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## Ward Manor: Care for the Elderly and Digital Memory

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WARD MANOR: CARE FOR THE ELDERLY AND DIGITAL MEMORY

Senior Project Submitted to  
The Division of Social Sciences  
of Bard College

by  
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Annandale-on-Hudson, New York  
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## **Ward Manor Timeline**

**1914** Gordon Louis Hammersley; orphan, gains inheritance and builds the Manor in Tudor revival-style architecture.

- Estate includes a farm, tenant houses, and gate lodge.
- Fights in World War I.
- Upon return he threw a big party
- Found upstate New York boring and moved to Long Island
- Property maintained by caretaker but becomes isn't well cared for.

**c.1919** Hammersley purchases Cruger's Island

**1926** Ward Manor opens upon being funded by Robert Boyd Ward Fund; run by the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP)

- September 8, 1926, James Martin passes away and becomes the first person buried in Ward Manor cemetery.
- 1926, girls summer camp "Ward Lea" opens
- 1928 "Holiday Bungalows" were constructed

**1931** Robbins built through a bequest of Emma Robbins and Holiday Bungalows open to visiting families.

**1939** A.I.C.P. and Charity Organization Society (COS) merged to become the Community Service Society, C.S.S.

**1946** William. H. Matthews dies; replaced by William Kirk

**1949** New Infirmary built, named after William H. Matthews

- Dedication of infirmary was attended by Bard College President. Bard College students begin to visit those living at Ward Manor on a weekly basis.

**1954** Boys' and girls' camps closed. CSS turns focus to the success of the Family Camps.

**1955** Mrs. William B. Ward and Jack Ward request that their names be removed from the Ward Manor Committee.

**1955** CSS disbands the Ward Manor Committee.

**1960** CSS closes Sea Breeze (Staten Island) and Bungalow Hill Camps (Ward Manor)

**1963** Bard College purchases Manor, Robbins, and Gatehouse.

**1962** Central Hudson purchases 'Abandoned Village' property (Bungalows, etc.).

**1981** Cemetery and former Bungalow land purchased by NYS as a nature preserve (Tivoli Bays State Nature and Historical Preserve,) later known as Tivoli Bays Wildlife Management to whom it presently belongs.



## Introduction

I am sitting in a room full of people I don't know, painfully aware that I am the youngest person in attendance. I look around. I see no familiar faces. I try to prepare for the lecture at this meeting of the Red Hook Historical Society at the historic Elmendorph Inn. The Digital Projects Coordinator for the Bard College Digital History Lab is seated next to me. The lights go down, and I am frantically looking for my pen. I find it at the bottom of my bag, along with my brand new, bright yellow notebook. I wonder why I chose a bright yellow notebook for my fieldnotes, and I just decide that it's too late to back out now, just like it's too late to back out of this project. I listen to a presentation on the history of a building called Ward Manor, a place I know little about at that time, located in Dutchess County, Red Hook, New York. I am impressed with the presentation and surprised by the number of residents attending the lecture. Red Hook is a small town, and it was quickly apparent that everyone in the room knew or knew of one another. This environment makes me miss my mother's childhood home in Western Maryland, a place where I spent a lot of my early years hearing stories about life in the Catoctin Mountains from my grandmother. Red Hook was a place that had yet to become an integral part of my Bard College experience. I have only been at Annandale campus at Bard College for a year because I moved to that campus midway through my freshman year of college. The town is small, with residents who are still unfamiliar to me.

I look around the room, searching frantically for my project advisor, a woman whom I have also just met and have known for only a month. She gestures for me to come over, and I meet a few members of the Red Hook community who will later become vital to my project on the history of Ward Manor. I am sure that the impression I make on them will not be the greatest; I'm shy and not yet sure of how to conduct research on my own. Luckily, some of the attendees

show interest in talking to me about the Ward Manor cemetery, and I feel a great sense of relief, since with those agreements I accomplish my initial goal of securing interviews. What I don't know is that these first interviews and a four-part project would become my senior project.

Ward Manor is a picturesque and stately Tudor revival<sup>1</sup> style mansion located on the Bard College campus. The Bard College campus is full of beautiful historic buildings that have been renovated into classrooms and dormitories. The college is a mixture of new and old architecture, with each building possessing a unique history. Some of the buildings are recognized for historical significance. One in particular, Ward Manor, should arguably also be recognized for its social history. The Ward Manor building is a little over a hundred years old and was not named for a person who built or lived within its walls. The mystery behind its history and its use as a college dorm gave me the idea of writing an ethnography on the historical/social structure of Ward Manor. Since I lived on the other side of campus for the first three years of my undergraduate work, I went to parties at Ward Manor, but I had never heard about its history until I began working with the Experimental Humanities (EH) department.

In this project, I use both digital technologies and traditional ethnographic practices to create a window into the past of Ward Manor. Drone footage, digitized archived material and oral history recording come together to bring the past into the present, providing a look at a community and its transformation through time. I think that a potential for tracing changes in community practices, which can shed light on current social relations, lies in combining these different ways of studying human behavior.

Studying a community by using digital technology opens up the inquiry to the changes that the property and local people have gone through to create their current society. One of the wonderful parts of this project was seeing connections between the past and present and

discovering how present the history of the Ward Manor community has remained within the surrounding area. The existence of the Ward Manor cemetery project, which I initially conducted with EH and the Red Hook Historical Society, is a testimony to the efforts of those who refused to forget the past and saw the unique place that Ward Manor has become.

To conduct this research, I traveled to the Ward Manor Cemetery, which lies close to the Bard College property. The Ward Manor Cemetery is not an easy place to reach, since there are no trails to it. It is confusing to find because the number of turns off of the manicured trail that leads through Tivoli Bays makes the distance to the cemetery seem longer than it is. On my first trek, on a muddy trail with many potholes and slippery spots to avoid, I felt confused. Suddenly, I turned onto a path lined with trees and walked straight into the heart of the cemetery. I remember reaching a fork in the road that led into a cemetery full of overgrown bushes, brambles, mud and leaves, which hid the residents resting beneath the surface.

At first glance, the graveyard didn't look like anything special because the grave markers are flush to the ground. The graves were hard to see; the indentations of sinking caskets and orange flags placed during surveys were the only indicators of a cemetery. Furthermore, I learned from one of my treks down to the graveyard that the graveyard has clay soil. According to an interlocutor for this project, clay soil hardens in the winter and isn't easy to dig in, which would seem not to make it an ideal burial location. The cemetery, however, is placed in a picturesque, beautiful area, surrounded by white pines. There have been some strange occurrences on trips to the graveyard. Once, I watched a visitor to the graveyard trip and nearly fall into a grave due to disrepair. It was clear there was work to be done to prevent unnecessary injuries. The Ward Manor cemetery, the final resting place of some 170 people, places beauty before function.

Residents of the Ward Manor retirement community have been largely forgotten by the Bard College community until recent years, but the fact that people from surrounding communities are attempting to bring the history of the retirement community back into public knowledge provoked my attention. The Experimental Humanities faculty and other Bard College faculty, along with the Deputy Mayor of Tivoli, New York, began the overarching project by focusing on the physical restoration of the Ward Manor Cemetery. The Center for Experimental Humanities houses the Manor cemetery project in the Digital History Lab (DHL). Previous groundwork of cleaning graves and collecting GIS<sup>ii</sup> data, as well as many of the residents' names, meant that a lot of information was already collected and waiting for further research. The project's goal was to bring the history of Ward Manor (and the cemetery) into public consciousness so that memories shared by those associated with the property would be archived. These people wished to create a mechanism whereby collective memory would be preserved and therefore available for future generations to experience.

My fieldwork for the Ward Manor Cemetery project began near the end of the 2016 fall semester, when I learned about the cemetery project through my class, "Anthropology of Death," taught by Professor Jonah Rubin. One of the class excursions was a tour of Ward Manor House and a short venture into the cemetery, conducted by a member of the Experimental Humanities department and the Deputy Mayor of Tivoli. Professor Rubin intended for this session and the trip to the cemetery to correlate with his overview of anthropological research and the process of death and dying that we had been studying throughout the semester. Hence, the class trip to the Ward Manor cemetery was meant to explore efforts made in cemetery restoration and local history, with an emphasis on restorative research and fieldwork. Additionally, the Ward Manor

initiative was an attempt to bring the local and collegiate communities together by linking Bard College faculty and students, the Deputy Mayor of Tivoli and Historic Red Hook<sup>iii</sup>.

This ethnography aims to understand and improve the process of making historical narratives. This project is an example of multimodal and interdisciplinary forms of collaboration that highlight the stakes of creating historical narratives. These narratives reveal unintentional and intentional selection of the materials that are preserved in the home and the institutional archive. These selections tell us what is considered important about a place. In the last chapter, I will go into detail on how I parsed a collected archive on Ward Manor; this archive is located at Columbia University and was stored there by the Community Service Society of New York.

The work of the Bard College Stevenson Library, along with the Center for Experimental Humanities at Bard and surrounding communities of Red Hook and Tivoli, New York, focuses on the creation of a collection regarding the Ward Manor property, a former retirement community run by the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) from 1926-1959. I developed a methodology to be reproduced at other research sites in order to create interactive collections for community use; this one will be housed with Experimental Humanities and the Stevenson Library. My topic, which I have worked on for three years, follows the processes of creating a historical narrative through using technology to digitize the graveyard of those former residents who passed away at the retirement community.

In Chapter 3, I will explain my research on the Ward Manor Cemetery as conducted through digital technologies. I believe that my research expands what ethnography can look like. For example, I created a map formatted with ArcGIS and used ESRI [Environmental Systems Research Institute] Story Maps to create interactive spaces in order to explore the scope of research. My digital model captures an overlooked gravesite and gives information to visitors

about the individuals who lived on the property. For the Ward Manor cemetery map, also discussed in Chapter 3, the practice of using a digital map, drone footage and interactive interfaces makes the cemetery a focus of study, but it also allows for engagement no matter the visitor's physical distance from the site. Mapping the graves and making the information available brings the graves into digital circulation, making them into a place for interactions. The digital map of the graveyard is available on the Bard Experimental Humanities website. Relatives of those buried within have already contacted Bard College because they have found their relative(s). One family even held a gathering to celebrate their relative upon discovery. The project, which ostensibly exists to create a narrative for Ward Manor, also came out of the need to foster relationships between Bard College and the surrounding towns. What is left to be seen in future use of the digital gravesites is how it affects the traffic of the graveyard and whether digitized graveyards will affect the ways in which we mourn. Although the latter is a question which will not be answered within this ethnography, it is important to consider and watch the ways in which digitalization of mourning practices change our relationships with the past.

The Manor project is multidisciplinary because it utilizes different forms of media to conduct genealogical research on those buried within the cemetery. Part of the Manor project carried out by the Center for Experimental Humanities included conducting oral history interviews. These interviews with former residents were then used to create interactive programs that are accessible to the public. One aim of the project was to bring the collegiate and surrounding communities together. I was very interested in learning how to conduct oral history interviews, as I saw the potential they hold, when made accessible through digital media, for connecting communities. Thus, learning about Ward Manor from former residents is a step toward keeping the history relevant to people in the broader community, including both Bard

College and residents of the region. The immediacy of this research is in the collection of oral histories of currently living residents who remember the property through childhood memories or retold stories. Those who lived as “retirees” at Manor may be long gone, but the collected oral histories provide a view of it through a child’s gaze, as well as “adopted” ideas of how the property functioned. Efforts to gather the history of a community are in their own way a creation of a community of individuals who feel the need to bring this history back into public discussion. In this way, the study of history does not end with a textbook but has a social aspect to it that can be studied and understood through anthropological theories.

The Ward Manor property went through many transformations until it became a present-day dorm on the Bard College Campus. In Chapter 1, I explore the history of the Manor property, which was purchased and transformed into a home for the elderly in 1926 by the AICP, an organization that had been established in 1843 and whose name was changed to the Community Service Society of New York in 1939<sup>iv</sup>. Ward Manor was proposed as a home for the elderly, although eventually it allowed anyone, regardless of age, religion or gender to apply. Facilitating moving to Ward Manor was consistent with the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor’s charity work within New York City.

This project has raised questions for me about the archival process and about how and for whom history is remembered. In anthropology and oral history, there has been a shift to include and highlight the stories of ordinary citizens. However, in their own minds, the residents of Ward Manor were no “ordinary” people: they were “soldiers of the good”<sup>v</sup>, an idea which connects them to philanthropy and William H. Matthew’s vision for the comradery and national/familial ties cultivated at the Ward Manor property. As I describe in Chapter 3, ‘soldiers of the good’ is a

term Matthew used that relates to the philosophy through which he viewed the residents of Ward Manor.

Earlier presentations of Ward Manor tend to focus on the wealth of William Hammersley, whom I will discuss in Chapter 2. This project, by contrast, focuses on the people of Ward Manor, who were older and relatively impoverished and so applied to the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) to live at Ward Manor, a home that was overseen by William H. Matthews. The home was financed by the Ward family. The changing use of the Ward Manor property through time shows interactions between rich and poor people who resided in the region, from upstate New York to New York City. This project aims to follow the anthropological tradition of highlighting the voices of those who would otherwise be forgotten by history. There are presently many efforts attempting to document and commemorate the important history of the retirement community at Ward Manor. This is important because the members of the Ward Manor community are connected to what eventually led to current practices of social security programs within the United States of America. I will discuss the history of social security programs in relation to the history of philanthropy in Chapter 1.

### *What goes into creating a historical narrative?*

Understanding of the historical narratives of Ward Manor comes from a variety of sources. William Henry Matthews (see Chapter 1) left behind an autobiography that gives a detailed image of the community living on the Ward Manor property, but this does not give accounts of daily life and the community's changes through time from first-hand accounts by residents. In an attempt to bring together Mr. Matthews's writings and other accounts of the residents, we looked at medias from different times within Ward Manor's history to piece together what the experience of living in the community was like for the residents. Alongside

Mr. Matthews's account, project members have collected oral histories and searched for other documents that have helped us create a fuller image of the property and its residents. We have done this by interacting with local residents of the surrounding towns and going to the Columbia University Archives to get more information on the general workings of the AICP. The collective histories that lead to the creation and production of historical narrative present challenges to the archival process: the narratives of oral history, in tandem with those of archival research and restoration efforts within the cemetery, all complicate one another due to their multidisciplinary forms. This dichotomy between oral and archival historical recordings and documentation can be seen in the Bard College Stevenson Library, where the classification of historical records collected from the Butler Library at Columbia University and the Columbia archives takes place. The creation of a historical narrative, mentioned above, through the collection of archival research creates tension with the narrative histories presented to the public through both the Center for Experimental Humanities and the Stevenson Library. This is because all archival processes are based on the selection of documentation deemed "savable". The complexity comes in because historical narrative is a way to disentangle nonlinear events and create stories, which make history flow and connect events with one another. Since archival research is done in stages, it is very difficult to make a final, definitive timeline from archival sources alone, as information is always changing with the addition of found sources within the archive.

Studying Manor through an anthropological lens allows us to think of historical sources in cultural terms. Social relations, as presented in oral histories, writing, newspapers and other sources of meaning, are embedded within the records. A historian's viewpoint traditionally focuses on collecting information without exploration of the cultural biases underlying the space

in which knowledge is collected in the first place. In both anthropology and history, the sources are rarely complete records: therefore, they are places of uncertainty. An ethnography instead asks how these historical records are significant, both socially and culturally.

Questions like “What does it mean to go into an archive?” and “What is a soldier of the good?” stand at the center of this research. The culture created by the residents at Ward Manor reflects an idealistic form of human familial connection beyond blood relation, one that was dependent on the residents wanting to feel bonds of familiarity with one another through a created community. The importance of community and creating a place for retirement was one of the main goals of William H. Matthews (see Chapter 1).

#### *Multimodality in anthropology and how it is used in this project*

The methodology I used to conduct this ethnographic research is multimodal and uses many interdisciplinary forms to create a thesis. ‘Multimodality: An Invitation’ suggests that multimodality is about reworking the ways in which we use fieldnotes and fieldwork within anthropological writing (Collins, Durnington and Gill 2017, 142-146). Ethnographic representations within multimodality are complicated by the presence of representational materials that rarely end up within ethnographic writings due to their disjointed connection to the topic. These materials, such as photographs, recordings and videos, typically inform but only rarely appear in ethnographic texts. But they are present within a multimodal project(s) since they can highlight the digital components that are difficult to express within ethnographic writings. Multimodality within the Ward Manor project is present through the inclusion of historical archived notes, photographs, oral history recordings and a digitized map of the Ward Manor Cemetery. These are all materials that serve to interpret the ethnographic materials through the use of the archive. This “excess” of materials and information would typically be

considered a “messiness” within the social sciences. Instead, in multimodality, an excess of material within fieldwork is a place of inquiry. Multimodality furthers the understanding of the Ward Manor site because its methodology allows for the use of materials beyond the written component to express the results of ethnographic research. Below is a portion of the description of multimodality from the American Anthropological Association’s website. As Collins, Durlington, and Gill write:

[...] multimodality is only about recognizing the ever-present “messiness” of the anthropological encounter, with the acknowledgement that much of this complexity is rendered more and more transparent through the ubiquity of media practices. It demonstrates that the anthropological field site and the work of the anthropology itself is never static or ossified, but is constantly subject to change. [Collins, Durlington and Gill 2017, 143]

The multimodal<sup>vi</sup> approach came initially from scholars studying films and “visual anthropology” but has transformed to include sound and other technology-based forms of media in order to explore the limitations of ethnographic writing. The first uses of multimodality by scholars were to complicate “visual anthropology,” used in the study of films, by incorporating other forms of technology-based media in ethnographic writings. This shift in focus within the ethnographic encounter complicated the materials collected and used within ethnographic writing to include other media. Through the inclusion of technological programs and other media that enhance social science research, multimodality invites non-anthropologists into dialogue with anthropological theory. Technology in multimodal methodology enhances the meanings within the use of digital technologies by highlighting the interactions between the research lab and the everyday uses of a certain technology.

The work that would be considered “multimodal” within this project lies in the production of audio recordings, drone video/photography and digital maps, all techniques that were used to allow the graveyard to enter into the global sphere. The digital map is not only

available online through the Bard Experimental Humanities website, but it is also presently being added to “Find A Grave,” a global database that allows people from all over the world to search for their family members’ graves. “Find A Grave” connects the collected information to other genealogy websites and will make it easier for descendants and researchers to discover the Ward Manor Cemetery. However, as you will read in Chapter 3, not every grave provides information that can be used to locate its inhabitant. The addition of digitally mapped graves into an interactive site like “Find A Grave” and the Bard Experimental Humanities website creates a new type of space. I suggest that the addition of the digital gravesites allows a new “imagined community” to form around digitized cemeteries. The website “Find A Grave” provides a space for people to create spaces where mourning and collaboration for memorials can take place even if the visitor to the website has never been to a particular graveyard.

When a person is searching online for their relatives on “Find A Grave,” they are imagining that they are connected to the other people searching for their family members within a larger collection of gravesites. This resembles Arjun Appadurai’s idea that community identity is performed by actions, which are orchestrated by mass media, drawing on Benedict Anderson’s (1983) work (Appadurai 1996, 158). Although the online grave and archive is not a physical site, the presentation of materials to the site visitor informs the interpretation and the feelings of kinship that they will get from the site based on the information available to them. For instance, one of the plots within the Ward Manor Cemetery is marked as “Reserved” and does not possess a grave marker with a name inscribed. The absence of a name brings up questions of what is missing from the historical narrative, and why. I propose that it gives us an idea of how history is written partially even before its entry into an archive. It is my hope that the processes that archived materials go through will become a place of further inquiry for anthropology and the

humanities; this will lead to more projects that involve ethnography, memory and sites of memory. There is so much research that can be done within the archive that can benefit from a collaboration between humanities and the study of technology that it seems a waste not to pursue such study.

I argue that the researchers working on the Ward Manor Cemetery project, in using a multimodal approach, are creating a collection for others that will allow those others to learn more about the Ward Manor property. I take inspiration from Nicholas Dirks (2002), whose work I connect to my reading of Ann Stoler's *Along the Archival Grain* (2010).<sup>vii</sup> Both theorists, Stoler and Dirks wrote about archives being an important place where anthropologists can further their understanding of history through ethnographic writing. My understanding of the archive is that the production of knowledge is mediated through higher institutional powers, which then influence the ways in which history is understood by the masses. In this case, connections to the collection of archived materials reorganize the events and story of the residents of Ward Manor. This project increases the "messiness" within the creation of historical narratives and understanding of social life. Dirks wrote about the caste system in India and, in a similar fashion to Michel-Rolph Trouillot (2015), sees the institution and archiving as a place where history is organized into categories of events and meanings:

I have suggested elsewhere the need for anthropologists to engage in the study of their own history to approach the colonial archive both as the repository of sources for their research and in terms of larger historical contexts that document the genealogical entailments of colonial knowledge for contemporary scholarship (Dirks 1999). And yet, I would also advocate the need for historians to engage in the ethnography of the archive, for the archive itself reflects the forms and formations of historical knowledge that have been so markedly shaped by their implications in the history of the state whose past it is meant to enshrine. [Dirks 2002, 12]

Using a multimodal approach to Ward Manor research enables the viewer to consider voices, photographs and digitalized materials as products of memory and history. Many of the

objects left behind, be these physical remains, memories, musical instruments, photographs or papers, create tangible spaces that can be studied in a concrete fashion. This is something that isn't present in all forms of ethnography, since other forms depend solely on written accounts and participant-observational narratives.

From Stoler and Dirks, I move to Michel Foucault's and Appadurai's views on the creation of the archive. Appadurai described the creation of the archive in this way:

Recognizing that the archive is not just a way to preserve accidental, but previous traces of collective memory, we need to see that perhaps Foucault had too dark a vision of the panoptical function of the archive, of its roles as an accessory to policing, surveillance and governmentality. the creation of documents and their aggregation into archives is also part of everyday life outside the purview of the state. The personal diary, the family photo album, the community museum, the libraries of individuals are all examples of popular archives and, of course, oral archives have been repositories of intentional remembering for most of human history. [Appadurai 2003, 16]

In my reading of Appadurai, I thought that his idea of "accidental trace" should be combined with Stoler's idea of the "unwritten" (2010), since both ideas depend on what is not foreseen within the replications of archival work, as you will see in Chapter 1. My work at the Ward Manor site has resulted in unplanned interactions between publics and my role as a researcher. The archive informed the process through which my project was created, and the additions given by current members of the community added to the collective archive that this type of work is creating.

## Chapter 1: Historical Narrative, The Buildings, Space and Time

*I have tried to reduce history to its lowest terms, first by defining it as the memory of things said and done, second by showing concretely how the memory of things said and done is essential to the performance of the simplest acts of daily life. I wish now to note the more general implications of Mr. Everyman's activities. In the realm of affairs Mr. Everyman has been paying his coal bill; in the realm of consciousness he has been doing that fundamental thing which enables man alone to have, properly speaking, a history: he has been re-enforcing and enriching his immediate perceptions to the end that he may live in a world of semblance more spacious and satisfying than is to be found within the narrow confines of the fleeting present moment.*

Carl L. Becker, "Everyman His Own Historian" I.

In 1914, a young, wealthy orphan, Louis Gordon Hammersley (born July 21, 1892), celebrated his eighteenth birthday and received his inheritance. He was the child of James Hooker Hammersley, who died in 1901. A few years later in 1904, his mother, socialite Margaret Chisolm Hammersley, died, when Louis and his sister, Katherine, were still very young. Louis chose to build a manor (the future Ward Manor) in Dutchess County, New York, where he and his sister Katherine spent their childhood summers. His guardians were in charge of designing and seeing to the manor's construction while Hammersley completed his education at Harvard University. Hammersley did not visit the Manor until after his graduation. The Manor was designed by architect Francis Hoppin.<sup>viii</sup> The exterior of the manor is stone and features a Coats of Arms belonging to the Hammersley family above the entrance. The other side, which faces the Catskill Mountains, has a large staircase leading down to the lawn. The house is Tudor revival-style and features dark wood siding, with ornate plaster ceilings and large multi-pane windows that look out onto the Catskills. This building became what we now know as Ward Manor

although it would not possess that name until its purchase and gift to The Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) in 1925.



Creator unknown. "Ward Manor House with Driveway." between 1879 and 1950. Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Columbia University, Community Service Society Collection

The Manor property included a farm, tenant houses, and a gate lodge. The property was never used as a permanent residence by Hammersley: he left to fight in World War I before the completion of the house. Upon his return, he threw a large party that lasted three days on the property, but that was the only event he hosted at the Manor while Hammersley owned it. Hammersley found upstate New York dull and moved to Long Island to be a part of high society. His sister had no interest in the house and moved away after marriage. Hammersley abandoned the house and left it to a caretaker.

The Tudor revival architecture and farming on the manor land comprised a nod back to an archaic form of land ownership practiced by the elite classes who owned large estates in Upstate New York. Historically, ‘manors’ were granted by Dutch governors or by loyalists connected to the British aristocracy. In building a “manor” in the Tudor style, Hammersley was inviting the idea that he had descended from an aristocratic background. Historically, manors were feudal and depended on a large house, while tenants rented the land and worked on the property. The manor’s setup as an atypical building and landscape makes it appear to be in an older style and is in this way removed from the outside world. Bourdieu once described architecture as, “world within a world, but one that always remains subordinate, because, even when it displays all the properties and relationships that define the archetypal world, it remains an inverted reflection, a world in reverse” (Bourdieu 1980, 282). A manor reflects an older style of showcasing money and power but its later use as a retirement home, after Hammersley sold the house, is contrary to its intended use as an estate. The manor is a place where the use of space changes depending on the ownership, as space is reimagined for different uses. Ten years later, after Hammersley’s short-lived use of the manor, it was transformed into a retirement community that reinterpreted the space for a larger group of older residents and children’s summer camps.

The project for transforming the Manor (future Ward Manor) was assigned the future Chairman of Ward Manor, William Henry Matthews, who was approached by William Ward. Mr. Ward had purchased the manor from Hammersley in memory of his late father in order for the Manor to be used as a home for the elderly and impoverished. The wealthy Ward family bought Ward Manor (formerly the Manor) and then gifted it to the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) in memory of the late Robert B. Ward,<sup>ix</sup> of the Ward Baking Co.<sup>x</sup>

William H. Matthews would be assigned to the property as Chairman and would act in this role until his death in the mid nineteen-forties.

Looking at the property today, there are only bits of evidence of Hammersley's ownership of the property in the small inscription of his family motto and familial coats of arms, which provide insight into Hammersley's social and economic standing. Although Hammersley never lived within Ward Manor, the building became connected American ideals of philanthropy due to its use by the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP). The use of a manor for a retirement home changed the landscape of the space, due to the number of people living on the property. Nevertheless, the retirement home still used the original structure and farm lands in ways similar to how the Hammersley might have used them. The reuse of an underutilized estate resulted in people of all economic backgrounds living communally.

#### *Ward Manor's philanthropic origins*

The Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor was a community service society that received the Manor property as memorial donation by William B. Ward in memory of his late father, Robert Boyd Ward. This allowed W. H. Matthews to construct his vision of a retirement home for the elderly (Matthews 1939, 168). Before Matthew's vision became a reality, charities like The Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) were established in 1843 and emerged due to overpopulation within New York City, and a lack of employment opportunities that cause mass poverty. The (AICP) sought to remove impoverished civilians from New York City and relocate them to the countryside. Many of the poor approached by 'visitors'<sup>xi</sup> by the AICP emigrated to rural areas in upstate New York. The poor in New York City did not have many opportunities to occupy well-paid positions because the education system had yet to be successful in teaching basic skills to children citywide; such as

reading, writing, and arithmetic. These skills might have ensured a more successful transition into the working world. With a large number of uneducated and impoverished individuals, there weren't enough opportunities for their 'social improvement.' For the emigration of the poor from New York City to upstate New York to take place, visitors and secretaries of the Association would report how many poor people needed aid in their area. Then they would decide where to offer them emigration based on skill level and need. By relieving the city or the poor, the AICP thought they would not only improve life within the city, but also improve the lives of those who agreed to emigrate (Hartley 1860). Charity organizations like the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP) began to emerge within New York City to alleviate the symptoms of overpopulation.

Social organizations sought to increase the chances of the poor acquiring jobs by encouraging their education. Besides arranging homes for the poor and elderly, the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor attempted to increase access to education. The AICP advocated for education regardless of one's economic standing so that they would have the necessary skills to acquire employment. Social societies were vital for creating initiatives for public education in order to ensure that everyone had basic education available to their person. The AICP and the Charity Organization Societies (COS) tried to intervene in the lives of the poor to increase their job prospects and educational opportunities:

"In the first quarter of the nineteenth century, the idea that every citizen should possess the three R's was introduced, but often discounted as visionary and impossible of attainment. In the succeeding quarter century [...] Another general approach to the problem of transforming the poor into economic resources has been the attempt to change behavior in the misguided idea that an individual's poverty is caused by the way he acts. Social workers are alert to the fallacies of this point of view, but many others have not been sufficiently aware of basic motivations to see its weakness. Sometimes exhortation has been tried, such as "advice" to be given by the so-called "visitors to the poor" in the early days of the AICP's and the Charity Organization Societies (COS). [National Conference on Social Welfare 1964, 164-165].

The AICP and COS were organizations that emerged out of the societal shift towards a philanthropic society. Helping and providing aid was becoming a fad in the early twentieth century with prominent families giving lots of money to social service projects. Philanthropy was becoming a part of American culture but many philanthropy and societies were emerging largely to mitigate over population of the poor. On the other hand, mass migration of the poor out of cities was a way of splitting social classes and controlling the population of the poor for the benefit of the rich.

Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Charity organized in 1843 to morally uplift and help the deserving poor. An offshoot of the New York City Mission Society, it was led by such prominent New Yorkers as the merchant Robert Minturn. Its first general secretary, Robert M. Hartley, supervised more than 300 upper- class men who volunteered to visit persons in need; his careful records demonstrated a relationship between mortality and filthy, crowded living conditions and became an example for scientific philanthropists in the late nineteenth century. [Jackson, Keller, Lisa and Flood 2010, 70]

Those with a surplus of income began to give disposable income away to avoid taxation. For this reason, philanthropic practices within the United States gained popularity outside of social services organized by religion organizations. Instead, the rich were inspired to give back to the communities due to social pressures for charity work by prominent families. Philanthropic practices in the United States were heavily influenced by Andrew Carnegie. Andrew Carnegie was one of the richest men in American history and gave a lot of his income to social societies and public projects. Carnegie helped to create the idea that helping others would help oneself, or, alternatively, that money should be used to help oneself by investing it into public services:

The period from the late 1880's to the Great Depression, when new sources of mobile capital were available, when titans of wealth used philanthropy for various reasons, and when Carnegie was preaching and practicing the doctrine of the stewardship of great riches. Finally, we could deal with the period since the depression, in which we have a shift of control from owners to managers, with the growing importance of public relations, and significant changes in the tax structure. [Curti 1957, 361]

The future Chairman of Ward Manor, William H. Matthews, although trained as an Episcopalian priest, chose to devote his life to the cause of helping those in need. Matthews studied at Williams College, where he studied Greek and philosophy. He was interested in teaching English, History and Greek (Matthews 1939, 36). I believe that William H. Matthews would have agreed with this quote: “I take goodness in this sense, the affecting of the wealth of men, which is that the Grecians call *philanthropia*; and the word *humanity* (as it is used) is a little too light to express it” (Bacon & Pitcher 1985, 96). To William H. Matthews, wealth wasn't just money: help should be given to all people in need.

William Henry Matthews knew what it was like to grow up poor. Due to his father's illness, William H. Matthews began working in a wool mill at the tender age of twelve; as the eldest of eight children, Mr. Matthews had to go to work to support his family. Matthews worked as a 'harness boy' and would clean the fuzz off of the woven cloth (Matthews 1939, 6, 9).

I sat down with my mother at the table as she carefully slit the edge of the envelope. A half dollar rolled out. Then she reached in her fingers for the paper currency, a whole two dollar bill—two dollars and fifty cents, for sixty-five hours of work. To me, then, it was a lot of money. I have no doubt that it meant considerable to my mother as she thought of grocery and other weekly bills to be paid. [Matthews 1939, 12]

Matthew's childhood inspired his career. Matthews began working with the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor on June 13, 1913, and became the director of the Family Welfare Unit (Matthews 1939, 96-97). Before becoming the chairman of Ward Manor, William H. Matthews served as the director of another retirement home in the Dutchess County area; his directorship of Sunset Lodge was one of his many projects that he undertook in his years working for the Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor (AICP). Williams wrote about the issues of poverty within New York and one of his memorable jobs working for the AICP by stating:

Before the time of which I write much of the relief given families had been in the form of grocery tickets, orders on store for shoes, clothing and other necessities. The government, much to its shame, returned that type of Elizabethan poor relief in 1931. [...] with the exception of a few isolated instance, the world with this group of families was, in the A.I.C.P. at least, the real beginning of “cash relief” as against relief by way of food and clothing tickets given to the mother and rent vouchers made out and paid to the landlord by the relief visitor. The seeming assumption was the death of the father, all the native and acquired intelligence of the mother had ceased to be, was, from the time on, along with the grocery ticket system of relief, relegated to the scrap heap [Matthews 1939, 104-105]

Most my information on William Henry Matthews came from his own writings. The spirit of Ward Manor was kept alive through his writings and they give a clear picture of what he believed what social life was like at Ward Manor. His autobiography, *Adventures In Giving*, is a prime example of the biographies produced in this time. Many wealthy citizens participated in philanthropic activities and wrote stories to commemorate social work in social welfare (Curti 1957, 361-362).

#### *Purchase of Hammersley's estate*

For Mr. Matthews, philanthropy was very close to his heart; he wanted those around him to have the resources that they needed to have a comfortable life, even if they were poor. His first house for the elderly was called Sunset Lodge and was located ten miles away from what would become Ward Manor. Mr. Ward wanted to create a retirement home in memory of his father, and contacted Matthews. As Matthews recounts:

Mr. Ward told me he had just purchased a large estate in Dutchess County, and that he had a wish, as a memorial to his father, Robert Boyd Ward, to turn it into a home for elderly people desirous and in need of such a home. Did I think a large place could be conducted in the same spirit and in the same homelike manner as that which seemed to characterize Sunset Lodge? For a good part of the afternoon we talked over what he had in mind. The very next day I drove with Ralph S. Kent, his attorney, through those lodge gates which I had ridden by so many times. The day will ever be a memorable one. No one save the caretakers had occupied the estate for some ten years. The exquisitely wrought iron doors of its gray and stone manor house, which stood near the center of the property, had opened neither for host nor guest. From its windows on the east, no one had

looked as the morning sun wove tangles of light and shade through leaf and branch of stately oaks. From its balustraded western porches no one had watched as river and mountain seemed all afire in evening glow. From the leaded casement windows there had come no gleam of lights to pierce in later hours the darkness of the night. As silent, cold sentinels, the tall limestone chimneys seemed to rise from the red tile roof. About their perfectly chiseled caps no smoke had curled from the roof, wide fireplaces of the hall and living rooms. The very silence of the “old man of the mountain,” outlined in his natural tomb on the ridge of the Catskills across the Duson to the west, seemed to surround and envelop the entire property. [Matthews 1939, 169]

A year after the purchase, Ward Manor opened its door to its first elderly residents in June of 1926. Above the entrance to manor remained the three coats of arms belonging to the Hammersley family. As a resident of Ward Manor arrived they would pass under the coat of arms above the entrance. The crests held no meaning to those residing within Ward Manor but the coat of arms serve as a reminder, even now, of the Hammersley’s legacy:

Should a visitor choose to wander through the house, he would find there much of beauty. Rugs, tapestries, books, pictures-bits of loveliness from far-away lands, gifts of visiting friends who have found way to the grey stone manor house during the three lapsed years. He would notice over doors and mantels, the coat of arms the first owner of the manor house. Its armorial bearing having no significance to those who now pass in and out of the doors and on winter evenings sit about the fireplaces. [Matthews 1939, 9]

William Henry Matthews wanted the residents to feel like they shared pseudo-familial relations with the one another. Mr. Matthews created many activities, some of which will be described in Chapter 2, which brought the community together. He described the manor as being a mish-mosh of influences that reflected the nature of the residents: an assortment of people, fabrics, land and the distance from the original owner.

*Hammersley moto: poetic license*

The Manor house has a motto inside the common room and next to the fireplace, placed by Hammersley. The subsequent Chairman of the manor, William H. Matthews, added a poem to

the motto. In Matthew's autobiography, *Adventures in Giving*, W. H. Matthews explains that the meaning behind the motto changed with the retirement community living in the home:

Over the entrance of the house, cut into stone, was the coat of arms of the original owner. The motto was *In honore et amore*. We have never removed it. Within the house I again used the inscription:  
 You must come home with me and be my guest. You will bring joy to me and I will do all that is in my power to honor you.  
 My thought was that with such a "rule" lived by all, we should have little or no need of others. [Matthews 1939, 170]

Hammersley's quote translates to 'Honor and love' in Latin, Mr. Matthews added his quote to reflect the Latin message. The two quotes complement each other to create the goal of Ward Manor; that everyone should make one another feel as though they are part of the community and family. Matthews's chosen quote was by poet Percy Bysshe Shelley (b. 1792, d. 1822.) and is an excerpt from "Hymn to Mercury," which was written in 1820 and published in 1824 by Mrs. Shelley in *Posthumous Poems* (Shelley and Woodberry 1892, 491). Instead of considering those who lived within Manor as temporary placements, Matthews placed an inscription on the wall reminding everyone who lived there that they were considered part of a larger community and were living within what Matthews hoped would become a familial home. Like many aspects of Ward Manor, the words inscribed change meaning with whomever resides within its walls. For instance, today 'Ward Manor' is interchanged with 'Manor House' by Bard College faculty and students. By beginning the title of the mansion with 'Ward' there is a disconnect between who resided within the mansion.

The motto reflects the message of hospitality within the retirement home, and these quotes show how the meaning of phrases can change over time and depending on how space is used. To William H. Matthews, this motto promised that residents would honor one another by making each other feel at home, making Ward Manor a peaceful place to retire for the rest of

one's days. The power of creating a space like Manor lay in the sense that residents were able to feel a sense of belonging and purpose. Having communities like Manor allowed for elderly residents to have agency over their lives, whereas, in New York City they were faced with unemployment.

Sunset Lodge was the property that William H. Matthews cared for before the opening of Ward Manor. Sunset Lodge was a six-acre farm that was available for purchase. In Matthew's recounting of the establishment of Sunset Lodge he states that the property is a 'summer vacation' spot for the elderly. His inspiration for Sunset Lodge came from Mr. W. P. Day who wished to see his mother's concern for the elderly inspired his philanthropy:

He wrote, "My mother once said, when I wheeled her out on the porch, "There must be many old people who have no one to care for them as you care for me," "With that in mind, he was writing to inquire whether the A.I.C.P would consider using his house during the summer months as a vacation place for old folks. He would remain on the property, fixing himself living quarters in the barn, so that we might have full use of the house. He would continue taking care of the grounds and fruit so long as he was able, turning in the crop proceeds toward the maintenance of the house. There was in this letter a spirit of highness and fineness of giving rarely found. [Matthews 1939, 138]

While living on the Manor property, residents interacted and worked on a large mass of land, allowing for the cultivation of cattle, vegetable farms and flower gardens. The residents living on the property interacted with the children from the children's camps established by William H. Matthews on the property.

What made Manor different from a present-day retirement community is that residents were expected to give back to the community through labor that depended on individual physical capabilities:

For the those who were able to care for themselves, the undesirability of institutional care became more and more self-evident, and a variety of assistance programs developed, usually on a categorical basis. To many people, this meant that the poor were receiving something for nothing, which in turn led to sporadic efforts to apply work test and work relief requirements. In a work test, the applicant was required to perform a certain

minimum amount of physical labor as a demonstration of his willingness to work if a job were available. However, the amount of work performed had no direct relationship to the amount of assistance given. [National Conference on Social Welfare 1964, 167]

### *Power of naming*

The power of naming a place should not be overlooked, since it informs the ways in which a property is connected to legacy. In having a family's name attached to the manor, Manor exhibits a connection to a human subject. In 1955, Mrs. William B. Ward and Jack Ward requested that their names be removed from the Ward Manor Committee. This was never realized because, that year, the Community Service Society (CSS)<sup>xii</sup> disbanded the committee completely. It continues to be referred to as 'Ward Manor,' even after its purchase by Bard College in the 1963. The unchanged name represents ways in which the property is remembered by the college and how disconnected the college is from the proposals and documents outlining the requests made to the Community Service Society (CSS).

Maintaining the name Ward Manor ignores the requests of the Ward family and has nothing to do with the name of the original owner of the Manor. Nor was it renamed in remembrance of the deceased Chairman, William H. Matthews, in remembrance of his work at the Manor. Although the Ward family requested for their family name to be removed, it was not necessary for the CSS to comply with their request. Therefore, names and the act of naming a place perform ownership, proving that the name is not just decorative, but a way in which the CSS exhibits their continued control over the property. Names exist to maintain order and place a person, place and idea within the social. Ward Manor took its name from the Ward family and thus continues to be connected to their familial tree, although the individual members are not

distinguishable. The continuation of the name's usage complicates the relationships between past and present understandings of the property.

Manor ran as a successful retirement home until W. H. Matthews died in 1946, and was replaced by William Kirk. After his death, the property began to decline, and with the property's eventual closure many of the archived documents were stored at Columbia University in New York City. Ward Manor took applicants from their New York City offices and many of the meeting minutes, photos, and newspaper articles are available for further reading at Butler Library at Columbia University.

#### *Bard College purchases Ward Manor in the 1960s*

Throughout the years, the changing ownership of Ward Manor has resulted in a forgotten history that is not known to all who encounter the property. The land use and Bard College's use of the property as a dorm has resulted in the endangerment of the property's structure, an issue that dates back to the building's abandonment by the Hammersley family. On the first floor, a large portion of the original structure has been renovated into a commercial kitchen, adjacent to the original dining hall used by the retirees. The building is currently used as accommodation for Bard College students. The building has changed a lot with additions and renovations, leading one to question what makes the building itself important and why Manor is different from other early twentieth-century buildings.

The Ward Manor building adapts to the needs of those living within. Historically, the property was never used for its original purpose of housing the Hammersley family and instead was repurposed as a home for the poor and elderly. Carl L. Becker once described, "history is the artificial extension of social memory" and oral history, photography and recollections of a past

all work to foster a collective memory shared by the former residents which inscribes more meaning than may have originally been assigned to everyday documents and objects than the place's original intent (Becker 1931, 221). Property exchanges and time between ownerships inscribed new meanings to old architecture. Due to the use of the building as a dorm, it appears to me that if preservation action was required, the building will be seen as having important if it adapts to accommodate more students over time instead of being returned to its 'original glory', since it is not old enough to be considered a site.

The history written by historians, like the history informally fashioned by Mr. Everyman, is thus a convenient blend of truth and fancy, of what we commonly distinguish as "fact" and "interpretation." In primitive times, when tradition is orally transmitted, bards and storytellers frankly embroider or improvise the facts to heighten the dramatic import of the story. With the use of written records, history, gradually differentiated from fiction, is understood as the story of events that actually occurred; and with the increase and refinement of knowledge the historian recognizes that his first duty is to be sure of his facts, let their meaning be what it may. [Becker 1931, 221–36]

These changes in the house and property remove it, little by little, from the original history of the property. With the name change to 'Ward Manor', the home became associated with a fantastical version of its history, since the naming of the manor with a surname creates an assumption of who dwelled within.

#### *Discovering Ward Manor through interview*

So many memories come to mind. Ward Manor was a community; it consisted of permanent homes where families lived, year round, mine among them; summer camps for children from New York City, boys camps, girls camps, and this was, the whole community was founded by my grandfather with the help of a very wealthy friend-benefactor-donor named Mr. Ward [son of the Ward for whom Ward Manor is named] who put up the money for the community. And my grandfather was in charge of executing Mr. Ward's wishes and overseeing the community. So the community consisted of summer camps for boys and girls; twenty-something bungalows which were summer retreats for the working families of New York City who perhaps couldn't afford to go on vacation and who wanted to spend some time in the country and

have some good, healthy, fresh air and swim and hike in the woods, and-and have campfires and so-so this was a large part, the bungalow community, was a large part of Ward Manor and also what many people long don't remember is that many community members from Red Hook and Tivoli would come and use the gigantic swimming pool, and facilities, they were all welcome. So most of the children of my generation learned how to swim, at Ward Manor in the-in the wonderful swimming pool which no longer exists of course. And-and the other part of the community was the two- the two homes- Manor House and Robbins House were retirement homes for elderly people who really wanted a place where they could spend their final years and have everything taken care of for them. My understanding is that when they entered they gave what they could for their support, some more than others, and then everybody who lived there participated in giving back to the community; so there were-there were gardeners, there were people who had spent their-their lives growing things and taking care of plants, so when they came to Ward Manor, they would tend the gardens and they would grow vegetables. And I specifically remember one lady named Martha who was a weaver in life, and she came to Ward Manor and she had a loom and she would weave beautiful objects of art and we had potters and we had artists and we had people who enjoyed caretaking. So everybody gave back and when I was growing up, the children of Ward Manor, the children of people who worked there, myself included, considered the-the guests, they were called guests, the people who came to retire at Ward Manor and they were all our adopted grandparents. And since my grandfather who founded Ward Manor, had passed away just before I was born, I had no grandparents living, so all the people who lived there were my adopted grandparents and I have very fond memories of many, many, many of them. [Comer 2017]

Small clues to the property's changes lie within memories, written and oral, that were collected in the spring of 2016, onward. I was lucky enough to sit down and conduct an oral history interview with a member of the Matthews family. Below is a portion of interview with the granddaughter of William H. Matthews, Donna has been a driving force in spreading the history of Ward Manor and bringing its history to the public by participating in public events and lectures with the local historical society in Red Hook, New York, Donna grew up in the bungalows, now located in Tivoli Bays, and remembered the Ward Manor property as a child:

Matthews continues: Well it was very busy in the summer because we had all the campers and the bungalow people and I would get to know them of course, because they would be- the families staying in the bungalows would come back year after year, and I'll introduce you to my friend Jackie who loved it so much that she bought a house here in Red Hook as a grown up. So summer was busy and we also had a Black Angus farm. We

raised beef for slaughter and the beef was used by the community; we grew crops, I mean I wasn't part of this so much but the adults. There were chickens, there were farm animals, there were horses; you know it was very busy and of course in the winter things slowed down a bit. We did have full time families living there and we would get together with them and of course the-the guests who lived in the retirement homes were there all day, for years until the end of their lives. So we would have holiday parties; there would be a huge Christmas part at the Manor House and the children would put on a talent show, and I remember I played piano at one of the Christmas parties and we'd all dress up and dance around and have presents and refreshments. So things slowed down a bit during the winter. The community is right on the Hudson River so there were activities around the river, there was-in the summer there was fishing, in the winter there was hiking. And when the bays froze we'd ice skate on the Bays; still do that even now. And an occasional ice boat out there, but it was a different rhythm when the weather was cold. [Comer 2017]

Bard College utilizes the former retirement community buildings [Manor House/New Manor and Old Robbins] as dormitories. The Manor dorm features a dining hall and is the main source of food for students living in North Campus. The kitchen is massive, with clear renovations that have changed the structure of the kitchen area. Although much of the building has remained similar to its original look. The entryway and the dining rooms are very similar to the original structure but the furniture has changed along with the blocking of the fireplaces.

*Going to New York City: The Columbia Archives*

The Community Service Society of New York is still in operation to this day and continues to assist residents of New York City through their charity work. The CSS stores their materials; meeting minutes and records belonging to the Community Service Society (CSS) regarding Ward Manor house in Butler Library at Columbia University. Going to the Columbia archives requires reserving the materials about a week in advance and traveling down via train from Metro North, as well as a forty-five-minute walk to the library. The Columbia archives are vast and quiet. The space is divided up in sections, with the files stored away in temperature-

controlled rooms in the basement. There is a small reading room in which researchers are required to wait for their materials to be called up and can only look at one requested box at a time.

My trip to the Columbia archives resulted in photographing over five hundred documents regarding the CSS's relationship to the Manor property. Much of the information was unknown before going, so the trip was extremely valuable to the collection of information. However, the Archivist and I did not have the chance to get through all of the boxes that we originally intended to examine because of time constraints.

Until spring 2017, Bard College hadn't published any article exclusively featuring the history of the Manor house's relationship with the AICP/CSS. With the inclusion of archival materials emerges a space for inquiry lies in the disconnect between these different narratives of history, because a story must be created in order for the public to orient themselves within the property. Yet creating an archive is an act of violence because it is deciding what is meant to be remembered. In choosing what should be remembered, there are events and people who are erased.

The trail of shared, collaborative media that our research and practice produces continues as a series of traces that adumbrate the anthropological engagement, a networked archive that twists around the final products of ethnography like snakes along the mythical caduceus. Multimodal anthropology refocuses our attention on these pre- and post-fieldwork encounters, compelling us to follow these complex networks back through the various collaborations and reciprocities that make up engaged anthropology today. While some of these (para)productions might be more quantifiable than others in terms of the value our institutions assign to them, they still connect to our interlocutors in meaningful ways that demand our attention as engaged anthropologists committed to supporting and giving back to communities we represent. [Collins, Durlington and Gill 2017, 142]

In order to make sense of the place, the Ward Manor project will not include a complete overview of the entire history of the AICP/CSS. Instead, it will focus on information that relates to the Ward Manor site. Choosing certain events found within the archive untangles otherwise

disorderly events/timelines from collected materials and makes them relatable narratives for public presentation. Therefore, combing through archival materials is attempting to make sense of materials in order to simplify events.

*Timelines and complexities in creating a sense of time*

In order to organize the events that took place on the property, we must look at how time is constructed within the space. Timelines and grave markers offer specific dates to organize the materials, but history-making is a process that is fraught with challenges due to the process of selecting documents that are considered important within the archive itself. The collective process of gathering information outlines the tensions between the institutions at play and the narratives presented by each place. For instance, the relationship between Bard College and Columbia University presents tension that allows for history-making to occur, since the selection of knowledge was already taking place within the Columbia archive prior to this project's beginning. Furthermore, the tensions found within the archive and disagreements within the CSS brings human narratives to light instead of assuming that everyone thought the Manor property was an idyllic place. There have been many readings of what Manor was, but they continue to change based on exploration of archival research and oral histories.

In his book, *Silencing the Past*, Michel Trouillot wrote about the difficulties of history-making. He outlines the tensions of creating a narrative from the archive by stating, ". . . we may want to keep in mind that deeds and words are not as distinguishable as often we presume. History does not belong only to its narrators, professional or amateur. While some of us debate what history is or was, others take it into their own hands" (Trouillot 1995, 153). By looking at the archive and reading about the politics created by the CSS, we can begin to question the care offered by society for the elderly and the mentally impaired.

The Columbia archives enable access to a vast source of information, but the ways in which we interact with information stored in the archive are still missing many key links that prevent us from forming a full narrative of the place. The archive is a reminder of mortality because it houses the words written by diseased workers from the CSS. It reminds us that life ends, and only a portion of a lived life survives and makes it into an archive.

*'Unwritten' narratives and the 'accidental trace'*

Here I attempt to distinguish between what was “unwritten” because it could go without saying and “everyone knew it,” what was unwritten because it could not yet be articulated, and what was unwritten because it could not be said. Similarly, in attention to “imperial disposition”-what it took to live a colonial life, to live in and off empire and was reflective of its practices-Lévi-Strauss’s adherence to the unwritten joins with the written to become relevant again. [Stoler 2010, 3]

Anthropologists Ann Stoler, Foucault and Dirks all wrote about colonial archives and she sees what is “written and unwritten” within historical narratives (Stoler 2010, 3). The Ward Manor property may not be connected to a colonial power but its history is still mediated through higher institutional powers that inform the public of what should be remembered. Although I am discussing a non-colonial archive, the Community Service Society was a society which ran many institutions were created to help remove the poor from New York City due to a employment crisis.

Stoler can help us understand the creation of the archive and what is assumed to be ‘obvious’ information. While living, photography and everyday events are obvious to those who are connected to a place, after death, the process of categorization becomes difficult. The archive relates itself to the Manor graveyard because many of the residents buried on the property only have their names, birthdates and death records surviving to the present. Although there are photographs, it is hard to identify individuals in these. I propose that those unidentified residents

within the property should be referred to as “missing residents”, since they are missing the links that connect them to the greater narrative, although it is recorded that they existed. The importance of recording the lives of the missing residents brings the mysteries surrounding the property to life and showcases the failings that we have in recording historical information: not to say that it is fault of a particular institution it comes down to the ways in which we perceive certain events to be ‘worthy’ of remembering. The work of an archivist is long and tedious, by watching how selections are made it’s clear that many decisions on what is savable is made before piece of information is sent to an archive. Looking through the documents at Columbia made me realize the vast array of knowledge available for this project but also the overwhelming amount of information that appears to all be available by chance. Some of the contents of the folders were small scraps of newspaper clipping, a pamphlet in pristine condition and other media that seemed random to save.

Selections are made, and, unfortunately, people, names of places and events are left out of it regularly. But the importance of naming the unnamed and acknowledging their existence brings the past to life well beyond shuffling through boxes. It humanizes the missing residents and acknowledges that they once lived and took part in creating the Manor property.

The Manor does not connect to colonialism, yet the unwritten is a mystery unless historical, contextual information is recorded when product is created. The documents relating to the CSS are not important unless one is aware of the social context within which they reside. Elements of the state and the CSS existing as a state -funded organization are reflected within the association’s agenda. It is important to pursue questions that seem obvious since underlying social rules are reflected more clearly in the questions we do not ask and assume to be obvious.

Stoler's argument is helpful because she introduces the ideas of information withheld from the archive, which may be due to obvious nature of the structure of the way in which artifacts are organized within a collection. Stoler focused on colonial ethnography, and she describes the shortcomings of Lévi-Strauss's writing on the archive because he did not identify the purposes of what is unwritten. Stoler offers several different understandings of the term "unwritten," and this argument is helpful to decode what is 'unwritten' within the context of Ward Manor. Within the Ward Manor archive the 'unwritten' is seen in the oral histories, documents within the archives and rumor which when studied together unveil the collective memory of the Ward Manor community. What is written and unwritten reflects what the state thinks is an important piece of information. The unwritten is either obvious, and thus unwritten, or it is a silencing of a part of the past that is crossed out and forgotten.

Stoler makes use of the colonial archive to detangle the questions that aren't asked. With the "unwritten" comes a place of liminality where we are unsure of the events that took place. We know certain things happened due to meeting notes, newspaper articles, letters, etc., but we don't know enough to fill a flushed-out story. What the archive does allow us to find is a linkage between these liminal spaces. It allows us to point to proof of certain events that disentangle the subjects from uncertainty and the 'messiness' of the archive.

## Chapter 2: The People of Ward Manor

The Association for Improving the Condition for the Poor (AICP) emerged out of the economic depression of 1870, a crisis that demanded the organization's work be used as a more effective means of charity than traditional charity performed by groups with religious affiliations (a tradition harking back to the Elizabethan Poor Law which was introduced in Chapter 1). In order to understand the work done on the Ward Manor property, we must look at the history of the AICP and the Community Service Society of New York (CSS) which merged in 1939. In order to understand the relationships among the 'guests' at Ward Manor, it is helpful to consult publications, oral histories, obituaries, and news clippings. Newspapers enable publics from various locales to learn about both local affairs and those taking place outside their given communities. Additionally, newspapers carry with them 'nonverbal' and underlying meanings which presume to give readers an idea of what to think of the given news as well as directions to process it.<sup>xiii</sup> The choice of what to print in newspapers carries profound meaning and can open a discussion of content and intent. This project found news articles and publications outlining the process of becoming a resident of Ward Manor, but they also uncovered social structures and outsiders' perceptions of Ward Manor. For example, the AICP undertook projects, in addition to Ward Manor, that were for the benefit of all people and by definition therefore, with the common good in mind. In 1852, the AICP opened the first public baths in New York State. Eighteen fifty-five saw the opening of the first tenement house in New York City. In 1862, the AICP pushed for 'pure milk laws', which to this day regulate and ensure that all milk sold commercially must be

treated (pasteurized) and further, that it is illegal to sell milk in its raw form: raw milk can only be sold to consumers if it is sold directly from the farmer. In 1893, the AICP opened its first homeless shelter for men. In 1909, the AICP led the way for improved children's health by establishing the Board of Health's child clinics. During World War II, the AICP helped to establish the Veterans Service Center. In 1946, AICP created a 'homemaker' service for struggling families through the Community Service Society of New York (CSS) program. Finally, the most prevalent effort by the AICP in relation to the legacy of elderly care within the United States began in 1950. Ollie Randall, a CSS consultant focusing on the aged population, helped to establish the first national conference on the topic, supported by the U.S. Federal Security Agency ('Community Service Society of New York City' 2017). All of the AICP initiatives listed above were connected as programs established and promoted for the benefit of society ostensibly regardless of economic standing, gender, religion, or sexuality. The programs undertaken are examples of the strides the AICP made for all citizens, while the homes were specific programs that were directed toward a select group of people with specific needs.

Following placement in homes such as Manor, individual residents could add to the community by using their artistic skills and labor to keep the facility running. Creating a community space such as Manor allowed residents to feel a sense of belonging and purpose. Elderly residents at Manor were able to regain some agency in their actions and lives, whereas in New York City they were faced with unemployment and lack of individual opportunity. While living on the Manor property, residents interacted with the environment and worked on the large tract of land.

This provided opportunity to gainfully undertake husbandry of the cattle, cultivate vegetables, plant flower gardens, and undertake stewardship of the farm land. The residents were also able to interact with students from Bard College, as well as male and female campers from the AICP program. In essence, what made Manor different from a present-day retirement community is that residents were expected to give back to the community through labor that depended on individual physical capabilities and personal initiative.

In order to alleviate the negative symptoms of mass migration to cities, charity organizations began to emerge to fight overpopulation and inadequate access to education. One of the key projects of the AICP was to relocate the poor out of the city and provide homes for the poor and elderly. Additionally, the AICP made strides to change the education system so that there would be standards for the type of education received by all students regardless of income.

#### *Application process*

Prescriptive pamphlets outlined how to apply and get into Ward Manor. The pamphlet provided descriptions of the individual property and the buildings on the site. Ward Manor had no restrictions for applicants based on age, gender, religious, or racial identity. No fees were charged for maintaining the property or for admittance. Admittance was rolling, according to the order in which the applications arrived. An interview, a physical conducted by the Ward Manor physicians, and a six-month trial period were undertaken by all applicants. After this a decision was rendered whether the applicant was a good fit for the property. It is of interest to note that

while undertaking genealogical research about those buried on the property, I found a pattern that many individuals who moved to Manor were elderly immigrants from European countries, and their obituaries demonstrated a historic transition from Europe to the United States.

Additionally, and not surprisingly, the genealogical research showed that many residents of Ward Manor came from New York and surrounding states.

### *Why Ward Manor?*

While there are many factors resulting in poverty, lack of education was critical. The poor in New York City did not have many opportunities to occupy well-paid positions because a standardized public education system teaching basic skills to children citywide such as reading, writing, and arithmetic was lacking. These skills would have ensured a more successful transition into the working world, however, for a large number of uneducated and poverty-stricken individuals, there weren't enough opportunities for their social improvement. AICP secretaries and borough visitors surveyed the situation and reported how many poor people needed aid in their area. The AICP would then decide who to offer and where to emigrate based on skill level and need. By relieving the city or the poor, the AICP thought they would not only improve life within the city but improve the lives of those who agreed to emigrate (Hartley, New York Times).

The individuals moved to Ward Manor constituted a large number of elderly immigrants from European countries. Their obituaries demonstrated a historic transition from Europe to the

United States, and since New York was a common port, it is not surprising that many chose to stay in the area, perhaps close to other family members or at least close to the only home they ever had in the United States. Perhaps as well, the European immigrants were familiar with *The Elizabethan Poor Law*, an old English law, which was adopted and utilized in an effort to stabilize the poor, handicapped and elderly by relocating them and providing them with aid.

Historically, *Elizabethan Poor Law* dates to 1598, and began with aid given by religious sectors in England. Every parish had to provide to those in need within their community, providing food, shelter, and clothing. Hadleigh, a borough in England, had almshouses that were maintained by a group called ‘the principal inhabitants’ and is an example of the *Elizabethan Poor Law* in action (McIntosh 2005, 458, 469, 470). Almshouses in England would provide a small stipend to those so they could be self-sufficient, and would assist with a proper burial if the family was unable to afford the cost. The money for the aid was collected through taxation of the wealthy class and England became the first European country to provide aid in this manner. However, this law left the decision of who was worthy of receiving aid up to the discretion of the parish. “In practice, only those people who displayed appropriate moral behavior and difference and who remained in a given community for some years qualified for assistance (McIntosh 2005, 458, 469, 470).”

There are clear similarities in the system of providing aid between the English example of Hadleigh and the ways in which relief was given within the programs run by the AICP, as well as the Community Service Society of New York (CSS).

Ward Manor, as an AICP property, expected residents to participate in everyday chores and perform maintenance around the property with the help of paid, nonresident, staff members. The elderly residents of Manor were able to add to the community by using their skills in order to keep the Manor running smoothly. Creating a space like Manor allowed residents to feel some sense of belonging and purpose, as well as some agency over their lives. With jobs to do and chores to undertake, the residents were no longer faced with New York City unemployment: residents worked on a large mass of farmland taking care of cattle, vegetable, and flower gardens. What made Manor different from a present-day retirement community is that residents were expected to give back to the community through labor that suited the individual's physical capabilities. While none of the accounts suggest that Ward Manor residents were expected to perform heavy manual labor, some of the other AICP programs required that the physical fitness of the person be considered prior to placement. In the case of Ward Manor, the residents were expected to help out around the property to keep it running. Accounts indicate that many looked back fondly on and appreciated the idea that everyone at Ward Manor worked together to maintain the property. However, there are some news articles that suggest that the unique setup of Ward Manor created some contention, especially for residents who were still connected to ideas of class and class relations. These preconceived notions affected the attitudes of some residents about the people with whom they lived.

*Social Life at Ward Manor as presented in the news*

Ward Manor was publicly acknowledged, and the property was often a subject for news articles in local newspapers. Through these news articles, we can catch a glimpse into the social life at Ward Manor as it was presented through representations of public inquiry. Newspaper accounts clearly demonstrate that Ward Manor caught the attention of the public. Not surprisingly, the articles highlight social tensions and the social life experienced by the residents at Ward Manor. More specifically, they speak to the loneliness that many of the residents felt and the efforts of Ward Manor to counteract that loneliness. William H. Matthews attempted to create a sense of family principles, but not all residents felt that connection to one another.



Figure 1: Drawing from Fortune article

Columbia University yielded several enlightening magazine and newspaper articles, albeit without provenience and date. A mid 20<sup>th</sup> century magazine article in *Fortune Magazine* on Ward Manor changed all the names of the residents mentioned. This article, found within the Butler Library at Columbia University, describes daily life at Ward Manor and recounts experiences of and reactions to the property by residents. The title “Old Age: Among the Nation’s 1,500 home for the aged, Ward Manor Ranks High. But not all old people want to live with other old people.” While the author is unknown, the article gives an incredible amount of apparently honest insight into the lives of those living at Ward Manor. One of the men, a Mr. Courtney, spoke to the writer about his hardships while adjusting to life at Ward Manor. The power of having a place like Ward Manor lay in the amount of agency the residents maintained over their lives and Mr. Courtney found it difficult to be happy at Ward Manor but was grateful for a place to call home. His unmarried status was relatively common for the residents of Ward Manor:

Mr. Courtney, of the pink satin rose and the little jokes, keeps copies of his eleven written works on his bookcase, a blank engagement pad on his desk. “I am filled with gratitude every minute of the day, I had no money, no home, no job, no wife, and they took me in.” his eyes fill with tears and his hands tremble, “I miss New York, and I can’t write any more, not a word. But when my heart is breaking I try to be gay.” [Fortune Magazine]<sup>xiv</sup>

From reading the passage above, it is clear that Mr. Courtney (above) and Miss Sanderson (below) were both lonely and frustrated with their lack of control over their lives at Ward Manor. Her frustration is understandable due to her position within the community and lack of control over her day to day activities. Many of the residents did not have family to care for them and found Ward Manor to be a place to create pseudo-familial connections. I believe that this went beyond ‘familial’ connections and that many of the residents felt a certain level of ownership and

agency within the home. For example, they were expected to do small household chores as they would within their own homes if they had such.

The Columbia University Library also contained an article without any clues about what newspaper it was from. Interestingly, the clipping was glued to a pink sheet of craft paper. The article was entitled “Birthday Party At Ward Manor: Three Opera Singers and Last of Buffalo Bill’s Frontiersmen Were on the Program,” and it described birthday parties held at Ward Manor. Every resident of Ward Manor was honored with a single birthday celebration each year in October. According to the dictates of Mr. William Henry Matthews, Ward Manor Chairman, the residents were a part of the community, and these parties were a way to show camaraderie between the residents. Thus, every year, Mr. Matthews would present a birthday speech to the residents and give thanks for their individuality (even though their most individual birthdates were collapsed into a single day and event). This practice, as well as the poetry provided by Mr. Matthews, was a way to bring the community together and celebrate everyone as equal:

Now listen, Ward Manor, and shall hear  
 Just why we all are assembled here  
 At this particular time of the year.  
 At some time or other, without our consent  
 Each one of us here just had to be born  
 In the night time, at midday, perhaps early morn,  
 Let us hope it was planned with best of intent  
 And that no one expressed astonishment  
 Or talked perhaps of an accident,  
 When kicking and squealing we burst into view  
 And made to the world our naked debut  
 Asking at once for milk overdue.  
 And ever since then we have made a try  
 In ways good and bad to justify  
 The prophecies made on the day of our birth  
 When some shook their heads and doubted the worth  
 Of addition then made to this poor old earth  
 And thought that our looks was occasion for mirth.  
 Tonight we’ll give toast to the day we arrived  
 Beginning at scratch our checkered career

And all be glad that we have survived  
To wish Happy Birthdays to everyone here.<sup>xv</sup>

The article continues with a description of the celebration, with each place setting decorated with Halloween decorations and Halloween themed food served. Mr. Matthews had a whimsical style of conducting his role as Chairman of Ward Manor, and in all of his holiday celebrations he tried to instill a sense of belonging to each resident:

Following the turkey dinner an enormous birthday cake, on a tray decorated with leaves and fall flowers, was placed before Mr. Matthews. Each guest also had his own individual birthday cake with one candle and was served with a mold of ice cream carrying out the Hallowe'en theme.<sup>xvi</sup>

The sense of warmth that is felt from the Halloween Birthday really captures how Ward Manor was envisioned as a place for people from all backgrounds to call home. Amazingly, this is an aspect that the property did not lose after its purchase by Bard College. By making Ward Manor a college dormitory, Bard College is keeping the spirit of Manor alive by having students from all walks of life and from around the world create a home in the beautiful structure. Just as the students do now, many of the residents moved to Ward manor from various places and for personal reasons. Many of the residents were widows or widowers, had never married or did not have families with the means to care for them. As single individuals, they mirror in this way the single life of traditional college students.

Social background and attitudes to class and hierarchy within Ward Manor disrupted prevailing social class structures, and some of the residents did not take kindly to staying with others whom they deemed as being in a lower social class. Not all of the residents liked Mr. Matthews' elimination of traditional social hierarchies and class structures. The *Fortune Magazine* article about Ward Manor demonstrates that there were class tensions felt by what the "Old Age" article referred to as 'The Rebels'. Specifically, this paragraph focuses on the women

of Ward Manor who did not fit into normal gender roles and were outspoken about their dislike of participating in the everyday chores expected of them. This account shows not only the class tensions at Ward Manor, but also the tensions between the sexes and social classes which affect the ways in which to members of the community relate to one another. The news articles and the interviews with the residents suggest that the Great Depression caused many people to lose their income which led to their dependence on social societies like the Community Service Society:

A few of the Ward Manor guests seem unable to fit into the life of the home. Miss Sanderson, for example, is perfectly willing to do her share of the work-she sweeps the porches, tends the canary (“He’s very old now, too old to sing”), and even goes out to clean snow off the walks in winter-but she doesn’t like it. She had worked hard and earned her living and saved money, but she lost whatever she had in the depression and she was getting old. “What could a woman like myself do?” When she signed the entrance paper to Ward Manor and made her will she felt that her life was over. She is beginning to get used to it, but wishes the home were near a community, Ossining, say or Yonkers. She misses her independence and her friends. “We’re all so different here. That makes it hard.” Her New Year’s resolution this year was to love her neighbor as herself. “But I find it too difficult.” [Fortune Magazine]<sup>xvii</sup>

These selected sections of the ‘Old Age’ article provide a valuable reflection on the social lives of those living in the Ward Manor house. Most importantly, they provide alternative voices to the operation besides the autobiography of William Henry Matthews. The journalist writing this article was doing the job that an oral historian or ethnographer would do today, if they had the opportunity, by speaking to the residents about their experiences on the property and highlighting the social tensions between clashing expectations of class. This section of the article names these women as ‘rebels’ when they are only frustrated with their lack of agency over their everyday lives. From a modern reading, I would say there is nothing ‘rebellious’ about them except their indifference to the chore system set up at Ward Manor.

Two guests, Mrs. Lathrop and Mrs. Loomis, are far more complaining and bitter than the other rebels. But their complaints and bitterness illustrate some of the difficulties confronting the superintendents and directors of home for the aged. Miss Lothrop was a successful New York businesswoman. She is still young, scarcely sixty, but she lost her

savings in the depression and couldn't seem to hold a job. She couldn't get along with her family and was persuaded by a friend to enter her name at Ward Manor. She has been in the home for almost two years and every minute has been torture. The place is beautiful, but it is much too far from the city, she thinks. In fact the whole idea of it is wrong. People of different tastes and manners should not be herded together just because they are poor. There are too many rules, too much red tape. It is absurd, in a place run by a rich organization, to ask the guests to work. ("I have delivered my ultimatum on that. I don't need to set the table to keep my mind occupied.") She reads and writes in her own room, stays apart from the others. She does not care to mix with all sorts of people and anyway there are too many women here, not enough men. They sit around reading escape literature and talking drivel. Half of them belonging "up the river, as they call it" in the Hudson River State Hospital. The management puts on a lot of noble airs, but the guests are treated like paupers ("Charity is Communism.") She despises all efforts to make the place homelike and friendly. "One Christmas when Mr. Matthews stood up by the fireplace and announced that we were all one happy family, I just said 'Blah.'" [Fortune Magazine]<sup>xviii</sup>

*Legacy of memory: families and children growing up on the property*

Oral history interviews reveal another type of documentation and retelling of events.

News articles and rumors are the basis of what can result in a collective memory of a place.

Photos and media create new spaces for the interaction between the past and present. For this reason, oral history interviews are a mediator between the past and present. Physical evidence of the Ward Manor houses, like Sunset Lodge, the boys' and girls' camps, and the bungalows, are still visible. Physical buildings, either standing or in ruins, are inspirations for further thought on the property.

The bungalows in the woods were places families could rent for two weeks out of the summer. Archival documentation indicates families who stayed in the bungalows had one member who was mentally impaired. The CSS wanted to offer families who otherwise perhaps would not be able to travel a comfortable and affordable vacation spot where they could have nurses' support for their impaired family member:

On different hilltops of the Dutchess county property I have watched the building of eighteen holiday bungalows. On little wringing boards over their door-ways they carry

the names of New York hotels, The Plaza, commodore, Prince George, The Biltmore, etc. They are completely outfitted for housekeeping, and the vacationists who come to them keep house for themselves, as they would in any house that might be rented for such purpose. All through the period known as vacation time in the workday world, the bungalows are at the call of people needing the rest and recuperation they offer. In every instance the money necessary for the building and furnishing of these bungalows was given by individuals who were asked to think of them as their guest houses, with the privilege granted me and my associates to play from them the part of host to the people invited. in securing funds for special purposes of this kind, I have never found any great difficulty. It is personal, individual. I have many friends who prefer to give in that way. [Matthews 1939, 180]

Ward Manor was always busy and had many activities at all times of the year. During the summer, families would come up to stay in the bungalows. The bungalows were in the woods of Tivoli Bays and were available for rent or permanent purchase by visitors or families working for or connected to the Ward Manor property. Although they are all gone, a few houses in Tivoli, New York, used materials from the bungalows and incorporated them into new homes. Because of the reuse of materials, such residents had a pseudo-ownership over the property, which continued after the closing of Ward Manor. Donna's interview highlights the way in which the visitors to the property, those who rented and those who owned property, held a responsibility to the property's maintenance. The residents' commitment to the property also applied to the way in which the residents interacted with one another and helped one another with repairs and chores to keep the property in top shape:

Matthews: (Mhm) And there-there would be a rhythm to it. Some families would come in July, others would come toward the end of the summer. And it was an endless group of friends and some of them would be first timers and others would be friends that I had known for years and years. And then as-as families would repeat their stays at Ward Manor, they would bring their relatives and then their relatives would make an arrangement to have a bungalow themselves. So at one point there was a family that had maybe three or four adult children with their own children and they would all try to come at the same time and have a grand reunion vacation all together. And it was very reasonable; I think there was a I don't know about the finances. I think there was a nominal cost but it was-it was minimal. And the whole idea was to-was to allow families some fresh air, and some time to enjoy the country. And again they would give back; they would-they would do work around the property. Wasn't required but they would maintain

their bungalow if it needed something or other. Those who were able would-work on it. And we also did have a complete buildings and grounds staff to maintain the property. There was a road where I learned how to ride my bike and everybody learned how to ride bikes but these things all required maintenance and there was a- there was a crew. My father supervised the crew that- that took care of everything. There was a garage on the property with a- a pit where the- all the trucks would have the oil changed and- and regular maintenance on the- on vehicles. There was a- there were several trucks used for work around the place and the farm and the- the- the cattle. So- so there was work being done; it wasn't all play. But for me it was. [Comer 2017]

The residents felt a strong connection to the property, and this feeling continues to the present day. Manor and the legacy left behind by William H. Matthews live on and touch the lives of those who interact with the property. Through oral history interviews, these connections are clear. After the death of William H. Matthews, Jack Ward (the grandson of Robert Boyd Ward (in whose memory Ward Manor is named)), served as the new Chairman of the Ward Manor Committee along with his mother.<sup>xix</sup>

In another oral history interview, a resident of Red Hook, New York, spoke about Ward Manor's transformation into a dorm. To the communities of Red Hook and Tivoli, it seems that Bard College's purchase of the Manor is bittersweet but comes with a multitude of possibilities for the Manor's reuse:

Ward Manor now has the world to come to it and it has the world. You can hear world class music, you can, you can go to lectures, you can hear programs, you can see digital humanities miracles of history retold and unfold. And so that's why I value Ward Manor now as a part of Bard. And Bard is an astounding place. It has just grown from this small, insular, religious high bound center of education, Greek and Latin and you know the 19th century, the 17th century, or whatever approach, to this world class institution. It's phenomenal. And Red Hook. What would Red Hook be without Bard? Oh my goodness. It would not be what it is. We still have a sense of community in Red Hook and that's what I value. Bard is definitely a part of that community, much more so now than it ever was before. The town gown friction of the 1950's and 60's and earlier, I suppose. Was, is gone. We depend on Bard College. [Comer 2017]

There was a sense of place and belonging in the voices of residents with whom I spoke about Ward Manor. It is clear that there was a tight-knit community supporting the property and that the local children who grew up around the property are invested in keeping its history alive.

### *Obituaries in the news*

Obituaries of Ward Manor residents were published in the *Poughkeepsie Journal* with varying degrees of personal attachment to the profiled resident. Many of the obituaries followed the format of stating the resident's age, birth and death dates, and then sharing a bit about how the individual became a resident of Ward Manor. The deceased were of various ages and had spent differing lengths of time at the property, but it was clear that each resident was missed by those around them. The care taken to publish an obituary for each person seems connected to the goal of recognizing all of the residents as members of a larger community. Each member was recognized as someone who had been cared for as a family member by those within the community.

My research includes only obituaries that are available online and whose subjects' names are publicly known. The names of the residents discussed below have their information posted on the Bard Experimental Humanities and the "Find A Grave" websites. The obituaries clear up rumors about the place in which the former residents were prepared for their funeral services, since the funeral preparations were completed at the Hand Funeral Home in Red Hook, New York. From the obituaries, I learned that Mr. Hand, the undertaker, prepared and hosted many of the Ward Manor funeral services before interment within the Ward Manor Cemetery.

One such obituary belonged to Alexander Berry. Mr. Berry was of 'ill health' upon his death and left behind his wife, Anne, who was also a resident of Ward Manor. Mr. Berry was

only sixty-seven years of age. The obituaries demonstrate that residents were of differing ages and marital status. In the following chapter I will describe the processes of digitalization of the gravesite and the further circulation of funerary materials.

### **Chapter 3: The Cemetery**

My experience within the graveyard, which I first described in the Introduction, led me to the anthropological study of death and dying, something I would never otherwise have imagined I would become interested in. Before that experience, my thoughts about death centered on its depressing nature. However, I knew I wanted to be a part of this particular project, and I was particularly drawn to it because of Bard College's eagerness to create a meaningful relationship with residents of the surrounding area. When the faculty member from Experimental Humanities asked if anyone would like to clean the cemetery, I immediately volunteered. In a meeting with members of Bard's History, Library and Experimental Humanities faculty, I was the only student there, listening while they went over the plan for the project. We met in the faculty dining room and discussed starting an oral history project and restoring the Manor cemetery. We spoke about oral history and the importance of creating a link between Bard students and the surrounding communities. The Ward Manor Cemetery project was introduced to spark interest in the oral history portion of the project, as well as to create and enhance relationships among Bard College, the town of Tivoli and Red Hook communities. These meetings and the people I met allowed me to build a better understanding of the history of Ward Manor and the people working to maintain it. The residents who were buried within the cemetery were remembered as a group of residents who had resided on the property and added to community life. Since cemeteries are not meant to be moved or disturbed, I argue that the burials of the residents together was an act of solidarity and familial bonding that moved beyond their lives on earth and into the afterlife. Therefore, the local community should maintain the Ward Manor Cemetery as a reminder of the community's ties to the history of Social Security within the United States.

William H. Matthews was a pioneer in his efforts to create a community as unique as Ward Manor. The efforts to continue the legacy of the community areas is becoming harder as time goes by due to the sheer range of information spreading from person-to-person, between institutions and from family mementos that continue moving through space and are separated from one another. But these can exist in a digital space together. The work of digitalization of graveyards, and specifically the example of Ward Manor's cemetery, shows the ways in which this project intersects with local oral history, historic records and the narrative of the development of social work post-World War I, prior to Social Security and the rise of Old Age Pensions<sup>xx</sup>. The work of ethnography is to write something that will one day become a part of the historical narrative of a place. It will also acknowledge the legacy of those who would otherwise be forgotten within a traditional historical record. Ethnographic archiving seeks to untangle the memories, documents, oral histories and records that have not been previously put into conversation with one another, in order to find the human connections between them.

### *The Cemetery*

On my first visit to the cemetery with my 'Anthropology of Death' class, we read nurses' reports of the Ward Manor residents aloud to one another. I felt that the process humanized the inhabitants of the gravesite, and I was struck by how intimate space became, as well as how quiet the group remained as the records were read aloud. Through this hearing, those buried within were no longer "others" and instead became recognized by the group as individual subjects who had once lived on the property. The nurses' reports presented a tangible way through which to understand the scope of medical attention provided by the retirement home for its inhabitants.

The records read aloud were not the records of those buried within the cemetery; for me, the act of reading them raised questions about the processes of collecting documentation.

While reading and listening to others read the records in the cemetery, I immediately felt that these processes humanized the people buried there. I was struck by how intimate the space became while the records were being read aloud. Those buried within were no longer “others” and instead became fully-formed people, as portions of their past were retold and recounted, utilizing nursing records which had been collected by the Deputy Mayor of Tivoli. I became interested in the Ward Cemetery Project because I was interested in the Bard College Digital History Lab and their eagerness to create a relationship with the surrounding communities. I volunteered to participate in the project and began working with the Experimental Humanities Digital History Lab. The next few months were full of cleaning the site, photographing and doing genealogy work for those buried in the cemetery.

Time, it seemed, was controlled by the process of collection for research purposes; any timeline of events is malleable and changes with the introduction of new information. Complex connections to time and space were warped together as we stood in the middle of the graveyard: This meant that the graveyard must become a liminal place wherein the bodies were interned. In looking at the cemetery through the study of its burial practices, we are able to bridge the histories of those buried with the temporality of us standing within the grounds.

“Liminality”<sup>xxi</sup> is a term coined by anthropologist Victor Turner, referencing the work of Arnold van Gennep (1960). It describes a period in time when a person is taking part in a rite of passage that has cultural significance to the participants within a group (Turner 1967, 93). The funerals at the Ward Manor Cemetery were liminal because the rituals that took place there to complete the burial put the body in a state of ambiguity in being prepared for the funeral but not

yet a part of the completion of the ritual. Those who were present within the graveyard during the service were also in a state of liminality because they were taking part in the body's transformation, which could only be completed within the cemetery:

Leach has argued that, '. . . the spatial and temporal markers which actually serve as boundaries are themselves abnormal, timeless, ambiguous, at the edge, sacred' (1976:35). In this respect the boundary marks not only the precise division between categories or states of being: it is also the margin, the in-between, the liminal. It is, therefore, a dangerous place in which to be. When people are confronted by a death they are confronted by a boundary, and all of the proscriptions and prescriptions we know to be associated with it clearly distinguish it as a boundary connoting danger. [Cohen 1985, 319]

But more importantly, the graveyard is liminal when a burial occurs. Rituals change the state of the graveyard, and actions become ritualistic, different from everyday occurrences. Burials are moments of liminality that transition the body from the living to the dead. The gravesite enables that transition from life to death to occur. Examining the cemetery's relationship to the living is a way to see how the living and the dead relate to one another through symbolic graves and thus change the deceased's physical body<sup>xxii</sup>. Reflecting on the written nurses' reports made me think of mortality and how bodies act as a symbol for the greater community, here as a collective entity for the entire Ward Manor community. As Robert Warner (2011) in *The Collective Memory Reader* wrote:

The lifetime of individuals and the living meanings of cemeteries are curiously interdependent, for both are dependent on an ascription of sacred meanings bestowed upon them by those who live. The symbols of death say what life is and those of life define what death must be. [Olick, Jeffrey K, Vinitzky-Seroussi, and Levy 2011, 165]

Graves are symbols that represent more than the individual within: they also represent a collective memory and a portion of time. For Warner, the social and status structures which organize the living community are reflected and expressed in the forms and arrangement of the cemetery's cultural landscape. Those buried within the Ward Manor Cemetery have similar-

looking, flat headstones and received similar burial processes, which connected them to the other residents within the cemetery.

Newspapers announced the passing of a resident of Ward Manor. The online news sources served as another source to collect information on the residents buried within the Ward Manor Cemetery. As in Chapter 2, the newspapers inform the remembrances and daily lives of those living in the community. The newspapers allowed those in the surrounding communities to know the goings-on at Ward Manor through news about daily life and obituaries. Ward Manor's community connections are reinforced by the burial rites performed locally by the Hand Funeral Home in Red Hook, New York. Attention must be paid to transition rites, which reveal how death influences the relations of privilege, power and prestige among the minister, the doctor and the undertaker, as family members withdraw their previously customary attendance to the dying and dead (Francis 2003, Warner 1959). The processes of aging and eventual demise were presented within the nurses' reports as an unfinished, liminal process. These reports cover the medical processes of the dying, many of which are universally shared: loss of appetite, confusion, and hallucinating are all signs of the last stages of life. *The Merck Manual* is a guide to these processes seen at the end of life. The manual was written by a doctor and showcases the ways in which the medical community describes end of life processes. This medical understanding of death is an informant as to how the process of the end of the life is viewed in the West. This is a passage from the website, *Merck Manual*:

People often think that the doctor knows and can predict how long an ill person will live. The truth is that, generally, no one knows when an ill person will die. Families should not press for exact predictions or rely on those that are offered. Such exact predictions are often wrong because there is so much variation in how long people can live with a disease. Sometimes very sick people live a few months or years, well past what seems possible. Other people die quickly. If a dying person wants a particular person there at the time of death, arrangements may have to accommodate that wish for an indefinite amount of time. However, estimating a range of time in which a person is likely to die is

sometimes necessary. For example, hospice care usually requires a doctor's prognosis of less than 6 months to live. [Cobbs 2018]

While we were not able to link specific nursing records to specific individuals buried within the cemetery on that first visit day, the records did create a vivid collective picture of the medical needs of some of Ward Manor's residents. These medical records created a collective picture of the processes of aging. Caring for the elderly is expensive, and Ward Manor's closure in the mid-twentieth century was due in part to a lack of funding for the huge cost of caring for its aged residents. For this reason, Ward Manor can be seen as a microcosm of a society without social security benefits, as well as an example of why health care coverage is vital to caring for the elderly.

When we entered the cemetery that day, I could see what appeared to be a sea of small orange flags marking the graves. The entrance trail continues into the older portion of the graveyard and provides access to a second entrance into the cemetery. Additionally, the path continues most of the way across the two sections of the graveyard. The cemetery is divided into two parts: the old and the new. The older portion of the cemetery is farther down the path, and you must walk past the most recent graves in order to reach it. From an architectural standpoint, the Ward Manor cemetery is simplistic, with a clean, orderly grid of plots featuring mostly identical gravestones. Grave marker designs vary based on the era of burial but are all flat to the ground, inconspicuous and not eye-catching.

I immediately noticed that the grave markers were flush to the ground, and, because there had been a rain storm recently, the grave indentations provided a striking contrast to the otherwise flat ground surface. After looking at the markers individually, I realized that the flag markers were helpful, as there had been a period of time in which the graveyard had not been cared for. It was thus overgrown with brush and thorny plants, as well as covered with leaves. I

could discern indications of burials because of the indentations of the graves, and I assumed this meant there could be additional grave markers present but overgrown.

The simplicity of the graveyard allows it to blend into the natural landscape that surrounds the area. Dense trees surrounding the cemetery shield it from the road and create a tranquil and relaxed final resting place. Residents of Ward Manor were mostly immigrants or people displaced due to economic standing and in need of a place to live:

[F]or members of minority and immigrant ethnic groups, cemeteries can play a significant role in creating a sense of community beyond the strictly familial [...] Cemeteries both evoke the place of origin and reflect the genesis of a new situational identity [...] Cemeteries are places of social, religious and ethnic continuity and belonging. Cemeteries act as bridges between two worlds – [...] the home of origin and the home of settlement. [Francis, Doris, Kellaher & Neophytou 2005, 195]

Ward Manor Cemetery was their final resting place on the property and solidified their connection to the Ward Manor property and to one another. Residents saw and participated in the burial services, knowing that the cemetery might also be where they would eventually be interned. This allowed residents to create familial bonds with one another and thus created a place where they participated in the ‘remapping of memory’ and a ‘reconstitution of memory of self, family and collectivity (Francis, Doris, Kellaher & Neophytou 2005, 195). By doing this, the residents were creating a community and a family whose bonds extended beyond the grave (195).

The cemetery was quiet, and standing within it and discussing the lives of the residents made the space seem liminal<sup>2</sup> to me. Time was different within the graveyard, and I began to think about the difference between the written nurses’ reports, which reflected lived lives, and the mortality that the graves represented for those who had lived on the property. Collective memory is a powerful phenomenon because it creates a bond between those who share a collective history and those who hear retellings of those events. For those who lived in and spent

time at Ward Manor, a collective history links them. This collective memory also enables someone who wasn't there but who has encountered passed-down memories to experience the place vicariously. This is manifest in the ability of local history societies and residents to keep the history of Manor alive and in circulation. Yet this is complicated because most of the remembrances of the property are from the memories of residents who were there as children: there are very few recollections of the property recorded during the Oral History Project of anyone who was older than a teenager during their time on the property.

The cemetery has a collective nature as well. The health records of the residents include those of many individuals who are not buried within the Ward Manor cemetery. They lived on the property before its closure, and many were then moved to other retirement homes. However, we are able to generalize all of these life experiences to create a more complete whole. The process of aging, as well as the development of diseases that lead to death, is a shared experience for retirement home residents. These lead to the end of a life, an end that in some ways is universally shared. The nurses' records of Ward Manor residents, both those buried in the cemetery and those not, attest to this collective experience.

### *Customized Burials*

Due to the importance of the cemetery and the unique ways in which William Henry Matthews conducted burials there, my interest in preserving the history of Ward Manor and the cemetery increased. Many of the area's current residents have childhood memories of the Girls and Boys camps and Ward Manor. But what has been missing is a detailed study and discussion of the Ward Manor residents who are buried in the cemetery. As part of understanding the cemetery, it is important to highlight the unique burial processes, described below, that took

place there. Burials at the Ward Manor cemetery differed from other burials because the funeral procedure was changed to honor the deceased in an upbeat and celebratory fashion).

The funeral of the first person to come to end of life in the Ward Manor household was to me a gloomy, depressing affair. I had called on a local clergyman to conduct the services. He made them interminably long and gave much admonition to the assembled living, from then on I chose, whenever possible, to conduct such services myself. Weather permitting, I use the hour of the sunset, in the little cemetery we have ourselves created among pines and cedars. As part of the service, taps are sounded. To the listener who once remarked to me that taps were played only for soldiers, I replied, “Yes, I know, but I think of these folks as soldiers of the common good. [Matthews 1939, 170-171].

William Henry Matthews created customized burials that fit into his vision of the Ward Manor property. In creating completely original funerary practices, he made a ritual that fit the ideology of the property, which was that all residents were ‘soldiers of the common good’ (Matthews 1939, 170-171). His vision and practices became customary during his career as Chairman of Ward Manor because he held authority. Even though he was not a practicing Episcopal priest, he had the religious training to conduct funerals. Therefore, William Henry Matthews still possessed the power and blessing from the church to perform last rites as he saw fit. Jacek Kolbuszewski states that burial should be provided based on the needs of the community:

a certain sector of space delimited by certain a priori formulated resolutions, according to which it is there that funeral practices consistent with religious, ethnic, cultural (that is customary) and other easily defined needs of a given community, will be carried out. [Kolbuszewski 1995, 17]

To Kolbuszewski, the burials within the Ward Manor cemetery would have been “carried out in an appropriately ritualized way” (Kolbuszewski 1995, 18), which in this case related to the use of the military song “Taps,”<sup>xxiii</sup> adapted into a symbol of solidarity for those living and buried on the property. The personalization of the funeral rites is what made the Ward Manor property different from other homes for the elderly run in the early twentieth century, through its

dedication to celebrating the lives of its inhabitants and using special song to symbolize the bonds shared by those who lived at Ward Manor. I take inspiration from Maurice Bloch in suggesting that, in playing ‘taps’, the individuals buried within the Ward Manor Cemetery were fully transforming into ‘soldiers of the common good’. They were not forgotten or unnoticed by the attendees of the funeral: instead, their lives were mourned with emotion. Bloch’s introduction in *Death and the Regeneration of Life* describes the transformation of emotional attachment within funeral and mourning rituals:

There are two jobs to be done: on the one hand a disaggregation of individual from the collectivity, and on the other the re-establishment of society requiring a reallocation of the roles the deceased once occupied. Consistent with such analysis, ‘the dead of a stranger, a slave, or a child will go almost unnoticed; it will arouse no emotion, occasion no ritual’ (Hertz, 1960:76). Such individuals have not been fully incorporated into the social order, which therefore remains largely unmoved by their deaths for it is ‘not the extinction of animal life that death occasions social beliefs, sentiments and rites....Since society has not yet given anything of itself to the (new-born) child, it is not affected by its disappearance and remains indifferent’ (1960:76,84) - thus illustrating once more the socially-determined nature of the emotional and ritual reactions to death. [Bloch 1982, 4]

Although many of the living former residents of the Ward Manor property participated in the summer camps and did not live as retirees on the property, Donna Matthews, the granddaughter of William Henry Matthews, recalls her experience at a Ward Manor funeral. His granddaughter holds a few artifacts that belonged to Mr. Matthews: his trumpet is an important artifact because it was used to symbolize his belief in the residents acting as ‘soldiers of the common good’. The trumpet was used during funerals in the Ward Manor cemetery as a way to honor the deceased residents and as a final way to symbolize the residents’ continuation in the Ward Manor family after their passing. As I noted above, everyone who was buried within the cemetery was honored as a “soldier of the good” and was sent off with a “Taps” played by William H. Matthews on a trumpet as a sign of respect. Although William Henry Matthews had passed on by the time

Donna attended a Ward Manor funeral, the honoring and celebratory portions of the funeral, which had been added by Mr. Matthews, remained and made the funeral a celebration that was not melancholy in nature. As Donna recounts:

Many of the guests who came to spend their final years at Manor House and Robbins House had nobody. They, many of them had no family, and-or at least no family that they-they were close to, so at the time of their passing, there-there really wasn't a community to-to take them in and support at that time. So my grandfather, William Henry Matthews, who was an ordained Episcopalian minister, would say a few words. There would be the-the remains would be buried in this area next to a beautiful ravine and he would say a few words and he would play the trumpet. And he would play taps and you know when I- when I was a little girl I didn't even-I didn't even think of it as a funeral because it was- it really was a testament of life. It was outdoors; it was in a beautiful place; it wasn't solemn at all, it was celebratory and it-it was just marking-marking the life of-of someone who had contributed a great deal and who was very much loved by the community of Ward Manor. So I didn't think of it- when I was a little girl being there-I really didn't think of it as-as a death as much as a celebration of the life of that person. And later on when I attended more formalized funerals and churches it was a completely different experience and looking back I much prefer the-the Ward Manor tribute and celebration. And I still have that trumpet that my grandfather would-would use in playing taps and celebrating the life of each guest who died. [Comer 2017]



Figure 5: Trumpet which belonged to William Henry Matthews (pictured)  
Photo by Anne Comer 2017

The use of the song “Taps”<sup>xxiv</sup> has transformed into an American staple for military funerals, but it comes from a military command meaning ‘put out the lights, go to sleep.’<sup>xxv</sup> It was originally arranged by an American general during the Civil War. ‘Taps’ was appropriated into funeral services and is played at funerals of service men and women possessing ‘full honors.’<sup>xxvi</sup> In utilizing “Taps” as a symbol of ‘soldiers of the common good’, the traditionally military-related song transforms into a powerful symbol honoring those who lived and were interred on the Ward Manor property (Matthews 1939, 170-171). It aligns those living on the property with a similar social standing as that attributed to a person who has fought in the military for the United States of America.

*Oral History and Drone Footage*

Due to the danger of memories fading, recollections of Ward Manor need to be recorded. The immediacy of this research lies in the collection of oral histories of currently-living area residents who remember the property from childhood memories or retold stories. The digital map, in tandem, allows for an expanded exploration of the ways in which the last years of one's life were spent at Manor. Placing the records in context and linking the map of the graveyard to sites for outside research allow visitors to the site to learn more about the community through further reading and exploration. In collating all of our data via an online source, the project is expanding in scope, allowing researchers and relatives outside Tivoli Bays and the surrounding area to explore the cemetery through digital means.

Visitors to the digital space hosted on the Experimental Humanities website are finding their relatives by using the map and are, in turn, sending the researchers materials relating to those buried within the manor cemetery. One of the website visitors contacted the Bard College Library and sent us materials on her grandmother, who lived at Ward Manor during its heyday. Among the items sent was information on her grandmother's funeral preparations and a certificate of death. Her grandmother's death certificate provides important information on the funerary arrangements, since it includes the name of the undertaker and where the body was prepared.

The digitized map has been available online since the summer of 2018. A few relatives of the deceased have reached out to the Bard Stevenson Library in order to inquire more about the project. One woman even sent in a photograph of her grandmother and herself outside of Ward Manor. Thus, the cemetery project's digitalization allows relatives to find the exact physical location of the graves instead of just the general area. Space thus changes with the introduction of technology and allows for more interaction between the living and the dead. It requires less

archival work for family members if the various collections of materials from the Ward Manor property and cemetery are available online.

Drone footage, interactive mapping and the interactions produced by technology are interactions that alter the cemetery. Erving Goffman was a sociologist who used theatrical<sup>xxvii</sup> terms to illustrate social interactions. Goffman's 'dramaturgy' was born out of the idea that human interactions are performances which are dependent on environmental, temporal and social circumstances (Goffman 1959, 8). My interpretation of Goffman's 'dramaturgy' is that both researchers and mourners of the former residents are engaging with the culture of Ward Manor that was created by William H. Matthews during his time as Chairman of Ward Manor, but this connection is changing with the inclusion of technology (Goffman 1959, 60). I argue that Goffman would view the care of Ward Manor Cemetery as a social practice that conveys the process of mourning and remembering those buried in the graveyard (Goffman 1959, 61). The Ward Manor Cemetery had unique burial and musical rituals that allow us to observe the social identity created on the property. Caring for the graveyard allows for the eventual expansion of the community of people interacting with that graveyard on the internet. Through the digital map, they can feel a sense of comradery with those buried within the cemetery.

In order to create this interactive digital map to contain information on individual residents, we needed to look at original blueprints of the cemetery to identify where inhabitants were buried. The original blueprint and maps of the Manor property made it possible to locate the graves. Besides the archival information, another way that information was collected on the locations of the graves was through the use of a drone. During the winter of 2019, with the help of a few media corps members, I was able to take video of the Ward Manor Cemetery from a

bird's eye view.



Figure 2: aerial photograph taken from drone footage of the Ward Manor Cemetery 2019

Although the drone footage was taken in the winter of 2019, it may assist with the discovery of more graves if they are present but not yet recorded on the Ward Manor cemetery map. The drone footage is very exciting because it gives the viewer the illusion of being in the cemetery, interacting with the space in a more intimate manner than only viewing the map. Drone footage of the Ward Manor Cemetery provides an opportunity for those who cannot physically visit the cemetery to see and experience it in a unique way which would not be possible even if they walked through Tivoli Bays.

The digitized Manor gravesite is housed on the Bard College Experimental Humanities website under 'Projects' (<https://eh.bard.edu/allprojects/>). Genealogical information connected to those buried within will become a part of a collection belonging to Bard, and thus a continuation

of the Columbia University archive. Although most of the gravestones are in their original places and are marked, a few of the graves are missing headstones. Some of these have been collected and may or may not be placed within the cemetery.



Figure 3: Photo of interactive cemetery map from the Bard College Experimental Humanities website

The map (Figure 3) shows the grave markers, a photograph of each grave marker, a short introduction to the person interred and, if possible, a link to his or her obituary<sup>xxviii</sup>. Each pink dot indicates a grave without a photographed grave marker, while a purple dot indicates a grave with a photo of its grave marker. One of the graves is marked as “Reserved” but is a filled-in grave, meaning that one of the residents was buried in the cemetery in this unmarked grave.

An unmarked grave serves as a symbol for the living within the community. As with the Tomb of the Unknown soldier<sup>xxix</sup> in Arlington National Cemetery, the identity of the resident

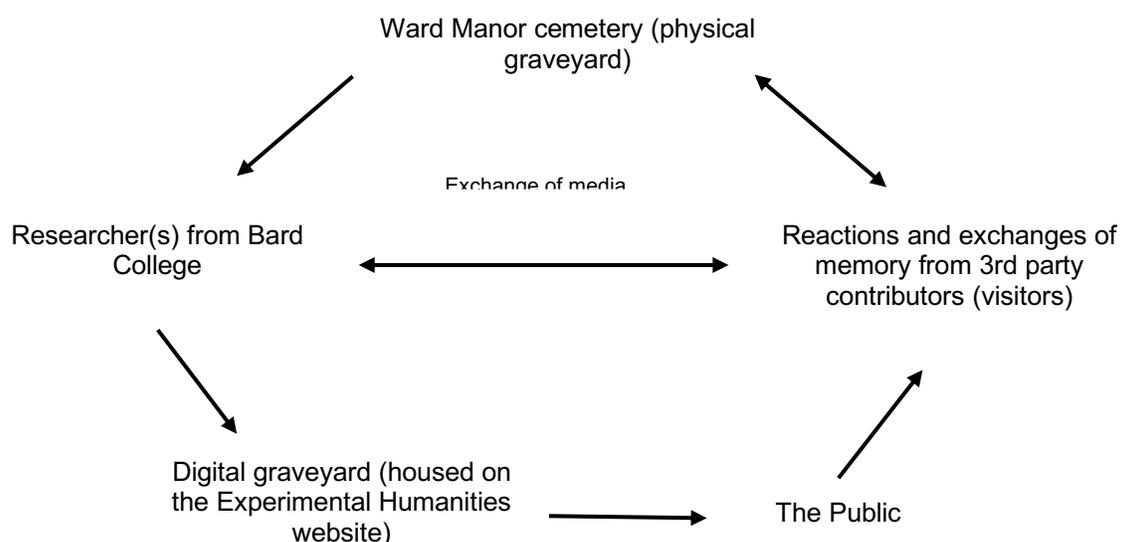
buried within the grave is unknown. The “reserved” grave can be likened to that tomb, as well as the idea of the Manor property being connected to an “imagined community,” made possible through the digitized cemetery. This grave represents those who are not found within the records and those who lack documents and photos to bring their stories to life. It is a marker of those who instead live on only within the collective memory of Ward Manor.

### *Death in the digital age*

The digitally recorded gravesites will not be forgotten when they are once again overgrown (see below). Digitalization of the site will enable family members and gravesite visitors to learn more about those buried there. It will also allow them to get more information about the individuals than they would get by just physically being within the graveyard. Websites and interactive spaces allow for further interaction and provide a platform for further research. It is hoped that this created platform will continue to grow with the project and that another student will take it over once the work for this year is complete.

Digitalization of cemeteries and cemetery studies within the humanities have increased in popularity. Digital technology has changed the ways in which researchers are able to study death and learn about older cemeteries. Historical cemeteries are entering the global sphere through the internet and digital imaging technologies, enabling anyone to research and create online spaces for reflection. Websites like “Find A Grave” and “Ancestry.com” provide platforms on which collaboration in genealogical work is possible. People from all walks of life and historical eras are able to be remembered through digital technologies. Figure 4 (above) shows the ways in which Ward Manor cemetery researchers and third party contributors (visitors to the Experimental Humanities website) collaborate to enhance the online graveyard map. The

## Relations between the digital map and the physical graveyard



physical graveyard only gives a small portion of information (names, birth dates and death dates), which was then enhanced for the project with genealogical research using Ancestry.com and other genealogical sites and newspapers.

The next step of the research came in the creation of the master file, an Excel spreadsheet that houses all of the collected information, which was established before I joined the research team. By gathering more information and adding to the existing Excel sheet, we were then able to map Ward Manor Cemetery's information onto a digital map that is now available to the public. Once the map was available online, some visitors, particularly family members of the deceased, sent in more genealogical information for a few of the interred inhabitants. This was added to the information already available and allowed for an exchange of information between the researchers and living relatives, creating a fuller story of the Ward Manor cemetery. Such

interactive ethnographic projects have also been attempted by other anthropologists, like Kim Fortun, who writes about “The Asthma Files.” “The Asthma Files” is a collaborative project which brings people from all backgrounds (parents, doctors, government officials, holistic healers, etc.) together to collaborate on finding solutions to asthma. Fortun describes her work as a compilation of anthropological theory, technology and interdisciplinary research. In her article, “Ethnography In Late Industrialism,” she states that:

Focusing on dramatic global incidence of asthma and other respiratory illnesses as a starting point, the project spirals out to address growing concern about the health impact of air pollution and associated need to build scientific, clinical and public health capacity to address environmental determinants of human health. Through ethnographic interviews and analysis of scientific publications, policy debates, and media coverage, the project draws together many different ways of approaching environmental public health, aiming to enhance comparative and collaborative perspective. A key aim is to develop comparative understanding of different styles of both environmental health research and environmental health governance, in different urban and national settings. The project will result in a theoretically robust, empirically grounded conception of (environmental health) research and governance styles, detailing and categorizing different ways of developing environmental health data, advancing the sciences of environment and health, and directing these toward governance of complex problems. The project thus builds on work in the history and anthropology of science on how “thought styles” shape scientific research, and extends it to sociocultural analysis of “governance styles” by theorizing a broader array of factors that constitute environmental governance, and that implicate potential for collaboration between governance regimes. [Fortun 2012, 453]

Although the Ward Manor Cemetery project is different from “The Asthma Files,” it is alike in the ways in which it uses methodology. Collaboration stemming from the digital gravesite map is allowing research to further develop. By providing a digital map of the Ward Manor cemetery, we are restoring the cemetery through digitalization. Although there are seasonal cleanups of the cemetery, there isn’t a huge initiative to restore the cemetery to its original condition of the mid-twentieth century. Instead, there will eventually be a fence that lines the graveyard for protection, as well as minor ongoing maintenance to keep it clean. The idea is that it will, in a way, go back to nature and become a part of the Tivoli Bays Nature Reserve. Digitalization of cemeteries is a

way to ensure that such information stays available even after the physical cemetery has returned to nature.

Instead of a full physical restoration of the cemetery, the gravesite will live on online, with the opportunity for visitors from all over to visit and learn more about life at Ward Manor. 'Restoring' the cemetery within a digital space makes the process of exploration into the lives of those who are interred in the cemetery more accessible and easier to understand for a larger group of visitors. Plotting the genealogical information onto a map allows for more interaction with the research and the opportunity for one to immerse oneself into the property's history. This is furthered by the inclusion of drone footage, links to oral history interviews and links to other archival sources and historical societies. The digital cemetery has sparked many emotional reactions from visitors to the physical cemetery and gravesite. I propose that digitalizing the graveyard provides varying levels of relatability that present themselves through the site visitors' reactions to the digitized cemetery (figure 4 shown above).

## Conclusion

Prior to the completion of this project, I was invited to present my work at the VIII<sup>th</sup> Smolny Student Conference in Saint Petersburg, Russia. This trip was to begin 10 days before the day that I was required to submit my senior project. Because it provided an important opportunity to solidify my methodology and get feedback from a third party, I accepted. My presentation focused on the events described in Chapter 3 and the use of multimodality as a methodological basis for my writing. After my presentation, the moderator reacted to my project in an interesting manner. She compared the digital mapping of the graveyard to the recent fire that took place at Notre-Dame de Paris<sup>xxx</sup>. She pointed out that digital technologies were to play an important role in the restoration work there. She said that digital mapping, although used in a different way than at Ward Manor, would be a tool for deploying existing resources and then uploading materials into digital spaces that could be presented in different and valuable forms within future projects. My hope is that The Ward Manor Cemetery Project will grow and continue to have interested students conduct research by utilizing skills acquired in a multitude of fields.

### *The Manor Today: Exceeding truth in creating rumor*

This research points to many future research opportunities. I would suggest that another researcher should explore contemporary rumors surrounding Ward Manor. It would be interesting to interview students about the circulation of rumors and “urban legends” related to Ward Manor. Rumors can exceed truth by creating a compelling narrative for readers to follow. Rumors about the Ward Manor property and its residents are common in present day conversations about Ward Manor in the Bard College community. Many students whom I have

spoken to have told me that Manor is haunted, or that a friend of a friend saw a ghost in the hallway. Although some rumors can be written off as superficial, rumor has the ability to lead to research. It can not only present the social life of a community, but highlight the connections that those residents feel and felt towards a particular place.

Due to Bard College's lack of published information on Manor, some rumors have come to be thought of as fact, edging the history of the property into mythos. Yet rumor is informed by fact, since many of the myths have pieces of fact inside. Rumors, which have created narratives of their own, have something to do with what can't be written and what is unspoken about the place in which they emerge. Mythos surrounding the property is informed by Manor's social reality and creates the imagination of the place, a way of understanding which is just as powerful to the understanding of placemaking as concrete facts and events. I would like to know why people believe in the rumors surrounding the property. How did they come into existence? It is important to the understanding of place to refrain from dismissing rumor, since rumors often carry shreds of truth that the researcher can pursue.<sup>xxxii</sup>

Furthermore, stories circulating within the college tend to inspire curiosity and engagement. Ward Manor has become a building that is able to occupy the imagination, and with its mysterious past comes the opportunity for fictional stories to become its truth. The stories become compelling, with ghosts and student-run seances becoming rituals within the current Bard understanding of the place. Ward Manor continues to possess the power to capture the imagination of students. The shortcoming of ethnographic and historical archival research is that a narrative must be created in the course of research. The property becomes a place onto which myth can be inscribed and, thus, allows for a murky history of a place that has already been shrouded in uncertainty. Rumors emerge out of archiving when the rumor is caused by a reading

of the collected materials. Penelope Papailias introduces the idea of ‘personal archive’ in her book on Greek archival practices;

At first definition of the personal archive might be a textured, material, and theoretical construct that makes the borders between secrets and revelation as well as between private lives, state authority, and national imaginaries. The personal archive can be constructed to stand beside or even compete with state archives, but it can also be a future discourse [...]. [Papailias 2005, 3]

Rumors could be said to circulate from researchers because their work puts them in a position where it is their job to dissect archival, historical and oral materials and create narratives from them. Everyone who interacts with and collects materials from an archive is in the process of creating “rumor” due to the nature of the archival process.

Another project I suggest would be to continue studying the AICP/CSS’s programs and connect the Ward Manor project to a larger investigation of the tenement houses in New York City. For example, a close examination of the children’s summer camps on the Ward property would almost certainly be a terrific project for a student to pursue since many members of the Red Hook community recall their summers at Ward Manor. I also hope that there will be more interaction between the surrounding community and Bard College in relation to Ward Manor. Ward Manor was ahead of its time in regards to the socioeconomic status, race and gender of its inhabitants; it would be unfortunate if their stories were not documented in greater detail. William H. Matthews was a visionary and pursued an idealistic way of living in order to give others comfortable lives. From his writings, and the oral histories collected, it is clear that his legacy continues to live on in the collective memory of those who spent time on the Ward Manor property. To summarize the events that took place after his death, below is a quick overview. Perhaps it will inspire another project.

Upon his death, William Henry Matthews left behind an example of exceptional elderly care, evidenced by the planning and processes in which the funerals were conducted. He saw each guest who passed away on the property as not only an individual, but as someone who contributed to the community of Ward Manor through their individuality. Mr. Matthews himself strove to give the elderly a comfortable life at Ward Manor.

In 1960, Bard College purchased Ward Manor and began preparations for its use as a dorm. The Ward Manor Cemetery is not owned by Bard College and is a part of the Tivoli Bays Wildlife Management Area. The College uses the cemetery for further research on the Ward Manor Cemetery Project, and Tivoli Bays is a popular place for locals and Bard College students to explore. Today, Ward Manor is a dorm on the Bard College campus. In an oral history interview that I conducted in 2017, my interlocutor had a very sweet reminiscence about Ward Manor becoming a part of Bard College:

Ward Manor now has the world to come to it and it has the world. You can hear world class music, you can, you can go to lectures, you can hear programs, you can see digital humanities miracles of history retold and unfold. And so that's why I value Ward Manor now as a part of Bard. And Bard is an astounding place. It has just grown from this small, insular, religious high bound center of education, Greek and Latin and you know the 19th century, the 17th century, or whatever approach, to this world class institution. It's phenomenal. And Red Hook. What would Red Hook be without Bard? Oh my goodness. It would not be what it is. We still have a sense of community in Red Hook and that's what I value. Bard is definitely a part of that community, much more so now than it ever was before. The town gown friction of the 1950's and 60's and earlier, I suppose. Was, is gone. We depend on Bard College. [Comer 2017]

In this study, I intended to explore the ways different narratives, both traditional and recent, such as digital technologies, can contribute to constructing a past that is accessible and usable to the public. In utilizing digital technologies to map graveyards, we are creating a space for past inhabitants to be remembered.



## Endnotes

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<sup>i</sup> “Blithewood, a sweeping Georgian revival pile complete with columns, bas-relief garlands, and urn-shaped finials. Built in 1900 on a riverside estate that dates to 1680, the mansion and its tiered formal garden were donated to the college in 1951. Four connected dormitories collectively known as Stone Row, built 1891, make a splendid example of the Collegiate Gothic style. Another landmark is the Tudor revival Ward Manor, erected in 1918, a former estate house purchased by the college in 1963 (along with its picturesque miniature castle gatehouse) and now used as a dorm.” (Sammy Dalati, 2017)

Blithewood Garden was designed by the same architect, Francis V. L. Hoppin. “Located in the heart of the Hudson River National Historic Landmark District, the garden was designed circa 1903 by Francis L. V. Hoppin (1867–1941) of the architectural firm Hoppin & Koen. It is a classic example of a walled Italianate garden” (Landscape and Arboretum Bard 2019).

<sup>ii</sup> Geographical Information Systems

<sup>iii</sup> Historic Red Hook at the Elmendorph Inn is a non-profit organization run by volunteers in Red Hook, New York. On their website, they describe their mission “to engage the community in conversations about Red Hook’s unfolding story. We do this by collecting, preserving and promoting Red Hook’s history, maintaining the historic Elmendorph Inn as a community center, creating dynamic public programs and partnering with community organizations” (Historic Red Hook 2019). Historic Red Hook frequently hosts talks and community events that are occasionally connected to Bard College classes, as well as community panels featuring discussion focusing on the history of the Hudson Valley.

<sup>iv</sup> The Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor was the organization’s name until 1939. The name was changed when a merger occurred between the AICP and the Charity Organization Society (COS). This merged organization was named The Community Service Society of New York (CSS). (Kenneth T. Jackson, Lisa Keller and Nancy Flood 2010, 70).

<sup>v</sup> “In ordinary political discourse, the “common good” refers to those facilities—whether material, cultural or institutional—that the members of a community provide to all members in order to fulfill a relational obligation they all have to care for certain interests that they have in common. [...]

### 4.2 A Set of Common Facilities

Most conceptions of the common good identify a set of facilities that citizens have a special obligation to maintain in virtue of the fact that these facilities serve certain common interests. The relevant facilities may be part of the natural environment (e.g., the atmosphere, a freshwater aquifer, etc.) or human artifacts (e.g., hospitals, schools, etc.). But the most important facilities in the literature are social institutions and practices. For example, a scheme of private property exists when members of a community conform to rules that assign individuals certain forms of authority over external objects. Private property, as a social institution, serves a common interest of citizens in being able to assert private control over their physical environment, and so many conceptions include this institution as part of the common good” (Hussain Waheed 2018).

<sup>vi</sup>. Samuel G. Collins, Matthew Durlington, and Hariant Gill, “Multimodality: An Invitation” (2017).

<sup>vii</sup> Although Stoler wrote about colonialism, it can be argued that Ward Manor does and does not evoke colonial ideologies.

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viii “American architect and painter. After early training at the Trinity Military Institute, Providence, RI, preparing for a career in the army, he attended Brown University, Providence. From 1884 to 1886, Hoppin studied at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and after another two years’ study in Paris, he briefly joined the architectural firm of his brother Howard (1845–1940) in Providence. This was followed by an apprenticeship with McKim, Mead & White. In 1899, after eight years with this firm, he left and joined Terrence Koen (1858–1923), concentrating on projects in New York City. Luxurious country and city homes became their trademark. One of their earliest residential commissions was The Mount (1912), the home of Edith Wharton, in Lennox, MA; the design reflected extensive input from Wharton as well as from the originally commissioned architect, Ogden Codman Jr. The James P. Lanier House (1905–6), 123 East 35th Street, and the E. D. Baylies House (1905–9), 10 East 62nd Street, New York, are both in the Louis XVI style favoured by their wealthy patrons. Among Hoppin’s public buildings, the New York City Police Headquarters (1909), 240 Centre Street, reveals the influence of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. Most of his fire and police stations in New York were also large and extravagantly ornamented. On retirement he travelled and painted watercolour views in Europe and New England. He had one-man shows in New York City in 1925 and 1929, the *New York Times* in 1934 noting that his ‘work is characterized by a strong architectural feel and accomplished smoothness in his use of color.’” (*Grove Art Online* 2019).

ix Robert B. Ward passed away from heart disease on October 18, 1915. During his life William B. Ward;

[...] served the City of Pittsburgh as president of the Common Council; he was a trustee of the American University of Washington, D.C., and was interested in many religious and charitable enterprises. He established a home for the children of the company's employees in memory of his mother, and operated it under the name of Eliza Ward Shriner. [“Sudden Death of Robert B. Ward, Head of Ward Baking Company”, 1915].

x The Ward Baking Co. was founded in 1849 and made popular foods like Wonder bread and Hostess cakes. The name of the company was changed in 1925 and is currently Continental Baking Co. (Popejoy, Tammy. “Chronology of the Ward family and Ward Baking Company compiled by Tammy Popejoy”, 1996).

xi The Charity Organization (COS) established the trend of ‘friendly visitors’ which would result in the framework for the behavior of caseworkers visiting poorer areas (Jackson, Keller, and Flood 2010, 228). Middle class men and women would volunteer to visit the poor for the AICP (2010, 70).

xii Reminder: The Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor was the original name of the AICP. It and the Charity Organization Society (COS) merged in 1939 to establish the Community Service Society of New York (CSS) (Jackson, Keller, and Flood 2010, 70).

xiii “This fact, characteristic of all media, means that the “content” of any medium is always another medium. The content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print, and print is the content of the telegraph. If it is asked, “What is the content of speech?,” it is necessary to say, “It is an actual process of thought, which is in itself nonverbal.” An abstract painting represents direct manifestation of creative thought processes as they might appear in computer designs. What we are considering here, however, are the psychic and social consequences of the designs or patterns as they amplify or accelerate existing processes. For the “message” of any medium or technology is the change of scale or pace or pattern that it

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introduces into human affairs. The railway did not introduce movement or transportation or wheel or road into human society, but it accelerated and enlarged the scale of previous human functions, creating totally new kinds of cities and new kinds of work and leisure.”

[McLuhan, Marshall, *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man* (1964, 1)].

<sup>xiv</sup> “Old Age: among the Nation’s 1,500 home for the aged, Ward Manor Ranks High. But not all old people want to live with other old people”. *Fortune Magazine* Vol./Box 70. Folder “Articles and Brochures-Historical” Community Service Society, 1842-2012. Community Service Society Archives, 1842-2012. Series IV: Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Columbia University Rare Books & Manuscript Library: New York.

<sup>xv</sup> Article referenced was found as a clipping in the Columbia University Archives. The original newspaper wasn’t traceable. This clipping can be found in Box #70 at the Butler Library in Special Collections.

“Birthday Party: Three Opera Singers and Last of Buffalo Bill’s Frontiersmen Were on the Program” Vol./Box 70. Folder “Ward Manor AICP” Community Service Society, 1842-2012. Community Service Society Archives, 1842-2012. Series IV: Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Columbia University Rare Books & Manuscript Library: New York.

<sup>xvi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xvii</sup> “Old Age: among the Nation’s 1,500 home for the aged, Ward Manor Ranks High. But not all old people want to live with other old people” from *Fortune Magazine*. Vol./Box 70. Folder “Articles and Brochures-Historical” Community Service Society, 1842-2012. Community Service Society Archives, 1842-2012. Series IV: Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Columbia University Rare Books & Manuscript Library: New York.

<sup>xviii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xix</sup> “CSS Open House In Dutchess County”. 1949. Vol./Box 70. Folder “Articles and Brochures-Historical” Community Service Society, 1842-2012. Community Service Society Archives, 1842-2012. Series IV: Association for Improving the Condition of the Poor. Columbia University Rare Books & Manuscript Library: New York.

<sup>xx</sup> Ward Manor opened its doors in 1926, only a few years before the Great Depression. The need for old age care increased, and social societies were early attempts to secure what would become a normative standard of living within the United States. According to the Social Security website:

Following the outbreak of the Great Depression, poverty among the elderly grew dramatically. The best estimates are that in 1934 over half of the elderly in America lacked sufficient income to be self-supporting. Despite this, state welfare pensions for the elderly were practically non-existent before 1930. A spurt of pension legislation was passed in the years immediately prior to passage of the Social Security Act, so that 30 states had some form of old-age pension program by 1935. However, these programs were generally inadequate and ineffective. Only about 3% of the elderly were actually receiving benefits under these states plans, and the average benefit amount was about 65 cents a day. [*Social Security* 2019].

<sup>xxi</sup> “Liminality” was coined by anthropologist Victor Turner. Liminality is a transitional time within “a relatively fixed or stable condition” that has cultural significance to participants within a society (Turner 1967, 93). In the case of this ethnography, “liminality” will refer to the transitional and unbound space: the graveyard serves as a place that works internally and has separate rules compared to spaces outside of the graveyard.

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<sup>xxii</sup> Anthropologist Doris Francis described Warner’s continuation of Durkheim’s symbolic theories by comparing it to the Yankee City cemetery in the 1950s: “For Warner, the social and status structures which organize the living community are reflected and expressed in the forms and arrangement of the cemetery’s cultural landscape. The family is the primary unit of American society and is collectively represented in the cemetery through separate family plots, outlined with stone borders. Class, age and ethnic differences, conflict between families of birth and marriage as well as strains between communal values and the autonomy of the socially mobile individual are marked by permanent mortuary symbols. The size of plots, placement, type and size of headstones, inscriptions on markers, greater use of the American flag to decorate graves, disinterment and transfer to another burial ground all signal the significance of the cemetery as both a performance stage and a material artefact which reflects the social hierarchy of the community, the shared hope for immortality and the private sentiments of its members. Cemetery landscapes mirror the past life and historic eras through which the community has passed. Attention must also be paid to transition rites, which reveal how death influences the relations of privilege, power and prestige among the minister, the doctor and the undertaker as family members withdraw their customary attendance to the dying and dead.” [Francis 2003, 223].

<sup>xxiii</sup> Arlington National Cemetery. “Origin of 'Taps'”. 2019.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Ibid.

<sup>xxvii</sup> Theatrical performances have a “fourth wall,” a conventional invisible wall separating them from the spectators. The actors create an illusion that they are unaware of the patrons yet are performing to them. Drone footage performs in a similar manner through the filming process and presentation of the footage. The Ward Manor Cemetery drone footage is performative because the cemetery is seen from a bird’s eye view. (Bell, Elizabeth S. *Theories of Performance* 2008, 203.)

<sup>xxviii</sup> Bard College Center for Experimental Humanities. “Ward Manor Cemetery”. 2019.

<sup>xxix</sup> The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier was first established after WWI:

On Memorial Day, 1921, four unknowns were exhumed from four World War I American cemeteries in France. U.S. Army Sgt. Edward F. Younger, who was wounded in combat, highly decorated for valor and received the Distinguished Service Medal in "The Great War, the war to end all wars," selected the Unknown Soldier of World War I from four identical caskets at the city hall in Chalons-sur-Marne, France, Oct. 24, 1921. Sgt. Younger selected the unknown by placing a spray of white roses on one of the caskets. He chose the third casket from the left. The chosen unknown soldier was transported to the United States aboard the USS Olympia. Those remaining were interred in the Meuse Argonne Cemetery, France. The Unknown Soldier lay in state in the Capitol Rotunda from his arrival in the United States until Armistice Day, 1921. On Nov. 11, 1921, President Warren G. Harding officiated at the interment ceremonies at the Memorial Amphitheater at Arlington National Cemetery. [Arlington National Cemetery. “The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier”. 2019.]

<sup>xxx</sup> On April 15, 2019, a fire broke out beneath the roof of Notre-Dame de Paris, resulting in massive damage to the structure.

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<sup>xxx</sup> “The more people believe rumors to be true, the more likely they are to report them on a questionnaire (Rosnow, Yost, & Esposito, 1986). In quoting others, speakers try to quote accurately, and listeners take the quotes as accurate (Wade & Clark, 1993). At the same time, people can exaggerate reportings of an event, highlight only certain aspects, or misremember what they have heard or experienced, so what counts as truthful can be murky (Clark & Gerrig, 1990; Pullum, 1991; Wade & Clark, 1993). Despite the murkiness, however, people generally do not tell stories to each other that are made up out of whole cloth; we do not expect our friends to confabulate over dinner. Nonetheless, although it appears that people want to tell truthful stories (Heath, 1996) and pass on rumors they believe to be true (Rosnow et al., 1986), false stories still get transmitted (see Best & Horiuchi, 1985, regarding the poisoned Halloween candy myth).”  
[Jean E. Fox Tree and Mary Susan Weldon, "Retelling Urban Legends", 2007.]

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