters.

In light of the loss of something with such intrinsic community value it is important to recognize that people outside of the historic preservation sphere related to and rallied for the deliverance of a structure of which they might not have otherwise been aware. Consumable media shapes public perception of the world and everything in it – if people imbue a real place with the details of a fictional narrative that they know and love, the reach of preservation is expanded. This ephemeral connection should be celebrated and cultivated if historic preservation is to successfully move forward into the 21st century.

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I. Introduction

Pilgrimage to a site of personal or religious import is not a novel concept. Literary tourism, the journey to a place featured in a work of fiction or related to its author, is a centuries-old pastime supported by loyal readers interested in the way that writing influences a place, and vice versa. As literary tourism relies heavily on the popularity of the work and its author, it is an exceptionally convenient advantage that many literary tours are based out of a museum dedicated to the writer, a site inextricably entwined with their reputation and history. What of those sites that are smaller, locally significant? Those places that are not Shakespeare's birthplace in Stratford-upon-Avon, the Margaret Mitchell House in Atlanta, or Sherlock Holmes' flat at Baker Street in London? They rely on luck and the casual passer-by, online advertisements and the chance that they might be a top result in someone's search engine - better still, exposure on the small or silver screens.

In a similar fashion to the literary sphere film has opened up an entirely new avenue for tourism, allowing another variety of secular pilgrimage to sweep to the forefront, endorsed by their visuals and stories. Successful endeavors are by and large connected to those epics that span sequels and trilogies, or a television series that has lasted several seasons' worth of episodes, thereby permitting the audience to develop empathy for and connections to both characters and plotlines. Film tourism - a pattern that drives visitors to see screened places during or after the production of a film or television serial - impacts a site economically, from a material and financial standpoint, and psychologically, when a visitor's experience is emotionally and personally gratifying. Landscape and film are social constructs that rely on vision for their very definition; it is this vision that assists the audience in defining a sense of

place, in the same way that a play's backdrop establishes the location and mood of a scene.¹ Cinematic landscapes are not strictly indicative of the moment in which we are currently living, but can also recall our general condition prior to their representation.

Much like those tourists who spend several hours at Thomas Jefferson's Monticello to learn and appreciate, the sense of belonging to a group of like-minded film location visitors is cognitive, based on a collective memory from which each individual traces their own attachments. We are not strangers to heritage and cultural tourism, nor are we unfamiliar with the intangible connections people draw from their own selves to sites where their favorite fictional character lived or worked. What happens when historic sites are used for film, when new stories are told in places that already had strong stories. The primary question this thesis intends to address is: What is the effect of film and the film industry on the integrity and interpretation of historic sites?

This thesis seeks to examine three case studies that meet very specific criteria: these historic sites are actively being used by and for the film industry, have seen recent increases in their tourist economies, and have vastly differing results.

The research will contribute examinations of three distinctly different case studies in very similar locations. The conclusions and analyses drawn from these will summarily serve as a springboard for future papers on the benefits of the film industry, and propose recommendations to similar towns and sites on how to reap the advantages of working with film, protecting and funding the historic value of their resources without compromising their integrity.

¹ Chris Lukinbeal, "Cinematic Landscapes," Journal of Cultural Geography Fall/Winter (2005), 8.

II. Methodology

The first step in constructing this thesis consisted of a more thorough and comprehensive literature review. Research was conducted on landscape use in film, analysis of the canons in which the aforementioned shows and films function, film tourism, studies on nostalgia, place attachment, and collective memory, and some of the economic benefits of the film industry's association with historic sites. While there are hundreds of articles in tourism science regaling the virtues or disadvantages of film tourism and a similar amount on cultural landscapes, these subjects did not often intersect. It was concluded that much of the research would rely upon visuals and on-site observation, data gleaned from firsthand experience of places that were both historic and served as venues for the film industry.

In selecting the case studies a number of criteria required fulfillment:

- 1.) Each case study must be in (or consist of) a relatively small historic site²
- 2.) Each case study must be a historic place on its own merit³
- 3.) Each case study must be accessible to the researcher for on-site observation
- 4.) Each case study must be home to a popular filming project⁴
- 5.) Each case study must have a tourist economy

The above criteria were chosen for ease of access and on-site study, and for the ability of the author to assess what physical changes had been made to a historic site upon being influenced by the presence of the film industry. Case studies were to be evaluated on integrity per Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the National Register of Historic Places Criteria for Evaluation. The initial list of potential case studies that fell within these

² Each "site" could not take up or encompass more than 1,000 square feet, and had to be located in relatively walk-able and pedestrian-friendly towns.

³ A case study must be historic prior to the presence of a filming crew and company, not as a result of the filming itself.

⁴ "Popular" here meaning host to a television serial with fan followings in the millions, and filmed within the last ten years.

parameters are as follows:

The Walking Dead (television serial, Georgia, 2010)

Big Fish (film, Alabama, 2003)

American Horror Story: Coven (television serial, Louisiana, 2013)

True Blood (television serial, Louisiana, 2008)

The Vampire Diaries (television serial, Georgia, 2009)

Midnight in the Garden of Good and Evil (film, Georgia, 1997)

True Detective (television serial, Louisiana, 2014)

After preliminary research it was decided that popular television serials would be better as case studies than films, as multiple episodes allow audiences to become more attached to the characters and stories. In producing the list it was also evident that the potential case studies shared a common theme of the "horror" or "thriller" genre. The list was then narrowed to consist of *The Walking Dead*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and *American Horror Story: Coven*, all of which met the criteria and are currently still in production. These places required visitation, onsite documentation and observation. Being on-site would also assist in the establishment of the images and aspects of the place that contribute to the overall effect of the film, and how perceptions of the fictional side of the site feed the perception of the reality of the site.

Initially, interviews with professionals in both film and historic preservation were considered to ascertain viewpoints on the changing climate of tourism and the interpretation of historic sites used for film, but it was at the on-site visit of the first case study (*The Walking Dead* in Senoia, Georgia) that this thesis changed direction from a strict quantitative approach to the financial and economic benefits of filming on a historic site, to a more qualitative examination of the interpretive strategies and adaptation of a historic site to cater to its audience. The reason for this is because while the economic benefits are undeniable, interpretation of place is a more tenuous subject, and one that looms over many schools of preservation thought.

-

⁵ This trend, along with the geographic locations of the case studies in Louisiana and Georgia, falls under the purview of the "Southern Gothic" aesthetic, a subgenre of Gothic fiction set in the Deep South.

III. Literature Review

The texts that served to frame this thesis followed a number of thematic trends; as to the author's knowledge there have been few to no prior studies on the effect that film has on the visual perception and interpretation of historic sites and places. There are, however, a number of tangentially related works on historic tourist cities, cultural landscapes, site interpretation, authenticity and integrity as per international and national standards, the novelty of film tourism and its growing industry, and modern culture's interest in "horror" as a genre.

Cultural Tourism

It is no simple feat to admit that what is available to the public now, through the media, is its own variety of culture. Media does shape public perception, however, and because of that has the ability to define places in which it occurs, or places that it presents to the public eye. Four texts on cultural tourism were examined, many with overlapping topics but providing case studies and guidelines for "successful" cultural and heritage tourism.

Bob McKercher and Hilary du Cros' *Cultural Tourism: The Partnership Between Tourism and Cultural Heritage Management* introduces critical underlying principles to tourism, better describing the actual nature of the activity. Daniela Angelina Jelinčić's *Cultural Tourism Goes Viral*, while primarily focused on the tourist activities and economy in southeast European countries, explores the virtual spaces available for cultural tourists and is a relevant text insofar as it explores an intangible approach of reaching out to an audience. *The Tourist City*, by Dennis R. Judd and Susan S. Fainstein, is comprised of four parts⁶ and discusses the commodification of historic cities and sites. Lastly, *The Tourist-Historic City: Retrospect and Prospect of Managing*

⁶ These parts are as follows: I. The Political Economy of Tourism, II. Constructing Cities as Theme Parks, III. Converting Cities into Tourist Sites, and IV. Tourism Strategies.

the Heritage City by G.J. Ashworth and J.E. Tunbridge, looks at the scope of heritage tourism, how it is modeled within cities, and the motivations thereof and the uses and *users* of the tourist historic city.

Cultural Landscapes

In acknowledging that film and media like it is indicative of a particular culture, one can make a shallow jump to identifying media-influenced sites as cultural landscapes. One of the primary works that examined landscape and interpretation in an abstract light is *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time* by John Brinckerhoff Jackson, tackling an esoteric look at the perception of cities and towns. Jackson's analysis acts as an examination of human perspective in towns and small communities, which assisted in framing the analysis of the case studies. Martin LeFebvre's *On Landscape in Narrative Cinema* and Chris Lukinbeal's *Cinematic Landscapes*, both also abstracts, describe the bond between narrative and place, a crucial element of interpretation for historic places like the case studies in this thesis.

Site Interpretation

Tilden Freeman's *Principles of Interpretation* is the widely regarded standard for site interpretation in the United States, and was utilized extensively in examining the author's case studies. It consists of six principles as follows, and assisted both in framing the observational data available to the author upon site visits, and evaluating the interpretation of the sites as they present to visitors.

- 1.) Any interpretation that does not somehow relate to what is being displayed or described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.
- 2.) Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.
- 3.) Interpretation is an art which combines many arts whether the materials presented are scientific, historical or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.
- 4.) The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

- 5.) Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.
- 6.) Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

While every aspect of Tilden's *Principles* may not necessarily be applicable to the express cases listed within this thesis, it was important to the author to identify them or the lack thereof present at the case study sites.

Authenticity & Integrity

Standards of authenticity are taken from the *Venice Charter* of 1964 and its approach to maintaining the genuine or undisputed original status of monuments and sites. This question of *what is original?* is particularly relevant to the observational data gathered on the case studies, and assists in determining what qualifies for authenticity. "It is our duty to hand [monuments and sites] on in the full richness of their authenticity," the charter states, going on to define what is appropriate for conservation, restoration, and the maintenance thereof. However, the *Venice Charter* does not entail more modern concerns regarding the social implications of a changing site, reversible restoration, or finances.

Standards for integrity are taken from the *Secretary of the Interior's* Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties, which defines integrity as a careful maintaining of the original fabric (material) of a building or place, ⁸ and also from The National Register Bulletin's *Criteria for Evaluation*. There, integrity is described as follows: the assessment of integrity for properties considered for information potential depends on the data requirements of the applicable research design ... it is important that the significant data contained in the property remain sufficiently

⁷ "International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites," (ICOMOS, 1964)

Almost simultaneously, the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards'* particular version of integrity also encompasses the ephemeral aspects of the "association" and "feeling" criteria present in the criteria for nominating a historic property to the National Register of Historic Places.

intact to yield the expected important information, if the appropriate study techniques are to be employed." In this purposefully vague definition, one is meant to assess the integrity of a site, building, or monument on a strictly case-by-case basis.

Film Tourism

The primary works on the burgeoning industry of film tourism most often consisted of the psychology behind the intrigue in the tourist sciences – as this is not a psychology study it was critical to analyze how the interests of the film location tourist coincided with the interests of the cultural tourist. The following texts tended to talk more about the on-site film tourism experiences as empirical studies, but contributed the discussion on the emotional attachment that preservationists identify as "feeling" and "association": *Film Tourism – Evolution, Prospects, and Progress* by Joanne Connell, *Audience Involvement and Film Tourism Experiences:*Emotional Places, Emotional Experiences by Sangyum Kim, and The Experiences of Film Location Tourists by Stefan Roesch.

The Experiences of Film Location Tourists, by Stefan Roesch, served as one of the most helpful secondary resources: it purports that "the general tourist experience is constituted by the combination of its constructed image, the individual perception of this image and its subsequent on-site consumption and experience." Critical to the analysis this idea of a blurred perception of reality – between what is real on-site and what is not, or what is historic and what has been changed – contributes to the examination of material realness explored within the case studies. Roesch examines three previously identified reactions at a site of filming: "real/unreal, amusement/purpose, and community/isolation." As specific as these reactions sound, they

⁹ "The National Register Bulletin: Criteria for Evaluation." (U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1990) 23.

¹⁰ Roesch, Stefan. *The Experiences of Film Location Tourists*. (Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2009.) 104.

Roesch, The Experiences of Film Location Tourists, 104.

allow for a tremendous number of vagueries, but all coincide with the tourist experience in different amounts. The conclusion is that reactions are subjective, but can be guided in a particular direction by the presentation of a site or resource.

A singular article of overlapping subjects discussed the heritage tourism for an expressly historic (period) film and examined authenticity: *Braveheart-ed Ned Kelly: Historic Films, Heritage Tourism and Destination Image* by Warick Frost. This text in particular was instrumental in looking at tourism development at a preexisting historic site, but authenticity was defined as best communicating what was most accurate in the film, as opposed to the original site.

The Appeal of Horror

Lastly – why is horror attractive? A fascination with the macabre and its influences in cinema is perhaps derived from the same desire drivers have to look back at a car accident on the road. It was noted upon creating a list of potential case studies that the predominant theme was "horror," through no fault of the author's. This is what is filmed because people will willingly subject themselves to it. Paul Santilli's *Culture, Evil, and Horror* abstract discusses the genre and its appeal, and how it feeds into understanding culture – this is particularly relevant, as the trend of gratuitous horror in television serials has peaked tremendously in the last decade. *Academic Film Criticism, the Rhetoric of Crisis, and the Current State of American Horror Cinema* by Steffen Hantke takes a much different approach, critiquing modern horror films' failings: through this it is evident why horror as a genre has made a leap to television, and how this inevitably affects the sites in which it is filmed, more so than in "one-off" movies.

IV. Introduction to Case Studies

The three case studies, as listed before, consist of *The Walking Dead*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and *American Horror Story: Coven*. Each of the sites upon which these television serials are filmed have histories of their own in their towns: Senoia and Covington, Georgia, and New Orleans, Louisiana. The case studies are introduced individually, with visual descriptions, succinct histories of the surrounding area, and supplementary photographs. The television serial is then introduced second, with a description of the overarching plot and themes thereof, as well as accompanying relevant photographs or screen-captures. The topics explored with each case study will examine the following: how the television show presents the location or site, what is different about the location as depicted in the television show versus reality, and what is the same. Lastly, a brief analysis will explore what it means to have film or a filming influence present at the historic location.

While each case study will have its own short conclusion, a greater analysis will compare their respective successes and failures. This comparative analysis will also identify the interconnectivity of sites and film, and briefly explore the trend of horror media in these locales.

¹² A screen-capture is an image, not unlike a photograph, of whatever is currently present on a computer screen. As the bulk of television serial research involved actively watching the shows that are presented in the case studies, many of these serials were available online for viewing, and therefore images from them were attained with the screen-capture function.

V. Senoia, Georgia The Walking Dead Fight The Dead. Fear The Living. 13



Fig. 5.1: Author. *Historic Senoia from southern edge of town*. 2014. Photograph.

Senoia is a small town in Coweta County, Georgia, established on land allotted to Gerard M. Veal during the Fifth Land Lottery of 1827. South Carolinians from Newberry migrated into the sprawling 202.5 acres and many of the original families who made the journey still have descendants in residence. Not unlike the rest of Georgia at the time, the settled space became a site of agricultural production for cotton, corn, and livestock, although a cohesive community was not founded until 1860. Prior to then, the South Carolinians lived in a settlement roughly two miles away from present-day Senoia, which they called "Location." By 1864 most of the local residents had decided to move closer to the intersecting railroads within their region, and

¹³ The Walking Dead Season 3 tagline

Senoia became an established town (5.2). Georgia, an expansive state with few large rivers, was not a place easily settled at the time. Without the railroads – and therefore the ability to acquire goods and supplies from far away – Senoia would never have been founded. After the Civil War, Senoia continued to serve as a shipping outpost for agricultural produce.¹⁴

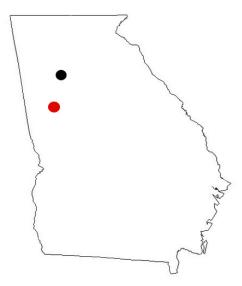


Fig. 5.2: Senoia's location (red) and relation to Atlanta, Georgia (black).

In 1905 it was officially chartered as a city, which is when the majority of the current downtown buildings were built, summarily giving the downtown area a distinct turn-of-the-century aesthetic (5.1). To this day much of the residential housing within a half-mile to mile radius is historic, dating from as early as the 1840s, and a number of those structures are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Historic houses in Senoia present on the National Register are identifiable by small signs posted in the yard, next to the mailbox or driveway (5.3).

¹⁴ "History of Senoia, Georgia." *Senoia Area Historical Society*. http://www.senoia.com/history.htm Accessed December 15, 2015.



Fig. 5.3: Author. Senoia Historic Home & Sign. 2015. Photograph.

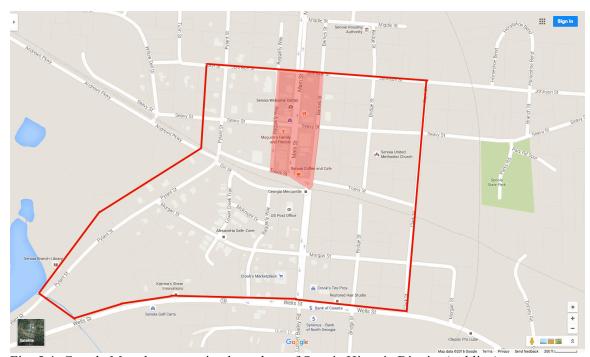


Fig. 5.4: Google Map demonstrating boundary of Senoia Historic District (red line) and the space analyzed for this case study (red overlay).

Today, downtown Senoia paints an idyllic picture of early American city life, evoking Edwardian charm and adhering to stylistic guidelines meant to maintain such charm. For this reason it has been the visually appealing site of multiple films and television series set both in-town and at the nearby Raleigh Studios Atlanta, attracting locations scouts from the

industry with its architectural styles and ability to communicate rural life without suggesting overwhelming provinciality. While there are multiple film projects being worked at any given time within the area, Senoia is largely dominated by the continued production of one of the highest-rated television series: *The Walking Dead*.

The Walking Dead, a horror drama developed by producer Frank Darabont from a graphic novel¹⁵ of the same name, is of an unassuming popular genre that takes place in a post-apocalyptic world, often pigeonholed into the "science-fiction" category for the dystopia it represents.¹⁶ As the title suggests the television series and its source material take place in an alternate universe of our own Earth. Here, a catastrophic epidemic has rendered the dead undead, where every human is infected with a virus that, upon their demise, will bring them back from beyond the grave to satisfy a ravenous hunger for human flesh. It follows a group of survivors struggling to outlast their trauma in a country that no longer has leaders, laws, running water, or the Internet. In short, it is Hell on Earth.

However, the primary antagonists of the series are not the previously mentioned flesh-eating zombies. The undead serve as a plot-pushing vehicle, a weapon, a frequent annoyance, and at their worst a mechanism used to displace our main characters as soon as they have become too comfortable with the status quo. The real threat is the living and the environments in which the intrepid survivors find themselves. They thrive in or struggle through obstacles in a world where former densely populated cities are cesspools of "Walkers" and the pastoral landscape that is the Southern countryside becomes the

¹⁵ A graphic novel is a novel in comic-strip format.

¹⁶ Post-apocalyptic fictions take place in worlds that exist after a catastrophic event. This event is often a devastating virus or nuclear war, and the survivors of the epidemic or fallout are forced to either come to terms with the new status quo, or die. A dystopia is a degraded society, often sliding into oblivion under its own weight.

¹⁷ "Walkers" is a colloquial, in-show term used for the undead.

backdrop for much of the series. We move from microcosm to microcosm, the rest of the planet presumably suffering the same virus as America while the glimpses the audience is offered are of much smaller, intimate places: a Queen Anne style farmhouse, an abandoned prison, or a historic town, quaint and prepossessing with an undercurrent of something much more sinister.



Fig. 5.5: Screen-capture of Senoia as featured in *The Walking Dead*, Season 3.

Downtown Senoia is the location of "Woodbury, Georgia," (5.5) a fictional town and small community first seen in season three of *The Walking Dead*. Two of our protagonists – separated from the main group – encounter Woodbury purely by chance, which has remained curiously untouched in the wake of societal collapse and the rise of the Walkers. This is largely due to the ongoing efforts of its residents and their leader, who introduces himself as "The Governor" and suggests that the protagonists stay for a time, recover from their travails, and perhaps find a new home in his town. This offer of both perfection and succor in a world that has become too unforgiving is uncomfortably sterile to one of the heroes, Michonne, who expresses her doubts about Woodbury's manicured lawns, overly friendly populace, and

frequent barbecue parties to her friend, Andrea. Conversely, Andrea is of the opinion that Woodbury is the home for which they have been searching.

To savants of post-apocalyptic fiction and the dystopian genre, this is approximately the point when one begins to suspect that something in this utopian community is decidedly off, as places that appear "too good to be true" usually are 18. The Governor's establishing episode defines him as a stern, but benevolent leader intent on protecting his people in a world full of threats and Woodbury physically reflects his ideals: a small, protected town full of architectural gems and perfect landscaping, its entrances barred by barricades and covered with armed guards. His true nature is unveiled at the end of the episode, and it is evident that Woodbury's glittering façade protects a rot that becomes season three's driving force.

Visitors come to Senoia to see the town as a cohesive whole, as depicted within *The Walking Dead*, and will not be disappointed. The late 19th to early 20th-century architecture that dominates the commercial downtown is almost indistinguishable from its depiction within the show, save for a few choice features that have since been removed after filming wrapped. These include the protective barricades that surrounded the town, the "Governor's house," and some landscaping features.

Barricades

In order to prevent Walkers from wandering into Woodbury and wreaking havoc, a series of protective walls were constructed out of corrugated metal and enormous rubber tires. Each

¹⁸ This is a frequently used trope in many examples of dystopian and post-apocalyptic fiction, called the "False Utopia." Pristine communities that have escaped the ravages of the epidemic, natural disaster, or world war are often utilized as a tool to lull unwary protagonists into a unwarranted sense of well-being. It is usually later revealed that the utopian society engages in activities such as cannibalism (video game *Fallout 3*, television serial *The Walking Dead*, seasons 4/5) or harvesting other humans for their bodily fluids (television serial *The 100*, season 2), and are ruled by totalitarian regimes hidden under gleaming exteriors with severe punishments for infractions (animated film *Toy Story 3*, video game *BioShock*).

barricade is patrolled by a set of armed guards. Present only for the filming, they were swiftly dismantled after all the requisite scenes were shot on-site.



Fig. 5.6: Screen-capture of south barricade, abutting the Woodbury Coffee Shop at right, an actual coffee shop in Senoia when not being used for filming. *The Walking Dead*, Season 3



Fig. 5.7: Author. Senoia Coffee and Café. 2016. Photograph.

Woodbury Town Hall: "The Governor's House"

Within the show the Governor took up residence in the Woodbury Town Hall, a style and period appropriate building in the downtown historic district. It blends well with the existing architecture, which in show context was a benefit. The only issue: it wasn't real (5.8, 5.9). A vacant lot in the Senoia Historic District was utilized to build a completely new and cosmetic structure. Its only purpose was to serve as a location for exterior filming, because the building itself didn't have a back and was merely a prop façade. It is one of the more disappointing facts for fans to discover, if only because the town hall does not exist. The faux building was burned to the ground in season 4.

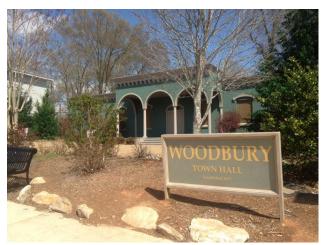


Fig. 5.8: Woodbury Town Hall, Photograph © Sean Daley, Tampa Bay Times



Fig. 5.9: Rear of Town Hall, Photograph © TheWalkingDeadNews.net

As of December the lot where "the Governor's House" once stood has been razed, and as of March the preliminary plans to occupy the lot with a mixed-used development have begun. These plans intend to execute the construction of a commercial and residential building within the design guidelines put together for Senoia by Historical ConceptsTM.¹⁹ "Senoia Lofts," as it is being called, intends to serve as a hip and appealing venue for living within the town's limits, but its goals feel out-of-place with the sleepy character that the town advertises, and its design strongly resembles Italianate buildings better suited to New Orleans, Louisiana, than a former railroad stop and shipping outpost in middle Georgia (5.10, 5.11). It comes as no surprise that the conceptual graphic of the future "Senoia Lofts" looks out of place: the design guidelines created by Historical ConceptsTM frequently suggest architectural elements not widely distributed within the commercial downtown, and their recommended building heights (3 and 4 stories) are not only uncommon in Senoia's original fabric, but not proportional to the width of Main Street.²⁰



Fig. 5.10, 5.11: Author. Senoia Lofts sign and lot where "The Governor's House" used to stand. 2016. Photographs.

Thanks to the generous funding and vision of Scott Tigchelaar, co-CEO of Historic Development Ventures and current president of Raleigh Studios Atlanta, Senoia has experienced an unprecedented explosion in tourism and construction over the last four years.

²⁰ Historical Concepts, Senoia, Georgia, 31.

¹⁹ Historical Concepts, Senoia, Georgia Pattern Book, February 22, 2010.

Tigchelaar's vision was to take the unquestionably dilapidated Southern town and restore it, constructing period infill development that is "designed to blend seamlessly with the town's existing architecture set between the late 1800s and early 1900s." Thus far a great deal of this infill has already been accomplished, although whether or not it can be classified as a success that embraces historic integrity or capitalism at its finest is up for debate.

In its current state Senoia resembles the streets of an amusement park, a film set, its *Pleasantville*-like²² levels of perfection creating a nearly cloying atmosphere of artificiality. At present, it does not look like a place where people actually live – but a destination. Nothing is what it seems: even the buildings that appear older based on a visual assessment of their brickwork cannot be trusted, as the façades were intentionally weathered to appear aged. (5.12-5.14) The appearance of the brick remains too new while the brick itself is now compromised and better exposed to the elements, while also giving the misleading impression that the careless mortaring is indicative of all historic brickwork, which is not the case. While the vast majority of the Senoia Historic District is residential, the primary areas that the public sees – that are presented to them with prominence – are largely fake. The commercial district is a thematically dissonant conglomeration of architectural styles that range from 1860s warehouses to turn-of-the-19th-century mixed use, and most of the original fabric in these structures is gone. Where the material is real it is lacking, neglected, at risk, or blended unskillfully with new infill: there are multiple instances in the downtown area of historic brick, once painted over, artfully sandblasted to mimic natural weathering. (5.15, 5.16)

²¹ Project Overview, *The Historic Senoia Project*, http://www.historicsenoia.com/projectoverview.html accessed November 12, 2014.

²² Pleasantville is a 1998 comedy-drama film wherein two siblings are transported into a black-and-white television show of the same name from the 1950s: a town where mothers bake flawless pies, the football team never loses a game, and everything is perfect – as the story progresses it is clear that this façade serves as a cover for a bigoted, repressed community.

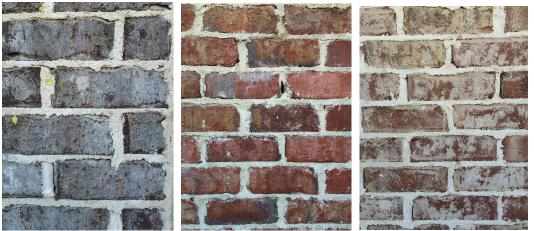


Fig 5.12-5.14: Author. New brickwork sand-blasted to appear aged in the historic downtown commercial district. 2016. Photographs.



Fig. 5.15, 5.16: Author. Boutique in historic downtown commercial district and intentional "weathering" of brickwork. 2016. Photographs.



Fig. 5.17: Author. *Brick in downtown* commercial district with deteriorated mortar, which has been haphazardly covered with concrete as a "quick fix." 2016. Photograph.



Fig. 5.18: Author. Wooden window panel in downtown commercial district that has aged to the point where the grain is in deep relief and visible. 2016. Photograph.

The town has no more regional identity or discernible features than any other small, Southern or Midwestern communities, with its timeless turn-of-the-century architecture that could be Anywheresville, America. Teeming with tourists it can cling to some semblance of integrity; at least then it looks vaguely inhabitable, when at its core it still seems hollow somehow, stripped of whatever it once was and redressed in quaint signage and flawless landscaping that echoes *The Walking Dead*'s Woodbury to a discomfitting degree. It does not feel or appear real, having compromised much of its outward, visual integrity to accommodate for a business and livelihood based on the film industry. At the southern end of historic downtown Senoia stretches an old railroad track from the shipping years, across from which is a planned housing community of spec homes being used entirely by and for the show, surrounded by a

corrugated metal wall²³ within sight of "Woodbury." In the below screen-capture of Senoia, the historic downtown buildings flank Main Street, which abuts the railroad track at Georgia Mercantile. The community of spec homes, which Google Maps has labeled "Alexandria Safe Zone," is to the immediate southeast of historic downtown Senoia and visible from Main Street.

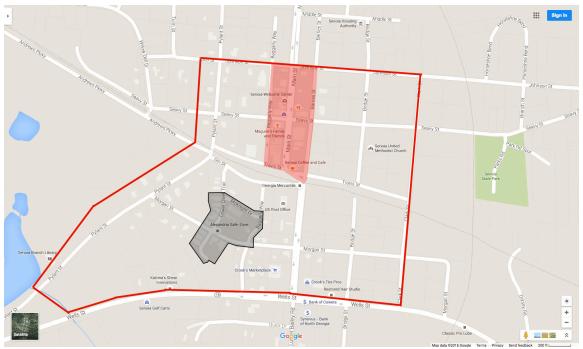


Fig. 5.19: Senoia Historic District (red line), commercial district (red overlay) and spec home development (grey overlay) via Google Maps, © 2016

 $^{^{23}}$ This particular location is being used in the current, sixth season of the show.



Fig. 5.20: Author. *Senoia: View of Corrugated Wall and Film Trucks*. 2014. Photograph.



Fig. 5.21: Author. Senoia: Unidentified Couple viewing the Film Site. 2015. Photograph.

Large historic homes in the surrounding area have also been utilized for multiple locations, all within a five-minute walk of the epicenter. (5.22, 5.23)





Fig.s 5.22, 5.23: Author. Senoia: Historic Homes Used In *The Walking Dead*. 2015. Photographs.

"I think we could live here," character Andrea says offhandedly to her friend, Michonne, in an early episode of season three. "Really live here." What is it about this setting that makes it so inscrutably appealing? Woodbury is safe, defensible, and idyllic. From early on Americans are taught that smaller, more tenable settlement patterns with distinct boundaries are preferred. Tight compositions of narrow spaces, clad in greenery with central landmarks, are desirable, picturesque, and much easier to control. These spaces encourage social interaction between residents, providing amply colorful street life and streetscapes.

Brinckerhoff Jackson calls this phenomenon "a sense of place." Undeniably this sentiment resonates with many Americans, many of whom claim that a return to traditional values and Main Street dynamics is more important than the sprawl of suburbia reaching into the plains and short grass of the West, but even this is still denying the most basic tenet of American life. Before Manifest Destiny became a battle cry for national expansion the very first colonists in Virginia moved away from Jamestown, much to the dismay of Captain John Smith. Small towns are what people desire in theory – in execution, the risk is always too

²⁴ "Walk with Me," *The Walking Dead*, AMC (Air date: October 28, 2012)

²⁵ Jackson, John Brinckerhoff, *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time*. (London: Yale University Press, 1994.) 157.

²⁶ Jackson, A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time, 157.

great, that proximity becomes a hindrance and the true colors of neighbors and friends prove that familiarity breeds contempt. In a way this "small town" feeling is what makes Woodbury so uncomfortable and unnatural, the town itself physically and symbolically a desperate means of clinging to an archaic way of living, one that is ultimately unsuccessful as it mirrors the sinister nature of its de facto ruler, the Governor.

Even with its "weathered" exteriors and thin mask of historicity, the tourist economy in Senoia is flourishing. "It's a host/parasite relationship," Mike Herro, producer/writer of shows One Tree Hill and Reign, explains on the set of Hindsight, "the dynamic between what's being filmed and the places where we're filming them."²⁷ By all accounts he isn't wrong, although it would be more accurate to say that the relationship between the town of Senoia and Raleigh Studios (and by proxy, *The Walking Dead*) is symbiotic at worst, the pros outweighing the cons by far on the most fundamental, economic level. According to Georgia Film, Music, and Entertainment Office Senior Location Specialist Craig Dominey, as of August 8, 2014, The Walking Dead Tour in downtown Senoia has brought in 2,674 ticketed guests alone since May 2013.²⁸ Over \$100,000 has been spent in the city on food and gifts by Walker Stalkers – fans of the show from across the country that have come for the express purpose of getting a taste of the action – even in the off-season, as filming for the show only takes place during the summer months.²⁹ This increase in revenue is a huge boon to the community, which struggled to survive until the film industry took a vested interest. According to local law enforcement, police chief Jason Eders, the majority of town citizens

²⁷ Mike Herro (television producer) in discussion with the author, October 2014.

²⁸ "More than 30k Georgians employed by film, tv work," *The Citizen*, July 20, 2014, accessed October 15, 2014, http://www.thecitizen.com/articles/07-20-2014/more-30k-georgians-employed-film-tv-work "The Very Real Effect Fictional Characters Have On Tourism," *The Credits*, August 8, 2014, accessed October 15, 2014, http://www.thecredits.org/2014/08/the-very-real-effect-fictional-characters-have-on-travel/

are die-hard fans and unopposed to the surge of income, the thrill of being associated with a swelling local industry and being in proximity to the filming.³⁰ Many have wholeheartedly embraced the notoriety; the town itself seeks to remind visitors of its film-related accomplishments with commemorative plaques that resemble Hollywood's gold sidewalk stars. (5.24)



Fig. 5.24: Author. Senoia: The Walking Dead Plaque. 2015. Photograph.

Dissent is difficult to come by firsthand, but increased traffic and ascending property values pose a threat to low-income residents of the area. Many local businesses have changed their strategies to accommodate the influx in tourists, going so far as to appeal to visitors in advertising and products, altering signage in historic windows to attract consumers with

³⁰ Diana Davis, "Giant wall divides metro town for new season of 'Walking Dead'," *WSB-TV 2 Atlanta*, July 22, 2014, accessed October 15, 2014, http://www.wsbtv.com/news/news/local/giant-wall-divides-part-senoia-new-walking-dead-se/ngkrj

products meant to replicate and emulate the "post-apocalyptic" aesthetic.³¹

In the middle of Senoia's historic downtown area is *The Walking Dead* store (5.31) where show-related goods (clothing, knick-knacks, posters, and other memorabilia) are sold to the masses, not unlike the gift shop at the end of a theme park ride. A coffee shop – *Senoia Coffee & Café* – on the edge of downtown, prominently featured as the boarded-up "Woodbury Coffee House" in season three, has kept its sign from the filming (5.25) and installed it inside the café, advertising hot beverages for Senoia's Walker Stalkers and "Zombie Dark Brew" coffee for purchase.



Fig. 5.25: Author. Senoia: Woodbury Coffee House Sign. 2015. Photograph.

There is something else that can be said for the changing economic and social climate of Senoia: in the span of four to six months two local businesses (owned by musician Zac Brown) have closed without public explanation, new development is beginning in the downtown historic district (Senoia Lofts), and a Starbucks Coffee shop backed out of Senoia to make way for a Walking Dead Coffee Shop, which is also the home of a Walking Dead museum. (5.26, 5.27)

³¹ This aesthetic often consists of distressed and weathered clothing, made to look as though it has been physically worn multiple times, or jewelry constructed of what appear to be "scavenged" materials. (Images of this can be found in the appendix.)

This swift change, while not altogether bad, suggests instability does not bode well for the permanence and longevity of Senoia's existing historic resources.



Fig. 5.26, 5.27: Author. Walking Dead Coffee Shop and Walking Dead Museum immediately adjacent





Fig. 5.28, 5.29: Author. Zac Brown's shuttered restaurant on Main Street, Vacant and architecturally inappropriate building on Main Street. 2016. Photographs.



Fig. 5.30: Author. Architecturally inappropriate building on Main Street. 2016. Photograph.

Still, with such persuasive numbers *The Walking Dead* has arguably done the town a great deal of financial good. The strategic improvement of Senoia into the quintessential 'small town' that exudes perfected Americana was deliberate. Senoia is selling a *feeling* rather than a sense of place or a modicum of history, and nowhere is this more evident than in the town's advertising tagline:

Senoia: The Perfect Setting. For Life.

Dismantling the phrase begs more questions and yields few answers, the ambiguous period after 'Setting' implying certain finality in the marketing team's attempts at making the town sound more like a soundstage for one's existence. The establishing year, 1866, is almost an afterthought, shoved under the bolded town name as if someone belatedly realized they should remind people that this place existed before the film trucks arrived. Senoia has changed and remains largely optimistic about its prospects, unabashedly supplying the product its visitors want. While many other filming projects have seen Senoia as a host and venue, none are so irrevocably tied to the town as *The Walking Dead*. Film tourists for the

show are present in a historic space, but do not see the history. With an omnipresent film industry, the town does not shy away from what has made it so successful, but in that prosperity and new infill it has effectively lost its historic identity.



Fig. 5.31: Author. Senoia: The Walking Dead Store. 2015. Photograph.

VI. Covington, Georgia The Vampire Diaries Love Sucks. 32



Fig. 6.1: Author. Original Newton County Courthouse. 2015. Photograph.

Covington is the seat of Newton County, Georgia, officially incorporated in 1822 and added as a stop on the Georgia Railroad in 1833 – this is not altogether different from what it is today, being immediately adjacent to the I-20 highway. After the first Georgia land lottery of 1805, the local population of indigenous peoples (the Creeks) was driven out of the area and settlers from South Carolina occupied the land that would become Newton County. Initially intended to be the primary railway stop on a stretch of tracks to Chattanooga, Tennessee, Covington was spurned in favor of the nearby Atlanta, which later became the hub of the rail

³² The Vampire Diaries Season 1 tagline

system in the state of Georgia.³³ (5.2)

Up until the Civil War, Covington's local economy revolved around textiles and cotton farming, both of which were the primary economic product in the Newton County area. General William Tecumseh Sherman effectively halted production and trade for the town in 1864 by ordering his Brigadier General to demolish the railroads, bridges, and public buildings and warehouses associated with the rail system. Unlike many of General Sherman's other destructive ventures into Georgian towns, residential structures were primarily left untouched. The predominant architectural styles featured in Covington consist of Federal and Greek Revival residential houses, with additions examples of Victorian and Queen Anne. The historic downtown area is distinctly late 19th-early 20th century.



Fig. 6.2: Covington's location (red) and relation to Atlanta, Georgia (black).

Covington, host to at least eighty films and several different television shows since the 1970s, has trademarked the tagline "Hollywood of the South" in light of its lengthy history as

³³ "Newton County, Georgia." Our Georgia History.

http://www.ourgeorgiahistory.com/ogh/Newton County, Georgia> Accessed December 21, 2015.

³⁴ "History of Newton County." *Covington-Newton County Chamber of Commerce*.

http://www.newtonchamber.com/Community/HistoryofNewtonCounty.aspx Accessed December 21, 2015.

a filming location. Their city website is proud to be "at the corner of yesterday and tomorrow,"³⁵ suggesting a forward-thinking community that remains rooted in its origins. It embraces its past and present, cognizant of the financial benefits provided by local filming and indulging many aspects of *The Vampire Diaries* phenomenon without overtly compromising the material or structural integrity of the historic downtown area.

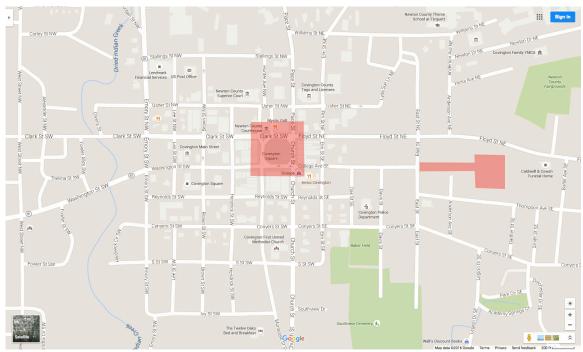


Fig. 6.3: Google Map demonstrating areas of interest for this case study: at left, Covington Historic Square, at right, Worthington Manor (both in red overlay).

The Vampire Diaries, an American supernatural³⁶ drama developed by Kevin Williamson and Julie Plec, is based on the wildly popular series of books of the same name written by author L. J. Smith. In the series, a fictional community in Virginia called Mystic Falls (6.4) unexpectedly becomes host to a slew of mythical monsters and paranormal beings, which includes vampires, werewolves, and witches, all of whom appear to have deep-seated issues with

³⁵ City of Covington Home Page, accessed January 13, 2016,

http://www.cityofcovington.org/Pages/home.aspx

³⁶ Oxford English Dictionary definition: (Of a manifestation of event) attributed to some force beyond scientific understanding or the laws of nature.

each other. In accordance with a great deal of existing folklore on the same creatures, (most of) the local humans are not aware of their existence and therefore at risk of becoming potential victims, an ignorance that drives much of the plot by forcing regular civilians to confront actual nightmares by being caught in a grudge-match between petulant immortals. All information regarding the events that take place in *The Vampire Diaries* show was acquired by watching season one of the television serial.



Fig. 6.4: Author. "Mystic Falls" Sign Outside Covington Tourist Center. 2015. Photograph.

As far as many residents of Mystic Falls know, vampires, werewolves, and witches are the stuff of fantasy and fiction, which in turn lends the series an element of magical realism.³⁷ We are introduced to the town through Elena Gilbert, a normal, *human* high school girl who

³⁷ Matthew Stretcher, author, defines magical realism as "what happens when a highly detailed, realistic setting is invaded by something too strange to believe." In effect, magical realism is a normal world with abnormal, possibly supernatural and mystifying elements that many of the people in said world may not know about or fully comprehend. Notable examples of this are television serials *The X-Files* (1993) and *Twin Peaks* (1990).

has recently lost her parents in a tragic car accident and now lives under the care of her aunt, with her delinquent younger brother. After summer break she is adamant to begin fresh to resist succumbing to her grief, a retrospectively ironic sentiment when her life becomes entwined with that of a 162-year old vampire whose defining character trait is an inability to let go of the past.

Mystic Falls is a small town with close-knit residents, all of whom know each other well, attend the same schools, and see the same doctors. An enormous amount of activity within the show takes place in the communal square of Mystic Falls, the hustle-and-bustle heart of a community with the droll atmosphere of an ideal neighborhood. Most prominently featured in the serial are the aforementioned square, the courthouse, the local eatery, a doctor's office, and a Mystic Falls founding family's historic home – each of these will be addressed in turn, all of them crucial to creating the environment and world featured within the television show and filmed on-location in historic spaces. Thematically *The Vampire Diaries* conveys an overt attachment to history in its respect of its location. Mystic Falls is inexorably tied to its past by means of the supernatural and the presence of vampires, which are proven to have resided there for hundreds of years. It has a fictional heritage that is happily celebrated by its inhabitants with festivals and fireworks, local history classes in the high school, a "Miss Mystic Falls" pageant, and is a reflection of another time with its quaint Victorian courthouse, distinctly American Main Street and locally run small businesses. A living, breathing entity and character all its own, Mystic Falls is at its core an innocent bystander in the way of unspeakable horrors. "It's Mystic Falls," Elena Gilbert tells one of her friends, with no trace of irony, "Nothing bad ever happens here."38

³⁸ "The Departed," *The Vampire Diaries*, The CW (Air date: May 10, 2012)



Fig. 6.5: Screen-capture of protagonist Elena (at left) with Stefan at Mystic Falls' "Founders Day" Parade, *The Vampire Diaries*, Season 1.

While it is possible to take a self-guided tour of buildings featured in *The Vampire Diaries* simply by walking around Covington Square, there are specific buildings to which access is expressly forbidden without arranged permission. In order to access one of those buildings the author purchased a standard "Vampire Stalkers Mystic Falls Tour" ticket from Vampire Stalkers, Ltd. The tour and its stops will be referred to for the remaining bulk of this case study.

Covington Town Square

It is astonishingly easy for a television serial to ignore its location with a preference for the development of live-action characters rather than place, but in Covington local spaces acquire personality and spirit of their own. Covington Town Square is one that is used for multiple real-world events, including Christmas pageantry, concerts, and public film screenings of different movies. In a similar fashion the same square features prominently in *The Vampire Diaries* as a gathering place for events and vigils, a meeting area for students and residents of the fictional town, and a hub around which much of the town's activity transpires, such as festivals and fairs.



Fig. 6.6: Screen-capture of the Mystic Falls Town Square with view of Newton County Courthouse as featured in *The Vampire Diaries*, Season 2.

Newton County Courthouse

One side of the town square is defined by a courthouse, which breaks up the steady roofline of the small, downtown area with a polychromous décor: the window frames and trims are a starkly contrasted white against red brick, the multi-leveled roof system dressed in slate shingles of two different colors, meant to communicate a simple design. The courthouse itself was built in 1885, dedicated a year after groundbreaking, and is still in use as a court of law and a symbol of Covington's progress and emergence out of what was left of the town post-Civil War.³⁹ While the courtrooms and meeting chambers themselves do not feature prominently within *The Vampire Diaries*, many passionate scenes between protagonists – and antagonists – from the television serial take place in front of and alongside it. Within the world of the show, the local law enforcement is headquartered at Newton County Courthouse, and the Sheriff of Mystic Falls' office is located in the southeast corner so as to be more accessible to the people for whom she works.

³⁹ "History of Newton County." Covington-Newton County Chamber of Commerce.



Fig. 6.7: Screen-capture of the "Mystic Falls Police Station" as featured in *The Vampire Diaries*, Season 2.

Additionally, a number of more dangerous scenes were shot on the roof of the courthouse, with the use of stunt rigging⁴⁰ and cherry-picker cranes. To both protect the original fabric of the courthouse and prevent a need for repeat performances should the show's plot dictate another "fall" from Mystic Falls' police station, a foam replica of the courthouse clock tower was built by the production company and housed in a soundstage in Atlanta.

The Newton County Courthouse is the first stop on the acclaimed *The Vampire Diaries* tour. ⁴¹ There, a concise history of the courthouse is told to tourists before the guide launches into its immediate relation to the show. (6.8, 6.9)

⁴⁰ For any stunts in a television serial where a character falls from something, the production company is required by law to use harnesses and safety rigging to prevent an actor or stunt person from injury.

This conclusion of acclaim is drawn from a pool of 272 visitors who chose to review the tour on the Trip Advisor reviewing website. It is important to note, however, the trend that people- only tend to leave reviews if they consider a place above-and-beyond exceptional or utterly deplorable, so there is very little middle ground. On Trip Advisor, 239 visitors rated the tour the highest possible ("Excellent"), 24 ranked it second highest ("Very Good"), and the remaining 9 visitors ranked it "Average" or lower.



Fig. 6.8, 6.9: Author. Commemorative Television Serial Stars in front of Covington Courthouse. 2015. Photograph.

Former law offices as "Mystic Grill"

Frequently the students of Mystic Falls High School are seen spending their after-school hours at the popular "Mystic Grill," an eatery and bar where characters work and socialize.

(6.10) Located to the immediate right of the Newton County Courthouse, the historic building that served as the exterior of the Mystic Grill during the filming of seasons 1 through 3 was home to law offices – all interior grill scenes were shot on a soundstage in downtown Atlanta. Post-season 3 a fire gutted the building⁴²; it was slated for demolition until the Mayor of Covington, Ronnie Johnston, recognized a unique business opportunity. With his wife and two entrepreneurial partners, Mayor Johnston decided to restore the building to its prior state with some interior and exterior modifications: he built a *near*-exact replica of the Mystic Grill, inside and out. With his partners he recreated as many details as possible, down to the lamps, the style of the bar, and the wall décor. The restaurant itself even sells t-shirts printed with the Mystic Grill name, modeled after those featured in the television show.

⁴² Associate and tour guide Angela Moss at Vampire Stalkers, Ltd. provided information regarding filming at the law offices that served as the Mystic Grill, and the fire that gutted the building.

Mayor Johnston, who intended for this venture to be a success for the city, publically stated that he "-decided this would be a great way to give back to the community because we are a community that is on the verge of exploding in many ways economically." A popular stop on the list of tourists who come into Covington specifically for *The Vampire Diaries*, the Mystic Grill is an accessible piece of fandom.⁴³



Fig. 6.10: Author. Covington's "Mystic Grill." 2015. Photograph.

 43 A colloquial term for "fanatic domain." A *fandom* is the state or condition of being a fan of someone or something.



Fig. 6.11: Screen-capture of the "Mystic Grill" as featured in *The Vampire Diaries*, Season 1.

While there are mixed responses about the Mystic Grill's success as a local restaurant⁴⁴ on venue-reviewing websites such as TripAdvisor, the vast majority of them are positive.⁴⁵ Using *The Vampire Diaries* as a financial springboard, local government has provided aspects of the show that visitors to Covington can actively touch and with which they can interact, making the tourist experience that much more immersive. While they won't have characters from the show serving them drinks or appetizers, they can sit in a replica of a character's favored barstool.

Boutique used as the "Clinic of Dr. Grayson Gilbert"

Before his untimely death, Elena Gilbert's father functioned as the Mystic Falls local medical professional, primary care physician and general house call doctor. His clinic, located on the opposite corner of the town square from the courthouse, is a charming turn-of-the-century building that fits into the mostly-uniform roofline of the historic downtown area. The actual building houses a small boutique that sells local arts and crafts, with the owners relinquishing

⁴⁴ "Covington mayor's restaurant fails health inspection," *WTV-2 Atlanta*, April 3, 2014, accessed December 22, 2015, http://www.wsbtv.com/news/news/local/covington-mayors-restaurant-fails-health-inspectio/nfRTr/

⁴⁵ Out of 254 TripAdvisor reviews, 151 rated the restaurant "Excellent," 78 rated it "Very Good," 14 rated it "Average," and the remaining 11 rated it "Poor" or "Terrible".

control of their business on designated filming days for scenes that take place in and around Dr. Gilbert's Clinic. Understandably interested in maintaining clientele even during the off-season, when filming for *The Vampire Diaries* has wrapped, the owners of the boutique have left Grayson Gilbert's sign in their shop window (6.12), while returning the window trim and door surround to their original colors. Dr. Gilbert's Clinic is another stop on *The Vampire Diaries* tour, which is led by a single guide from Covington's *Vampire Stalkers*, *Ltd.*, and visitors are encouraged to take photographs in front of the Gilbert sign. (6.13, 6.14)



Fig. 6.12: Screen-capture of Grayson Gilbert's Clinic, The Vampire Diaries, Season 1.



Fig. 6.13, 6.14: Author. Dr. Gilbert's Clinic Sign and Tourists Having Their Photograph Taken in Front of Dr. Gilbert's Clinic Sign. 2015. Photographs.

Lockwood Mansion

The last and arguably most popular stop on The Vampire Diaries tour is the Lockwood Mansion, a historic house which, in the world of the show, belongs to one of the Mystic Falls founding families. The Lockwoods hold a number of enormous, town-wide events in their expansive home, ranging from Masquerade Balls to the Founder's Day party, to the Miss Mystic Falls Pageant.



Fig. 6.15: Screen-capture of The Lockwood Mansion, *The Vampire Diaries*, Season 2.

Located a block away from the central historic downtown square, Worthington Manor is a locally owned private residence, built for John J. Dearing in 1850.⁴⁶ The owners, Benjamin Dameron and Ralph Miller, who decorated the interior in the style of a traditional southern plantation, have restored the house since its purchase in 1997⁴⁷ while maintaining much of the original fabric in an effort to keep its character in accordance with that of historic Covington.

(6.15) Approached by locations scouts for The Vampire Diaries in 2009⁴⁸, they constructed

⁴⁶ "Covington Georgia Self-Guided Home Tour" pamphlet, acquired at Covington/Newton County Convention and Visitors Bureau

⁴⁷ "Inside Worthington Manor," *The Covington News*, September 30, 2011, accessed December 25, 2015. http://www.covnews.com/archives/23546/

⁴⁸ "Inside Worthington Manor," *The Covington News*.

careful agreements with the production company regarding the safeguarding of their home and both the building and its grounds have since been used for filming in multiple seasons of the television show. While Worthington Manor is a gated residence (6.16) and not open to the public, Dameron and Miller have made allowances for the city to place a commemorative film star (6.18) in its driveway, and for the local *Vampire Diaries* tour company to access the lawn, building exterior, and rear grounds for photographs.



Fig. 6.16: Author. Entrance to Worthington Manor. 2015. Photograph.



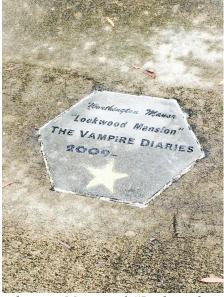


Fig. 6.17, 6.18: Author. West Elevation/Façade of Worthington Manor and "Lockwood Mansion" Commemorative Television Serial Star. 2015. Photographs.

Currently, the downtown Covington area presents a space not unlike the picture it would have painted in its peak, save for the advent of paved roads and automobiles: a central square serves as the epicenter of the historic downtown, surrounded by one-to-two story buildings in a turn of the century mixed-use style that favors both convenience and community. Aware of its quintessential "small town" aesthetic and character, the local government has agreed to new, strict design guidelines⁴⁹ for the historic district, in which many filming projects are undertaken. These guidelines are intended to inform local business owners about the correct rehabilitation measures for their properties, so that they remain sensitive to the integrity of the commercial and residential parts of the city. At present Covington benefits tremendously from the patronage of *The Vampire Diaries*, both in the onslaught of film tourists and the financial backing of the production company itself.

In 2014 alone, Newton County's (and by proxy, the city of Covington's) tourism industry supported 1,090 local jobs, generated \$120.11 million in direct tourist spending, created \$4.67 million in state tax revenues, and generated \$3.60 million in local tax revenues. The popular tour company, "Vampire Stalkers, Ltd." gives two tours a day, six days out of the week – each ticket is \$55.00 and on average, a tour consists of 20-30 people. Business is doing well for both the city and the tour company, which has exclusive access to Covington's Worthington Manor and, on occasion, sets where active filming takes place. Not unlike Senoia, Covington is graced with a gift store thematically directed to its target audience of loyal viewers, out of which

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⁴⁹ Georgia State University Preservation Planning Class. "Proposed City of Covington Historic District Guidelines." 2015.

⁵⁰ Financial data acquired from Covington/Newton County Convention and Visitors Bureau.

⁵¹ In order to gain access to Worthington Manor, the author purchased a *The Vampire Diaries* tour ticket from the "Vampire Stalkers, Ltd." company.

⁵² Average number of tourists per tour group attained from Angela Moss, associate and tour guide at "Vampire Stalkers, Ltd."

"Vampire Stalkers, Ltd." is based.⁵³ There, an assortment of memorabilia, clothes, and other vampire-related souvenirs are available for purchase. (6.19)

A window in a Covington café boasts a mouthwatering "Vampire Skinny Latté" but the shop is full of locals, a town alive in part due to its immediate proximity to Georgia I-20, in part due to the local government's strict design guidelines and a community preservation society's attempts at maintaining the authentic fabric of the local architecture. Covington and the Newton County Convention and Visitors Bureau are acutely aware of the fickle nature of film; it stands to reason that after witnessing more than eighty individual projects the city has learned to mitigate any permanent alterations that the film industry's influence might have on the environment. There are notable small changes here and there – signs left over from filming, commemorative stars set into the sidewalks to quietly celebrate it achievements – but nothing outstanding to the untrained eye.

Historic downtown Covington is small, but *The Vampire Diaries* projects the impression that it is much larger than its actual size. Here, a worthy compromise has been struck between progress and the past, enabling moderate change to appeal to a fresh audience while simultaneously working with and around existing historic resources.



Fig. 6.19: Author. "Mystic Falls" Postcard from Gift Shop in Covington. 2015. Photograph.

⁵³ Vampire Stalkers, Ltd. is the only "official" Vampire Diaries tour available in Covington.

VII. New Orleans, Louisiana

American Horror Story: Coven *In New Orleans, there's all walks of life.* 54



Fig. 7.1: Hermann-Grima House, image © Broadway World

The Hermann-Grima House is a historic house museum in New Orleans, Louisiana, settled neatly in the French Quarter not a block away from Bourbon Street. Built in the Federal style in 1831 it consists of a main house, a flourishing courtyard garden, a horse stable and short driveway, and enslaved people's quarters set back from Saint Louis Street. The first owner, Samuel Hermann, immigrated to Louisiana from Germany and settled in New Orleans in the early 1810s. When the cotton market crashed not six years after the house's construction he sold the house to Felix Grima, a lawyer, a native to New Orleans, and by all accounts a Renaissance

⁵⁴ American Horror Story: Coven tagline

man of the highest order. The last surviving Grima sold the house in 1921, which was eventually purchased by the Christian Woman's Exchange in 1924.⁵⁵



Fig. 7.2: New Orleans' location (red) and relation to Baton Rouge, Louisiana (black).

The organization's purpose was to support women and the homemade crafts or heirlooms they produced, thereby giving them a modicum of personal agency and independence; the Exchange therefore used the Hermann-Grima House as housing for many of the women it hosted. The horse stable adjacent to the house is used as a reception area for visitors, a small museum on its own, and an extension of the original Christian Woman's Exchange, selling goods and crafts by modern female artisans in New Orleans. The homemade crafts or heirlooms they produced the homemade crafts or heirlooms they produced the homemade crafts or heirlooms.

The Gallier House is an Italianate style building a few blocks away from the Hermann-Grima House, constructed between 1857 and 1860 by notable New Orleans architect James Gallier, Jr. ⁵⁸ The Hermann-Grima House was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1971 with the Gallier House following shortly thereafter in 1974⁵⁹ – the Hermann-Grima House

⁵⁷ Information on current status of the horse stable shop gathered from exchange with Hermann-Grima/Gallier Houses executive director Mamie Gasperecz, December 11, 2015.

⁵⁵ Dufour, Charles L. Pie. *Women Who Cared: The 100 Years of the Christian Woman's Exchange*. (New Orleans: Christian Woman's Exchange, 1980.) 12.

⁵⁶ Dufour. Women Who Cared. 36

⁵⁸ McCaffety, Kerry. *Luxury, Inequity, & Yellow Fever: Living Legacies and the Story of Old New Orleans.* (Vissi D'Arte Books, 2014.) 82.

⁵⁹ Louisiana, Orleans County List. *National Register of Historic Places*.

was then converted to a house museum in 1975, and the Woman's Exchange acquired the Gallier House in 1996. The Exchange currently manages both.



Fig. 7.3: Google Map demonstrating boundary of the French Quarter (red line) in the city of New Orleans and the location of the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses (red dot).

American Horror Story is an anthology horror series created and developed by Ryan Murphy and Brad Falchuk. The anthology itself consists of five individual seasons: each season is its own miniseries, has its own terrifying tale⁶⁰ and is told in a different environment and place than the one before it. The stories are cohesive, singular units, not meant to expand beyond the reach of a single season consisting of thirteen episodes, and incorporate aspects of actual history via events and people to give the series more contextual depth. The third installment in the American Horror Story anthology is subtitled *Coven*, reflecting its concentration on witchcraft and magic in New Orleans, Louisiana, as a primary plotline.

Within the universe of the show, which is for the most part set in modern day and

⁶⁰ American Horror Story is known for its abundance of graphic violence, sexual content, and forceful storytelling.

punctuated by the occasional flashback⁶¹, young and inexperienced witches coming into their powers are admitted to a boarding school to help them hone their abilities. The school itself is led by the "Supreme": a woman descended from the original Salem coven⁶² of witches, who possesses the most powers and serves as a de facto global leader of all witches. *American Horror Story: Coven* revolves around an aging Supreme desperately trying to cling to her authority by any means necessary, going so far as to provoke conflict from other practitioners of magic within the city of New Orleans. This second faction practices a stereotypical and sensationalized interpretation of Voodoo,⁶³ and is led by Marie Laveau.⁶⁴

In an effort to achieve immortality the Supreme Witch unearths the body of a notorious historical figure: Delphine LaLaurie⁶⁵, a woman from 1830s New Orleans who was purportedly cursed with everlasting life by Marie Laveau, whose secrets the Supreme wishes to acquire. Throughout the thirteen-episode season the audience is subject to flashbacks of Delphine

⁶¹ Oxford English Dictionary definition: A scene in a movie, novel, etc., set in a time earlier than the main story.

⁶² Oxford English Dictionary definition: A group or gathering of witches who meet regularly.

⁶³ New Orleans Voodoo is a set of spiritual folkways that evolved out of the traditions of the African diaspora. In Louisiana it meshed with the Catholicism of the French culture in New Orleans. Voodoo, which is often depicted as humans working with demonic forces, is in fact a stricter brand of Catholicism. This information is consistent with the interpretation that docents offer visitors when visiting the St. Louis Cemetery to see Marie Laveau's grave.

⁶⁴ In *American Horror Story*, Marie Laveau is depicted as a sensationalized stereotype of the "voodoo priestess," working with black magic and making deals with the Devil. Very little is known about the actual Marie Laveau save for the fact that she was born a free Creole woman in 1801, worked prominently as a local New Orleans hairdresser, and practiced the craft of voodoo (which is a stringent religious faith, not the work of demons). This information is consistent with the interpretation that docents offer visitors when visiting the St. Louis Cemetery to see Marie Laveau's grave.

Delphine LaLaurie was a wealthy New Orleans socialite and alleged serial killer in the early 1800s, most well known for having tortured and very likely murdering many of her household slaves. An 1834 fire started by a slave in her kitchen, which called the police and local fire marshals, revealed that the slave had started the fire as an attempt at suicide to prevent herself from being taken to the "upper room." It was reported by the New Orleans news source at the time that within the attic room the police and fire marshals had witnessed all manner of depraved and torturous devices used on still-living enslaved persons. When the story circulated that Delphine LaLaurie had so brazenly broken the Code Noir regarding slave treatment in Louisiana, a mob gathered to pillage and burn the LaLaurie Mansion. Delphine LaLaurie, fearing for her life and rightly so, fled the country. This information is consistent with the interpretation that docents offer visitors when visiting the St. Louis Cemetery.

LaLaurie's daily life and horrific crimes, as well as her interactions with modern day characters and the frequent missteps to which a temporally displaced immortal might be subjected. For period accuracy, circa-1830s scenes with Delphine LaLaurie and her family were shot in and in front of historic resources in New Orleans' French Quarter. All information regarding the events that transpire in *Coven* was acquired by watching the three episodes in which the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses were featured.

A historic location that has had one of the least-intrusive experiences possible with the film industry is the Hermann-Grima House off of Saint Louis Street, half a block away from the infamous Rue Bourbon. (7.1) Several blocks closer to the Mississippi River is the Gallier House, which served as an establishing shot⁶⁶ for exterior scenes of the LaLaurie House in spite of their visual dissimilarities.⁶⁷ (7.4, 7.5) All interior scenes of Delphine LaLaurie in the 1830s were shot in the Hermann-Grima.⁶⁸

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⁶⁶ An establishing shot is usually the first shot of a new scene, meant to "set" the scene and show the audience where the action is taking place.

⁶⁷ It might be assumed that because Delphine LaLaurie is known in name and reputation, but not expressly by place of residence, that the production company decided a house from the same era would suffice and that audiences would not know the difference. The Gallier House is two doors down from the actual LaLaurie Mansion. It is also possible, but cannot be confirmed, that the production company could not gain access to the LaLaurie Mansion for filming, and opted to use the second house owned by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses.

⁶⁸ Information on exact shooting locations used for *Coven* gathered from exchange with Hermann-Grima/Gallier Houses executive director Mamie Gasperecz, December 11, 2015.





Fig. 7.4, 7.5: Author. LaLaurie Mansion and Gallier House. 2015. Photographs.

To create the atmosphere and environment of an early 19th century residence the location scouts of FX turned to existing structures, which would prevent them from having to build a (faux) house in its entirety. The Hermann-Grima House, with its period appropriate décor, sprawling rooms, and wealth of period furniture, was the ideal selection. Utilizing the preexisting richness of the building was an apparent objective: *Coven* filmed at the location for three episodes and organized scrupulously precise location agreements and work lists⁶⁹ with Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses for the spaces they intended to use for on-site filming: the first-floor parlor, dining room, and entry hall, the second floor bedroom, and the rear courtyard.

⁶⁹ A blank location agreement and the detailed work lists for the film crew (as prepared by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses) were shared with the author: photographs of both can be seen in the appendix.

First Floor Parlor, Dining Room, and Hall



Fig. 7.6: Screen-capture of LaLaurie, seated at left in her parlor, AHS: Coven, Episode 1.

The preface to the opening credits of the first episode of *Coven* introduces the audience to human darkness and a fascination with sadism and the occult. Delphine LaLaurie, neighborhood socialite, holds an elegant gathering for friends and associates in the downstairs of her husband's house, (7.6) but taking umbrage with her daughters' salacious topics of conversation. The otherwise friendly impression of high society is uncomfortable in light of the conscious choice to have LaLaurie's own clothing reflect the character of the Hermann-Grima House. Her dress is a vibrant red, matching the preexisting curtains and foretelling sinister intent, when not soon after it is revealed that LaLaurie takes wicked delight in torturing her own enslaved persons.

In the same episode, the young witches of the coven are taken on a tour of the LaLaurie House, purportedly to remind them of their heritage and of the twisting turns that New Orleans' history takes. Here, the Hermann-Grima House is used to depict the LaLaurie House facilitating visitor tours; the neophyte witches join one of these tours through several rooms in the house.





Fig. 7.7, 7.8: Author. *Parlor* and *Dining Room* of Hermann-Grima House. 2015. Photograph.



Fig. 7.9: Screen-capture of a "tour in the LaLaurie Mansion," AHS: Coven, Episode 1.

The parlor, dining room, and hall were all used for the introductory party scene in *Coven*, as were most of the decorative arts within them: according to a comprehensive work list provided by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses, specific pieces of furniture were permitted

to remain, while the majority of the "smalls" (decorative items such as vases, silverware and other portable objects that could be supplemented by the Properties Department or Set Dressing Department⁷⁰) were removed and stored for safety. The entry hall (7.10) and library, the former of which would see little screen time but the latter of which was used to hold film crew members and equipment during the filming process, underwent the same assessments for safeguarding the assorted decorative arts housed within the building.⁷¹



Fig. 7.10: Author. *Entry Hall from Front Door*. 2015. Photograph.



Fig. 7.11 Screen-capture of Supreme entering the LaLaurie Mansion, AHS: Coven, Episode 1.

Delphine LaLaurie's Bedroom

When the setting changes from the first floor to the second in episode one, it is to view

⁷⁰ The Properties Department, called "Props" for short, handles any objects that are touched by actors in a film project. The Set Dressing Department decorates the sets themselves with items like furniture, artwork, and other objects that will not be touched by actors.

⁷¹ Information from detailed work lists supplied by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses executive director Mamie Gasperecz, December 11, 2015.

the Grima Bedroom, which *Coven* chose to stand as LaLaurie's own chambers. It is here that she is depicted quite literally bathing in the blood of her tormented servants in front of a vanity mirror. In the second episode LaLaurie is poisoned in the same bedroom by a hairdresser, the then-not yet immortal Marie Laveau.



Fig. 7.12: Screen-capture of Delphine LaLaurie's bedroom, AHS: Coven, Episode 1.



Fig. 7.13: Screen-capture of Marie Laveau offering poison to Delphine LaLaurie in the LaLaurie bedroom, *AHS: Coven*, Episode 1.



In a similar fashion to the first floor rooms, the Grima Master Bedroom (7.14) underwent safeguarding alterations as minor as moving a hoopskirt draped on the sheets and covers, leaving many of the smalls intact and preventing a need for the film crew's Set Dressing Department to make any permanent changes to the bedroom with regards to décor.⁷²

Fig. 7.14: Author. *Grima Master Bedroom*. 2015. ptograph.

The tour that the coven of witches, led by their Supreme, take in "the LaLaurie Mansion" leads the Supreme into Delphine's bedroom to look at her vanity table. This serves as convenient foreshadowing: while LaLaurie herself desired immortal beauty in the context of the television serial, so too did the Supreme.



Fig. 7.15: Screen-capture of the Supreme entering LaLaurie's Bedroom, AHS: Coven, Episode 1.

⁷² Information from detailed work lists supplied by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses executive director Mamie Gasperecz, December 11, 2015.

Rear Courtyard with Enslaved People's Quarters

The rear courtyard, which features a number of orange, lemon, and kumquat trees, is bordered on one side by the enslaved people's quarters that currently house the administrative offices for the Hermann-Grima House. Gated, it serves as the primary means of movement in and out of the Hermann-Grima House excluding the front door on Saint Louis Street. Within the show the rear courtyard underwent a cosmetic transformation with new plants and foliage, used in a scene where Delphine LaLaurie and one of her daughters arrive in New Orleans from Paris. Concerned she will find New Orleans dull LaLaurie engages herself with household tasks and forces her daughter to watch her slaughter a chicken in the courtyard, using the kitchen and washrooms located in the enslave people's quarters as a backdrop. Here, the appearance was changed to include new plant life and garden benches, and cleanup crews were engaged after the filming had wrapped.⁷³



Fig. 7.16: Screen-capture of LaLaurie and her daughter in the courtyard, AHS: Coven, Episode 11.

⁷³ Information on film crew cleanup protocol supplied by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses docent and former production assistant on *American Horror Story: Coven*, Ellie Ginsburg, December 12, 2015.



Fig. 7.17: Author. *Hermann-Grima Courtyard*. 2015. Photograph.



Fig. 7.18: Screen-capture of LaLaurie slaughtering a chicken in the courtyard, *AHS: Coven*, Episode 11.

Gallier House Façade

As previously stated, the exterior of the Gallier House was chosen to represent the façade of Delphine LaLaurie's New Orleans home. It is possible that the production company chose to use the Gallier House as the exterior for convenience and to better consolidate its building usage deals, as the Woman's Exchange runs both the Gallier and Hermann-Grima Houses. An alternate explanation is that FX was unable to acquire the rights to use the exterior of the actual LaLaurie Mansion, now under private ownership.

The Gallier House, which is still run as an active house museum, had little changed for the filming beyond dirt being spread in the streets (so as to preserve period accuracy) and a frame rigging was put together so that in the show the LaLaurie family could be hanged by the angry mob that stormed their household. This was shot in such a way that made it appear as

⁷⁴ It is not uncommon for the film industry to do this, as was done here, thinking the audience will not know any better.

though Delphine LaLaurie's daughters were being hanged from the house's balcony, when it fact it was the result of strategic editing.⁷⁵ The front door of the Gallier House was also used in an encounter between Marie Laveau and Delphine LaLaurie. Tours of the actual Gallier House utilize a side-door.



Fig. 7.19: Screen-capture of Delphine LaLaurie with Marie Laveau, *AHS: Coven*, Episode 1.



Fig. 7.20: Author. *Gallier House Front Door Gate*. 2015. Photograph.

Louisiana, like Georgia, is one of the most hospitable states in which a production company can film. In 2012, \$236.4 million dollars of tax credits per Louisiana program were certified, \$773,172,430 was spent in the Louisiana economy and roughly 15,200 jobs were generated by the entertainment sector. With no cap on total tax credits issued by the state they can be applied to production expenses (30%) and utilizing local labor (40%), and can be transferred to Louisiana taxpayers. One of the primary liaisons between the film industry and local businesses in the New Orleans area is Second Line Stages, whose soundstages have been occupied by American Horror Story for the last four years.

The approach that Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses took was a risky one, and

⁷⁵ Information on precautions taken to preserve Gallier House balcony supplied by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses executive director Mamie Gasperecz, December 11, 2015.

⁷⁶ Financial data acquired from LFEA (Louisiana Film Entertainment Association).

understandably so. Affiliating buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places with horror-oriented source material is a gamble, and has the potential to permanently damage a historic house's reputation. The entire site was used for its original purpose. Bedrooms were bedrooms, parlors were parlors, and dining rooms were dining rooms: this lack of change is in part because the Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses team was scrupulously specific, intent on maintaining the original fabric of their resources without compromising the integrity beyond the minor inconveniences or dangers inherent with the presence of large amounts of people in small, enclosed spaces. It can also be argued that the production company, FX, wanted something similarly specific to fulfill their respective needs for *American Horror Story: Coven*. As filming processes go, it was unobtrusive as a result of meticulous coordination, to the point of protective micro-management. The work list provided by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses is two and a half pages long and covers preparatory work, wrap work, the moving of furniture and decorative smalls, the precise varieties of dripless candles permitted on-site, the exact rooms to be utilized for storage and air-conditioning, floor protection, permissible food (none) and drink (room temperature bottled water, capped), any other special requests and monetary compensation for use of museum furniture.

There is no shortage of self-guided *American Horror Story: Coven* tours for the city of New Orleans⁷⁷ and because of a blatant lack of affiliation – Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses, perhaps wisely, decided not to be credited in the filming⁷⁸ – both house museums have continued with business as usual, without altering any physical features or any part of the interpretive story they choose to tell on site. The house museums follow their tradition of

⁷⁷ Primary search results yield self-guided tours listed by Deep South Magazine, Huffington Post Entertainment, Hooked on Houses, and OLV (On Location Vacations).

⁷⁸ American Horror Story's reputation for graphic violence was not subject matter with which the Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses were sure they wanted to be associated; from exchange with executive director Mamie Gasperecz, December 11, 2015.

enforcing the sharing of less-told stories: the critical roles of women and the contributions of enslaved people in New Orleans, upon whose backs these affluent citizens rose to prominence. In this way the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses have been able to maintain their historic integrity. Though docents will not shy away from questions about the filming if they are asked, it is communicated to employees that background of the houses are more important, and connections to the television serial that filmed in these locations, while not discouraged, should not be their focus.⁷⁹

⁷⁹ Information on the approach of site interpretation supplied by Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses executive director Mamie Gasperecz, December 11, 2015.

VIII. Comparative Analysis

In this analysis the author intends to compare the visual/physical changes and influence of a film presence at the preceding case study sites. These on-site alterations will be taken into account to determine whether the case study in question has maintained its integrity by historic preservation standards, and where these case studies fit into the greater context of preservation as a field. The current interpretations of these sites will be evaluated with Freeman Tilden's Six Principles of Interpretation and the author's observational data gathered on-site during visits. Additionally, a succinct exploration of the benefits and downsides to a film presence at a historic site will be taken into account when evaluating. Lastly, the author will address the stories that television serials are telling at these historic sites, what they mean for the layman's perspective of said site, why horror as a genre has such a universal appeal and what that means for future filming at places like these. What these places have in common, and what their differences are, are listed in the below chart comparing use of materials within the historic resource, geographic orientation, and their similarities in dates of significance.

	Television Serial	Period of Significance	Location	Infill/New Development	Building Type/Use	Primary Materials: Historic	Primary Mater New	rials:
Senoia Historic District	The Walking Dead	1827-1929	Senoia, middle Georgia, historic district bordered by a railroad line.	Extensive	Originally: mixed-use Currently: commercial	Brick, wood, tin, aluminum	Brick, concrete synthetics (vin	1.
Covington Historic Square	The Vampire Diaries	1822-1948	Covington, middle Georgia, historic district bordered by a railroad line.	Some	Originally: mixed-use Currently: commercial	Brick, wood, iron	Brick, concrete	ŧ
Hermann-Grima & Gallier Houses	American Horror Story: Coven	1831-1975/ 1857-1868	New Orleans, Louisiana, historic district bordered by a river.	None	Originally: residence Currently: commercial	Brick, wood, iron	Marginal (on a repair-basis or	

Fig. 8.1: Author. Comparative Chart of Case Studies. 2016.

The National Register Criteria for Evaluation requires that a property must qualify for one or more criteria (A, B, C, and D) in order to be listed. These criteria consist of an association

with significant events that have contributed to the wider scope of history (A), association with a significant person or persons (B), embodying distinctive characteristics of a type, period, method of construction or represent the work of a master (C), as well as properties that have yielded or have the potential to yield critical historic or prehistoric data (D). 80 Integrity is "the ability of a property to convey its significance;" there are seven aspects of integrity within the Criteria for Evaluation. The aspects of integrity are location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, all of which must be considered when nominating a property to the National Register.

Authenticity, as defined by the 1964 Venice Charter, is based almost exclusively around the idea of maintaining the original fabric of a monument or site. By this logic, the less original fabric there is to a monument or site, the less it is worth with regards to its "realness" – it is, conclusively, less real as a result. By contrast, the Nara Document on Authenticity, while conceived "in the spirit of the Charter of Venice," does not restrict itself to the wholly material concerns of Western Europe. The Nara Document stresses cultural diversity and heritage diversity, going so far as to suggest that even when cultural values conflict, all parties should be given respect and acknowledged for their differences, as all societies "are rooted in the particular forms and means of tangible and intangible expression."

This is particularly applicable to film: media itself is a cultural by-product, often indicative of societal norms and trends, and sometimes used as a vehicle for social commentary. If culture is defined as "the arts and other manifestations of human intellectual achievement

⁸⁰ The National Register Criteria for Evaluation, 2.

⁸¹ The National Register Criteria for Evaluation, 44.

⁸² The Nara Document on Authenticity. 1.

⁸³ The Nara Document on Authenticity. 2.

regarded collectively,"⁸⁴ the medium of film is unrepentantly a culture of its own. This is not to say that it takes precedence over existing historic integrity by preservation standards, but that it should be considered on equal footing for its contributions.

National Register Significance

Each case study has at least one (applicable) listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Senoia with the Senoia Historic District, Covington with both the Covington Square Historic District and the Newton County Courthouse, and New Orleans with the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses. This section will analyze the listings located within each case study, their respective significance, and how the film industry has affected both the outward appearance and significance thereof. It will also draw conclusions as to whether the listings have lost their significance as a result of filming, and what that means for maintaining status on the National Register.

Senoia Historic District

The Senoia Historic District is listed as being significant in three areas: architecture, community planning and development, and transportation. Architecturally the district consists of an eclectic variety of building types found in many historic Georgia towns, such as houses, churches, stores, and industrial structures. The nomination states that many of these building reflect small town construction techniques and technology, and possess a regionalized interpretation of popular national styles from their respective time periods. Several wood-frame buildings located in the northern half of the commercial district of historic downtown Senoia have survived in spite of the tendency for buildings with these materials to burn down prior to the 19th century.

⁸⁴ Oxford English Dictionary

⁸⁵ Amy Schlagel. "Senoia Historic District." (*National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 1989). 5.

The boundaries of the Senoia Historic District as designated within the National Register listing currently encompass the modern planned community of townhouses and spec homes immediately across the railroad line at the very edge of historic downtown Senoia. These are the buildings currently being utilized by the film industry for *The Walking Dead* and will be sold when the show has wrapped. This is critical to note, as the second chief areas of significance in the registration form state "the district is significant in that it contains almost all of the historic town with very few modern intrusions or new development." In 1989, the rehabilitation and renovation of the historic downtown area had not yet happened. While the central area of the district has maintained its gridiron street pattern laid down by the original engineers who designed it, this organization devolves in passing the southern railroad boundary, no longer "tailor-made to fit Senoia's landscape and its railroad," imposing a prefabricated form on the district.

Senoia, Georgia, has arguably seen the most modifications in cohabitating with *The Walking Dead*. Raleigh Studios Atlanta made it no secret that it intended to redevelop the once-sleepy historic downtown with period infill that would accommodate new retail/commercial, office/professional, and in-town residential, all of which would follow strict design guidelines. Modern amenities placed into historic "looking" structures have both been built and are also in the works: an 11-acre residential development built at the southern edge of Senoia's historic downtown, currently used as a "live back lot" for *The Walking Dead* with intentions of being used for future film projects, ⁸⁸ is larger than the actual historic downtown itself. The period infill meant to contribute to the character of Senoia within the

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⁸⁶ Schlagel, "Senoia Historic District," 5.

⁸⁷ Schlagel, "Senoia Historic District," 6.

⁸⁸ Residential Project, *The Historic Senoia Project*, http://www.historicsenoia.com/residential.html, accessed December 27, 2015.

historic downtown area is outstanding in that it is neither genuine nor concerned with the material integrity to which American preservation standards hold. It is unreal both physically and visually, with new materials weathered to look older than they are and a pristine appearance that looks neither lived in nor regionally distinctive. Senoia is disingenuous in every sense of the word; not unlike a theme park it removes the visitor from the outside world and transports them (perhaps unintentionally) to a film set, and one that tourists come to out of a desire to see the too-perfect town of "Woodbury" firsthand. Senoia attempted to create a new identity after being branded as a fictional place, and its architecture and lack of material integrity makes this evident.

For these reasons it is suggested that the Senoia Historic District no longer qualifies for two out of three of its primary areas of significance, and arguably does not qualify for Criterion C (Design and Construction) with regards to the commercial districts distinct and noticeable changes. The district should either be removed from National Register status or amended to account for non-contributing features, such as the period infill and new development to the immediate south. Based on the changes and alterations that have been made to the town with the presence of the film industry, Senoia should not continue to present itself as a historic town.

Covington Historic District

The Covington, Georgia case study consists of multiple properties: the Covington Historic District, which includes many commercial structures, and the Newton County Courthouse. The approximate center, the nexus of the district and the primary location for the case study as seen in *The Vampire Diaries*, consists of Covington's business district. The Covington Historic District is significant in areas of architecture, commerce, community planning and development, ethnic heritage (black), landscape architecture, politics and

government, and transportation,⁸⁹ but the areas of significance with the most relevance to change due to the film industry are architecture, commerce, and community planning and development. The commercial buildings in downtown Covington are, as stated within the case study section, mostly representative of the types of structures built in small towns in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. The district as a whole possesses a wide variety of intact landmark and commercial buildings, many of which serve as centerpieces of public gatherings and provide the community with a sense of place. These commercial row buildings surrounding the square are one- to four-stories tall, share party or common walls, and have uniform setbacks with continuous lines so as to provide visual repetition and flow of design. The majority of these commercial row buildings have a distinctive late Victorian influence, although there are others in the Neoclassical Revival and Colonial Revival styles.⁹⁰

The historic central business district around the Covington Square served commercial needs for Covington and the surrounding areas – this has not changed. Similarly, the community planning and development has been altered very little and follows a "Washington"-type courthouse town plan⁹¹, wherein the central business district faces an open space, not unlike a Roman forum. In this plan all roads at the corners of the square block intersect without interrupting the primary gridiron plan of the town, which remains intact.

The commercial district and central square of Covington, Georgia, has sustained little physical and visual change as a result of *The Vampire Diaries*, its visible alterations primarily serving as "Easter eggs" for the savvy visitor who also happens to be an active follower of the

⁸⁹ Edson Beall. "Covington Historic District." (*National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*, 1998) 15

⁹⁰ Beall, "Covington Historic District," 17.

⁹¹ Beall, "Covington Historic District," 18.

⁹² A media Easter egg is an intentionally hidden message, inside joke, or visual in a film, television show, or video game. The only people who will see Easter eggs are those who are looking for them.

show. Small things, such as the "Grayson Gilbert, M.D." sign in a boutique window and signs referencing non-fat vampire lattes at the local café are such entertaining references, not likely to be caught or noticed at all by the casual visitor to Covington's historic downtown. The most gratuitous inside joke present in Covington is the Mystic Grill, built exclusively as a replica of the same restaurant and bar in the television serial. It too serves as a special reference to those familiar with its source material, but does not advertise itself as anything more than a local eatery. Visitors from all walks of life may enjoy a drink and a sandwich at its tables without ever knowing they visited a life-size, functioning model of a fictional grill. In design it was reconstructed to the exact specifications and style it was before the fire, and blends seamlessly with the other commercial district buildings.

Having maintained all areas of significance since the National Register nomination for the Covington Historic District was written in 1998, it can be concluded that little change has occurred, and certainly not enough to affect its status and listing on the Register.

Hermann-Grima & Gallier Houses

The Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses, both of which are listed on the National Register of Historic Places, are significant in the areas of architecture and landscape architecture. The Hermann-Grima House, also known as the Christian Woman's Exchange, has maintained much of its original fabric and the overall design and style of the structure and its rear courtyard. The Gallier House, built and decorated by prominent New Orleans architect James Gallier, Jr. in the mid-19th century, has maintained the large majority of its original fabric both with regards to the house and its landscaping in the rear courtyard. The statement of significance provides a brief history of Gallier's association with his family home. ⁹³

The Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses in New Orleans are demonstrative examples of

⁹³ Paul Goeldner. "Gallier House." (National Register of Historic Places Nomination, 1974). 3.

how little the film industry can affect the material integrity and character of a historic resource.

On site, it is evident that neither historic house suffered visual physical changes or alterations — as stated within the designated case study chapter this was a direct result of extremely diligent monitoring and careful negotiations on the part of the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses director and staff. Because of this attention to detail, the significance of both houses remains as listed in the National Register: there are no concerns about any changes compromising what put them on the register in the first place.

Interpretation

Freeman Tilden's Six Principles of Interpretation are the foundations upon which many interpretive strategies are rooted. These points can be used to evaluate the extent and success of a historic site's ability to reach its audience.

1.) Any interpretation that does not somehow relate what is being displayed or being described to something within the personality or experience of the visitor will be sterile.

Here Tilden stresses that a dichotomy between what is presented to the audience and what is visually available can create cognitive dissonance, driving a wedge between the visitor and their ability to understand what is being shown to them. Of the three case studies, the presentation of Senoia as the idyllic Woodbury is the most grating, particularly given that the town itself has defined its appearance as an unreal place, down to the faux-aged bricks. Covington rests comfortably in a middle ground, providing amusing references for visitors who are fans of *The Vampire Diaries* and a separate tour that focuses exclusively on the show's locations within the historic Covington downtown. The Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses in New Orleans were presented as working houses and museums within the context of the show, and have therefore not deviated from their original purposes.

2.) Information, as such, is not interpretation. Interpretation is revelation based upon

information. But they are entirely different things. However, all interpretation includes information.

Or, how is the visitor engaged? What role does the site or location play to them? Rote facts and informational pamphlets do not an interpretive strategy make, which is where Senoia and Covington suffer. Both offer self-guided tour pamphlets and brochures that advertise their careers in the film industry, but third parties, not the community itself, run all film-based tours that take place in both towns. Conversely, the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses in New Orleans have made a concerted effort to channel information on their respective resources through an expressly particular view, focusing on an interpretation of those subjects less-talked about: women and the enslaved people.

3.) Interpretation is an art which combines many arts whether the materials presented are scientific, historical, or architectural. Any art is in some degree teachable.

Here all of the case studies qualify in some regard, albeit not without some minor alteration to the definition of "art." If media and film qualifies thusly, it can be concluded that all of the case studies – Senoia, Covington, and the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses – are valid.

4.) The chief aim of interpretation is not instruction, but provocation.

Similarly each case study can qualify for the 4th Principle: art's intention is to provoke and inspire, not to remain sterile, and because each location is imbued with a preconception from each visitor, they are all provocative in their own ways. No visitor comes to a site without even the vaguest notion of what to expect, whether their perception is hinged on the historical aspects of a place, or that place's relation to a fictional narrative.

5.) Interpretation should aim to present a whole rather than a part and must address itself to the whole man rather than any phase.

Senoia presents a specific period in history, although that period is firmly set and determined by new design guidelines. In appearance it achieves little cohesion beyond sterile

newness, while Covington has maintained its historic character even while adapting to the "inside jokes" left over from filming (i.e the Mystic Grill). The interpretations at the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses provide a look at general New Orleans life from the period in which the houses were built up through their uses for the Christian Woman's Exchange, while also offering a more complex and thorough interpretation of the roles of woman and enslaved peoples.

6.) Interpretation addressed to children should not be a dilution of the presentation to adults, but should follow a fundamentally different approach. To be at its best it will require a separate program.

Tilden's 6th Principle is, sadly, irrelevant and not applicable to any of the case studies, all of which are directed to more adult audiences and adult comprehension levels: in the case of the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses this is perhaps more flexible, but the subject matter in third-party tours for Senoia and Covington is less family-friendly.

Reception and interpretation are nuanced, as every visitor brings their own personal association to the site they are attending. Not unlike the fictional town that made a home there in *The Walking Dead*, Senoia is constructed of cloying unreality – the ever-present film trucks, walled-off planned community, and film studios based not two miles away do little to dissuade that impression. Covington, a veteran of film, retains the same genial character it presents within the context of *The Vampire Diaries*. The impact one receives of the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses in *American Horror Story: Coven* is that they are inherently dark places; many scenes were either shot at night or employed the use of blackout curtains in windows that might accidentally provide ambient light. By comparison the interiors are airy and bright with the cheery and pleasing atmosphere of a stately home.

There are more concerns about authenticity of place and about the effect of association. If

one is to draw conclusions about the Nara Document's standards for authenticity suggesting that all culture – film included – is valid heritage, then how much is really detracted from these places if they associate themselves so freely with the genre of horror, and embrace the change? The local tourism centers in each city are happy for the economic boost, frequently claiming that locals are thrilled to be in such close proximity to film and the actors they admire. This starstruck reaction is almost universal, giving the industry a glamorized reputation that it may not entirely deserve. By contrast there are ways of alienating one's wider audience to an irreparable degree by fully indulging the fictional canon in place of the historical one. The issue: a combination of destination image and association is what drives tourism to these places. A great deal of tourism literature of fictional films and television serials concentrates on the appeal of "highly attractive scenery or quirky, nostalgic and idyllic rural societies," 94 all categories into which these case studies fall. But what of the association to morbid and macabre subject matter? Judging by the number of horror-related⁹⁵ tours in each city it can be concluded that an association with the grotesque is not something that people shy away from: a fascination with fear and the things that inspire it acts as a powerful draw. This can be used to the advantage of historic preservation and the protection of historic resources, provided that you are telling the story you want to tell without permitting a bleeding of fact and fiction, the latter of which is a powerful medium for shaping a visitor's view of the local history of one's resource.

For reasons such as these historic preservationists are naturally wary of progress, fearing that the integrity of historic structures will be compromised by the presence of the film industry.

⁹⁴ Frost, Warick. "Braveheart-ed Ned Kelly: Historic Films, Heritage Tourism and Destination Image." *Tourism Management* 27. (2004): 248.

⁹⁵ In relation to either the horror show or local "ghost tours." Senoia, Covington, and New Orleans all have ghost tours, but this is to be expected in any town with a historic cemetery and a history older than one hundred years.

Senoia is one such example of a place so caught up in its connection to popular culture that it has lost much of its original identity, the buildings hyperreal⁹⁶ in their perfection, new structures and infill indistinguishable from anything that is historic or original to the town. It has a modern culture, one that draws direct lines from its source material, and therefore strains to appear genuine. This lack of original material and the inability to distinguish existing historic fabric from contemporary infill is jarring – in attempting to blend a cohesive historic theme and architectural style together Senoia achieved a too-perfect appearance, made all the more unreal by the prominently placed *The Walking Dead* gift shop. Covington, in spite of its tagline "A Georgia Camera-Ready Community," has altered little of its original fabric outside of necessary restoration to the former law offices that once sat next to the Covington Courthouse after they burned. It can be argued here that because the replacement structure of the Mystic Grill is, quite obviously, the Mystic Grill, visitors are not laboring under any pretenses about local historic structures unless they are wholly unfamiliar with *The Vampire Diaries*. The downtown historic square and the buildings around it feel real because they are real. By the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the National Register Criteria for Evaluation this physical integrity gives it a distinct advantage over Senoia in terms of American preservation. On the far end of the spectrum there are the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses, which have successfully maintained integrity in location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association by preservation standards, decidedly unapologetic in not acknowledging its affiliation to American Horror Story: Coven unless expressly asked.

Compounding the issues inherent with how these case studies are presented from an interpretive standpoint, there are obvious benefits to the presence of the film industry. The

⁹⁶ Hyperreality is a post-modernist idea that theorist Jean Baudrillard suggested in *Simulacra and Simulation*: where something was made a representation without original referent, confused for the real and not actually existing.

proximity to a studio and soundstage promotes this relationship, contributing to the regional economy. In all three case studies there was a marked increase in tourism and the money that comes with it, all of which feeds back into the city, town, or house museum. In one special case, *American Horror Story* decided to hold a sale that would benefit the community: after the production of the FX shows had wrapped in New Orleans, the local studios at Second Line Stages set up a "fire sale" of a large percentage of their inventory from both the Properties Department and Set Dressing Department. Over the course of *American Horror Story: Coven* these departments acquired goods and furniture (ranging from garden variety to fine antiques) for use in the show from local sources. Post-wrap it was decided that these goods should stay in the city from whence they came, to be sold publicly at shockingly low prices to rid themselves of the stock.⁹⁷





Fig. 8.2, 8.3: Author. AHS Props & Decoration Sale at Second Line Stages. 2015. Photographs.

According to a scathing critique by Steffan Hantke of modern horror cinema the genre has floundered over the last two decades, degrading into a series of neo-slasher ⁹⁸ films and

⁹⁷ Information on the *American Horror Story* sale supplied by Second Line Stages client services coordinator Katie-Grace Zusser, December 11, 2015.

⁹⁸ "Slasher" films are a subgenre of horror film that involve psychopathic murderers taking multiple victims. (One of the earliest is argued to be Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, 1960.) Hantke describes the "neo-

remakes, and remakes of remakes. The early 2000s saw a series of critical reviews on the future of horror and where it might go, if it still had any potential for success. ⁹⁹ It is possible that this trend has driven the genre out of its one-and-a-half to two-hour long structure mandated by the length of time people will willingly sit in a movie theatre without taking a break to use the facilities, and into television. Here an introduction, a conflict and a solution (or conclusion) are not required to happen in the course of two hours, and instead take place over a stretch of twelve to twenty-four episodes, each of them forty-five minutes long and enabling an in-depth exploration of character and opportunity for audience empathy. Hantke's 2007 critique came just before a sudden increase in horror-related television: *True Blood* in 2008, *The Vampire Diaries* in 2009, *The Walking Dead* in 2010, *American Horror Story* in 2011, one following another.

Follow-up questions about the nature of the television serials so prominently set in these historic places is: why horror, and why here? Stuart Hanscomb suggests two reasons behind the intrigue: "the 'fascination' element of monsters could in part be explicable by our concern for our own ambiguous ontology. The second, more contestable, suggestion is that part of arthorror's appeal is that it allows for a partial expression and exploration of repressed, undeveloped or forgotten existential sensitivities:"100 We are driven to anxiety and disgust while simultaneously wondering why these reactions manifested themselves in the first place. This is in part an element of the television serials featured in the case studies, but not the reason alone; it is more accurate to say that the sensations provoked by horror run into a deeper theme of people wanting to explore the monsters and their narratives, a kind of reflective catharsis.

The Walking Dead is not about the Walkers, but the struggle of people coming to terms

slasher" as a variety of horror film that gained traction in the early 1990s and fell back on overused and lazy "slasher" film tropes, which gave the movies little individual identity.

⁹⁹ Hantke, Steffen. "Academic Film Criticism, the Rhetoric of Crisis, and the Current State of American Horror Cinema: Thoughts of Canonicity and Academic Anxiety." *College Literature*, 34.04. (2007): 192. ¹⁰⁰ Hanscomb, Stuart. "Existentialism and Art Horror." *Sartre Studies International*, 16.01 (2010): 15.

with their humanity — and what is left of that humanity when the trappings of civilization are stripped away. It reflects an ongoing quest to be the best in an unforgiving world where remnants are the only judges of character. On more than one occasion people have been shown to be more threatening than the actual monsters, as is evidenced in Woodbury: not unlike its fictional counterpart Senoia appears idyllic and safe, but it was also built to suit the needs of its creators. Why Senoia when there are other small towns in Georgia? It is most likely that the owner of Raleigh Studios Atlanta considered it more advantageous to build on the film reputation of a small town and shape it to the needs of the production company. Senoia supports the script of the show by representing the idealized community in spite of the sacrifices it has made to achieve that: were the nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places reassessed, now twenty-six years after original submission, it would be found that Senoia's areas of significance are greatly compromised. It has reached a threshold for lost integrity.

The Vampire Diaries depicts the problems inherent with physically being a monster and desiring a normal life: an impossible goal but one to which many of the vampiric characters continuously strive in an effort to redeem themselves from what they are. Covington does not reflect this turmoil save for in a few cleverly hidden features that reference the fictional characters from the show: signs leftover from the filming, the Mystic Grill's presence adjacent to the Newton County Courthouse. In most respects Covington is a generic American small town, and therefore is not unavoidably entwined with allusions to The Vampire Diaries in that it has also served as a prominent backdrop for dozens of other films. Possessing its own unique identity and maintaining its significance as defined by its nomination for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, Covington is an ideal location for filming movies or television serials set in a broad spectrum of time periods.

Lastly, hubris reigns supreme in American Horror Story: Coven, in which characters

become monsters in a foolhardy attempt to achieve immortality and maintain the status quo. Almost without trying New Orleans and the buildings featured in the third case study – the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses – wholeheartedly support the script of the show. In spite of the fact that *American Horror Story: Coven* has not altered the interpretations presented at the historic houses in any way, the locations themselves are the best representations of appropriate time periods and use. They are precisely the same.

IX. Conclusion

There is no general, sweeping conclusion that can be made about the defined and predictable effects of film and the film industry: it all depends on circumstance. From a material-oriented perspective of preservation this association and business exchange can hurt rather than help a reputation, can compromise the original fabric of a historic resource or tie it too tightly to a fictional narrative, thus obliterating its historic character and replacing it with the unreal, or hyperreal. It is important to acknowledge the tremendous importance of the film industry and its presence in these places as it creates miniature cities all its own, working in and around existing resources. The benefits are undeniable: increased tourism via exposure in media, and new revenue available for local restoration and conservation efforts. It has also been demonstrated in the case of the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses that "having it all" is possible, and that sacrificing historic integrity by preservation standards to let a film crew through one's doors is not mandatory. The notion of compromise is something with which historic preservationists are overly familiar, but the author would challenge concerned preservationists to consider the advantages of acquainting themselves with the film industry.

The film industry is fickle and sensitive to any threats to productivity. In the past the climate for filming in the south has been a welcoming one, and it would behoove all parties interested in keeping this relationship with a lucrative industry intact to avoid the potential for discrimination. Alienating a business of this nature will not force them to reevaluate their terms: they will leave.

Increased visitation is a determined given based on the results of the three studies, but there are still ways to utilize film exposure without losing historic resources or changing the identity and character of one's community. There are no set guidelines or convenient resources for

historic sites to use in order to better understand the film industry without the potential for being taken advantage of, and perhaps there should be – Covington's saving grace is its long history with film, and the Hermann-Grima/Gallier Historic Houses built a comprehensive series of work lists for the express purpose of encouraging its staff to feel comfortable and safe in saying "no."

Film engagement on its own does not threaten most schools of preservation thought, but in the case of Senoia, Georgia, it is evident that there are consequences to not striking a better balance between working to conserve existing resources and inviting a new, jarring economy into an otherwise sleepy town. As stated in the case study, a number of significant changes have been made to the historic district of the community over the last four to six months alone, suggesting an instability that is not sustainable.

Unlike Covington's Square and the Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses, Senoia is presents as a theme park rather than a historic town – in part, this is because Covington and Senoia are structurally different, and Covington is both a Certified Local Government and has years of film experience under its belt. While the Senoia Historical Society exists, the extent of permanent damage with "period" infill and cosmetic alterations to the commercial downtown indicates a distinct lack of power in the say of what happens to the town's development as a whole. By naturalizing economic development that has shown little regard for typical preservation objectives, Senoia has set itself up not to maintain what it already has. The local history is superseded by its fictional one, and it cannot decide between adopting a new identity or using its relation to *The Walking Dead* as a gateway to its *actual* history.

It is therefore within the purview of the conclusions drawn by case study observations to make recommendations, and to propose a working relationship between historic resources and the film industry. The author asserts that writing a set of guidelines for historic places that want

to associate with the film industry safely, without causing their resources undue harm, is the appropriate course of action.

Guidelines for the safeguarding and protection of historic resources at a site or place should include the following:

- 1.) **Research:** "film and tv production" companies are present in all states and have databases of locations; explore your state's options in-depth and consult with other resources that have worked with the film industry, if possible.
- 1.) **Make yourself available:** The Hermann-Grima and Gallier Historic Houses are undergoing a small project to build a photographic portfolio of their resources that would be available to film location scouts, to avoid illicit on-site photography by covert scouts and better advertise themselves to the industry. This documentation is strongly advised and can be used as a resource in the future.
- 2.) Execute an assessment of your existing resources and their respective conditions: This is for your own records, so that you know when something has been damaged, changed, or altered as a result of the filming process. Film companies are often happy to pay for slip-ups provided there is documentation of the transgression, but these material wounds may be irrevocable damages to the integrity of your resource.
- 3.) **Acquire legal counsel:** Strongly recommended, but not required. A lawyer or someone with legal experience will assist in the navigation of a location agreement.
- 4.) Create a detailed work list of what can and can *not* be done on the property: This is imperative. In order to maintain the condition and integrity of your resource there should be a list of definitive guidelines to prevent anything from happening to it.
- 5.) Maintain constant communication with the film company: This would include

having an employee/overseer or employees on-site during the filming at all times, to ensure that the work list you have written is followed. Film days run for twelve to sixteen hours: the film company should pay for the revenue you might have otherwise acquired on a business day, and for the time of your employees.

6.) **Do not be afraid to say "no":** The industry will always ask for more than what it thinks it can get.

With these guidelines as a simple basis for starting out, historic resources can explore the exposure and possibilities that come with collaborating in a film production. Resources-strapped municipalities can find it difficult to work with the pressure of a billion-dollar industry, but if the industry wants a particular historic resource, it is inclined to bend to fairness: the qualities of that resource are the reason for that desire in the first place. There should be little reason to compromise integrity for the lure of Hollywood glamor.

The Anarchist's Guide to Historic House Museums purports that the only means by which sites can be relevant and meaningful to modern audiences is to adapt¹⁰¹, and incorporating new stories with the old may be a constructive solution, weaving a richer tapestry for future generations even if the historic interpretation does not reflect an expressly film-related presence. A fictional perspective should not be the motive, but its impact on the community from both physical and financial standpoints is worth integrating into a site's interpretive strategy. This is accompanied by a disclaimer that recommends assessment on a case-by-case basis, but working with film is not a solitary sojourn and requires both negotiation and active communication. Fostering relationships with the film industry is economically advantageous at worst, can prove to be a valuable addition to a community with historic resources.

¹⁰¹ Ryan, Deborah, and Franklin Vagnone, "Reorienting historic house museums: An anarchists guide." (2015): 197.

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Appendix

The appendix consists of additional photographs to supplement painting a full picture of historic downtown Senoia, Georgia, historic downtown Covington, Georgia, and the historic Hermann-Grima and Gallier Houses in New Orleans, Louisiana.

Senoia, Georgia





Fig. 10.1, 10.2: Author. "Distressed" clothing for sale at antiques shop in Senoia. 2015. Photograph.



Fig. 10.3: Author. Primary intersection of historic downtown Senoia. 2014.



Fig. 10.4: Author. "Walker Stalkers" sign in front of Senoia Coffee Shop. 2014.



Fig. 10.5: Author. Ms. Wendy's Antiques and Main Street Senoia. 2014.



Fig. 10.6: Author. "Bullet Casing" jewelry advertised in window of Ms. Wendy's Antiques. 2015.

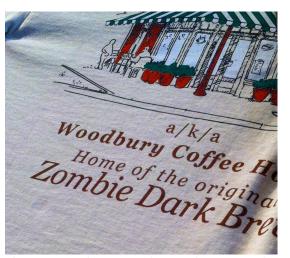


Fig. 10.7: Author. "Zombie Dark Brew" t-shirt, Senoia Coffee Shop. 2015.

Covington, Georgia



Fig. 10.8: Author. *Dedication stone of Newton County Courthouse*. 2015.



Fig. 10.9: Author. Alley between Courthouse and Mystic Grill. 2015.



Fig. 10.10: Author. Additional film stars set into Covington sidewalks, one of which belongs to a main character from The Vampire Diaries. 2015.

New Orleans, Louisiana



Fig. 10.11: Author. *View of Hermann-Grima House from back of courtyard*, enslaved people's quarters at left. 2015.



Fig. 10.12: Author. Second Line Stages soundstage, a retrofitted historic warehouse. AHS: Coven sale housed in soundstage at time photo was taken. SLS client services coordinator Katie-Grace Zusser featured in photo. 2015.