

## Reflection After Journeys

During my Journeys to the Gullah Geechee Corridor, specifically Charleston and Beaufort South Carolina. I got to interact with a lot of important people within the community, such as Erica Veal. Throughout the trip we talked about the Mcleod Plantation and the lives of slaves from our tour guide Ista. We learned about downtown Charleston and its work in slave auctioning in our tour with Erika and our interactions with Gullah Geechee culture while staying at the Penn Center in Beaufort. Through this experience we saw discussions and acts of Globalization, Colonialism, and the Identity of the Gullah Geechee people. Throughout this paper I want to reflect on some experiences that I think touched on each of these topics and what they mean to me.

On the first day of journeys we met with Doctor Tamara Butler who is a worker at the Avery Research Center. She was with us on most activities and on Sunday she showed us her family home and the houses around it. These houses were small, one stories, that were spread out and separated by woodland on three sides. Down the street from these houses we got to see houses that were drastically different. These being large, white two story houses that were close in space and had a dock at the end of the side walk. Dr. Butler told us about how and why these lands had such different buildings. She told us about two brothers who shared the land and couldn't agree on what to do with it. One brother wanting to keep the land with the people and the other wanting to sell it off. Ultimately, it led to the splitting of properties and land.

This experience reminded me of a short discussion we had with Erica on our tour of Beidler forest. She talked about the natives who lived near Beidler and would hunt within the forest; and how they were pushed back into the woods by colonizers. The natives were forced off their land and into Beidler forest making it harder for them to live due to the dangers in the forest. These same colonizers would then pay the natives to go through Beidler forest and hunt down escaped slaves that were hidden within the trees. The natives could also then get their land back by doing said work. This ends on the same problem as the last experience were a group of people are making decisions for land that they never owned or didn't live on.

I really liked these interactions because I got to see first hand a situation that people are living through and actively fighting against. This also applies to the learning about the College of Charleston and the current predicament with buying out a burial ground and wanting to turn it into a freshmen dormitory. That is another problem that is happening that the community has to come together and speak out on to try and get changes made to the plans. As someone who's never been involved in their community it's nice to hear about how other people interact with their community to try and make a difference. It reminded me of when I was high school and I believe the district wanted to move a bunch of schools around and combine a few. Which wouldn't have worked since a few of those dealt with a lot of gang violence and shoot outs. It put other schools in danger and good couple of those buildings just aren't maintained. One example of this is that they wanted to move a Technical Magnet school from behind the technical college in Augusta, to the other side of the city. This wouldn't have worked out well because the school they were trying move it into was a medical magnet school. The tech school had dual enrollment courses with our Technical college, it also had a culinary program and the school they were

trying to move them into had no kitchen for the program. It was all around a bad idea that was being made to try and save money that, I personally think, would have costed way more money with having to renovate the schools to match their school colours, repaint mascot paintings, change signs to the proper name. It was too much effort for too little reason.

From these two interactions, and a few others, I've seen a lot of dealings with globalization, Colonialism and identity in the Gullah Geechee Corridors. I think of the three the biggest contenders is globalization and how its affecting the Gullah Geechee people. We see how the gullah geechee people are dealing with gentrification first hand and we learn about how they're pushing back against it. We also see a struggle with identity in how they were the "first freed slaves" in a technical sense. We see how they thrived as a closed off colony and worked together to make the most of what they have with the invention of the Penn Center. However, with the building of bridges that now connect the sea islands, these people are more accessible than ever. There is both a positive and negative to this situation, as with all things. The positive being more people are able to interact and learn about the gullah geechee culture which helps keep it alive. A negative being that people are treating the sea islands like a vacation home or a permanent place of residence which is causing a rise in the cost of living prices and also leads to things like the two story, close spaced houses I mentioned earlier. Lastly, we see colonialism in the erasure of slave history. For example, the differing plaques of history preservation in downtown Charleston. One plaque that talk about the architecture of a house and the aristocratic man who "built" it, he didn't build it enslaved people did. As opposed to the plaque that talks about a building that was used to auction the most slaves in USA history. Even the gentrification happening on the sea

islands if a small form of colonialism. If anything it's colonizing on a smaller scale, a group of people going somewhere and slowly taking the land or making it inaccessible to the people who already live there.

Lastly, I want to relook at my letter from the start of the semester. All in all I wasn't really excited about this trip, however I had fun learning about the stuff that we did. If I was still planning on majoring in Anthropology I'd like to think that this class would've been even more insightful for me. I originally thought of global learning as a large scale, everyone is affected problems; but I think I'm realizing now that global doesn't have to be put into such a broad scope. Global can mean large scale communities that are being affected. In conclusion, I think I learned a lot while on this trip and from the class in general.