Race, Discourse, and the Cultural Economy of Neoliberal New York: An Analysis of Online Tourist Reviews of Harlem Heritage Tours

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Thesis submitted to the faculty of the Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of:

Master of Science
    In
    Sociology

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May 7, 2014
Blacksburg, Virginia

Keywords: Sociology, Ethnic and Racial Studies, Recreation
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Abstract

This study is about how Harlem—an ethnically diverse community regarded by many as a primary site of the African American Experience—is represented in the online tourism domain. More specifically, it is about identifying loci of value in the content of online tourist reviews which contribute to a color-blind and politically sanitizing discourse about Harlem that reinforces a neoliberal understanding of Harlem as an underdeveloped economic frontier. Tourism has been identified by New York policy makers to be a way to generate revenue in culturally diverse, low-income areas, and especially in Harlem. In order for tourism to be successful, a neighborhood needs to be considered a place that can offer tourists a valuable experience. Online reviews, particularly those on social media sites, are becoming increasingly influential within the tourism industry because of their influence with consumers, who regularly consult them to guide purchasing decisions. This study examines online reviews of a prominent Harlem tourism company as a way to analyze the valuating discourse needed to keep tourists coming back to the community. What do reviewers find valuable during the tour? And what elements of the tour are responsible for producing value for tourists? These questions are investigated using a four-step qualitative approach to analyzing online tourist reviews on TripAdvisor.com posted about Harlem Heritage Tours.
Acknowledgements:

I want to thank my committee for all of your time and effort in helping me put this project together. Dr. Harrison, as my chair you bore the brunt of the task, so I would like to especially thank you for all of your insight and guidance. Thank you, Dr. Smith, for your constant encouragement and advice, which helped me get through some of the more complicated theoretical bits. And lastly, thank you Dr. McGehee for providing me with your expertise in critical tourism studies. It was wonderful to work with all of you.
This is for my family.
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Introduction

New York City is one of the world's most popular tourist destinations. In 2012 the city of 8 million residents received a record 52.7 million visitors\(^1\). Because of these numbers the tourism industry is among the most important to New York's economy, and increasingly so for the community of Harlem, where tourism has been identified as a key way to generate local revenue (Hoffman, 2003; Davila, 2004; Chinyelu, 1999; and Maurrasse, 2006). One of the leading ways that tourist based information—or discourse—occurs is through digital and web-based mediums (Holmes, 2001). The information disseminated through online mediums has taken on increased importance in terms of how people make decisions about tourism purchases and the ways that tourist operators and policy makers use this information to make decisions about effective tourism practice (Leung et al., 2013).

If a potential tourist interested in visiting Harlem performs a Google search of some combination of the words "Harlem" and "tourism" one of the first links is to a cultural tourism company called Harlem Heritage Tours, and not far down from that is a link to TripAdvisor.com's description of the neighborhood. Harlem Heritage Tours and TripAdvisor offer two of the most prominent representations of Harlem within what tourism studies scholars call the online tourism domain (Miguens and Mendes, 2008). The reviews concerning Harlem Heritage Tours on TripAdvisor are important examples of the discourse generated from touristic experiences in the community because of their influence and stature within this domain (Jeacle and Carter, 2011).

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study is to examine the digital discourse that comes out of cultural tourism in Harlem as it relates to an ongoing valuation of cultural 'otherness' under a neoliberal economic model. This research is important because understanding cultural tourism in this context can inform a better understanding of the contemporary significance, shape, and influence of what Linda Smith refers to as 'traveler's tales' (Smith, 1999). These play a crucial role in how popular western conceptions of racial or ethnic 'others' are created. They are also sites which act as markers for linking public discourse concerning cultural 'otherness' at the touristic level with public policy discourse and practice concerning that concept. The data for this project includes online tourist reviews of Harlem Heritage Tours. This interpretive, qualitative project employs a four step analysis of the online customer reviews to examine the role that cultural tourism plays in contributing to discourses of cultural otherness which emphasize cultural uniqueness as an inherently valuable, and commodifiable, concept, rather than a concept which is tied to ongoing struggles for social and economic equality for Harlem residents.

\(^1\) NYCgo.com, NYC Statistics Page (www.nycgo.com/articles/nyc-statistics-page) (accessed 4-28-14)
The problem this study examines is how the depolitization of race within the context of tourism—a recurrent theme in tourism studies—has become more widespread as the tourism industry's role as an agent of economic growth has grown in importance in policy-makers' plans to revitalize America's urban economies (Mele, 2013; Hoffman, 2003; and Gotham, 2007). This is particularly evident in Harlem, which today is home to a thriving tourism industry based in large part on Harlem's symbolic importance as a major site of the African American Experience (Hyra, 2008). Tourism has been identified as a key factor in generating economic growth in Harlem based on neoliberal views of race, culture, and ethnicity as commodifiable and valuable (rather than political or social) concepts (Hoffman, 2003; Werry, 2011). The treatment of cultural otherness in public examples of post-tour narrative accounts of cultural tourism in Harlem—such as the online reviews being analyzed here—mirrors in many ways the treatment cultural 'others' have been given in larger discussions about the role that tourism plays in the economic development of Harlem. These congruities in fact represent a series of disconnects between the perceptions of policy makers and tourists, and the ongoing social, political, and economic struggles of Harlem's residents. A discursive emphasis on cultural otherness as having inherent value tends to mask, ignore, or dismiss how social elites continue to define and dictate the terms of cultural otherness as well as the historical and current negative consequences of that label.

Thesis Outline

This thesis is composed of five chapters including, in the first chapter, a literature review and theoretical foundation that is divided into two sections. The first section sketches out important intersections between three broader subjects: 1) Contemporary racial understanding, 2) the tourism industry, and 3) neoliberal ideology. The second section establishes a basis for understanding the influence that online tourist reviews have as simultaneous examples of Traveler's Tales and Social Media.

The second chapter introduces the research question, and includes sections which focus on the complex relationships between Harlem's residents and tourism interests. This chapter also includes a section that deals with TripAdvisor specifically, and elaborates on what aspects of the site contribute to it being viewed as 'trustworthy' by readers.

Chapter Three is devoted to a discussion of my methodological approach to analyzing the reviews. This approach uses four steps to analyze reviews at first as parts of an aggregate of reviews representing an abstract system and gradually shifting to focus on the details of individual review content. This chapter also includes a discussion of ways—through employing different techniques of triangulation—I have tried to ensure that standards of trustworthiness in qualitative, tourism based research are met as defined by Decrop (2004).
Chapter Four includes an analysis of findings that is broken down in two sections. The first focuses on what tourists find valuable about their tour experiences, and how they communicate that value to others. The second section shifts the emphasis to topics which are not discussed often — such as Race, Gentrification, and Civil Rights — but are nonetheless important to understanding social conditions in Harlem.

The fifth and final chapter includes some remarks about my personal experiences during my two tours taken with Harlem Heritage Tours. It concludes the study by offering a model for both how value is produced during the tour and how this value becomes part of a larger valuating discourse representing Harlem in the online tourism domain — and some of the possible negative repercussions of that discourse.
Chapter 1: Literature Review and Theoretical Foundations

Race and Neoliberalism

Carol J. Greenhouse defines neoliberalism as "...the prevailing approach (for now) to government that supplants regulation by law with market forces, and government functions (especially in the service sector) by private enterprise...(2010, p. 1)." This definition encapsulates the basic premise of the neoliberal economic regime, which is that greater prosperity for all can be obtained by allowing for a free-flowing exchange of goods, information, and services across multiple sites of consumption, production, and trade. Neoliberal thought is predicated on three main values: the sanctity of individual liberties and freedoms, the sanctity of private property, and the 'market' as a decisive influence on the social world at large. According to neoliberal theory, the government's responsibility in this system is that of guardian of these three central values, and little else. This has meant in practice that governments in many places have taken on more intrusive roles in 'creating a good business climate' by prioritizing corporate, financial and industrial interests. As Harvey explains:

Neoliberalism is in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterized by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. The role of the state is to create and preserve an institutional framework appropriate to those practices. - 2005, pg.2

In David Harvey's *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (2005), he explains that processes of neoliberalization began in the 1970s as a response to the Keynesian style of embedded liberalism which dominated the economies of the capitalist world (USA, Western Europe, Japan) during the first stages of the Cold War. Harvey explains that states characterized by embedded liberalism all exhibit, "...an acceptance that the state should focus on full employment, economic growth, and the welfare of its citizens, and that state power should be freely deployed, alongside of, if necessary, intervening in or even substituting for market processes to achieve these ends (p.10)." One example of a major federal program inspired by embedded liberalism was President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society. This initiative consisted of a set of domestic programs spearheaded by the federal government with the dual role of eliminating poverty as well as racial injustice (Johnson, 1964). The major policy to come out of this initiative dealing with poorer urban areas was the Model Cities Program, which lasted from 1966-1974 (Oakley and Tsiao, 2006).

The height of embedded liberalism in the United States occurred during the 1950s and 1960s, which coincided with the height of the Civil Rights Movement. As embedded liberalism came to be replaced by neoliberalism throughout the 1970s and 1980s there was also pressure placed on the gains made by racial minority groups in the United States during the Civil Rights Movement. Affirmative action, a result of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, had, by the 1990s,
become weakened as a result of Supreme Court Decisions such as Adarand Contractors Inc. v. Pena (1995) and Hopwood v. Texas (1995) which called into question the constitutionality of any employment or admissions policy which used race as a basis for preference (Brown and Wellman, 2005). The welfare reform debates during the Clinton presidency also carried many racialized undertones, while at the same time serving as an example of the ongoing neoliberalization of the United States during the 1990s. Government welfare for the poor, in a neoliberal sense, is not only wasteful and beyond the state's ideal reach, it also encourages idleness and laziness for those who receive it. This belief becomes racialized when the poverty of minority groups becomes attributed to cultural or behavioral characteristics, rather than the result of overt and institutional racisms.

The neoliberal focus on the individual aligns itself with a tendency of many policy makers, politicians, and academics in the years since the Civil Rights movement to focus not on the disparate impacts produced by widespread institutional racism but the intentions of racist individuals, as well as cultural and behavioral characteristics, which cause racial disparities in socioeconomic outcomes (Reed, 1991; Brown and Wellman, 2005). According to Wornie Reed, this has led to the creation of a racial paradigm which de-emphasizes the extent and importance of institutional racism and maintains that contemporary racism is the result of the actions of a small group of bigoted individuals (1991). The notion that racism is rooted in the actions of a small group of individuals, and the idea that disadvantaged minority groups are poor because they do not work hard enough, or "apply themselves" and therefore do not deserve or are entitled to government aid both fit nicely within a neoliberal ideology. As Brown and Wellman, in the case of African Americans, explain:

The seductiveness of the idea that persistent racial inequality is located primarily in the individual failure of African Americans is due in large part, we think, to Whites belief that African Americans have failed to take advantage of the equality of opportunity provided by civil rights legislation. As a result, the core American value of individualism has been racialized-Whites antipathy to Blacks or color conscious processes is now justified through the language of individualism. -2005, p. 204

David Theo Goldberg, in 2009's The Threat of Race: Reflections on Racial Neoliberalism, argues that, in the United States, the chipping away at social welfare policies and affirmative action in part constitutes an undoing of, "...the laws, rules, and norms of expectation the Civil Rights movement was able to effect, attacking them as unconstitutional, as the only sort of racial discrimination with which we should be concerned today (pg. 78)!

This contradiction represents one of the fundamental aspects of the most recent version of what Goldberg terms racial americanization (2009). Racial americanization is a particularly American historical process of encoding the dichotomy of white supremacy/black inferiority in society through a series of major forms of state sanctioned segregations (slavery-Jim Crow-ghettoization, and reservations) which resulted in a normativized belief that racial apartness was not only desired, but natural, even necessary (Goldberg, 2009). The contemporary manifestation of this process, Goldberg argues, is one that is characterized by a "conservative segregation." He uses the word 'conservative' in the sense that, "In the absence of the Civil Rights spirit, and now in its active undoing, accordingly,
the present period conserves (and deepens) the hold of racial preference schemes historically produced as if they were the nature of things [emphases author's] (Goldberg, 2009, pg. 78)."

Racial americanization, in other words, is a historical process that tends to reproduce racial stratifications in accordance with political, cultural, economic, and social situations in the American context. Racial americanization, for Goldberg, represents one example of a racial regionalization and in Threat of Race he distinguishes between several of these regionalizations in addition to racial americanization including racial palestinianization, racial europeanization, racial latinamericanization, and racial southeraficization (2009). Each of these regionalizations are characterized by specific historical and spatio/geographic racial configurations, which is an important aspect of Goldberg's arguments (this study is in part concerned with what might be called racial harlemization). One feature, however, that they all have in common is that today these configurations are all influenced by the processes of global neoliberalization. Within these configurations, color-blind racism is the result of the individualization of racism, born again racism is the result of the privatization of racism and the growth of the prison industrial complex is indicative of the commodification of racism (Goldberg, 2009).

Racial neoliberalism, in many instances, has the effect of demonizing racial "otherness" while simultaneously victimizing whiteness (Goldberg, 2009). This can be evidenced by the hate discourse surrounding Muslims in post-911 America, by the fact that whites now claim to be "victims" of affirmative action policies, and that jobs (ostensibly for whites) are being "lost" to Hispanic or Mexican immigrants. This racial paradigm is heavily implicated-and in turn dependent upon-what Eduardo Bonilla-Silva has suggested to be the era of color blind racism, and represents one way in which neoliberal policies or ideologies can influence racial attitudes (2006). It also represents a strategy for justifying government non-interference in racial issues. Neoliberal governments and states deal with racial issues in various ways, but these methods generally take one of two approaches: suppression or incorporation (Werry, 2011, Goldberg, 2009). Methods of suppression can take place on a broader level, such as the rise of colorblind racism, or can be much more pointed, such as the phenomenon of mass incarceration which began in the United States during the 1980s (Harvey, 2005). Methods of incorporation include any measure which brings racial or ethnic minority groups further in to the folds of the 'global marketplace' (Werry, 2011, Goldberg 2009, ). In order for this to happen, concepts such as 'race', 'culture' and 'ethnicity' need to go from being associated with 'negative' markers such as crime or poverty to 'positive' markers such as uniqueness or value (Werry, 2011). In these conceptualizations, racial "otherness" must go through a valuating process. When racial, cultural, or ethnic "otherness" is rendered into an inherently valuable or desirable trait, it not only distances the "otherness" from its supposed 'undesirable' traits, it also renders whiteness innocent to any past transgressions.
Tourism and Race

One industry in which this process can clearly be seen is the tourism industry (Werry, 2011), which has long depended on the touristic desire to experience cultures and peoples unlike one’s own (MacCannell, 1976). For neoliberal policy makers, tourism is thought of as a win-win scenario for the local economy as well as how it is incorporated in how a place brands itself as unique and culturally friendly (Gotham, 2007 and Hoffman, 2003). Hoffman concludes that one of the major reasons for the shift in cultural diversity being seen as a "positive demographic characteristic for business and tourism...is the move toward 'niche' or targeted production and marketing, an aspect of flexible specialization which coincides with the saturation of traditional markets, heightened global competition, and the search for new economic frontiers (i.e. non-traditional markets/populations)(2003, p. 289)." In the context of tourism then, cultural uniqueness becomes an economic asset (Gotham, 2007). Cultural tourism is also, and just as importantly, a site where crucial interactions take place between its consumers and producers. For the tourist, these interactions are meant to take place on a deeper and more personal level, and provide a sense of inclusion and attachment to the culture they are temporarily entering (Werry, 2011).

Tourism also has the potential to harm the groups it supposedly helps (Gotham, 2007; Shukla, 2010; and Werry, 2011). According to Gotham, one of the major problems associated with urban (re)branding in New Orleans following Hurricane Katrina is the neoliberal policy makers hope that these manufactured branding images become internalized by residents of local communities (2007). For Gotham, "This idea is based on the assumption that rebuilding New Orleans is incumbent on local people coming to accept the branded image as their own and learning to 'live' the brand (2007, p.840)." One of the issues stemming from an increase in the popularity of immersive, or anthropologically based cultural tourism is that the local populations these tours focus on are treated as yet another variant of 'the exotic other' (even if they are led by members of that community)(Werry, 2011). Gotham points out that the process of urban branding "is particularly silent about issues of social justice, equity and inclusion (2007, p. 844)", a point that Shukla (2010) would also agree with. There is also the concern that cultural tourism represents another, more refined form, of cultural appropriation (Johnston, 2006).

The idea that 'local populations' in the tourist context represent a variant of the 'exotic other' is, for MacCannell (2011), another side of the West's exploitation of the exotic "other." In his discussion of how the Tourist relates to the tourist Other, MacCannell envisions this relationship as one, in a nod to Edward Said (1978), of 'positive' or 'reverse' Orientalism. Writing about Said’s work, MacCannell states:

Said was aware of the other side of Orientalism, the positive side, what can be called the tourist version...the Near East as attraction...the birthplace of religions, the cradle of civilization...The ultra-touristic version of the Near-East proffers an endless open air bazaar by day and the romance of men on stallions, dancing girls, hashish, and moonlit oases at night. -2011, p. 8-9
This is the Other cast in a much more positive light than the racialized notions of crime ridden and poverty stricken communities offered by the apologists of neoliberal theory. It is also a major way in which presumptive views about the racialized 'other' had to change in order for the tourism industry to sell the 'exotic other'. In terms of how racial, ethnic and minority groups continue to be misrepresented, this could potentially be a more insidious form of misrepresentation than that which characterizes minority groups in the United States as culturally disposed to crime and poverty. It hides the realities of institutional racism, and touristic objectification of the cultural other behind the veneer of, respectively, mutually beneficial economic practice and cultural uniqueness.

In order for race to be seen in the neoliberal state as a positive marker rather than as "...a biopolitical technology of categorization operating through empirical epistemology (the supposedly hard facts of phenotype and genotype)(2011, p. 175)", Margaret Werry, in discussing New Zealand, argues that the political rationality of the state has shifted concerning the discourse of race (2011). Instead of employing a discourse of 'race' in the sense that race is simply a means to classify individuals based on skin color or ancestry, she suggests that it has been replaced in the neoliberal state by a discourse of 'indigeneity' (the major racial minority group in New Zealand are the indigenous Maori people). She proposes that, "Crucially, whereas race is a device by which states distribute resources and opportunity, indigeneity is being newly identified as a locus of value in itself: the property of specific subjects but widely available for empathetic participation, and a space through which capital might flow on these currents of empathy(2011,p. 176)."

The shift from discourses of race to discourses of indigeneity distances the latter concept from the "historical and class baggage" that comes with the former (Werry 2011, p. 176). This distinction is important when thinking about what sells and what doesn't in terms of tourism enterprises. This conceptualization of racial 'otherness' is driven by the idea of value and the promise of capital. Racial 'otherness' in this way, becomes something to be desired, an experience not to be missed (Werry, 2011). For her, neoliberal indigeneity:

...is brought into knowledge experientially as a constellation of attachments, sensitivities, awarenesses, and conducts that evoke links to place, past, and lineage. It is not a medium of allegiance or solidarity [see also Holm et. al., 2003] nor is it a political claim on the state [see also Niezen, 2003]. Instead it operates through a nonexclusive, largely nonessentialist principle of affinity. Indigeneity, in this policy fueled reinvention, is less a discourse of difference than (increasingly) one of similitude, invoked to offer the tourist access and attachment. - 2011, pg. 176-177

This model of indigeneity is more driven towards inclusion than exclusion, which, according to Werry (2011) is important in delivering for tourists an immersive and valuable experience. This is a crucial discursive shift because of the ways that, as a replacement for race, this model of indigeneity acts as a mechanism for state management of racial, ethnic, and cultural heterogeneity (Goldberg, 2009, pgs. 339-341).
Werry bases her analysis of this shift on ethnographic fieldwork done with an urban Maori tourism group in Auckland, New Zealand. For most New Zealanders the concept of indigeneity, and the fact that Maori are the original, indigenous inhabitants of Aotearoa/New Zealand, at least in a general sense, is understood. The history of the state is (mostly) a history of the interactions of these two groups (Hill, 2009). Harlem, by contrast, is a community which has been at times defined by patterns of continual displacement and migration, a place notoriously difficult for groups to establish a sense of indigeneity (Shukla, 2010). Harlem has long been seen as an important symbol for the Black Experience in America (Jackson 2001, Hyra, 2008), but Shukla highlights the effects that neoliberalism have had on the promotion of greater cultural diversity within the community (2010).

One of the reasons Harlem has experienced the gentrification associated with neoliberalism, according to Hyra (2008), Hoffman (2003), and Shukla (2010) is that it was targeted by corporations, governmental and other non-governmental actors as a potential site for making profit based on its ethnic make-up. In order to spruce up the image of what was one of the country's most impoverished neighborhoods, the local and state government partnered with firms like JP Morgan, TimeWarner, and Bloomingdales to push money towards local 'improvement' projects designed to bring in revenue, with projected tourism revenue being a big part of that plan (Hoffman, 2003). In order for this to occur, according to Werry, there would need to be a similar sort of shift in the discourse of race as the one she discusses in The Tourist State. But how would that work in a community which is defined by displacement and diversity, rather than indigeneity?

While these processes are taking place at the national level in New Zealand, elsewhere around the world they are taking place at the regional, city, or local level. In each instance, however, the local racial dynamics and economic climate play a role in determining the discursive shift away from race towards the different conceptualization of racial otherness, the one in which a 'locus of value' can be realized. One example of how indigeneity is used as a racial locus of value in the United States is the casino movement among federally recognized American Indian tribes. The reason casinos are 'allowed' to be built on reservation land is that tribes have an indigenous claim, and hence a certain degree of sovereignty, over their land. The city of New Orleans, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, attempted to brand (as well as commercialize) itself as a city with top notch history, food, and also as the city which gave birth to jazz (Gotham, 2007). Efforts have been made since Katrina to boost the tourism industry around the New Orleans Brand, which has meant that local residents have been tacitly encouraged to internalize that brand, often to their detriment and dismay (Gotham, 2007). Tourism in New Orleans centers on racial loci of value—including concepts like music, history, and tradition—and post-Katrina, around a discourse of 'branding'. In Harlem these are also identified as loci of value, and to this list of concepts we can also include "diversity" and "authenticity" (Hoffman, 2003; Shukla, 2010).
Tourism and Neoliberalism

The tourism industry is known by neoliberal policy makers in many areas to be an industry of promise because of its ability to capitalize on not just racial, but social and geographical loci of value as well. It is this characteristic of the tourism industry—the capacity to secrete monetary value out of something which heretofore has not been considered financially valuable—which makes it so attractive to policy makers or corporate personnel interested in locating and developing new ‘economic frontiers’, whether they be located on geographical 'outskirts' of the 'Global' (Johnston, 2006) or in the 'center' (Hoffman, 2003). Tourists spend money wherever they go, and its allocation varies, but much of this spending is focused on the purchase of an experience or experiences (Werry, 2011). Through this spending social constructs such as race, culture, history and tradition become commodified as prices become attached to the myriad ways for the tourist to experience them. For MacCannell, the ultimate 'other' of the tourist desire is the unconscious, which theoretically makes anything susceptible to touristic commodification (2011). Tourism, in this way, has the ability to commodify the non-commodifiable, which, for Harvey (2005), plays a key role in the mechanism by which neoliberalism is demonstrated to be monetarily redistributive (in favor of the upper classes at the expense of the middle and lower), instead of generative (which would presumably favor everybody): accumulation by dispossession.

In 2003’s The New Imperialism, Harvey explains that accumulation by dispossession is an updated term for what Marx has categorized as processes of 'primitive' or 'original' capital accumulation. For Rosa Luxemburg, as discussed by Harvey (2003, p. 138), this type of capital accumulation represents one of two main ways that capital accumulation occurs (1968). The other is the way that surplus value is produced in the 'traditional' commodity market (i.e. surplus value that is produced in the "factory, mine, agricultural estate"...etc.) where the key phase—and also the primary site of economic dispossession—is the "transaction between the capitalist and the wage labourer (1968)." In developed capitalist societies, as Harvey explains, surplus value within the established commodity market inevitably transforms into a crisis of overaccumulation which is characterized by"... a lack of opportunities for profitable investment as the fundamental problem (2003, pg. 139)." In other words, in developed capitalist countries the traditional commodities markets become so tightly streamlined that it becomes difficult to squeeze additional profits out of the system, which is essential to maintain capital growth. Therefore, as both Harvey and Luxemburg contend, what is needed is for the market to find new sites of potential profitable investment opportunity outside of the traditional—already capitalistic-market; capitalism must look outside itself (ie non-capitalist societies), or, failing that, must create new ‘economic frontiers’ within the confines of the established market system in order to maintain profitability (1968, 2005). Tourism, because of its commoditive capabilities, is located in a prime position in terms of helping to establish new ‘economic frontiers’ (both in- and outside of the spatio-geographic confines of 'global capitalism') for the neoliberal project to exploit (Hoffman, 2003; Werry, 2011; Harvey, 2005).
Werry (2011) furthers an analysis of the relationship between neoliberalism and tourism by suggesting that the immersive nature of cultural tourism plays an important role in neoliberal cultural production, a process Harvey refers to as 'the construction of consent' (2005). This is because the interactive nature of cultural tourism is designed to allow the consumer to participate, albeit briefly, in the cultures they are, at the same time, observing. The idea that the consumer can, and is encouraged, to actually participate in the touristic presentation is crucial to Werry's definition of one of the most important players in a neoliberal vision of profitable cultural tourism in New Zealand: the Free Independent Traveler (FIT)(Werry, 2011).

According to Werry the FIT tourism model was a result of policy strategists, "focus[ing] on drawing not more tourists but higher yield tourists: those who would stay longer, spend more money on a wider range of more expensive products, visit at all times of the year in a range of locations, and be return visitors (2011, p. 148)." This individual is described as one looking for an 'immersive and qualitative experience', being" technologically savvy market leaders who would circulate information about the destination widely among equally affluent and educated networks", and, "also implicitly English speaking, wealthy, and white (2011, p. 148)." One of the most important aspects of this definition is that this individual also represents the ideal consumer and citizen in a place where cultural diversity is being targeted as a site of economic growth. The consumers of cultural tourism, especially those in the FIT model, play an important role in strengthening the notion that, through a neoliberal understanding of culture as a commodity, these types of tourism are not only personally, emotionally, and spiritually satisfying to the consumer, but also that they economically benefit indigenous populations (producers) as well.

The FIT consumer, "this human invention of policy (p.148)", was created in order to help New Zealand tourism interests better market their brand (Werry, 2011). In terms of marketing Harlem's diversity to tourists, Hoffman highlights some of the issues that may arise when catering to a FIT-type crowd in this particular location (2003). As she puts it:

The requirements of cultural tourism are complex. Cultural tourism requires substantial civic as well as public/private participation...Based on ethnicity and place, cultural tourism also gives rise to claims of legitimacy that require a degree of compliance...Negative interactions with visitors walking through neighborhoods-in the words of a proponent of heritage tourism-ruin the experience for visitor and resident -Hoffman, 2003, p. 296

Hoffman mostly focuses on the experiences of people living in Harlem, rather than the experiences of tourists. Santos and Buzinde report that fear of gentrification led the Puerto Rican residents of Chicago's Humboldt Park neighborhood to devise three ways of incorporating their spatial claims to the neighborhood whilst simultaneously promoting tourism growth (centered around the ideas of our history as told by us, our space, and affirmation) that reflect the ways that both resistances to—and inclusion in—the forces of racial neoliberalization can occur at the same time, and in the same place (2007; see also Goldberg, 2009; Harvey, 2005). The residents' approach focuses in part on establishing a recognized indigeneity to the neighborhood.
Werry focuses on the experience of cultural tourists and how it is through their interactions with 'other' cultures that we can see how tourism plays an important role in neoliberal cultural production (2011). The idea that, in the neoliberal state, the ideal tourist is also the ideal citizen is not an accidental by-product of the way the tourism industry is used in the neoliberal state. As Harvey explains, "Neoliberalization required both politically and economically the construction of a neoliberal market-based populist culture of differentiated consumerism and individual libertarianism (2005, p. 42)." In terms of how this involves tourism featuring racial loci of value, we are brought back around to the contradictory nature of neoliberal theory versus practice, as Werry argues that:

One of neoliberalism's animating fictions is that racial inequity will disappear if the politics of racial solidarity (along with its structural and class analysis and the demand for recognition and remediation of historical wrongs) is abandoned in favor of individualism. The result is to naturalize a range of old and new inequalities while robbing us of a language—race—with which to name them, giving us a dizzying rush of promise in its place: freedom, growth, opportunity, mobility, and competitiveness. 2011, p. 187

The Importance of Tourism Discourse

Edward Said (1978) suggests that an important part of any study of an 'Orientalism' (he distinguishes between, for example, German, French, British and American Orientalisms) is an analysis of the "kind of intellectual authority [emphasis author's] over the Orient within Western culture (p. 19)." An Orientalist discourse can be briefly defined as a discourse that privileges a Euro/Ameri-centric way of thinking about places not considered part of Europe or the United States. For Said, it is a Western imposition across discursive and epistemological fields which results in a discourse that, "...is produced and exists in an uneven exchange" with other types of power—such as political, economic, and cultural power (1978, pg. 12). In order to examine how authority works within the discursive formations of a given Orientalism he identifies two methodological 'devices':

My principal methodological devices for studying authority here are what can be called strategic location, which is a way of describing the author's position in a text with regard to the Oriental material he writes about, and strategic formation, which is a way of analyzing the relationship between texts and the way in which groups of texts, types of texts, even textual genres, acquire mass density, and referential power amongst themselves, and thereafter in the culture at large. - Said, 1978, pg. 20

While these definitions, and Said's use of them in this particular work, have been questioned (see MacCannell, 2011, pgs 8-9; and Behdad, 1994, pgs 9-10), they nevertheless provide a useful framework for understanding how online reviews of cultural tourism companies
might be attached to various forms of authority that exist among the intersections of race, tourism, and neoliberalism. Keeping in mind that these are not mutually exclusive conceptualizations and that there is some overlap here as well, traveler's tales will be read here as being more implicated in strategic location while social media will be read as being more implicated in strategic formation.

The Strategic Locations of Traveler's Tales

Maori scholar and activist Linda Smith devotes a chapter of Decolonizing Methodologies to the importance of travelers' tales in not just Western science and research, but also trade and culture, or trade in culture (1999, pgs. 81-97). She links traveler's tales to knowledge exchange value and cultural market commodities in a process she calls "Trading the Other":

In this sense, the people and their culture, the material and the spiritual, the exotic and the fantastic became not just the stuff of dreams and imagination, or stereotypes and exoticism, but of the first truly global commercial enterprise: Trading the Other [sic.]. Trading the Other is a vast industry based on the positional superiority and advantages gained under imperialism. It is concerned more with ideas, language, knowledge, images, beliefs and fantasies than any other industry. Trading the Other deeply, intimately, defines Western thinking and identity. -1999, pgs. 92-93

Said's project is ostensibly that of understanding how Western notions of a negated or inferior "other" are the result of, as well as a justification for, Euro-American political, economic and intellectual domination over 'peripheral' peoples and nations, and therefore he focuses on how Orientalisms work to portray the 'other' in a negative or inferior fashion. Ali Behdad argues in 1994's Belated Travelers: Orientalism in the Age of Colonial Dissolution that one way to keep the spirit of Said's analysis intact—yet still avoid the essentializing pitfalls of conceptualizing Orientalism as the opposition between two monolithic entities, the Orient and the Occident—is to recognize that what makes a given Orientalism a powerful discursive force, "... is the all-inclusiveness of its epistemological field and its ability to adapt and incorporate heterogeneous elements (1994, pg. 13)." Behdad identifies travel guides of the late 19th century as important examples—and "complex manifestations"—of what he means by the "heterogeneous elements" of Orientalism (1994, pg.12). These guides acted as windows in to the exotic cultures of the far flung outposts of Europe's colonial empires, and in part shaped how Europeans envisioned these places as destinations for discovery and adventure (Smith, 1999; Behdad, 1994).

What is crucial to how travel guides are linked to discursive authority is the dissociative nature of the relationship between the statements made in the guide and the people who 'made' the statement (Behdad, 1994, pg. 40). This is evidenced by the fact that many of these guides had no single author but instead were credited as being produced by a series of editors and publishers, which effectively eliminates the possibility of a singular 'voice' emerging from the text (Behdad 1994). This, in effect, shifts the focus of the text from the writer (because there is none) to the
reader. The tourist guide identifies the reader as a potential tourist and asks the reader, and in some cases tells the reader in the first person, to imagine oneself in the place that is being described, and to imagine oneself acting out the fantasies which await them there (Behdad, 1994, pg 42). For Behdad, this is the source of discursive authority for the tourist guide:

The tourist guide is thus a discursive formation that defines its authority in a mediating relation to the reader's desire for exotism...The tourist guide, in short, depends for its authority on including within its own discursive practice an exhaustive enumeration of possible positions of the reader's desire that would eventually be reimplicated in European colonialism. -1994, pgs. 42-43

Given this description of how a tour guide's authority is gained and defined, it seems as if this authority—as Said envisions it as part of a strategic location based on the author's position within the text—would disappear as the author's presence does. In the case of the travel guide, does this mean that it is even a traveler's tale at all? Here, Behdad argues, the travel guide still functions as the facilitator of a traveler's tale, except the traveler in question is now the reader, as opposed to the writer, and the tale is the imaginary narrative shaped by the reading of guide. The authority of the travel guide, then, is based on its power to shape the imaginary narrative of the reader. This is still treating the strategic location of the traveler's tale within the confines of the reader-text relationship as Said uses it. It is also important to understand—as Behdad recognizes here in the second part of this passage—that traveler's tales are also strategically located within the larger discursive practices which sustain the orientalist impulse in contemporary Western society.

Now there is a preliminary basis for understanding how a traveler's tale possesses discursive authority by virtue of its strategic locations, the authority they possess in today's tourism-race-neoliberalism nexus becomes more visible. In a literature review of 44 journal articles concerning tourism and social media that appeared in the Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing, Leung et al. (2013), found that, in terms of what potential customers consider most credible in terms of gathering information during pre-trip planning, word of mouth (WOM) tops the list, as demonstrated by Murphy, Moscardo, and Benckendorf (2007). Because of a perceived lack of commercial self interest in WOM accounts, these are seen as more credible, trustworthy, and authentic than, for example, an advertisement (Leung et al. 2013; Casalo, Flavian, and Guinaliu, 2011; Litvin et al., 2008). Tussyadiah et. al. emphasize the narrative aspects of online representations of touristic experience (2011). According to Leung et al.:

[Tussyadiah et. al. (2011)] proposed that the narrative reasoning and narrative comprehension that readers possess have substantial impact on the usage of UGC [another acronym for electronic word of mouth, or eWOM] on social media as well as on traveler's subsequent behavior. In general, the content shared online communities and blogs are travel stories and experiences that are represented in narrative format. [They] posited that stories have the ability to encourage audiences to visualize the consumption of a product or service. - 2013, pg. 9

The language of this passage, and indeed, of the title of Tussyadiah et. al.'s (2011) article is illuminating in terms of locating the discursive authority of traveler's tales in the contemporary
tourism industry: "Assessing the Effectiveness of Consumer Narratives for Destination Marketing." Here, economic and market oriented terminology have been used to describe the objects of this analysis. "Consumer narrative" can just as easily be read as "traveler's tale", while "destination marketing"—while not as easily read—could perhaps better be described as "how tourism interests represent a place to potential tourists". Contemporary traveler's tales assume their discursive authority in part through their ability to "encourage visualization (Leung et. al., 2013, pg. 9)". This authority is also derived from the position that cultural tourism occupies at the intersection of race and neoliberalism, per the Behdadian notion of the strategic location of traveler's tales being implicated in larger discursive practices (i.e. social media). Modern traveler's tales ultimately assume their authority through the business/economic decisions that they influence, but this is only half of the picture. The discursive authority of traveler's tales within the race-tourism-neoliberalism framework is derivative as much from the strategic formation of social media as it is from the strategic locations of the traveler's tales themselves.

Social Media as a Strategic Formation

In order to understand how contemporary social media works as a strategic formation of discursive authority within the tourism-race-neoliberalism nexus, we must first understand the link between communications (or information) technology and neoliberalism. For David Harvey, information technology plays a vital role in the process of neoliberalization:

It [the process of neoliberalization] holds that the social good will be maximized by maximizing the reach and frequency of market transactions, and it seeks to bring all human action into the domain of the market. This requires technologies of information creation and capacities to accumulate, store, transfer, and use massive databases to guide decisions in the global marketplace. Hence neoliberalism's intense interest in and pursuit of information technologies (leading some to proclaim the emergence of a new kind of 'information' society). -2005, pg. 3

As it is understood by Harvey (2005) as well as Steger and Roy (2010), information technologies have always been an important part of the neoliberal political economic system. It was not until the second wave of neoliberalism, dominated by policies of a "socially conscious market globalism" as espoused by President Bill Clinton and Prime Minister Tony Blair (Steger and Roy, 2010, p.3), that the internet—and the newly emerging broadcasting and social spaces within it—began to acquire the sort of social, political, economic and cultural influence that could qualify it, in a Saidian sense, as a strategic formation of discursive authority. The internet of second wave neoliberalism has, alternatively, been described as Web 1.0 (Berthon et al. 2012). This internet was almost the exclusive domain of the corporate and intellectual economic sectors and as Berthon et al. put it:

The great majority of early company websites were little more than what came to be termed 'brochureware,' as organizations rushed to have an Internet presence by converting their corporate
brochures to simple websites. Yet, this online presentation evolved rapidly to online coordination and commerce, with content spanning from entertainment to education. Companies saw the Web as the new Eldorado and quickly colonized the space. -2012, pg. 261

If we want to look for an orientalist impulse in how the internet was imagined in the 1990s, we need look no further than the last sentence of this passage. Web 1.0 was a central feature of the economic successes attributed to policies of market globalism during the second wave of neoliberalism, but in the late 1990s the economic optimism surrounding the internet's potential was strongly shaken as a result of the dot.com bubble bursting (Howcroft, 2001). This crisis can be thought of as the rough dividing line between Web 1.0 and its successor, creatively dubbed Web 2.0 (Leung et al., 2013, Berthon et al., 2012, Keitzman et al., 2011), or more aptly described as the internet of social media. The dot-com economic crisis of the late 1990s, was also, relatively speaking, a crisis of identity for the internet in terms of its position as a strategic formation in the neoliberal project. Indeed the neoliberal project itself during this time—due in part to the Asian economic crisis of 1997-98, rising anti-globalization movements, and most prominently, the attacks in New York on September 11, 2001—experienced major upheaval as well (Steger and Roy, 2010).

Web 2.0 is, first and foremost, conceptualized as a social stage in which people actively participate. As Leung et al. explain, "In this era of social media, the Internet has evolved from a broadcasting medium to a participatory platform which allows people to become the "media" themselves for collaboration and sharing information (2013, p 3-4; see also Li and Wang, 2011; Thevenot, 2007). It is the predominance and prevalence of social media within Web 2.0—and the sheer volume of information shared through this medium—which gives social media its discursive authority as a strategic formation. In terms of how this authority is manifested within the tourism-race-neoliberalism framework, an analysis of the literature review by Leung et. al. reveals one main dimension (2013).

Social media's discursive authority as a strategic formation lies in its importance in relation to how people make decisions on tourism purchases (Leung et. al., 2013). A study by Torres (2010) found that 84% of leisure travelers used the internet as a planning resource (Leung et al., 2013 p. 6). A study by Xiang and Gretzel (2010) found that, when doing travel related searches on Google, 10% of all results were instances of social media. As Leung et al. explain, "With the rising popularity of websites that contain content that is generated by travelers, a number of scholars coined the paramount importance of social media in the research phase of the travel planning process including Cox et. al. (2009), Lo et. al. (2011) and Tussyadiah et. al. (2011) (2013, pg. 6)." Discursive authority is established here through the role that social media plays in mediating the relationship between the producers of tourism and its consumers. The study by Litvin et al. (2008), for example:

... looked at UGC on social media as a substantial source of strategic information which can be used for the development of a number of business strategies-including enhancing visitor
satisfaction through product improvement, solving visitor problems, discovering visitors' experience, analyzing competitive strategies as well as monitoring image and reputation of the company. - Leung et. al., 2013, p. 14

This passage comes close to naming outright social media as a strategic formation (through its ability to maximize the strategic location of traveler's tales) and then lists ways in which analyzing social media can be used to make better business decisions. And it is telling that the information within social media which Litvin et. al. (2008) identifies as important for analysis is UGC, or electronic word-of-mouth. Tourism companies, in other, words, would be wise to consult information generated from social media because this information is important in maintaining their profitability. This is discursive authority in action.

Tourism and telecommunications are two of the world's largest and fastest growing industries (Holmes 2001; Barr 2000; and Fainstein and Judd, 1999). Online tourist reviews, because of their dual positions as both traveler's tales and social media assume their importance due to their discursive authority within the textual and economic environments of neoliberalism, racial understanding, and the tourism industry. As Steger and Roy indicate, the economic crisis of the late 2000s has cast doubt on the viability and direction of the neoliberal project. As they, rather optimistically, conclude: "Thus, both third-wave neoliberalism (of a more moderate kind than its two predecessors) and a global new deal (based on Keynesian principles) are distinct possibilities for the second decade of the 21st century (2010, pg. 137)." But if the growth of the tourist industry is any indication (see Holmes, 2001; Miguens and Mendes, 2008), then the problems and contradictions associated with the forms of accumulation by dispossession in the tourism industry's mediating relationship with racial (and spatial) understanding and neoliberal practice will continue (Werry, 2011). Much of the literature associated with tourism and social media supports this claim, as it is geared towards an economic/market orientation (Leung et al. 2013).
Chapter 2: Research Question and Conceptual Development

Research Question

This study aims to fill a gap in this literature by understanding cultural tourism and online reviews from a critical perspective, in as much as they are implicated in a broader critical social framework (race-tourism-neoliberalism). Online reviews will here be read as examples of traveler's tales strategically located within the strategic formation of social media. The main research question I ask in this study is: How are ideas of value manifested in the content of online tourist reviews—how is value realized? More specifically, to what extent, in the content of these reviews, can we detect traces of the valuating process needed to shift discourse around racial, cultural, or ethnic "otherness" from one centered on markers of 'negativity' (i.e. racial Americanization) to one centered on markers of 'positivity' (oriented around racial loci of value)? The units of analysis in this study are customer reviews of Harlem Heritage Tours posted online at TripAdvisor.com.

Conceptual Development

Harlem and Neoliberal New York

The population of upper Manhattan—in which Harlem is the largest community—in 2000 was 545,000 located in 7.3 square miles. Its racial demographics are 52% Hispanic, 33% African/African American, 11% white and 4% other (Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone Annual Report 2005). In 1995 upper Manhattan's population earned $6 billion, which translates into an average income per square mile of $900 million (Chinyelu 1999). Seventy percent of residents go outside of the community to shop, and in 1999 the area saw around 500,000 tourists annually (Chinyelu 1999).

As more recent demographic statistics show, the population of Harlem has become more, not less, diverse, since 1990, with Hispanics now being the largest group in the community (Oakley and Tsiao, 2006). This is the result of an influx of Puerto Rican, and more recently Mexican immigrants to the area. The overall population of Harlem and upper Manhattan increased significantly from 1990 to 2000 (Oakley and Tsiao, 2006). The tour company this study focuses on, Harlem Heritage Tours, operates in Central Harlem, which in 2000 was 88.3% African-American/Non-Hispanic (Maurrasse, 2006, pg. 30).

Despite being such a large economic entity, Harlem in 1990 was characterized by a poverty rate of 42%, and an unemployment rate of 18%, both of which were well over the national average, and had seen no significant change since 1980 (Oakley and Tsiao, 2006, Busso and Kline,
2007). These rates are characteristic of what Lilly Hoffman describes as a 'ghetto economy'. As she puts it, "When the poverty rate reaches 20%, 'economic ghettoization' occurs; most activities associated with a middle income neighborhood (supermarkets, commercial banks, legal and accounting services) disappear. Used merchandise outlets, check cashing operations, liquor stores, job training and family services replace them—the hallmarks of a transfer economy based upon government-funded services and informal activity (Hoffman 2003, pg. 288)." This results in a micro-economy in which wealth does not become accumulated, and indeed, tends to either leave quickly, or never arrive at all.

By 1920, the Harlem ghetto had been thoroughly consolidated. In his detailed discussion of how this occurred in Cleveland, historian Kenneth Kusmer (1978) explains that this process, which involved the forced segregation of the black population in American cities into densely populated neighborhoods which became known for vice, poverty and crime, was much more pronounced in Harlem than in inner-city Cleveland. David Maurrasse notes that the rapid loss of factory jobs in the New York Metropolitan area between 1958-1964 (87,000 total [Dodson et al., 2000]), while making life harder for all working class New Yorkers, hit blacks living in Harlem harder than in other communities (2006). By the late 1960's, as Maurrasse explains, many of Harlem's middle and upper class African American residents, which had up until that point formed the backbone of the local economy, were starting to leave, leaving Harlem in a precarious economic situation:

Many of the higher income African Americans, who moved out of Harlem during the '60s, '70s, and '80s, took vital resources along with them. Harlem remained a predominantly African American neighborhood, and remained the capital of the African diaspora; however, its resources were diminished. Moreover, few of the remaining Harlem residents owned local businesses or real estate. As a result, residents, for the most part, were left with not only low incomes but also very little wealth (Oliver and Shapiro, 1996). In a free market economy, lack of ownership generally means lack of power and control.- Maurrasse, 2006, pgs 27-28

By 1975 the suburbanization and deindustrialization of New York had resulted in large swaths of dilapidated and impoverished central city areas and a city government on the verge of bankruptcy. According to David Harvey, this crisis marks one of the most "iconic" and earliest examples of neoliberal reform being implemented on a large scale in the United States. The main New York banks used the chance to bail out the city financially, but only under certain, business friendly terms. According to Harvey (2005), the austerity measures that followed had a dual effect, on one hand, New York became resurgent as a financial and cultural destination for the global elite, while on the other:

Working-class and ethnic immigrant New York was thrust back into the shadows, to be ravaged by racism and a crack cocaine epidemic of epic proportions in the 1980s that left many young people either dead, incarcerated, or homeless...Redistribution through criminal violence became one of the few serious options for the poor, and the authorities responded by criminalizing whole communities of impoverished and marginalized populations. Pgs 47-48
Harlem, Tourism, and the UMEZ

African-Americans have long been stereotyped to be 'sensual', 'dangerous' and 'exotic' and the tourism industry continues to reinforce and perpetuate these stereotypes through their status as "attractions" (Kusmer, 1978; Werry, 2011). The processes of ghettoization that contributed to years of economic depression suffered by Harlem's residents were so severe that Harlem eventually became famous for its poverty. I have participated in two tours with Harlem Heritage Tours. On both occasions, towards the end of the walk, we entered the courtyard of a public housing complex. Here we were told that, a few years ago, these were spaces considered off limits to tourists because of their dangerous reputation. The focus then shifts towards optimism. These spaces are open now because Harlem is safer, things are better.

It is no accident that Harlem seems safer now than it did in the 1980s. Since 1990 there has been a concerted effort by policy makers at both the city and local levels in New York to promote tourism in culturally rich and economically depressed areas. In order for tourism to be possible, an area has to be safe. And an area that is safe for tourists is also, presumably, more safe for residents. In 1994 Harlem was approved by Congress to become a Federal Empowerment Zone, an initiative designed to bring economic uplift to impoverished inner city communities (which also 'happened' to be communities composed primarily of minority groups)(Oakley and Tsiao, 2006). As a result of the empowerment zone policy, almost $400 million in block grant funds (Federal, State, and City) were awarded to the community to use in whatever way its community leaders saw fit. This was a policy designed to approach community building from a ground up, rather than top down approach (Oakley and Tsiao, 2006).

The resulting entity called the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone (UMEZ) allocated money in a way consistent with neoliberal economic practice with an interesting twist. Implementation of the policy depended on which projects received funding, and of the $390 million in available funds, one third was spent on commercial development, and one third was spent on tourism (the remaining third was spread across programs such as job training and placement, health and human services, and community based partnerships). These monetary allocations stand in sharp contrast to how monies were spent in the other five original empowerment zones. Chicago spent around 10% of its empowerment zone funds on tourism related projects, the remaining four cities (Atlanta, Baltimore, Philadelphia, and Detroit) all allocated less than 1% of monies towards tourism (Oakley and Tsiao, 2006).

The philosophy behind this approach to community economic development is best exemplified by Michael Porter's influential article in the Harvard Business Review entitled, "The Competitive Advantage of the Inner City" (1995). According to Hoffman, "Porter argued that local market demand is one of the 'true' competitive advantages of economically disadvantaged inner-city areas. Compared to suburbs and other urban areas, it is under-serviced and under-retailed. Although household income is low, the dense residential population has an aggregate buying power comparable to that of other parts of the city. (2003:289)" The plan then, would focus
heavily on commercial development and tourism in order to bring in increased revenue from outside interests as well as generate internal economic activity in the hopes that these will reduce unemployment, raise incomes, and reduce poverty. The allocation of funding for UMEZ projects reflects these goals.

Harlem occupies a unique position vis a vis the tourist industry, in the culture of New York, the United States, and the world. It is, at once, a community used to highlight New York’s cultural diversity and a major symbol of the Black experience in America. It is symbolic of the American Urban, of hip-hop and jazz music, of basketball (the Globetrotters still travel the world as Harlem ambassadors), of minority discrimination and resistance to oppression. Cultural anthropologist John Jackson Jr. theorizes this symbolic importance to be located in a zone of 'intergeographicality' he calls Harlemworld, "The term Harlemworld is intended to foreground Harlem's self-conscious place in the popular imagination, its ability to extend and exceed its geographical borders. (2001, pg. 9)."

Harlem (particularly East Harlem) is also home to an established Hispanic cultural heritage that has been-for all intents and purposes according to Arlene Davila-left out of UMEZ plans for tourism in Harlem (2004). The identification of Harlem’s importance as a site of economic growth and the rise of tourism in the community before crime rates started dropping in the late 1990s prompted a change in the state tourism department’s marketing of New York. As Hoffman explains:

The New York State Division of Tourism’s …first advertising venture-the well known 'I love NY' campaign in 1977-was decidedly anti-urban and featured commercials depicting upstate parks and waterfalls. In 2001, the tourism division added a director of cultural tourism whose first project was an 'I Love NY' travel guide and related website entitled Explore New York State's Diversity. The theme was 'cultural connections' with tourist attractions color-coded on a map by ethnicity [emphasis Hoffman's](African-American, European, Hispanic, multicultural, and Native American). Harlem accounted for 6 of the 27 NYC attractions and this popular guide received 58,000 requests in the first few months. -2003, pg. 291

These new marketing strategies seem to have paid off, as tourism has grown to be one of Harlem's most important economic sectors. Maurrasse cites a report commissioned by the UMEZ Development Corporation in 2000:

Upper Manhattan" receives 1.4 million visitors per year, who spend $25.7 million on food, admissions and shopping during their trips. The overall economic impact of tourism in Upper Manhattan on New York City is over $154 million and over $4 million in tax revenue. -2006, pgs 32-33

Despite the increased numbers of visitors to the area, it is unclear whether community residents are directly benefitting from the upswing in tourism (Maurrasse, 2006). Jackson, when interviewing residents about tourism in Harlem, also found mixed results along with a general
distrust of white tourists (2001, pg 178-179). Tourism is often discussed in the context of gentrification, something considered a major threat by many Black Harlemites (Jackson, 2001). Maurrasse clarifies this connection: "Despite some remaining negative perceptions about Harlem and the rest of Upper Manhattan, the impact of tourism cannot be denied. If tourists can see Harlem's assets, others will follow (2006, pg. 33).

The Pitfalls of Neoliberal Urbanism

The UMEZ, and Federal Empowerment Zones in general, are examples of what Mele (2013) has described as neoliberal urbanism. For Mele, policies such as the UMEZ or economic development plans such as the one designed to 'revitalize' Chester, Pennsylvania's waterfront district are demonstrative of what occurs when, "...a particular form of racializing discourse-'color-blindness'-coincide[s] with the political economic aims of neoliberal urbanism to render exclusionary urban development legitimate, realizable, and seemingly attractive to distressed cities (2013, pg 599). In recognizing the dual importance of color-blind racial discourse, he adds:

What color blind racial discourse does provide is the underlying basis of legitimacy for the planning, implementation and promotion neoliberal urban policies and practices that reproduce and enhance sociospatial inequality. In turn, color-blindness also provides the requisite discourses that construct exclusionary urban development [like gentrification or commercial development] as defensible, desirable, and essential to the improvement of the urban condition. – 2013, pg. 599

Maurrasse suggests that changes in a community leading to gentrification occur in stages, starting with community efforts as simple as grassroots level organizing (street clean ups, neighborhood watch groups). His model consists of seven stages leading from underdeveloped inner city areas to fully gentrified communities, where local—often poor minority residents—are pushed out of the area as real estate prices rise due to an increased desire among wealthier (and whiter) demographics to live there. Maurrasse locates gentrification in Harlem to be between stages 4 and 5 (7 is complete gentrification, like New York’s Upper West Side), because it hasn’t seen a large demographic shift in terms of community residents, but new commercial presences, such as banks and chain retail outlets and restaurants, are more prevalent than previous years.

In terms of assessing whether or not the success of commercial development and tourism led to success in reducing poverty, raising incomes and reducing unemployment, the results are not positive. The 2006 study by Oakley and Tsiao found that there was no significant change in socioeconomic indicators between residents living in zone areas versus comparable non-zone areas in Upper Manhattan. According to the authors, "In New York City, no significant differences are found between change [between 1990-2000] in the zone and the comparison area for poverty, unemployment, and income. Poverty decreased by 1.37% in the zone, but decreased by slightly more (1.86%) in the comparison area. Zone unemployment increased by 3.1% and increased in
the comparison area by 3.7%. Income did increase more in the zone ($4,076), but not significantly more than the comparison area (2006, pgs. 458-464)."

These findings lend support to Chinyelu's argument that, instead of the UMEZ acting like an economic anchor for the residents of Harlem, it resembles more closely a Trojan horse because most of the money for the implementation of the policy was used as a way for big business to infiltrate the area and extract profit from the residents instead of empower them, economically or otherwise (1999). Chinyelu ultimately compares the establishment of the UMEZ with how third world countries have been exploited under neo-colonialism: "In the end, the UMEZ merely represents the classic ploy to economically exploit a third world country; that is, rapid growth stimulated by foreign investment. Such growth however, does not represent development, since the conditions of the residents have not improved. (1999:49)". The evidence by Oakley and Tsiao lend support to this argument by showing that socioeconomic conditions have in fact not improved, and that while business has increased and Harlem is in the midst of yet another cultural 'rebirth', this time fueled by tourism, it also remains an economically disadvantaged and impoverished community.

Harlem Heritage Tours and Staged Authenticity

Native Harlemitite Neal Shoemaker, started Harlem Heritage Tours in 1998, after realizing the opportunity that tourism offers Harlem to preserve its culture and contribute to the development of the local economy. All tours and events are conducted by those who were actually born and raised in Harlem. When we started Harlem Heritage Tours ten years ago, many thought that visitors would be reluctant to visit the community. But to our pleasant surprise, we were happy to realize that the public was thirsty for authentic experiences presented via the eyes of those who are actually from Harlem. Customers have expressed to us that they want the heritage of Harlem to come alive. -Harlem Heritage Tours Website

In this opening paragraph of the company's mission statement the indigeneity of the tour guides is immediately emphasized as is the company's recognition of tourists' desire for an 'authentic' experience in Harlem. The main presentational method that is advertised is one that emphasizes, "...multimedia bus/walking tours that present archival video and sound at the very sight where history happened - this method keeps the human touch while bringing the past to life- this is a first in the industry (Harlem Heritage Tours website, 'About us', accessed 11-12-13)." The mission statement stresses the dual benefits of 'authentic' cultural tourism in the first paragraph while the conclusion to this mission statement alludes to some of the more problematic aspects-as well as uplifting potentialities-of cultural tourism (see Hoffman, 2003):

The goal is to respect the privacy and integrity of those who live and work in Harlem, and at the same time expose visitors to all that makes Harlem special. Because of our sensitivity, we receive more support from grass roots Harlem than any other tourism company in the community. Over the
past ten years we have meet [sic.] people from all over the world and we feel that tourism is a great tool to promote positive domestic relationships and heightened foreign diplomacy.

Harlem Heritage Tours business is selling the culture of Harlem to its customers. To that end, and in the tradition of niche marketing, the company offers tours which highlight different aspects of Harlem's culture. These include the general walking tour of famous Harlem landmarks, the gospel tour which highlights notable churches (takes place on most Sundays and sometimes Wednesdays), the Harlem Nights Tour focusing on the community's rich Jazz tradition, the Roots of Harlem Hip Hop multimedia walking tour, the 'Taste of Harlem Tour', the shopping tour, the book tour (focusing on the Harlem Renaissance's literary tradition), the Harlem Renaissance multimedia tour, the Spanish Harlem walking tour, the Harlem Heritage walking tour + the Apollo Theater experience and the Harlem Civil Rights multimedia tour. These tours are typically scheduled to last no more than two hours, short by immersive cultural tourism standards, but designed so that the experience is compact, educational, and entertaining.

The first time I took a walking tour of Harlem (it was the general history walking tour) with Neal Shoemaker and Harlem Heritage Tours, it was a snowy early March day and after a few minutes retracing the steps of Marcus Garvey and a side stop to see the monument to the Harlem Hellfighters, an all-black infantry unit that fought with distinction during World War I, our group of around 18 (which was the single largest group of white people I saw all afternoon on the tour), ended up, cold and wet, at the Minisink Townhouse, the community center that sits on the site of the old Cotton Club, which was one of the more famous jazz clubs during the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920's. On this particular day there happened to be a fundraiser going on for the Harlem Youth Drum Corp. After a short conversation between Neal and a woman working at a greeting desk, we were invited inside. We were led from the cold into a small room with folded tables lined up in the middle with aluminum foil pans of Harlem soul food: barbeque chicken, macaroni and cheese, collard greens (I didn't notice anyone from our group eat). And from there we were led into the gym where we warmed up and were offered sodas (for a dollar). The kids in the drum corp. were still milling around, drums still placed where they had finished playing. It looked like they had finished either practice or performing, but as soon we were seated I started noticing activity, the kids were heading back to drums, some didn't look very pleased. We got a 'private' performance as the drum major put the line through its paces.

According to Neal, none of that was planned, it was just one of those things that sometimes happened on tours (On another tour of the area, this time in nicer weather, we just passed by the Minisink Townhouse, not venturing inside, although the significance of the site was mentioned). He said hello, as if he personally knew them, to at least a dozen people during our hour and a half tour. The tours are designed to invoke the authentic, we are asked to imagine ourselves back in time, to Harlem in the 1920's, as jazz from the era is blasted through a speaker connected to an Ipad. It wasn't only the music of Duke Ellington and Ella Fitzgerald that we heard. We also heard the voices of Garvey, Malcom X, and Adam Clayton Powell, Jr. (It's in your hand!) All of these
things help frame the tour for the outsider such that it 'feels' like an authentic or organic experience even though it is a carefully negotiated interaction between the tourists, the tour guide, and the community, each with its own, still very present, front and back regions.

One of the ways tourists are given an 'insider's view of Harlem's history is that they are taken to the site of the old Cotton Club (which now houses the Minisink Townehouse). This is where famous jazz greats like Duke Ellington once performed to all-white audiences and the only blacks allowed were the performers and the wait staff (i.e. 'the help'). After the shows at the club would end there would be late-night shows at 'rent parties' where the performers, waitstaff and locals would gather, away from the segregated nightclubs. Based on my experiences taking tours with Neal Shoemaker and Harlem Heritage, this story is relayed to tourists as they are walking from the site of the old Cotton Club to a seemingly nondescript row house on 133rd Street, where Billie Holiday got her big break while singing at a speakeasy that used to be on the site. For contemporary tourists, this is a look into an imagined 'historical backstage' (not even whites back then were privy to these parties) which adds to claims of authenticity on the part of the tour guide, as well as emphasizes the role that tourism plays in the history of Harlem.

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One of the main draws of cultural tourism is the idea that this sort of tourism promises a different experience than the sort offered by mass, commercialized tourism. In Harlem’s case, tourism in the 1980s and early 90s was characterized by tours in which the participants sat in buses as they whizzed through Harlem’s central business thoroughfare, 125 Street, as a narrator (sometimes just a recording) told them what the 'sights' were (Hoffman, 2003). Since that time there has been a focus on 'getting off the bus' and exploring Harlem by foot (with a paid guide). This sort of tourism then, is focused on the tourist gaining a deeper understanding of the community and forging a stronger connection with its residents in order to gain the perception of an authentic experience. But, as the presence of a paid guide would suggest, what is being presented to the tourist in these tours is not true or actual authenticity (a highly disputed concept), but an example of staged authenticity (MacCannell, 1976).

Writing in 2011’s The Ethics of Sightseeing, Dean MacCannell recalls:

In the 1960s while still in graduate school I noticed a quirk of places that attracted tourists...The odd social engineering I found in tourist settings involved the pretentious revelation of 'back region' procedures, even 'secrets'. Guides regale tourists with tales of 'authentic tradition', factory visitors stroll along the line following the progress of product assembly, orchestras permit paid attendance at rehearsals, farms convert to bed and breakfasts and invite guests to participate in the harvest, morgues and sewers open for tourist visits. Tourists, for their part, are endlessly fascinated with 'society's id'. I'd called these and other similar arrangements for tourists "staged authenticity [as first coined in his 1976 work, The Tourist: A New Theory of the Leisure Class]." - pg. 13
This version of staged authenticity synthesizes Goffman's ideas concerning the front stage-back stage distinction and Durkheim's division of social activity between the Sacred and the Profane. MacCannell's identification of 'revelations of back region procedures' stems from an analysis of tourism using the frontstage/backstage distinction as posited by Erving Goffman in 1959's *The Presentation of the Self in Everyday Life*. For MacCannell, staged authenticity in tourism involves the presentation of Goffmanian 'back regions' to tourists, and framed in a way that front stage regions normally would be. For MacCannell (1973, 1976) the idea of staged authenticity is based on the idea that this exists in relation to sources of 'real' or 'true' authenticity. MacCannell bases this 'true' authenticity on the nature of what he considers to be the modern tourist experience, which is based on the Durkheimian, religious based dichotomy of the sacred (tourist trips) versus the profane (everyday life). 'True' authenticity, for MacCannell, is experienced by the tourist in relation to the alienated inauthenticity characteristic of modern industrial life.

John Taylor argues that MacCannell's original conceptualization of staged authenticity, "...fails to recognize...its own implicit engagement in the politics of other people's identity. What needs to be realized is that tourism situates people within zones of contact (2001, pg 14)." Taylor's article, which addresses authenticity and sincerity in Maori cultural tourism in New Zealand from a critical perspective, is one of many that have engaged in what has been a long and protracted inter-and intra-disciplinary discourse within the academy concerning the topic of authenticity (Lau, 2010). In terms of tourism studies, MacCannell (1976, 2008, 2011) is one of the major contributors to a conversation that also includes significant works from other tourism studies luminaries such as Bruner (1991, 2005), Cohen (1979, 2004) and Urry (1990). These conversations, in many cases, revolve around the question of whether 'real' or 'true' authenticity (authentic authenticity) exists at all. As Bruner puts it,"...authenticity implies the existence of a true original ...and the French post-structuralists have shown that there are no originals (1991, pg. 241; as quoted in Lau, 2010, pg. 484.)" One thing that these scholars mostly agree on, however, is that authenticity, or the idea of it, is important in understanding tourist motivation and behavior. Lau goes on to suggest that there are many "senses" of the word 'authentic' and that understanding this heterogeneity is crucial to understanding the topic (2010). Peterson (2005) echoes this argument by suggesting that the concept of authenticity, at its core, is a social construction, which is the general view of authenticity that this study will also adopt.

One way to get around this ponderous notion of 'real' authenticity is to focus instead, as Chhabra, Healy, and Sills do, on the idea of 'perceived authenticity' (2003). Their study centers on quantifying perceptions of authenticity held by visitors to a Scottish Highland Games festival in North Carolina through survey research (2003). They find that perceived authenticity is important for understanding how value is generated in heritage tourism:

The perceived level of authenticity is controlled partly by media and partly by the people [heritage tourists]. Recent research has shown that heritage events get maximum publicity through word-of-
mouth (Chhabra, 2001)...Further, the authenticity rating was found to be positively related to tourist expenditures. This gives a very important indication to the organizers of Highland games. Authenticity—or more accurately, the perception of it—generates revenue and its preservation is considered important by the tourist. - Chhabra et. al., 2003, pg. 715-716

This study is, like Chhabra et. al. (2003), concerned with how staged authenticity is linked to perceptions of authenticity in the context of value generation in Harlem Heritage Tours. It also, like Taylor's (2001) study, is concerned with placing the staged authenticity characterizing Harlem Heritage Tours into a critical perspective, one that recognizes, "...that the creation of authenticity is important to tourism as a distancing device which prompts desire and the production of value...[and that authenticity's] temporal implications and ‘tradition’ in tourism have tended toward the reification of modernist essentializations concerning Otherness...(2001, pg. 7)."

Online Reviews on TripAdvisor

Customer reviews posted online can be a valuable source of information regarding the customer experience in cultural tourism. Though mostly short, one or two sentence blurbs, these reviews can also be quite lengthy and include detailed descriptions, as well as feelings about, the things they were seeing. The reviews on TripAdvisor.com also reveal where the person writing the review is originally from, which is important in thinking about people's motivations for taking these tours. These reviews, posted publicly in an online forum, are sites where we can see traces of claims to, and subsequent recognitions of, value in the interactions located at the heart of the performance of cultural tourism. They are also posted on to one of the internet's largest online communities.

There is a growing body of literature concerning TripAdvisor specifically. On March 17, 2012, TravelTradeJournal, an online trade publication devoted to online travel review sites, posted the following short news story:

TripAdvisor announced that it is also the world’s largest social travel site. Till [sic.] date, more than 100 million travellers have received a personalised experience, allowing them to engage first with their own Facebook friends’ reviews and opinions when planning a trip on TripAdvisor.

With more than 60 million reviews and opinions on the site, TripAdvisor has a wealth of travel planning insights from its community. With the additional insights from friends, impacting over 100 million travellers to date, TripAdvisor has made travel planning easier, more social, and more trusted.

A Nielsen study stated that 76 per cent of respondents trust recommendations from people they know the most².

TripAdvisor was founded in 2000, during the period between Web 1.0 and 2.0. A study by Xiang and Gretzel found that social media represented 10% of all Google searches concerning travel or tourism, while TripAdvisor constituted 8.3% of the overall total of social media hits of travel related searches (2010, pg. 184, Table 2). This represents the largest percentage of hits by any one website. Jeacle and Carter (2011) posit that TripAdvisor is a strong example of an abstract system which both engenders trust among its users while simultaneously wielding a considerable amount of power through its abilities of signification and legitimation.

In terms of engendering trust among users, Jeacle and Carter (2011) argue that TripAdvisor fosters personal trust through the narrative aspect of the online reviews. For example:

The most obvious way in which a TripAdvisor reviewer can impart their ability and competence to users of the site is through the narrative content of their reviews. Within such a forum they can exhibit their expertise in the field of travel and hence their legitimacy in making pronouncements on the quality of a certain establishment. – 2011, pg. 299

Ability is identified as one aspect of trust that TripAdvisor help engenders, this is not only accomplished through the forum that they provide for travelers to share their experiences, it is also coded in to the site's ranking systems through the reviewers personal information. Each reviewer has listed under their name the number of reviews they have contributed and are labeled as either "reviewer", "contributor", "top contributor" etc. Information also included is how many places they have reviewed on the site, and how many people have found their reviews helpful. They are then ranked accordingly. Another element of trust (per Mayer et. al. 1995) which TripAdvisor engenders is benevolence, which, according to Jeacle and Carter, can be evidenced by the friendly message the website has for new reviewers:

It's a place that feels like a neighborhood coffee shop, a café, a pub. A friendly and relaxed community filled with unscripted and honest conversations between travelers like you³.

For Jeacle and Carter, per Mayer et. al. (1995) the third element of trust that TripAdvisor helps engender is the element of integrity, "the belief that the trustee behaves in an honest and principled fashion in all dealings with the trustor (2011, pg. 300)." This is tied in to TripAdvisor's campaign to eliminate biased reviews and instead include only those written by 'real' travelers. This problem is minimized by TripAdvisor staff (Jeacle and Carter, 2011), and research by O'Connor (2008) suggests that these claims are valid.

TripAdvisor has signifying power in the way that it uses, per Giddens (1979, pg. 11), 'interpretive schemes' as represented by the Traveler Rating (the rating a reviewer gives a hotel or attraction on TripAdvisor) and the Popularity Index (an aggregate of traveler ratings)(Jeacle and Carter, 2011). These 'interpretive schemes' are comprised of, "the categories we employ to

³(www.tripadvisor.co.uk/help/what_is_tripadvisor) (accessed [by authors] August, 2009)
construct our sense of reality of the social world (Jeacle and Carter, 2011; Giddens 1979). TripAdvisor is a medium, Jeacle and Carter argue, that allows for a kind of, "reverse panopticism" (Carter and Grieco, 2000) or a synoptic form of power (Clegg, Courpasson and Phillips, 2005) where the many-i.e. users of TripAdvisor-Observe the few-i.e. hotels (Jeacle and Carter, 2011, pg. 302). The website has legitimating power in the sense that, "...the legitimation of TripAdvisor is through its capacity to give 'voice' to the authentic opinion of independent travelers (Jeacle and Carter, 2011, pg. 302)." The website itself also engages in legitimating activity through its ranking systems, which, Jeacle and Carter explain, are becoming increasingly influential in the tourism industry.

As detailed and as useful as Jeacle and Carter's article is in helping understand the importance that TripAdvisor plays in online tourism domain, what this article doesn't share is that every review that is posted to TripAdvisor.com becomes the exclusive property, upon final submission, of the website. In this case the discourse itself becomes part of the process of accumulation by dispossession (Harvey, 2003). As the Terms and Conditions of the website explain, by submitting a review to the website:

...you grant TripAdvisor and its affiliates a nonexclusive, royalty-free, perpetual, transferable, irrevocable and fully sublicensable right to (a) use, reproduce, modify, adapt, translate, distribute, publish, create derivative works from and publicly display and perform such Submissions throughout the world in any media, now known or hereafter devised; and (b) use the name that you submit in connection with such Submission.

Chapter 3: Data Collection, Methods, and Trustworthiness

Data Collection

Using site sucker software and starting with the URL for Harlem Heritage Tours reviews on TripAdvisor, the website was downloaded on December 30-31, 2013. In total, there were 443 reviews available for public consumption regarding this company. Of these 443 reviews, reviews numbering 150 words or more, 111 in total, or approximately 25.1% were selected for the sample. The reviews are organized on the website in terms of which have been posted the most recently. The most recent review included in this sample was posted on November 25, 2013, while the oldest was posted on July 22, 2006. On the website older reviews are cycled out as new ones get posted, so by downloading the website I was able to obtain a fixed sample.

Vasquez's study of online complaints on TripAdvisor found that, "the average negative review was approximately 300 words in length, with the shortest around 50 words in length and the longest approximately 2000 words (2011, pg. 1710)." My process involved visiting TripAdvisor several times in the past 13 months for the specific purpose of looking at review length, taking the first 100 reviews posted concerning Harlem Heritage Tours and manually checking word counts. Each time I did this reviews consisting of 150 or more words constituted between 20-25% of the sample. In my reading of these reviews, I also noticed that reviews shorter than 150 words often do not constitute a narrative so much as they do 'greetings', 'comments', or 'shout outs'. I am still looking for research that may establish a more firm precedent in terms of word count for qualitatively analyzing online reviews, but based on the size of the sample relative to the population and the richer narrative structure within the review that 150 word-or-longer reviews offer, this is a number that I think would be comfortable setting.

The longest review in this sample is negative and contains 1,150 words, while the longest positive review (also the oldest one included in the sample) contains 903. The shortest two reviews each contain 150 words exactly, and are both positive. The shortest negative review is 155 words. To put this in perspective, 500 words are about the length of one single spaced type page.

Once the website was downloaded and all of the 150 word reviews were identified, they were copied and pasted on to a Word document, and numbered 1-111, beginning with the reviews posted most recently. In addition to the content of the review, this document also includes the reviewer location, their Traveler's status (a 'badge' based on how many reviews they have posted for other attractions and hotels), how many reviews they have contributed to TripAdvisor, the number of helpful votes this review has received from readers, a short phrase, written by the reviewer which acts like a 'headline' for the review, the star rating the tour received, and the date the review was posted. In total, this document is 120 pages long and contains 30,902 words.
Methodological Approach

Each review underwent a four step analysis to determine the extent to which we can detect manifestations of value in the text of the review. One of the reasons these reviews have been chosen for the units of analysis is that they are easily accessible, posted in an online public forum. But these reviews are also important in and of themselves because they can be read as a kind of traveler’s tale embedded in social media and the information gained from their analysis can help further an understanding of how touristic ‘value’ is shaped through them. Reviews will be read as a kind of informal discourse on ideas of race and value but it bears mentioning again that not only does each review constitute TripAdvisor property, but it also represents the purchase of an experience as well as a qualified, short-term membership within the community of Harlem. For a graphic representation of this methodological approach see Appendix A (page 79).

Step 1: Ratings Analysis

Reviews that qualified for selection in the sample were noted for reviewer name, location, rating, Traveler status, and number of helpful votes the review received. Each of these categories corresponds with crucial elements for understanding potential reviewer-reader interactions mediated by the website. These elements of TripAdvisor’s online presentation are also important for understanding how value is organized on the website and how, in the context of TripAdvisor, value is defined. Helpful votes are useful for understanding the influence an individual review has, and a clue for understanding in general how many people are reading these reviews. Both the Traveler status and star rating are components of TripAdvisor’s rankings system. For Jeacle and Carter, per Giddens (1990), one of the major reasons that information on TripAdvisor is considered trustworthy by both consumers and producers in the tourism industry is this ratings system:

Giddens (1990) argues that trust is inscribed in abstract systems, which rely on the effective functioning of expert systems. Expert systems rely on calculative practices. We contend that the calculative practices that comprise TripAdvisor’s expert system are located within the algorithm which creates the site’s famed rankings. -2011, pg. 301

The star rating is a way for the reviewer to sum up their impression of the tour and one of the first markers that attracts a reader’s attention (Jeacle and Carter, 2011). This five star system is similar to a Likert scale. In addition, these individual ratings contribute to an algorithm which determines Harlem Heritage Tour’s place in TripAdvisor’s rankings of “activities” (as opposed to "attractions", "nightlife" and "shopping", the other three categories in the "Things to do in the New York" section on the website) in New York. At the time the website was downloaded, Harlem Heritage Tours was ranked 47th out of 462 possible "activities" in New York. It was the
highest rated activity in New York to feature Harlem as a main selling point. These individual ratings are also sorted according to rankings and presented neatly in a graph featured prominently on TripAdvisor pages listing the reviews. Website users can click on any of these categories to be taken to all the reviews of a given rating.

**Step 2: Coding for Expressions of Value**

Reviews were coded according to what seems valuable to the reviewer, or sentences in the review which indicate the reviewer had a favorable, enjoyable, or in some way positive experience. This step consisted of reading each review carefully and determining which sentences were clearly indicating the reviewer had a positive experience, which sentences clearly indicated that there was something about the tour that was not valuable, detrimental, or bad, for the reviewer, which sentences contained contextual information about the reviewer, and which sentences seemed to toe the line between value and detriment, or express a qualified sense of value. In this step the focus begins to shift from the review as a part of an aggregate of an abstract system to the content of the individual review.

The goal of this round of coding is to isolate and differentiate clear expressions of value from expressions of value which are unclear or communicate an anti-value. Equal attention was given during the coding process to expressions of value versus anti- or unclear communications of value, but this study mostly focuses on clear expressions of value. This is an important first step in understanding how these reviews can be examined as a valuating discourse being applied to racial or ethnic otherness from a neoliberal perspective. This step also useful for comparing the general content of the review to the rating the tour was given by the reviewer, and might allow for contradictions between content and ratings to be revealed.

**Step 3: Coding for Realizations of value**

The groupings identified in the previous step were further analyzed in terms of identifying realizations of value, or value types. This step was focused fully on the content of the review and concentrated attention on the specifics of each expression of value. Each sentence, regardless of its previous categorization in the prior step, was broken down based on specific types of value being discussed. As part of this step, each sentence is broken down based on 1) type or types of value mentioned in the sentence and 2) whether the value is being directed outward by the reviewer, or whether it is more located within the reviewer's experience.
Realizations versus Expressions of Value

A distinction is made between an ‘expression’ of value and a ‘realization’ of value. For example, the sentence, “Neal is an absolute all-star: his tour of Harlem is fun, funny, educational, and yes, even inspiring, for natives and visitors of all ages, races, backgrounds, etc.” is an expression of value, but within it we have 4 realizations of value: Neal is an absolute all-star (value in host), his tour of Harlem is fun, funny (value in presentation), educational (value in education), and yes, even inspiring (value in inspiration). This expression of value contains one facilitating type (Host) and one facilitating type (presentation) being described as an attraction, illustrating the malleability of some of these value types. Expressions of value are almost always a complete sentence, but realizations of value can be either verb or object/subject based. This sentence, per the second part of this coding process, is situated in the present tense, “Neal is...his tour is...” which is an indication that the comment is directed outwards towards an audience, rather than being rooted in experience, which is typically indicated by the presence of the past-tense, “Neal was...his tour was...”.

Facilitating/Attraction Based Value Types

Specific realizations of value, or Value Types, were coded as either being facilitating (Host, Presentation, Community) or attraction based (Luminaries, Landmarks, Information) value types. This distinction is one of the most important in the coding process, as it begins to parse out different value types, and illustrates how they relate to each other. Attraction based value types act as points of interest for the tourist—objects of touristic desire—while facilitating types act to foster a connection between tourist and attraction—the mediums by which this desire is satiated. Value is communicated in the review as being derivative of how the tour connects the reviewer to attraction based value types through the mediation of facilitating value types. This distinction, however, is not fixed, and some value types can appear in the same review as both Facilitating and Attraction based value type (See below Host/Presentation/Community). For a graphic representation of how value types are organized in this study see Appendix B (page 80).

Host/Presentation/Community

Host, Presentation, and Community are three facilitating value types that seem to appear more often than the rest, and they seem to work in conjunction with attraction based value types within a value expression. They are value types through which other types of value, such as an empathic connection to an attraction, are produced or realized. They are also three of the most common attraction based value types communicated in the reviews. As such, they each appear in
almost every one, and are indicative of how different types of value overlap to produce a valuable overall experience as communicated in the reviews.

For almost every positive review, one of the main discussion points is how much they enjoyed their interactions with their tour guides. Finding value in the interactions with the host is an indication that the host is engaging in effective cultural brokerage, or when cross-cultural boundaries are being successfully negotiated. The second main facilitating value type is presentational value; this value type corresponds to the private nature of the tour, and the fact that this tour is an experience that is paid for, and exclusive. This value type was coded based on references to walking, stories shared, and audio/visual elements. This dynamic is also one of the highlights of the tour for many reviewers. The third main facilitating value type is value in community which refers to the social setting of the tour. This value type was coded based on references to community members. For many reviewers (96 out of 111 reviewers in this sample rated HHT at four or five stars), Harlem Heritage Tours has figured out a catchy combination of guide charisma, setting, and presentational elements that create an absorbing experience during their visit to Harlem.

**Step 4: Categorical Groups**

The objective of this step is to identify patterns within the content of the reviews which help foster an understanding of how these reviews relate to how racial or ethnic "otherness" as understood from a neoliberal perspective. Four distinct categorical groups were identified. Categorical groups are based in part on the results of the coding process, and in part based on how the components of each group correspond to different links in the discursive chain which connects online reviews to larger discourses about Harlem. Once they were identified as being important to the discursive process, each of the following sub-groups were recoded to determine intra-group patterns.

The first categorical group is topical and is based on subjects which are central to understanding current political, social, and economic issues pertinent to Harlem today. Moreover, these are topics that reviewers are likely to be aware of before visiting Harlem, and therefore may frame their experience, whether they are mentioned in the review or not. These include Race, Civil Rights, Gentrification, and Uncertain Phrases.
1) Topical: Before the Tour

Race

Each review was coded for whether or not it included any type of reference to the concept of race or ethnic difference. More specifically, this project defines a 'mention of race' as any mention of a social grouping based on ancestry or skin color. The main pattern that emerged from the coding was the relative lack—given Harlem's most visible (or celebrated) symbolic status, and as a focus of the Black Experience in America and the way it is emphasized by the tour company—of a discussion including the concept of race (25 out of 111 mention race in some capacity). Not to mention that most (if not all) of these tours were conducted in and around Central Harlem, where blackness is still very much a demographic reality.

Civil Rights/Gentrification

The next two components of this categorical group, Civil Rights and Gentrification, are included because of how they are linked to contemporary racial dynamics in Harlem. These two are mentioned in the reviews less frequently than race (15 for Civil Rights, 11 for gentrification) but they are important because they reference local racial issues that are, at the same time, not unique to Harlem. They can also help augment the larger discussion of race by helping understand where linkages are—and are not—being made between these three topics. Not a single review, for example, discusses gentrification as a Civil Rights issue, which speaks directly to color blind discourse as a depoliticizing agent.

Uncertain Phrases

Uncertain phrases were coded as containing language or terminology which act, in the context of the sentence, to communicate an uncertainty over how to represent or discuss negative or controversial aspects of Harlem's people-present and past. These phrases do not appear often, but when considering how touristic discourse can be linked to the topics discussed above, they serve as markers for how valuable or positive aspects of a visit to Harlem can be distanced from factors that might be considered uncomfortable or unsavory for the reviewer to confront, although at times there may be a desire or impetus do so. In the context of Racial Americanization (referenced in Chapter 1), it is possible that the reviewer would consider it politically incorrect or even racist to mention—even discretely—topics like race or Civil Rights from a critical perspective. Most of the examples are provided by American reviewers, such as kim026 from New Jersey mentioning that:
He [guide unnamed] shared stories of Harlem that you might not see in the paper and told stories of how the people in Harlem maintain community despite economic hardships faced. -posted 12-21-09

The phrase “economic hardships faced” can be read as a polite way of referencing Harlem’s history of chronic poverty.

2) *Important Value Types: During the Tour*

*Host, Presentation, Community*

The second categorical group is composed of several of the value types which emerged as particularly important in the general coding process. These value types are largely facilitating value types. They often appear in conjunction with attraction based value types. It is the presence of these value types which dictate how attraction based value types, in many instances, are perceived and experienced by reviewer. The first segment of value types in this categorical group includes Host, Presentation, and Community Value. As mentioned before (page 33), these three types appear in almost every review, and often within the same expression of value.

*Authenticity/Indigeneity*

Authenticity and Indigeneity work in very different ways to provide the reviewer with a sense of inclusion and group membership during the tour, although they are closely related. Through their analysis useful insight can be gained as to how value is produced through the experience of the tour. These two value types appears less frequently than that Host, Presentation, or Community, but each show up in close to half of the reviews.

Chhabra et. al. (2003) operationalize authenticity quantitatively by looking at questionnaires designed to measure 'perceived authenticity' (see Chapter 2, pages 26-27). Though this study is qualitative, the same logic concerning authenticity will be used, in that 'perceived authenticity' will take the place of conceptualizing whether any type of 'actual' authenticity is being described in these reviews. The coding for authenticity is based on how the reviewer recounts their perceptions of the tour. Within these reviews there seems to be multiple dimensions of authenticity, each of the three main value types, for example, is associated with a different kind of authenticity. It is described differently based on what is being described as authentic. Authenticity for many people rests with place, so anything like the phrase, "...where history really happened" or, "on the very spot where Marcus Garvey spoke..." were coded as containing value in authenticity, but are related to how the community is valued by the reviewer. Any phrases which
mentioned an aspect of the tour as "coming to life" were coded as containing authenticity. For some Harlem Heritage Tours reviewers, the perception of historical authenticity seems to be quite strong, as Karentriggs [sic.] (21) narrates, "Let's go right on back to 1963,' [Neal] says, flashing up a short clip on his iPad. It is Malcolm X, speaking, on the very spot we are standing and we are for a moment transported back forty years."

Indigeneity was coded most commonly by noting any mention of "locals", "natives" or "born and raised in Harlem", though these are not the only three realizations of indigeneity communicated in the reviews. The most common way indigeneity was discussed is in reference to the main tour guide Neal. The fact that he was born and raised in Harlem is a common source of value for many reviewers, as well as something which is prominently displayed on the tour company's website. Including a discussion of indigeneity in this analysis is important because of how the concept is being mobilized, both by tourism policy makers interested in finding new niche markets, and by communities trying to devise ways to counter the displacement caused by gentrification. Both indigeneity and authenticity work in different ways to produce value during the tour. Authenticity in tourism, according to Taylor:

... has become the philosopher's stone for an industry that generally seeks to procure other people's "realities". In tourism, authenticity poses as objectivism. It holds the special powers both of distance and of "truth". These are vital components in the production of touristic value. -2001, pg. 8

If authenticity possesses powers of "distance" and "truth" (Taylor, 2001), then indigeneity, as it is imagined by Werry, possesses the powers of "intimacy" and "shared perspective" (2011). And rather than posing as objective, indigeneity is understood as being subjective. Karentriggs [sic.] (21) for example, maintains that, "Born and raised in a housing project sited right across the road from Malcolm X's old stomping ground, Neal clearly knows more about Harlem than most residents have forgotten (12-21-09)"

**Changing Stereotypes/Safety**

The final value types included in this categorical group are Changing Stereotypes and Safety. Both of these value types are linked to explicitly racist discourses surrounding Harlem and their relative infrequency (8 contain value in changing stereotypes, 9 contain value in safety) suggest that these are not commonly held beliefs among reviewers. They represent a view towards racial otherness that is more in step with what Goldberg describes with the phenomenon of born-again racism, and not as 'enlightened' as the view of racial 'otherness' held by the next categorical group.
3) FIT Tourism: Linking Discourse and Policy

The third categorical group is focused on reviews that contained expressions and realizations of value which coincide with Werry's FIT tourism model, a "human invention of policy (2011, pg. 148)." This category is included because of the relative frequency of these phrases (28 total), the complexity of the sentiments regarding Harlem contained in these statements, and how they represent ideal understandings of minority group relations, as understood from a neoliberal perspective. They often show evidence of a kind of empathy that is needed, according to Werry, for the FIT tourist to also be an ideal citizen in a neoliberal state. One upbeat expression of this type is supplied by Chinaboy74 (from Toronto) at the end of the review, "Will we return? Of course. Should you go on this tour? Definitely- It's a must, and by signing up you will be supporting a guy (Neal) with a dream (to share his neighbourhood)- and that's what Harlem is all about..."

4) Influential Reviews: After the Tour

The fourth categorical group shifts gears somewhat and moves its focus to two groups of reviews which are important for understanding the reviews that are more influential than others. The first group is distinguished by the number of helpful votes the review received. Reviews included in this group (22 total) have helpful votes ranging from 10 to 109, which is the highest number of helpful votes a review received in this sample. These are important reviews because they have clear evidence of a readership, and, I argue, are viewed as more influential by readers on TripAdvisor than other reviews in much the same way that reviewers with Top or Senior Contributor status are seen as more influential (the two are distinct categories on the website). The second group of influential reviews have this status because of the outside influence—as educators—of the reviewers. These reviews, which do not overlap with those in the 10+ Helpful Votes group (no reviewer self-identified as an educator received more than 6 helpful votes), are influential not because of their content, but because of what the presence of the reviewer represents, and that the ideas communicated in the tour are also being presented as part of a formal educational process.

Trustworthiness and Reflexivity

In order to help establish the trustworthiness of this study's approach to analyzing online tourist reviews, this section will sketch out the types of triangulations being employed. Decrop (2004) identifies trustworthiness in qualitative research thusly:
Trustworthiness refers to scientific inquiry that is able to 'demonstrate truth value, provide the basis for applying it, and allow for external judgments to about the consistency of its procedures.' 2004, pg, 157, as quoted from Erlandson et. al. (1993).

Defined by Decrop as, "looking at the same phenomenon or research question from more than one source of evidence (2004, pg. 167)"—techniques of triangulation represent, "probably the most comprehensive way of building trustworthiness into the research design (2004, pg. 161)." The types of triangulation this study employs include Data, Method, Theoretical, and Interdisciplinary Triangulations.

**Data Triangulation:** The unit of analysis in this study are the online tourist reviews. Two types of data triangulation are being employed: inward and outward. Inward triangulation refers to using content provided on TripAdvisor including the 1) the individual Traveller Rating; 2)What the reviewer values about the tour as communicated in the review; and 3) Topics important to understanding social issues in Harlem. The outward data triangulation consists of 1)TripAdvisor content, 2)Harlem Heritage Tour's website, and 3) My personal experiences on the tours, in the form of my fieldnotes.

**Method Triangulation:** There are three primary methodological approaches this research; 1) Content analysis of TripAdvisor reviews, 2) Participant-observation as a tourist on a Harlem Heritage Tour, and 3) Ratings analysis to understand how value is defined on TripAdvisor.

**Theoretical Triangulation:** There are two theoretical frameworks developed in this study, the first is contextual (Tourism-Race-Neoliberalism) and the second is subject-based (Traveler's Tales and Social Media). In terms of the first framework, I have developed it so that there is an emphasis on how these three topics overlap by focusing on theorists such as Goldberg (2009), Werry (2011), and Harvey (2003, 2005) who highlight these intersections. In terms of the second framework, it is important to understand that traveler's tales and social media continue, individually of each other, to possess powers of discursive authority, and that online tourist reviews represent examples of these types of discourse occurring simultaneously.

**Interdisciplinary Triangulation:** This type of triangulation is described by Decrop (2004 as research that uses a variety of, "...investigators, methods, and theories from different disciplines...[to consider]...a particular research problem (pg. 163)." This study pulls in theoretical, methodological, and contextual contributions from a variety of different academic disciplines including, but not limited to, history, anthropology, sociology, political science, post-colonial studies, Africana studies, tourism studies, accounting, and network studies.

I understand that my role as a researcher has influenced every aspect of how this project has come together to this point. One of my goals is for this research to ask thoughtful questions—and in turn generate thoughtful answers—about how some groups acquire certain kinds of cultural value in the face of evidence that suggests societal impulses to negate or erase that value. In accordance with my desire to situate this research within a critical perspective I have understood
the three elements in the contextual theoretical framework as Race-Tourism-Neoliberalism rather than, for example, Culture-Tourism-Globalization. I believe that in this research my interpretation plays a larger role in how I situate, describe, and analyze my personal experiences participating/observing the presentation of the tour, and the decisions I am making in coding the reviews for manifestations of value.

I have participated in two tours with Harlem Heritage Tours, both guided by company founder Neal Shoemaker. The first was a General Harlem History Walking Tour in March 2013, and again, for the Harlem Heritage Walking Tour+ the Apollo Theater Experience. Including tours and a walk I took by myself from the Upper East Side to Harlem and back, I have spent about 7 hours total in the community. Recognizing that, if fieldwork were my primary source of data, this would be a serious limitation, I only intend my personal experiences on the tour to be used as augmenting information for the analysis of the online reviews, which is the main focus.

In terms of the coding process, I have hoped to introduce an open-focused coding framework what will help recognize and isolate different types of value that may be realized within the review. The content of the reviews has determined the coding process, and all information has been carefully recorded in an extensive codebook.
Chapter 4: Findings

This study is concerned with understanding how—or what aspects of—the community of Harlem are valued in online travel discourse. Units of analysis include reviews on TripAdvisor.com written about Harlem Heritage Tours, a popular locally owned cultural tourism company. This chapter presents an analysis of review content that focuses on both how value is communicated in the review, and on topics which are important (but not very visible in these reviews) in understanding social issues pertinent to Harlem.

There are two main ways on TripAdvisor that a reviewer can communicate a feeling of value or satisfaction about the tour experience: the tour rating and the content of the review. The first two sections of this chapter present an analysis of how value is communicated by reviewers through these two mediums. Findings indicate that almost all reviews have content that reflects the rating the tour was given (i.e. reviews with a favorable rating also had favorable content). Analysis of influential value types suggests that value is produced through the linkages the tour fosters between Tourist and Attraction (Landmarks, Luminaries, Information) with the help of three main facilitating value types: Host, Presentation, and Community. Other common value types important to value production—more intangible value types—include Indigeneity and Authenticity. While occurring much less frequently, Changing Stereotypes, and Safety are discussed because of how they are linked to racist dialogue concerning Harlem. Each section in this chapter (with the exception of Uncertain Phrases) begins with examples that the coding process revealed as more typical representations and ends with less common examples.

Ratings Analysis

Traveler Ratings Distribution: Sample versus Total

Of the 111 reviews included in the sample, 85, or 76.5%, have a Traveler rating of 5 stars, or Excellent. 4-star (Very Good) ratings (11 total), constitute 9.9% of the sample. 3-star and 2 star ratings (3 in each group) each constitute 2.7%. Two of the three reviews to receive a 3 star rating are two of the most influential reviews (based on Helpful votes and Reviewer status) in the sample. 1-star (Terrible) ratings (9 total) constitute 8.1%. When compared to the entire group of 443 reviews originally downloaded for this study, the middle three categories (4-, 3-, and 2-star ratings) in both the sample and total are about the same, or separated by less than one percent. The main difference in ratings distribution between the total and this sample lies in the highest and lowest categories. There are 5.5% fewer 5-star ratings in the sample (76.5%) compared to all 443 reviews (81%) while there are 5.2% more 1-star ratings in the sample (8.1%) compared to the population (2.9%). This finding is in line with those of Vasquez (2011), who found that negative
reviews tend to be longer than positive reviews. So it makes sense that this sample, which contains longer reviews, contains a slightly higher proportion of negative reviews than the total number of reviews downloaded. For a quick view of ratings distribution results see table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reviews</th>
<th>5-Star</th>
<th>4-Star</th>
<th>3-Star</th>
<th>2-Star</th>
<th>1-Star</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total: 443</td>
<td>359 (81.0%)</td>
<td>52 (11.7%)</td>
<td>8 (1.8%)</td>
<td>11 (2.4%)</td>
<td>13 (2.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample: 111</td>
<td>85 (76.5%)</td>
<td>11 (9.9%)</td>
<td>3 (2.7%)</td>
<td>3 (2.7%)</td>
<td>9 (8.1%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Rating and Content**

While 5-star reviews constitute just over three quarters of the sample, there also seems to be delineation between 5- and 4-star reviews and reviews rated 3 or lower. One marker of this stems from the overall impression (favorable or not) of the reviewer, those rated 4 or higher tended to contain more favorable comments and language (clear expressions of value), while those rated 3 or lower tend to include mostly non-favorable comments (expressions of anti-value). Additionally, 4-star ratings in this sample are the lowest rating in which the reviewers are observed to be recommending Harlem Heritage Tours to others in the content of their review. Many, but not all 4- and 5-star reviews included a recommendation, but not a single review rated 3 or lower included one.

One possible explanation that two out of the three reviews rated 3-stars were among the most influential in the sample (Review 49: by CAP 60, for example, garnered 109 Helpful votes, by far the most of any review) could be that—in following the pattern of most reviews—the content matches the rating the tour was given. In other words, the content of the review matched the 3-star (Average) rating because it contained both positive and negative content, offering the reader a more balanced assessment of the tour.

In all the reviews, positive, negative, or average, the elements or aspects of the tour that either become valued or devalued—the loci of value—tend to be similar. The most common element of value in the positive reviews for example, was locating value in the Host, which was also the most common element of anti-value found in negative reviews.

Reviewer 32, hoopoe123 [sic.], from New York City provides what might be considered a typical review for this sample. The rating (5-star) matches the content (mostly favorable). All of the important value types (for both Facilitating and Attraction based value types and excluding Changing Stereotypes and Safety) are represented. Of the three main issue topics being analyzed in these reviews, only one, Civil Rights, is mentioned:
"Authentic & amazing"

5 of 5 stars Reviewed December 2, 2012

If you want a slick, homogenised, packaged tour go elsewhere. If you want Harlem to come alive [Authenticity] as you walk [Presentation] in the company of a charismatic, funny, passionate guy [Host] who loves his hometown [Indigeneity], where every street corner has a history he will tell you [Presentation], and every member of the community seems to greet him as a friend [Community], this is for you.

Neal mixes the inspiring history [Information] of giants like Martin Luther King and Malcom X [Luminaries] as well as lesser known but crucial Harlem figures with tales of his own experiences growing up [Indigeneity]; you'll float along the streets [Presentation] listening to John Coltrane and James Brown [Luminaries, Information], the voices of civil rights [Civil Rights] activists and local heroes played on his iPAD[Presentation]. He won't just tell you the history [Presentation], he'll make you feel as if you were there [Host, Information, Authenticity].

The gospel church was an extraordinary, warm and welcoming experience. And ending up at the doomed, historic Zebra room at the Lenox Lounge [Landmark] was amazing. I felt like Billy Holliday's ghost was sitting at her favourite [sic.] table in the corner [Authenticity].

Thanks, Neal! Don't go changing [Host]

Visited December 2012

Value Types

Facilitating and Attraction based Value Types

33 types of value were identified during the coding process. These types were coded as either facilitating or attraction based value types (See Chapter 3). Attraction based value types are more numerous than facilitating types. They fall into three broad categories: Luminaries, Landmarks, and Information. These refer to value types read as being experiential goals, or highlights, in the review. They are the end point of the assembly line of value production, what the reviewer ultimately wants to make a connection with, understand, and appreciate These are the tangible attractions the company advertises access to. It is the way in which this access is mediated—by Facilitating types like Host, Presentation, and Community—which determines whether or not the reviewer experiences them in a 'valuable' way. For a graphic model of how facilitating and attraction based value types are related to each other, see Appendix B (page 80).
The first paragraph of the review by 32. hoopoe123 is a good example of the ways in which facilitating value types work in conjunction with each other to create a connection between the tourist and attraction based value types. For this reviewer, Harlem (the Attraction), "...comes alive (communication of valuable connection) as you walk (Presentation: Facilitating) in the company of a charismatic, funny, passionate guy (Host: Attraction) who loves his hometown, where every street corner has a history he will tell you (Host: Facilitating)(12-2-12)."

As this passage suggests, these groupings are not mutually exclusive. In this case the Host is communicated as both Attraction and as a Facilitator. But Facilitating types seem to be more important in ensuring a positive experience for the reviewer. While also serving as sources of value in themselves, these facilitating value types act to suture the tourist in to the environment they have paid to experience. They act as mediators which initiate or propose a bond between tourist and attraction. Taken together, they create something akin to a 'bricolage effect' which serves to strengthen this connection, and is the driving force in the production of value as communicated in these reviews. Value is produced in the tour through the interplay and overlap of facilitating and attraction based value types. Facilitating value types are given more attention here because of how they serve as both main sources of value and as the medium through which attraction based value types are realized through the tour, and communicated in the review.

Host

The most prevalent facilitating value type in the sample represents that value derived from the described interactions with and comments directed towards the reviewer's tour guide. This value type acts as indicator of the strength, effectiveness—or lack thereof—of the Host-Reviewer relationship. Almost every other review—from the first, "He is clearly well known to the residents we passed, which brought the essence of Harlem as a community and neighborhood to life (1. Donna O, New York City, 11-25-13)"—to the last, "So: best food, best basketball, a congenial guide who really loves the place he grew up... (111. Lesleyangela, Toronto, 7-22-06)" includes at least one comment which communicates value deriving from the Host-Reviewer interaction.

The Host-Tourist relationship is also important in this case because the Host determines in large part important presentational aspects (like where to walk and in what order places are visited, stories that are shared, controls audio-visual presentation) and serves as the main link between the Tourist and the Community. While the value derived from both Presentation and Community are distinct from that of the Host, they are tied to his actions. Without a guide, it's not really a "tour".

Two guides representing Harlem Heritage Tours were identified by reviewers: Neal Shoemaker and Andi Owens. Neal founded and owns the company, and serves as the primary tour guide. Judging by the number of reviewers who identified him as their guide (95 out of 111, or 85.5%), he leads most of the company's tours.
Neal

In order to understand in more detail the measure of Neal's importance to reviewers, all reviews mentioning him as the main tour guide were recoded to determine Neal's centrality to the experience. Of the 95 reviews (a measure enough of his importance) featuring Neal as the guide, 18 were coded as Neal being the most central feature of the described experience, with many other reviews referring to Neal in multiple expressions of value. This was determined by noting Neal's presence in the review by the inclusion of superlative phrases, like Roger L (11) from Sucre, Bolivia saying of Neal, "We've done countless tours in 60 plus years of travel in the US and other countries, but we've never had a more enthusiastic and skilled guide (7-19-13)."

These phrases represented the most positive content in the review being directed towards him. Neal is the primary reason, as explained by Sicilybound (15), from Vienna, that the reviewer returned to take a trip with Neal and HHT over ten years after the first visit. The headline for the review reads, "Harlem? Only with Neal":

“It’s a great day, Austria is back!!" Can one imagine a warmer welcome to New York City than this? We met Neal Shoemaker the first time back in April 2002, when we were on our first trip to New York City just a few months after 9/11. That rainy Sunday morning Gospel Tour then were virtually our first steps we made in NYC and we left Neal convinced that Harlem is the true heart of all New York...By now, Neal Shoemaker and Team have become a Harlem institution in their own right, and I think this is due to the dedication, professionalism, and charisma of the frontman and of the people, who work there. –posted June 12, 2013

The main superlative phrase (outside of the headline) here is the naming of Neal and his team as a "Harlem institution in their own right". This description is directed outward, towards the audience, as it is situated in the present tense. Other reviewers reflect a more personal engagement with their guide, and are situated in their experiences, like 292richardb292, from San Francisco:

First of all my tour guide Neal was fantastic, A Harlem native, HE KNOWS HARLEM! Because of his knowledge that he freely shared, I now feel like I now know enough to say I know Harlem a little also. –posted April, 2013

Other reviewers are more to the point:

47. traveldiva27 (Educator), Hartford, Connecticut: It [the tour] was the best because of our tour guide Mr. Neal Shoemaker... (6-25-2012)

Three reviewers referred to Neal as a pied piper, for example sandgroper12391, from Perth, saying, "It was easy to follow Neal around like a modern day pied piper and letting the music transport us back to another time (12-25-12)." And one, tamerai, from Minneapolis, (93, educator

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5 On both of my tours with Neal, he called me “Virginia” and referred to other people in our group (Texas, Germany) by where they were from.
representing the Griot Leadership Project) referred to Neal as a traditional West African storyteller:

The most amazing part of the tour was the stories shared that linked the sites and history together. The tour guide Neal was a true Griot—he told us stories and even sung a few songs to capture the essences of the time period. -posted July 7, 2008

Andi

Nine tours were led by Andi. For reviewers, Andi’s most distinctive characteristic—although recognized by most as an effective guide—is his age. Six of the reviewers who named Andi as their guide mention his age as a positive trait, one that belies his energy during the tour, for example:

60. linpinGlasgow, Glasgow: This man is 85 and has the stamina and fitness of a 40 year old (2-21-12).

45. Kristin K, New York City: Although Andy was a 'wee bit' older than most of us, (you wouldn't know by looking at him) we could barely keep up... Andy has been in NY since 1969 so has a firm grasp on the history and what's happening today (7-2-12).

The prominence Andi's age is given in these reviews is notable when compared to the comments regarding Civil Rights, many of which locate it as a movement in the past. The last quotes by Kristin K allude to this, but consider how Donna 0 (1) from New York writes about Andi's age and background:

We had Andi Owens as our tour guide, an 85 year old historian who, having landing in NYC as one of the very few African American males to attend Columbia University in his time, offers a fascinating and unique perspective on the evolution of Harlem. -posted 11-25-13

Both Donna O and linpinGlasgow identify him as 85 years old, even though more than twelve months went by between those postings. Andi’s age is not discussed on the company’s website and his age is reported in a story in the Pittsburgh Post Gazette—posted September 30, 2012, and after linpinGlasgow—which reports his age at 84 (Dyer, 2012). For Donna O, today Andi is "an 85 year old historian", but "in his time" he was "one of the very few African American males to attend Columbia." This is the only time in the sample that the race of the tour guide is mentioned (Neal is also African-American). What is important to pay attention to here is that Andi’s racial identity is constructed in this instance around his past life experiences. It is located in his history.
Community

One of the most important relationships mediated by the host during the tour is the relationship between the tourists and community residents. Interactions of this sort are mentioned in 60 of the reviews as a source of value because of how they provide a sense of belonging during the tour, or how they contextualize historical information as seeming more meaningful during the tour:

23. 292richardb292, San Francisco: It was during spring break when I took the tour and so children were out of school. Some of the neighborhood kids came up and introduced themselves and our tour guide knew them by name and knows their parents. That meant something to me and it provided for a very memorable experience (4-5-13).

87. Kay 09, Ireland: In conclusion, I learnt [sic.] a lot on the walking tour. I felt the excited buzz on the streets as market sellers sold 'Obama' T-shirts, and heard, through Neil, the voices of Malcolm, and Martin Luther King, and the History of Harlem (11-10-08).

In most of these cases, reviewers either mention how their guide interacted with local residents as something they liked during the tour:

108: stmer, San Francisco: It was great seeing the jazz clubs and hearing about the historic civil rights events that occurred right here in these neighborhoods, but it was equally fun to see the friendly way that people greeted Neal everywhere we walked (4-8-07).

Or discuss their own personal observations of, or interactions with residents (or other luminaries):

20: MCB73, West Brattleboro, Vermont: ...and when he played wonderful classic music (Holiday, Fitzgerald, etc.) to match the sights of Harlem, I loved to watch folks on the street turn their heads and start dancing a little (or a lot) (5-2-13).

105: thereishope, Hartford, Connecticut: While walking 125th, we ran into rap artist Method Man, whom we were able to get pictures with (8-17-07).

Both of these reviewers find value—facilitated by interactions with people in the community—in experiencing a small slice of Harlem's famous musical tradition as a birthplace of both jazz and hip-hop. This tradition is heavily emphasized by the presentational aspects of the tour experience, most notably by the use of portable audio visual technology.
Presentation

There are two main presentational aspects to tours: walking and audio-visual elements. As majella b (6), from Toowoomba, Australia, explains, "We continued on foot thru the streets of Harlem stopping at points of interest, during the tour Neal played blues music and showed us relevant clips from his iPad (11-6-13)." Harlem Heritage Tours advertise an "authentic" Harlem experience in part based on how the tours are almost always walking based in order to create a more immersive, interactive environment. 73 reviews mention walking either as a direct source of value:

37. R M, Melbourne: The walk was relaxing, much better than whizzing past something on a bus, so you had time to take it all in (10-2-12).

Or in a sentence where it facilitates the realization of other value types:

91. Queen30, New Orleans: I was quite impressed walking in the heart of Harlem, seeing the sites, people, vendors, and organizational groups while being inlighted [sic.] by history and facts which told their stories about the past, present and future (8-2-08)

Of the 67 reviews where there could have been a mention of an audio-visual presentation (Neal only started using an Ipad in early 2011, Andi does not use one), almost half of these mention this as source of value (both in itself and as a facilitating type), often in reference to historical information, music, or both:

33. Rene020612, Copenhagen: Neal invites you in, and start telling you about Harlem and its history, spiced up with old and classic jazz songs from the speakers on his back makes it even more authentic (11-19-12).

As this passage suggests, on many occasions the combination of walking on the streets and the audio/visual material presented meets the company's goal for reviewers to feel and express perceptions of authenticity during their tour experience.

Authenticity

Harlem Heritage Tours' advertise an authentic experience for their customers and many reviewers communicate perceptions of authenticity in the content of their reviews. Authenticity is an important value type because of how often it appears in the sample, how important the concept is to Harlem Heritage Tours company image, and how it serves a complicated role as an intangible medium of desire for tourists. Reviews were coded for perceptions of authenticity by identifying terminology in the reviews which reflect the writer feeling a kind of actuality or emotional salience about aspects of the tour. Among these, there are four main ways that perceived authenticity is expressed. The first is the use of the term 'authentic'. The second group includes
reviews with comments describing parts of the tour as 'coming to life' or some use of the term 'alive', particularly in regards to historical information, personalities, and sites. The third group of reviews coded for authenticity contained terminology referring to the tour as being a way to experience Harlem in a more 'real' way. The fourth group finds value in perceived authenticity based on place, or the indigeneity of events to a place.

1) The term 'authentic': 10 total

Authenticity is sometimes used to describe the results of certain aspects of the tours presentation:

90. OliveH08, Conway, Arizona: I highly recommend Harlem Heritage Tours-and specifically this walking tour-for the content, caliber, and authenticity (8-10-08).

Other reviewers perceive authenticity in Neal's indigeneity to Harlem, revealing one way in which these concepts are found to overlap:

22. 1117, Sarasota, Florida: I think it even made it more special that Neal was raised in Harlem and still lives there today. Authentic (last words of review, 4-11-13).

2) "Coming to life" or Authenticity of the Past: 11 total

Most of these instances specifically refer to history as being brought to life through the tour:

57. LegacyPlanner, Salem, Oregon: You start out with a brief history of New York City, starting with the Native Americans, then the British, and working you way up to modern day 20th century with Malcom X and Dr. King – presented in such a way that history is brought alive (5-26-2012)

3) "Getting the real deal" or the Authenticity of the Present: 11 total

Some reviewers communicated that the tour presented them with a "real" Harlem experience. A "real" experience, for this reviewer, is opposed to another tour type (in a phrase also coded as containing Comparative Value):

108. stmer, San Francisco: While a lot of tours just seem to bus people in and out, we felt like we were getting the real deal.
4) Authenticity of Place, or the Indigeneity of Events: 9 total

Reviews also feature comments where another aspect of the relationship between authenticity and indigeneity becomes visible. For these reviewers, a way in which value is produced during the tour are the linkages tours make between people and events of interest and their association with specific places in Harlem:

39. Lola K, New York City: You'll stand in the same spots where Malcolm X delivered speeches, Martin Luther King Jr. gave sermons, and Billie Holliday sang, all the while experiencing Neal's multimedia presentation (clips of relevant videos and songs) (9-27-12).

While perceptions of authenticity for many reviewers are found in a variety of perspectives, discussions of value located in indigeneity tend to be more focused on the Host.

Indigeneity

The majority of reviews that discuss the idea of indigeneity as a source of value do so in reference to Neal. In many cases, Neal's indigeneity contributes to a greater understanding or appreciation of different value types. Neal is clearly considered to be indigenous to Harlem by reviewers. Due to his longtime status as a Harlem resident, Andi is recognized to have a degree of indigeneity to the community as well, though he does not share stories of growing up in the neighborhood like Neal does and his indigeneity is not discussed in the same way as Neal’s in the reviews. For some, the fact that Neal is from Harlem adds legitimacy and vibrancy to his explanations of Harlem's history:

91. Queen30, New Orleans: The tour guide being born and raised in Harlem was very knowledgeable about the history of Harlem, other events, and factors which made the tour personal (8-2-08).

Almost half of reviews coded for value in indigeneity link it to value in community:

52. Robalmar, Melbourne: We were fortunate to bump in to some local identities that Neal knew. The senator, the professional basketball coach, etc., showing us that this tour is not a commercialized one but a down to earth[sic.] local representing his neighborhood (5-14-12)

Most reviews finding value in indigeneity do so in relation to how they experienced the 'community' during the tour and how it helped them contextualize historical events and personalities. One reviewer, however, comes close to linking Neal's indigeneity to feelings of safety during the tour:

82. silver_153, Pennsylvania: It was very safe and the residents there were just as friendly as in any small town. Maybe the fact that our tour guide was a local made a difference on how Harlem residents viewed us (7-10-09).
The example provided above is the closest that a reviewer comes to saying that a local guide ensured their safety during the tour. It is among a small group of reviews that include references to their personal safety as a source of value. These, along with reviews mentioning stereotypes, or how the tour facilitated a change in them, are notable groups because of how they are linked to explicitly racist discourse concerning Harlem, and racial minority groups.

**Changing Stereotypes**

I've had the opportunity to reverse people's perceptions of my home. So many people come here and they want the history, they want the culture, but they hesitate because of the stereotype that Harlem is dangerous. And I walk them around and say 'let me show you what Harlem is really about'. -Neal Shoemaker (Jones, 2001)

Eight reviews were coded as containing references to changing stereotypes. Two reviewers maintain that going on the tour helped change, for the better, their stereotypical views of Harlem:

2. Dee C, Westport, New York: Stereotypes of what I had grown up hearing about Harlem were destroyed. Just walking and seeing how people greeted each other reminded me of a friendly small town atmosphere (11-20-13).

74. heretohelp, New Jersey: From the minute I stepped off the bus, the trip had such an effect on me. I never really noticed how much I had stereo-typed Harlem. I never realized the amount of culture and energy there really was in Harlem (5-11-10).

In all of these instances reviewers direct their concerns towards a depopulated idea of "Harlem" as opposed to its residents. But once "Harlem" through the tour, becomes a more familiar place, it is then safe, and open to be enjoyed.

**Safety**

Seven reviews in the sample were coded for containing content referencing the reviewer's personal safety. This reviewer takes a reassuring tone in their review in terms of their safety, presumably to inform readers that this is something not to worry about:

88. bob7320, Burnie, Australia: If you are thinking of safety, don't worry we felt as safe as in anywhere in the world we have been (9-9-08) !!!!

The assumption behind the need to make a statement like this is that the reviewer—at least to some extent—believes that potential readers are likely to be worried about their safety in Harlem. The reviewer assumes the reader to have a biased view of the community. This assumption does not seem confined to review content, references to personal safety during the tour are few in number. But both TripAdvisor and the Harlem Heritage Tours website prominently
address the issue of safety in Harlem. Harlem Heritage Tours website, for example, lists the question, “Is Harlem safe?” at the top of their Frequently Asked Questions list.

In contrast to most references to safety, one reviewer explains that they did not "necessarily" feel safe around some community residents:

67. Leonbc, New York: Neal left us at the Apollo, which was not our starting point, with a sense of being stranded. My girlfriend knew where we were thankfully. There was no offer of a reason why we ended up there, or where we need to go to get back to where we started...I saw...a lot of kids dressed in hip/hop gangsta apparel (who I didn't necessarily feel safe near) (2-17-11).

The first part of this passage refers to time spent in Harlem either at the very beginning or very end of the tour. In other words, time spent in Harlem without the presence of a guide. This reviewer is not the only one to express concern over Neal's abrupt departure at the end of the tour. kiwitraveller007 (106, negative), from New Zealand, states that: "The 'tour' ended abruptly, with no explanation as to where we were in Harlem, or public transportation options (8-8-07)."

Concerns of safety seem to be more pressing during those moments immediately before and after the tour. Many reviewers mention how easy it was to get from their transportation (subway, taxi, etc.) to the meeting place. Violetvale (28, Senior Contributor, 27 helpful votes), from Ontario, describes how the tour, and walking around beforehand, helped allay her fears of safety:

As a solo female, I was a bit uncertain about taking the subway to the tour meeting point... I timed it wrong and arrived about an hour early for the tour, but felt completely safe wandering the blocks around the meeting point. One of the most wonderful things about the tour is the way it showed me the difference between my perceptions of Harlem (mostly from media/movies) and the reality. – posted January 9th 2013

This is one of two reviews in the sample which contained content coded for both safety, changing stereotypes and how they are related to each other. The second mention, from dantheguy (102, Halifax, Canada) is more direct in linking the two:

He [Neal] showed me that Harlem is a wonderful, safe area full of caring, friendly people (I have to admit, I had kind of stereotyped the place before.)- posted March 2, 2008

Prior to the tour, the reviewer thought Harlem was something other than "wonderful, safe...etc." For dantheguy, this was a valuable and unexpected experience, maybe more valuable in part because it was unexpected:

I never would have gone to visit Harlem if it wasn't for a group of people I knew who got a group of us to take the tour. But I'm SO glad I did (first sentences).

Changing Stereotypes and Safety are rare value types as communicated in the reviews, but they are important because of how they are tied to the ways in which Harlem’s residents

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6 (www.harlemheritage.com/frequently-asked-questions/, accessed 5-4-14)
experience racial stereotyping. They also serve as value types which bridge the discursive gap between the more common value types and the topics discussed in the next section, which also appear infrequently in the reviews.

Topical

Harlem Heritage Tours are conducted in Central Harlem, where almost nine out of every ten people are African-American (Maurrasse, 2006). They take place in the heart of the Upper Manhattan Empowerment Zone, a spatial policy of economic uplift many believe has opened Harlem up to gentrification and has led to the very visible appearance of major banks and brand name retail stores along 125th Street (Hoffman, 2003). Most of the major personalities showcased during the tour are African-American civil rights leaders. The musical attractions are Jazz, Hip-Hop, and Gospel, all created by African-Americans. The food is soul food, which the company’s website identifies as originating from slaves in the South. The tours end at the Apollo Theater, a venue famously known for African-American entertainment. For John Jackson, “Harlem is a symbolic center for African American culture, a key reference point for blacks [I would also extend this to tourists.] who seek who seek to define themselves in relation to a certain canonized version of African American tradition and history...People cite Harlem’s past as an iconic story, one of the quintessential stories of black American achievement. (2001, pg. 9)”

The topics discussed in the second part of this chapter include Race, Gentrification, and Civil Rights. Given how they are all important as part of Harlem’s reality and mystique (Gentrification in this case threatens that mystique)—both of which the company advertises access to—these are topics that one might think to find at least referenced during reviews. Their appearances are notable in that they are few and far between, but this is in many ways to be expected for reviews of a company that places so much of an emphasis on creating attachments to the different value types discussed above. Just as there are ways, as Bonilla Silva (2006) suggests, to “talk nasty” about minority groups without sounding racist, there are also ways to “talk nice” about minority groups without mentioning their racial status (Werry, 2011). These references are given more of an emphasis in this study than in the reviews because of how fundamental they are to understanding tourism's larger role in Harlem.

Race

Reviews were coded for containing a mention of Race if they contained any reference at all to a social grouping based on skin color or ancestry. The idea of race is often absent in the sample, as only 25 of 111, or 22.5%, mention the concept. When race is mentioned, the centrality of the concept to the main point of the sentence or statement varies. When it is least central, race is used
as a descriptive adjective for another subject, for example, Shalovesney (59), from Stockport, United Kingdom, mentions that:

...we did the classic trick...of getting the wrong train -this made us about 15 minutes late. so we actually missed the pre-talk and short black history film [Race: Information](3-2-12)."

Or silver_153 (82), from Pennsylvania, explaining that:

He [Neal] took us to places where Malcolm X made speeches, historical black churches [Race: Landmark], the mosque where Malcolm X was the leader, and locations where New Jack City was filmed (7-10-09).

In both of these cases, the concept of race serves as a descriptive adjective for attractions (all of which-not just the churches-are oriented around African-American themes) featured on the tour.

Other times the idea of race is more central to a sentence or statement, but the content reflects only a surface level engagement towards the subject, Barbara L (9) from San Francisco says that, "The church service was inspiring from a faith perspective, music experience, and view into the black community in Harlem (7-26-13)." DoubleV15 (18) states that, "I have never been to Harlem, and being from central PA [sic.]- I had no idea so much of black history was first developed so close to my home (5-17-13)." These two statements feature the concept of race as a part of what made the experience valuable to the reviewer. One reviewer inadvertently privileges blackness as a racial grouping in Harlem by positioning it as an attraction against those of another part of the city, Carregcennen (76), from Taunton, New York, opens the review with the statement:

If you go to Harlem then it will certainly come to life all the more if you have somebody like Neal for company: he is thoroughly passionate about black history and culture (which is what it’s all about in Harlem-it doesn’t have the grand visual monuments that you find in Midtown). –posted March 6, 2010

There are several reviews which offer a more personal, and favorable, engagement with the concept of race as it is related to their experience on the tour. Most reviewers who did mention their racial identity did so as whites. These reviewers mention their racial identity in terms of how it helped them make sense of their experience:

lucy g (62) Vancouver: Everyone should take this tour, young and old, least [sic.] we forget how many fought so hard to gain what was denied for so long, and I say this as a blonde skinned middle aged woman. -posted December 29, 2011

Rick C (36), Herndon, Virginia: My sister and I are middle class whites who married first generation children of Mexican and Chinese immigrants who came to the US searching for a better life. We have heard our families' stories. My wife and I have spent our careers doing community work in the inner city and felt strongly that Neal is the real deal. Our family and career experiences resonate with the story told by Neal Shoemaker. -posted October 8, 2012
The first reviewer, in this case, aims to provide a representation of whiteness that is typical, perhaps to provide context for potential readers. It is notable that the reviewer is the only raced individual in the sentence and that they are vague about the identities of those "who fought so hard" as well as what they were fighting for, "to gain what was denied for so long." The second passage describes what might be considered an exceptional version of whiteness, where the reviewers are open about how they have crossed racial and class boundaries in both their personal and professional lives (and not just on a short tourist excursion).

One reviewer identified as an African-American. JadeS, from Garden City, NY, concludes her review with, "I left the tour with an increased sense of pride for my African American ancestry and more knowledge about how African-American and Hispanic culture impacted New York City (3-3-13)." This is also a notable quote because it is one of very few that mentions Hispanic culture as existing alongside African-American culture in Harlem. Even though Central Harlem, where most of the tours take place, is still very much an African-American community, the largest racial group in Harlem proper today is Hispanic.

While most mentions of race occur in positive reviews, there are two noteworthy mentions that occur in negative reviews. There is one instance of race being treated with skepticism on the heels of a discussion that many (including Goldberg, 2009; Bonilla-Silva 2006; and Kusmer, 1978) would characterize as language that is racially stereotyping and derogatory. And one instance where a state sanctioned system of racial prejudice and exclusion developed on the other side of the world is invoked to describe how the reviewer was treated in church. The first instance, supplied by Leonbc (67, also the longest review), from New York City is quoted at length:

Despite him [Neal] saying hi to everyone in the street and referring to them as family, I did not feel that other than from Neal, this sense of community. I saw a few old women who seemed drunk and possibly available for personal services, quite a lot of neglected buildings and a lot of nickel and dime stores, a lot of kids dressed in hip-hop/gangsta apparel (who I didn't necessarily feel safe near) and many, many barber shops. That is not intended as a critique of Harlem, because I wanted to go there and soak it up for myself. I just regret paying a guy to lie to me and tell me everyone muddles together and live as a happy community because I did not sense that.

He did have a lot to say on the Black civil rights movement and a couple of his heroes, but that was not really a rounded view on the history of Harlem. It felt like we were invited into the bedroom of someone who used to be an angry teenager to see their scrapbook.-posted February 17, 2011

The second instance is provided by Snokie (56) from Frankfurt, who is listed as a Top Contributor, and whose review is among the most identifiably influential in the sample (70 Helpful Votes). This reviewer had a negative experience during the church service they visited. One possible reason for this is that visiting the Church service is a point of excessive intimacy between tourists and community members:
We personally had a bad experience when my daughters after the ceremony went to the bathroom and tried to find the way to the exit they ended up in the area that is only allowed for local community members. They were quite unfriendly told by a guard that they were not allowed to be in that area and should leave immediately. This whole thing was interesting and we thought that this is somehow a kind of apartheid. Sure, it’s difficult to open the community for hundreds of tourists and in the same time trying to avoid interactions between the tourists and community. – posted April 9, 2012

Both Maurrasse (2006) and Jackson (2001) discuss how many Harlem church-goers are uneasy about tourists being in church. Many Harlem churches are struggling with membership, leading to situations where the balcony is filled with dozens of mostly white tourists, while the congregation below consists of just a few African-American individuals. Just as there is an unease in Harlem about the effect tourism has on the area’s churches, there is similar unease about the possibility of more white faces becoming a permanent part of the Harlem landscape through the process of gentrification (Jackson, 2001; Maurrasse, 2006).

**Gentrification**

This section discusses references to gentrification (See Chapter 2). Specific references to gentrification occur eight times in the sample. In most cases the term itself is used, though in others, the process of gentrification is described rather than named. Lynne M, from Danbury, Connecticut, (48, Educator), in recounting her tour experience, mentions that:

> We walked all over Harlem, accompanied by Neal’s lively, informative patter, dramatic flourishes, and Jazz booming from the speakers on his back. It was wonderful to be given this new dramatic perspective to our understanding of Harlem when it was Haarlem all the way to its gentrification today. –posted June 10, 2012

In this case, the term is used to provide context, or acts as a point of interest made more understandable by an aspect of the tour. Gentrification’s role here is as contemporary context made more legible by presentational aspects-about historical information-in the tour.

Kim026 (78), from New Jersey, suggests that Neal’s indigeneity to Harlem contributes to his knowledge on the topic:

> It was undeniable that being a lifelong resident of Harlem contributed to his passion and true understanding of the impact gentrification has on the community. –posted December 21, 2009

In two of these reviews, a value stance against gentrification is communicated. LizHLondon(70) from London, in recounting her Taste of Harlem tour, writes that:

> What we had booked for was his 'Taste of Harlem Tour' and over three 'tasting stops' at Soul Food, Caribbean, and Senegalese restaurants he explained the food's relevance to how Harlem came in to
being, its rich history, its famous sons and daughters and even his hopes for the future of Harlem children (not being driven out by yuppies and gentrification). -posted July 25, 2010

In one review, CAP26 (49, most Helpful votes) from Tyneside, United Kingdom, finds Andi’s inclusion of gentrification as a focal point of the walking tour over other potential subjects contributed to a disappointing experience:

Our guide was a personable and sprightly 84 year old who loved Harlem with a passion but we were taken up and down a few streets and given accounts of how the area was becoming gentrified and too pricey for locals to stay. The ways in which Malcolm X, Martin Luther King and other significant political and social figures had impacted and shaped Harlem was overlooked, something I was expecting as part of the exploration of the streets and local community. -posted June 1, 2012

The most detailed discussion of gentrification found—and Neal’s attitude towards it (consistent with those of many other Harlemites [Maurrassee, 2006 and Jackson, 2001]) is given by TheGinGenie (66), from New York City, during their Taste of Harlem Tour:

Next we strolled up St. Nicholas Ave. towards 8th Ave, with Neal saying hi to pretty much every passing person on the street. I wanted to know what he thought about all the new Starbucks and Best Yet [sic.] stores that seemed to be gentrification of Harlem [sic.]. So, without hesitation, we were marched into both chain establishments, while Neal explained that although he did feel a sense of guilt for frequenting these places when smaller, independent businesses were struggling to survive, it was such a move forward from the Harlem of 10-20 years ago. Ultimately, through his tours and events, he wanted to make both locals and visitors appreciate and to utilize what Harlem already has to offer. Use it or lose it. -posted March 9, 2011

Civil Rights

In contrast to discussions of race and gentrification in the reviews—which use these concepts in a variety of ways—in the majority of reviews where Civil Rights are mentioned (10 of 18), the topic is communicated as being historical, or located in the past. LizHLondon (70) for example, writes that Neal, "...is a walking encyclopedia of Civil Rights history (7-25-10)." TorontoSuzie (80) recounts that, "We saw famous jazz venues (like the Apollo Theater) and locations significant in civil rights history (9-13-09)." Or mebeddow (31) exclaiming, "The church service was moving with the spiritual gospel choir, the civil rights history lessons were incredible, walking along the streets with Neal playing jazz on his iPad, and then ending up at Lenox Lounge listening to jazz was incredible (12-18-12)." A couple of these instances, while still locating Civil Rights in the past, also allude to what Civil Rights are, and why Harlem is a place where they stand out as being valued. Catherine M (44) from Baltimore writes that:

Not only did we learn a lot about the changes Harlem has been through over the decades, but he also tied the tour to civil rights activists who had a major influence in Harlem and had videos of
their speeches in buildings and streets of Harlem—really bringing the history alive for us. -posted
September 7, 2012

This passage—instead of linking "the changes Harlem has been through over the decades" (a phrase coded as an Uncertain Phrase) with the concept of Civil Rights—separates the two through its relegation of civil rights to history, whether it is 'brought alive' (also a phrase coded as containing perceived authenticity) or not. The closest a review comes to linking struggles for civil rights in Harlem in the past and present occurs in Review 87, posted by Kay 09 from Ireland, who took the tour, "...the week before the historic election of the first Afro-American president of the USA, Barack Obama." In the concluding sentence of the first paragraph, they write:

The events of the 1960's civil rights movement against racist segregation and for equal rights, came to life as Neal eloquently retold the story, in this colourful setting.

This is the only occurrence of either the word 'racist' or 'segregation' in the entire sample. A paragraph later, the author offers a statement which may or may not express a value stance towards gentrification on the grounds that locals are negatively affected by it:

As we walked through some of the leafy streets with beautiful houses, we learnt about some of the current issues facing the community including the 'gentrification process', where house prices and rents are soaring as property developers move in and the local community are being pushed out. - posted November 10th, 2008

Here civil rights are still being located in the 1960s along with 'racist segregation' but the difference is that gentrification is understood, like the racist segregation that preceded it, as something which negatively impacts Harlem residents, a connection that no other reviewer made.

**Uncertain Phrases**

Uncertain Phrases represent language coded as containing masking or hesitant terminology to describe an aspect of the tour experience. This section begins with an exceptional case that offers a clear example of an uncertain phrase in that it contains both the root source of the uncertainty and a possible substitute which is more 'politically correct'. MJUtah (58), from Utah, mentions that:

After visiting the worship meeting at Canaan Baptist Church he took us on a walking tour. Neil grew up in the projects of Harlem (oops ... the developments) so he was able to offer the perspective of someone that called Harlem home- posted March 22, 2012

This is the only review which features a written self-correction of this nature. "...The developments" the reviewer is suggesting, is a more suitable term than the "the projects", though
they do not identify why this is the case, and end up mentioning both terms anyway in the review. The reviewer communicates that "projects" may be charged with tension in some way, or that the use of it is 'incorrect' in some way.

In most cases, sentences containing these phrases also contain contextual clues as to what the reviewer may be avoiding or using substituting language for. The most common indication of an uncertain phrase is a strategic use of the word "changes" in a sentence:

20. MBC73, West Brattleboro, Vermont: He [Neal] really conveys a deep essence of the history and how all of that is alive and well even though decades have passed and brought changes (5-2-13).

104. raib75 (educator), New York City: As transplants in the city, it is important that our children know the legacy that is their community since it is changing so much (9-6-07).

Each of these reviewers acknowledges that Harlem has seen transitional periods, but remains vague about the conditions characterizing those transitions. Other reviewers, more direct in their vagueness, use more pointed terminology:

41. Hanna S, New York City: We learned about the history of the neighborhood from the very beginning, through its transformation into African American Harlem, through its many troubles, and into today. (9-23-12)

45. Kristin K, New York City: There is a lot more than meets the eye and like every other neighborhood...Harlem has its politics. (7-2-2012)

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Findings in this chapter suggest that value is produced for the reviewer through the ways tours connect them to the attractions featured by Harlem Heritage Tours. Host, Presentation, and Community are not only the most common value types found in positive reviews, they are also the most common types of anti-value found in negative reviews. I chose to highlight how these aspects of the tour are found to be valued—or valuable—rather than not for two main reasons. The first is that the vast majority of reviews for this company, in both the sample and the total available for viewing, are positive. The second is that positive reviews offer the most salient examples of the valuating language that is required for the ongoing commodification of culture, race and ethnicity (Werry, 2011).

The inclusion of the word “Heritage” in the company name, Harlem Heritage Tours, implies a desire on the company’s part to offer an experience that links Harlem’s past to its present. Review content reflects an engagement with this principle, but only on certain terms. These terms are in part set by the tour company, which, understandably, emphasizes positive and uplifting aspects of Harlem’s present and past in relation to the African American Experience.
These are the things that tourists pay to witness. But this does not totally explain the relative lack of discussion of topics like race, gentrification, and Civil Rights. Based on my experiences with Harlem Heritage Tours, these are not topics that the company ignores by any means.
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

Just because topics like race, civil rights, and gentrification appear infrequently in the reviews does not necessarily mean that they—and the connections between them—are not being emphasized during the tour. My discussion of the significance of the findings begins with three anecdotes about my tour experiences with Harlem Heritage Tours that are relevant in understanding the dialogue about these topics that took place during the tours I participated in. In one instance, there is a direct link between a tour that I was involved with, and a review included in this project.

1. Neal, Bugs Bunny, and Africa

On both of the tours I took, one of the first of many stories that Neal shared with the group involved how he perceived Africa, and Africans, when he was a child. He said that when he was little, "growing up right here...in this very neighborhood" (as he gestures with his arms slightly upwards and body, a 360 degree spin)...he would be watching cartoons Saturday mornings, Looney Tunes, Bugs Bunny and all of his friends. Every now and then there would be an episode where Bugs or Porky Pig was in Africa, and inevitably, at some point in the episode, the hero would be shown in a pot of boiling water with caricatured and stereotyped natives dancing wildly around in preparation for the feast to come. Of course, Bugs Bunny would treat his near doom as just another day relaxing in the hot tub. Neal said that during this he would be yelling at the TV, "Bugs Bunny! Run! You've gotta escape!" He never made a clear connection to the group between him watching this cartoon as a kid and how Harlem in recent decades had been stereotyped as a place unfriendly or unsafe for tourists, but I interpret it as an attempt to lay a foundation for the group to begin understanding Harlem from a "different" perspective.

He uses this example to talk about the powerful influence that representation can have in shaping people's perceptions of groups they do not know about or have not experienced. One of the goals of these tours, Neal told us, is that "history be actualized" through the unique access to the community and presentation that he offers. It becomes a way to get a more personal experience that offers that "different" perspective. This story was shared with the group very shortly in to the tour on both occasions, and it was the first story that Neal shared that also included comments about him living and growing up in Harlem.
2. Gentrification, Education and the "new" Civil Rights

Once again, on both tours (these were different tour types taken 6 months apart) we stopped for a couple minutes on the street a couple blocks down from Abyssinian Baptist Church in front of two smaller apartment buildings, 4 floors tall each, brick (not brownstone) mostly indistinguishable from each other. This, Neal said, was the face of gentrification, something he called on both tours "a new civil rights issue". The building on the left he explained was occupied by families paying a city-subsidized rent for around $650 a month. The building on the right, he explained, had been sold to a developer, who planned to convert the building to luxury condos with a starting price of $600,000.

Both tours also included walks, as some of the reviewers mention, through a public housing unit (Neal called it this first, then referred to it later as a "project") that contained a branch of the Harlem Children's Zone, a community uplift organization that has existed in some way since 1970. As we stood between the buildings, snow falling quietly in the empty courtyard, Neal explained that the organization's current CEO Geoffrey Canada, is an example of one of a new generation of civil rights leaders, a generation tasked with solving a different set of issues affecting the community.

One review in the sample references a "children's center", it is supplied by MBC73, from West Brattleboro, Vt. (20), and is followed by a passage which is reminiscent of the way Werry (2011) describes indigeneity as being a locus of value in itself for both tourists and locals:

The trip past the new Children's Center was very moving also. He [Neal] said we (a group of prep school students and English teachers-many races/ethnicities in our group) probably would not understand the significance of an elaborate new center for kids being built on the grounds of the projects. He's right, we may not grasp the wholeness of what it means since we come from different communities, but as compassionate fellow humans, we can share in the joy and the hope. -posted May 2, 2013.

In this passage, per Werry, the indigeneity of both Harlem's residents to the community and the indigeneity of the reviewer to theirs is both established, as is a link between the two that allows for "currents of empathy (Werry, 2011, pg. 176)" to flow between Tourist, Host, and Community. Race also makes an appearance here, though it is used as a possible reason for a lack of understanding between Tourist and Community. In order to "share in the joy and the hope" the significance of this new center is best understood from the perspective of "a compassionate fellow human". Indigeneity is emphasized here over, and instead of, the concept of race. This also has the effect, as Werry warns, of leaving out the idea of race as part of a language that could perhaps be used to effectively explain the "wholeness of what it means" of a new Children's Center in Harlem to tourists.
3) Review 7: clock60 from Sydney

The following excerpt is from a review written about a tour that I participated in. I am referenced:

"Thanks Neil- an absolute highlight for these Australians!"

5 of 5 stars Reviewed September 23, 2013

Coming from Australia & with an interest in the history of civil rights & music this was an absolute highlight of our recent trip to NYC.

The Harlem Heritage walking tour guide Neil Shoemaker was a treasure chest of information as to the rich history of Harlem & his delivery had all in the group enthralled.

Our group comprised a couple from Texas, some Germans, some brits [sic.] & a young bloke from Virginia.

I remember this guy. He was with his wife touring the East Coast and making a short stop in Los Angeles on the way back. It was their first time to the Eastern United States. I was on the tour alone, and he was one of the group that I chatted with probably the most during the tour. He told me on at least two occasions that he was really excited to be in Harlem to be able to witness, in person, all these places he had read about and seen in the movies.

He also experienced one of the more 'personal' moments during the tour. We were walking past a row of street vendors on 125th Street when Neal stopped us right in front of a vendor selling framed photographs. Neal picked a framed copy of the famous picture of Olympians John Carlos and Tommie Smith giving the Black Power salute during the medal ceremony for the 200 meter dash at the 1968 Mexico City Games. The bronze medal winner John Carlos, Neal explained, was born in Harlem. The silver medalist in that race was Australian Peter Norman, who showed support for Smith and Carlos by wearing a patch showing support for the Olympic Project for Human Rights, an organization founded the year before by black American athletes including Smith and Carlos that was devoted to protesting racist segregation in countries like the United States and South Africa. Upon Norman's return to an Australia, Neal explained, he was vilified and ostracized by his own people for supporting the African-Americans. Neal wanted this Aussie to know that Norman, in his eyes, made a sacrifice on the podium that night, one that had not been forgotten on the streets of Harlem. Neal gave the vendor some money, and presented the Australian with the picture as a gift from Harlem Heritage Tours. Capital flowing, as Werry (2011, pg., 176) says, on the currents of empathy.

The next day I walked from where I was staying in the Upper East Side, cut across Central Park, and walked around Central Harlem by myself for a couple hours, about as long as a tour would be. I visited some places we had seen the day before like the Apollo Theater and Bill's Place on West. 133rd Street., which is the last 'authentic' speakeasy still in operation on the same site
dating back to the 1920's. The connections were clearly not there, it didn't "mean" as much. Not only was I lacking the insider access Neal provided. I was also lacking Neal's ability to have me "take a step back" and appreciate the symbolic importance of the streets I was walking on. These are two aspects of the tour which prove crucial for how many reviewers are able to gain value from participating in them.

**Discussion**

**The Process of Value Production**

Reviewers find value in not just the different attractions featured by Harlem Heritage Tours; they also find value in the way they are connected to these attractions through the tour experience. Based on the coding results, a model has been developed which describes the process by which value is produced through the linkages made between tourist and attraction. The main mechanisms which determine value production are located in the sets of interactions oriented around each of the three main facilitating value types. It is important to remember that even though a given expression or realization of value may only describe how one of these facilitating types enriches an understanding of one attraction, during the tour these facilitating types are always working in conjunction with each other. And they are each constantly present.

A bricolage effect results from the overlapping interactivities provided by the facilitating value types. This results in, for many reviewers, a feeling of being temporarily sutured in to the community of Harlem, including its past. On the tour, for example, Neal's indigeneity to Harlem is temporarily conferred to the reviewer as well, creating an intimacy which Werry (2011) regards as crucial to how indigeneity is used as a locus of value. While this temporary indigeneity creates perceptions of intimacy, the fact that tours focus on providing tourists with an "authentic" look at Harlem's history—not to mention that many reviewers seem to perceive the tour as an "authentic" experience—suggests that, per Taylor's (2001) arguments, a certain amount of distancing is taking place. For Taylor, this distancing takes place in relation to a predetermined origin point:

Authenticity in the present must pay homage to a conception of origins. In this way, tourism sites, objects, images, and even people are not simply viewed as contemporaneous productions, or as the context dependent and complex things in the present. Instead, they are promoted as signifiers of past events, epochs, or ways of life. In this way authenticity is equated with the "traditional" (2001, pg. 9).

Whether or not a tour successfully establishes valuable connections between tourist and attraction is in large part a function of how the balancing act between authenticity and indigeneity is negotiated by the reviewer in their interactions with each facilitating value type. This model suggests that a dialectical relationship between the concepts of indigeneity (as it is understood by Werry (2011) (see Chapter 1)—and authenticity—as it is understood by Taylor (2001) (see Chapter
2) —underlies the process of value production during the tour. This dialectic works to create empathic links (between tourist and host/community/information/attraction) where there were none before. Establishing these links is both a stated goal of Harlem Heritage Tours (see Chapter 2) as well as a stated result of many reviewers (see Chapter 4), suggesting that the tours often succeed in helping tourists negotiate this balancing act and their Harlem experience. Embedded in each of the facilitating value types is a tension that is often bridged by this relationship.

This seems to be the case in many of the reviews, which find value in not learning about the history of Harlem, but learning about that history (There/Then) as they are walking and standing on the places where specific events happened (Here/Now). They find value in Neal’s personal stories (Subjective) just as they do in audio clips of Adam Clayton Powell Jr. and Marcus Garvey (Objective). The Host creates Distance between the tourist and community by creating a small, moving "tourist bubble"—bounded by his presence, voice, and other sounds and visuals he provides (such as dancing along with locals to Jazz from an iPad)—which is essential for providing tourists context to facilitate seemingly ‘authentic’ encounters. This distance is what allows tourists to appreciate and form a connection with Harlem’s symbolic importance, which in this case is derived from the community’s characterization as a center of the African-American experience. There is also some evidence in these reviews that distance from the community through inclusion in the tour group is linked to safety. But in turn, the host provides tourists a kind of private access to the community and facilitates a sense of immersion and Intimacy for reviewers. An indigenous experience from a Harlemit's perspective is, for many, what makes it an authentic and "truthful" one. Taken together, these conceptual relationships boil down to a tension between Truth (authenticity) and Perspective (indigeneity). The successful mediation of which may be the most important element in determining whether or not a reviewer has a Harlem experience they deem valuable.

Taylor writes that, "In tourism, authenticity poses as objectivism. It holds the special powers both of distance and of 'truth'. These are vital components in the production of touristic value. Fundamental to the authenticity concept is a dialectic between object and subject, there and here, then and now (2001. Pg. 8)." If this description is combined with Werry's model of neoliberal indigeneity, which emphasizes intimacy and attachments through shared subjectivities, then the particulars of the arrangement between indigeneity and authenticity, as they are articulated during the tour, can be assigned to each facilitating value type (See Appendix C, page 81):

1. Host: Distancing (authenticity) vs. Intimacy (indigeneity)

2. Presentation: Objective (authenticity) vs. Subjective (indigeneity)

3. Community: There/Then (authenticity) vs. Here/Now (indigeneity)

The process of value production can be expanded to consider how these reviews, taken together, constitute part of a more general valuating discourse about Harlem (See Appendix D,
Once the valuable connections generated through the tour experience are written about and publicly shared on a site like TripAdvisor, they become part of an aggregate of Traveler’s Tales consumed on Social Media. Both of these discursive platforms, as Chapter 1 suggests, command their own sorts of authority. For Traveler’s Tales, this authority is rooted in the ability of the tale to shape the imaginary narrative of the reader. For the reader or potential tourist unfamiliar with Harlem for example, a review provides a point of narrative origin, or a starting point from which they imagine themselves being there. For TripAdvisor, authority lies in how, per Jeacle and Carter (2011), it engenders legitimacy and trust among users. For the reader of TripAdvisor reviews then, the reviews become ‘authentic’ accounts because they represent experiences that ‘actually happened’. The result is that the reviews themselves assume a kind of discursive authority as ‘authentic’—or at least authenticated—accounts of what it is like to experience Harlem as a tourist.

Where Harlem Heritage Tours FITs in Neoliberal New York

FIT tourism is a model Margaret Werry uses to describe the ways in which the concept of indigeneity—as a discursive replacement for race—is being mobilized as a locus of value in New Zealand’s tourism industry. An acronym for Free Independent Traveler, the FIT tourist is defined by Werry as:

...The ideal tourist modeled by policy analysts and courted by policy measures. Educated, affluent, and autonomous, the FIT was imagined as coming from New Zealand’s traditional markets—the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, or Germany—or from the cosmopolitan class of any number of countries... Above all, the FIT would seek exclusivity, educational and cultural experiences, and bonds of intimacy and identification with those who delivered them. FITs would do considerable web-based research before arrival and (although a small demographic) they were technologically savvy market leaders who would circulate information about the destination widely among equally affluent and educated networks. —Werry, 2011, pg. 148

For many of these reviewers value is produced through the connections made—with the help of facilitation value types—between the Tourist and the Attraction. These connections are enacted through the ways that each facilitating value type encourages and promotes interactions between the two. According to Werry, another moniker for the FIT consumer is also the Interactive Traveler (2011, pg., 148). An abbreviated reception geography of reviewer locations indicates that these countries, along with Canada (as well as New Zealand), are the most heavily represented in this sample. All but 5 are from this group of countries. The city with the largest representation is, not surprisingly, New York, but this is important because FIT travelers, in addition to their penchant for return visits, represent ideal citizens and consumers because of their desires for empathic connections and willingness to pay for it. Local consumers are desired by tourist operators because they are more likely to go on return visits, and many of the New York based reviewers indicate a desire to do just that with Harlem Heritage Tours.
Twenty-eight of the reviews contained language coded for as including FIT tourist sensibilities as defined by Werry, other reviews specifically refer to picking Harlem Heritage Tours based on the advice of other TripAdvisor reviewers. By posting these reviews in a public fashion, reviewers are not only valuating a specific tourist experience, they are also valuating cultural, racial, and ethnic difference under terms set by the tourism industry. If these reviews represent ideal racial understandings from a neoliberal perspective, then the tours themselves can be seen as ideal vehicles for promoting this perspective.

Some of the aspects of how value is understood in the reviews are concerning, mostly due to what is not being discussed. The first is that these reviews still, even considering the empathic links being made between shared yet distinct subjectivities are at times evocative of color blind racism as described by Bonilla-Silva in the sense that they “otherize softly (2006, pg. 3)” The idea of race appears very infrequently in these reviews, given that almost all the attraction and facilitating value types focus attention towards Harlem's historical role in the African-American Experience. This results in a discursive disconnect between loci of value for tourists in Harlem and social issues important to understanding Harlem's community dynamics, such as the delinking that takes place between Civil Rights and Gentrification. But rather than attributing color blind racism to be the sole reason for why these topics are referenced infrequently, it should instead be emphasized that there are a variety of reasons that Race, Civil Rights and Gentrification are relatively invisible—despite how they are given attention during tours—within review content. It is possible that some reviewers truly feel that today's world is "post-racial" and would not think to include words like "black" or "African-American" to describe aspects of a visit to Harlem in the first place. Other reviewers might have a desire to express an opinion or include a discussion about a racial matter but withhold them in an online review because they do not want to sound ignorant, politically incorrect, or racist. It should not be overlooked that the public nature of online reviews might play a role in reviewers erring on the side of caution when mentioning controversial or sensitive topics. Whatever the reason for these disconnects, the end result is a valuating discourse that is, as Werry would say, "robbed" of language through which a critical perspective about being a tourist in Harlem could be established by readers.

The next concern stems from the first. These reviews, and this company, are some of the most prominent representations of Harlem on the online tourism domain. They effectively attach Harlem to the Black Experience in this domain, which in turn hides the fact that—as Davila (2004), Shukla (2010), and Hoffman (2003) contend—Harlem is a community better understood through its racial diversity and spatial contestations, rather than an epicenter of experience for one particular group. One of the ways that this attachment occurs is through the way indigencity is discussed in the reviews. This is a particularly troublesome trend, as it reinforces Goldberg's assertion that the newest type of segregation to characterize racial Americanization is conservative segregation. If Harlem's African-Americans are indigenous to that neighborhood, then so are whites to Park Avenue, or the Financial District. According to this line of reasoning, this is how things are supposed to be. For the individual reviewer, posting a review is like saying publicly, "I have lots of
black friends now.”, without calling them black. It is a way to advertise one's enlightened worldview. It is a claim of possessing "authentic" understanding and "indigenous" knowledge.

**Summary**

This study set out to understand how value is produced in cultural tourism by analyzing reviews on TripAdvisor concerning Harlem Heritage Tours. Both website and company are among the most prominent online representations of travel devoted social media and Harlem tourism enterprises, respectively.

Two theoretical perspectives are employed to understand the relevance and discursive positions of these reviews. The first is contextual, and is concerned with understanding the relationships and overlaps between contemporary racial understandings, the tourism industry, and neoliberal ideology. The second is subject based, and situates online reviews as simultaneous examples of Traveler's Tales and Social Media, which each are associated with different types of discursive authority.

New York was one of the first major cities to embrace a neoliberal system of economic governance. One of the goals of that system is to establish and develop new economic frontiers which increase the reach of the mainstream market in order to ensure continued capital flow. Majority-minority inner city areas like Harlem are crucial to the implementation of this plan as they represent areas that are characterized by 'underground' market forces and are zones of high population density with a high aggregate income. The goal is to replace the underground market economy of the 'ghetto' with the mainstream market to capitalize on that income, and the development and encouragement of tourism in these areas is crucial to making that happen. These areas need to be considered safe and valuable for tourists to want to come to visit.

Harlem Heritage Tours fills this niche by offering an indigenous and authentic experience for tourists wanting to get a sense of the "real" Harlem. These relatively brief (2-4 hours) tours educate the tourist about Harlem's history, mostly focusing on the Harlem Renaissance, the Civil Rights Movement, and contemporary (key words revitalized/gentrified) Harlem. They are also interactive experiences, walking from site to site, going in to businesses and visiting community gatherings. The reviews posted on TripAdvisor concerning this company are posted to one of the largest and most trustworthy travel related social media sites.

My methodology is based on the research question: How are ideas of value manifested in the content of online reviews—how is value realized? Coding revealed 33 different types of value which were then recoded into two groups, Attraction based and Facilitating value types. The main attraction value types include Landmarks, Luminaries, and Information. Major facilitating types include Host, Presentation, and Community. These types, while serving as sources of value in themselves, also work to connect the reviewer to attraction based types as well. Reviews were also
coded for what was not discussed, and topics like Civil Rights, Gentrification, and Race appear infrequently in the reviews.

Findings indicate that value is produced through the linkages made between facilitating and attraction based value types. Within each major facilitating value type lays a tension underwritten by a dialectic found throughout the tour between the concepts of indigeneity and authenticity, producing mediation between Truth and Perspective. Whether or not this tension is successfully negotiated by the tourist is the main indicator of whether they enjoyed their experience or not. While Race, Gentrification and Civil Rights are present in the reviews, their presence is minimal, and further distance between these topics and how they affect Harlem results from how they are discussed in the reviews.

Conclusions

Just because these reviews reinforce a discourse of color blindness does not mean that the reviewers themselves are 'color blind racists'. And just because Harlem Heritage Tours use of indigeneity is concerning in some regards, does not mean that the company is doing the community a disservice. These tours do bring in customers which support local businesses (especially restaurants). They provide outsiders with an overwhelmingly positive and hopeful depiction of the direction that Harlem is headed in terms of distancing itself from the low points of the 1970s and 1980s. Reviewers have numerous meaningful and uplifting things to say about not just how the tours are operated, but how the community itself is vibrant and harmonious, peaceful and quiet. Destructive stereotypes are sometimes dismantled through the experience of the tour. These are all good things, right?

The concerns lie in how these reviews, taken as an aggregate of traveler's tales positioned within an influential social media site, describe a picture of Harlem that seems complete. Yet as this study suggests, topics are being left out of the reviews which are important in understanding social dynamics, histories, and conditions which played important roles in shaping the community of Harlem. This could be the result of a number of different factors but the end result is a distorted representation of Harlem in the online tourism domain. Reviews communicate a selective focus oriented around elements of touristic value and by doing so they encourage readers to think about Harlem in the same way. The most pressing concern is that the reviews contribute to a discourse which defines culture, race, and ethnicity in part based on how these social constructs—indigeneity and authenticity included—can be commodified through tourism in the continuing development of the neoliberal urban frontier.

More and more people are turning to online reviews as a way to make decisions about the purchases they make. TripAdvisor, in particular, is seen as very influential in the tourism industry (Jeacle and Carter, 2011). In the case of cultural tourism, the purchase in question is not only the
purchase of an experience, but the purchase of a qualified, short term membership which takes place, in the case of Harlem, in a community that has a history of, and ongoing struggles with, the membership rights of its own residents. These reviews are examples of the discourse generated from the interactions of tourists, tourist operators, and the community. A set interactions which scholars like Werry (2011) and Harvey (2005) show are critical in the formation of neoliberal subjectivities such as the FIT consumer and the process of accumulation by dispossession.

Limitations/Flaws

There are millions of reviews posted on TripAdvisor. This study looks at 111 of them. New York received over 52 million visitors in 2012 and this study analyzes reviews about New York tourists dating back to 2006. This represents a very small snapshot of touristic discourse, online prominence notwithstanding, concerning New York and Harlem. This study could have benefited from post-tour questionnaires handed out to volunteers directly after the tour. More fieldwork could have been involved. I only spent about 7 hours in Harlem as part of the research for this project.

There are many other companies which offer a variety of walking tours of Harlem, some of the most popular focus on Harlem's history as a birth place of hip-hop. Harlem Heritage Tours focus is mostly on specific historical aspects of Harlem's community identity, most of which relate to the African-American Experience. This company, and these reviews, were chosen for analysis because of their prominence in the online tourism domain, but there are many ways to "experience" Harlem as a tourist today. This study is limited by only looking at one set of reviews about one company on one website.

Suggestions for Further Research

My goal is to construct a theoretical and methodological approach to examining these reviews from a critical perspective that can be replicated because ultimately I think a content analysis of these reviews would work best in a comparative framework. This could be either between reviews for different attractions in the same city or for similar attractions in different cities. For example, the tour company in which Werry (2011) bases much of her research on FIT tourism in Auckland offers tours that are similar in style to what is offered by Harlem Heritage Tours. The methodology so far is concerned with as much openness of interpretation as possible by focusing on a broad and varied subject, value, because the neoliberal project is concerned with transforming anything that can be valued—in any way—into a specific form of financial value, i.e. monetary. The ratings system that TripAdvisor uses has been shown to be one that has considerable clout among the websites millions of users, and as part of my methodology it isn't subject to my interpretation. The study Jeacle and Carter provides a roadmap of sorts for how to
approach TripAdvisor from a rigorous analytical perspective, which includes establishing the importance that online communities play in influencing decision-making processes as well as a critical consideration of the trust this engenders and the power it produces (2011).

**Epilogue**

While concluding this project, I was thinking about ways a comparative approach would work, so I looked up the reviews on TripAdvisor for Potiki (now Mohio) Tours, the Auckland based urban Maori experience company that Werry used to discuss how indigeneity is being used by the New Zealand tourism industry. As I was scrolling through the reviews, I came across one written by werry00l, from Minneapolis. Here's what the reviewer had to say about their tour experience:

I recommend the Urban Maori Experience tour to all my friends and colleagues who are visiting New Zealand and want to know what they should do to experience something of Maori culture. You'll get a great introduction to Maori history, politics, culture, and contemporary life. It's not staged, it's not scripted, it's not "put on" -it's an opportunity to spend an entire day in the company of a person of Maori heritage who will share their knowledge with you, and show you around their city, giving you insight into the way they live their lives and how they think about their culture and environment. My guide was smart, really well informed and articulate, and terrific, easy-going company. You can go at your own pace, ask all the questions you want and get honest, informative, interesting answers. Your guide will listen carefully to what interests you, and because the groups are really small, you'll get a very personalized experience.

I am originally from New Zealand-I am quite well read about contemporary Maori issues, and about Maori history and politics. I've also spent quite a bit of time in Auckland, and never liked it that much. I really felt as if I gained some fresh insights from my tour with Potiki, and learned a new appreciation for Auckland. Auckland is not an easy city for the visitor to get around, and of its really charming spots you won't find in a guide book. Potiki Tours will take you straight to the good bits! You'll see hip, sophisticated neighborhoods of the city, and places of jaw-dropping natural beauty, all in the course of a few hours.

So, if you're in Auckland for only a few days and want to get straight to the heart of what is interesting about the city...of if you're in New Zealand for a longer trip and want a nice introduction to help orientate yourself to the place...or if you want to engage with Maori culture as it is lived today... you couldn't do any better than to spend a day with Potiki Tours. -posted 7-29-2010
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Appendix A: Methodological Model

1. Ratings Analysis

2. Expressions of Value

3. Realizations of Value (Attraction and Facilitating)

4. Categorical Groups

1. Topical:
   - Race
   - Civil Rights
   - Gentrification

2. Important Value Types:
   - Host, Presentation, Community, Authenticity, Indigeneity, Safety, Changing Stereotypes

3. FIT Tourism: Linking Policy and Discourse

4. Influential Reviews
   - Educators
   - 10+ Helpful Votes
Appendix B: Diagram of Value Types

33 Value Types

- Comparative
- Facilitating Value Types
  - Spontaneity
  - Others

Attraction Based Value types

- Host
- Presentation
- Community
- Authenticity
- Indigeneity

- Information
- Landmarks
- Luminaries
Appendix C: The Process of Value Production in Harlem Heritage Tours
Appendix D: Expanded Model of Value Production.