RACE AND TOURISM IN AMERICA'S FIRST CITY

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In 1988, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau established its Multicultural Affairs Congress (MAC) to attract and monitor minority tourism in one of America's most historic cities. Four years later, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce acknowledged MAC's efforts and ranked Philadelphia the nation's top destination for African American tourists. Coinciding with the fulfillment of several key civil rights projects, particularly the election of Philadelphia's first black mayor, African American tourism ties Philadelphia's existing political and economic growth to the city's racial past. Placing changes in city policies and landscape that accompanied the emergence of this industry in context with overall economic, political, and spatial shifts marking Philadelphia's entrance into a service-driven economy, this article explores the possibility that African American tourism in Philadelphia represents a fusion of politics and racial formation within urban development that opens the door to investigating a new plane of urban racial politics.

Keywords: *Philadelphia; tourism; urban tourism; race; African American tourism*

Like many cities of similar age and size, Philadelphia positions itself within a service and tourism-based, postindustrial economy through its local history and culture. Philadelphia stands apart from cities such as Boston or Baltimore, however, in making African American culture and history a substantial part of the city's tourism economy. Since 1988, Philadelphia's Multicultural Affairs Congress (MAC) has drawn black tourists to Philadelphia with heritage tours, festivals, museums, and cultural centers. In 1992, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce acknowledged these efforts and ranked Philadelphia the number one tourist destination for African Americans in the country. This article places the multiple definitions of black community mapped by the various tours, museums, and cultural sites making up Philadelphia's African American heritage industry in context with the city's emerging postindustrial political economy. Coinciding with the fulfillment of several key civil rights projects, particularly the election of the city's first black mayor in 1983, Philadelphia's successful campaign for African American tourism binds Philadelphia's existing political and economic growth to the city's racial past. Moreover, as part of larger investments made in promoting Philadelphia's role within an historical narrative of American revolution and independence, Philadelphia's African American tourism industry reflects the racial dynamics shaping postindustrial tourism economies emerging across the country. My aim is to show that the

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rise of African American heritage is one of Philadelphia's most valuable assets and that the changes in city policies and landscape accompanying it indicate a fusion of politics and racial formation within urban development that opens the door to investigating a new plane of urban racial politics.

TOURISM IN PHILADELPHIA

In Philadelphia, and elsewhere, tourism is a major force behind contemporary urban development, one that has helped give new meaning to the spaces and places composing U.S. cities.[1] According to David Harvey, global economic change has resulted in the shift from a managerial to an entrepreneurial urban politics built on public-private partnerships, speculative business and design practices, and increasing prioritization of place within the city.[2] Mounting interurban competition for investment capital places great stock in the construction of city spaces and the promotion of urban "quality of life" through specific places such as convention centers, tourism sights, and shopping malls. The urban "growth machine" defined by Harvey and its emphasis on selling the city through its own image have left an impression on urban landscapes and in the economic and cultural values projected through them. Sharon Zukin locates these new values within a postindustrial symbolic economy in which culture and imagery form the basis for urban economies. According to Zukin, the production processes driving the urban symbolic economy since the late 1970s have transformed the spaces typical of postindustrial, service-oriented cities, such as convention centers, hotels and skyscrapers, shopping malls and marketplaces, and museums and concert halls, into products. The images conveyed through them, a strong business economy, ample leisure space, and a thriving arts scene, form the currency in which the city is valued.[3]

Philadelphia's tourism industry is conducted from the city's downtown area, Center City. In *Landscapes of Power*, Sharon Zukin explains that the "creative destruction" of downtown areas accompanying the rise of a postindustrial symbolic economy is highly representative of the symbolic and cultural importance of these centralized areas in contemporary urban development.[4] As the geographic and historical heart of the city, Center City Philadelphia, with its vital place in Philadelphia's history, easily navigable grid design, and accessibility, is a logical site for the city's tourism campaigns, one that provides both a "spatial link with history and a temporal link with economic and political power," as described by Zukin.[5] And it is predominately within this central block of the city, originally surveyed for settlement in 1681, that the city of Philadelphia sells itself as an ideal destination for business and leisure tourists alike. Fifty years of city planning have repackaged Center City Philadelphia as a collection of overlapping historic, commercial, cultural, and business districts easily navigated with tourist maps and literature and by trails and signposts that steer visitors from sight to sight. Each of these carefully

packaged districts is marketed through the city's greatest selling point—national heritage. As colonial America's busiest and richest seaport, and home to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, Philadelphia is America's First City, the Cradle of Liberty, and the Quaker City of Brotherly Love, and national heritage is what the city does best. Indeed, as historian Gary Nash writes, in the present day, "Philadelphia's past is a thriving business."[6] Tourism campaigns such as "Philly First" and "Welcome America!" emphasize the city's age and place in U.S. history, while advertising slogans such as "Enjoy our past, experience our future" unite the contemporary city with projections of its historic past.[7]

Billing itself as "America's most historic square mile," Historic Philadelphia and its concentration of colonial and antebellum relics form the ideological and strategic heart of Philadelphia's tourism industry.[8] First conceived in the 1950s as part of Philadelphia's urban-renewal scheme and later developed for the 1976 Bicentennial celebrations, Historic Philadelphia has had a considerable impact on the city's development.[9] Preservation of the Pennsylvania State House and the creation of Independence National Historic Park, for example, resulted in extensive redevelopment for Old City and Society Hill as gentrification swept through the areas' colonial and early Republican townhomes, slowed the city's westward expansion, and brought residents and businesses back to the oldest quarters of Center City. In the wake of the Bicentennial, Historic Philadelphia and efforts to improve heritage tourism spurred growth within the hospitality and finance sectors of the tourism market.[10] Multinational chain hotels and new business complexes that ousted stalwarts of industrial Philadelphia's merchant oligarchy—the Lits, Wanamakers, and Strawbridges—today fit snugly between the new Pennsylvania Convention Center, a Hard Rock Cafe, and the major retail and entertainment chains lining the city's ancient commercial corridor.[11] The construction of One Liberty Place in the 1980s, a sixty-story glass tower that dwarfs the city's Quaker founder atop City Hall in 50 million square feet of office space, completed the city's transformation into a postindustrial urban center of business and leisure tourism. Violating a belief shared among city planners and developers that City Hall's dominance of the Philadelphia skyline symbolized the democratic notion that no private interest should supersede the building that housed the people's representatives, Liberty Place and the skyscrapers that followed made known the city's stakes in the postindustrial economy.[12]

Extremely profitable in generating real estate investment and tourism in Old City and other areas of downtown Philadelphia, Center City's historic district also performs a "representative function" described by Ashworth and Turnbridge as "the 'Washington slept here' phenomenon."[13] This phenomenon combines aesthetic with antique impulses to place high commercial and cultural value in symbols of the city's past, resulting in the expansion of Center City's housing and commercial stock through the restoration of older buildings and the conversion of warehouses and factories into commercial and retail

Figure 1: Absolut Philadelphia
SOURCE: Photograph taken by author (2002).

space with important implications for the values placed on the city's heritage. Reflecting the nostalgic impulse in contemporary urban planning described by Christine Boyer's *The City of Collective Memory*, Philadelphia's past is reimagined as part of the contemporary city's landscape.[14] Historic Philadelphia invites visitors to shop and eat within a recreation of the colonial city, while privatized spaces outside the city's historic square mile, such as the Shops at Liberty Place and the Mellon Independence Center, cite important themes of the American Revolution to place themselves within these nostalgic projections of the city's heritage. In Old City, an Absolut Vodka advertisement featuring a staid Benjamin Franklin peering over the city through Absolut bifocals drives home the market value attached to Philadelphia's past (see Figure 1)

Returning to Sharon Zukin's definition of the symbolic economy, it is clear that Philadelphia's landscape has become a product valued and marketed through recognizable forms of cultural currency. However, as the defunct features of the old industrial city are recycled into functional spaces for the postindustrial city, the resulting eclipse of a "moral public sphere" by a "private sphere selling fictional styles of life and imaginary behaviour," as described by Boyer, raises important questions over the values celebrated within these reimagined historic spaces and who determines them.[15] Tourism,

particularly heritage tourism, raises important sociopolitical and cultural concerns over representation that centers on the point of "whose history" is to be celebrated by this industry.[16] Kevin Archer's study of tourism in Orlando points out that contemporary urban planning and its concentration on constructions of place and image open a forum for debating important issues of representation: "The attempt to imagineer places for sale thus opens a potential site of social struggle over *whose* reality is to be narrated and promoted."[17] It is important, then, to explore these carefully constructed "places for sale" to understand the sociopolitical and cultural struggles staged within them. To do so, I will take a look at the spatial organization of Philadelphia's tourism industry to provide some view of the social, political, and cultural impulses guiding the city's staging of its own past. Essentially, the social and political interests informing the shape of Philadelphia's tourism industry consult the scales of cultural currency to alternately value and devalue particular places of the city. In doing so, these interests use notions of culture to exercise great power in the city's development, thereby engaging critical themes in contemporary urban politics, particularly the allocation of socioeconomic opportunities attendant to urban development. As I will show, in the city of Philadelphia, these issues are of great importance in understanding the city's racial politics.

CREATING AMERICA'S FIRST CITY

If history is the cultural currency through which Philadelphia markets itself, then the realization of this history upon the landscape clearly is an important political issue within the city. Bids for increased tourism generally reflect positively on politicians in their promise of urban redevelopment, increased direct and indirect revenue, and employment. Within such a highly speculative market, however, tourism-related development projects can form a smoke screen to obscure problems of unemployment, poverty, and poor infrastructure still marking the beleaguered city, a political phenomenon David Harvey describes as "the triumph of image over substance." Consequently, "concentration on spectacle and image rather than on the substance of economic and social problems can also prove deleterious in the long run, even though the political benefits can all too easily be had."[18] In Philadelphia, the high cultural currency placed in projections of the city's history holds great sway in city politics.[19] Moreover, the sociopolitical questions surrounding the representation of history and the allocation of tourism's financial rewards engage contemporary racial politics with the very landscape of the city itself.

Historic Philadelphia's strategic role within the city's tourism industry is centered on the new Independence Visitors Center, one-third of a recent redevelopment project for Independence Mall. Squatting at the intersection of Old City and Society Hill, just across from the new Liberty Bell Center, the visitors center is central command for the city's tourism industry, laying out the city

Figure 2: Disk Map
SOURCE: Photograph taken by author (2002).

and its significance for visitors through visual displays, theatrical presentations, and all kinds of Philadelphia merchandise. Park rangers costumed in eighteenth-century colonial garb greeting guests upon entry leaves little room for speculation as to the city's primary attraction. Following the *Lights of Liberty*, a brief film celebrating the city's role in the American Revolution, visitors are directed through the Gateway to Philadelphia where they stroll along an airy corridor lined with placards featuring each of the city's different neighborhoods and their highlights from which visitors can plan their trips through the city and its sights.

This spatialized rendering of Philadelphia unfolds on the city's landscape in the special historic, commercial, retail, and cultural districts of Center City. Visitors find their way through these districts using maps, guidebooks, signposts, and special public transportation provided by the Convention and Visitors Bureau. Across Center City, reimagined renderings of William Penn's original plans for Philadelphia hang from signposts and trees as a guide to visitors making their way through the historic, commercial, and cultural districts highlighted by the map's vivid colors (see Figure 2). These signposts and their functional rereading of Penn's Greene Country Towne not only unite contemporary Philadelphia with its historic past but also reveal the city's deep concern with directing and facilitating tourist travel through the city. Boyer argues that the production of urban places through the packaging of nostalgic cityscapes

creates deep fissures in the landscape and obscures the interstitial spaces of the city. In the 1990s, Philadelphia began to place increasing emphasis on controlling these interstitial spaces as a means of maintaining its carefully constructed image. In 1993, the Convention and Visitors Bureau published new maps of Center City featuring "yellow-brick roads" to direct visitors from their hotels to the city's tourist destinations.[20] The following year, the city unleashed a fleet of ten purple buses to ferry visitors on a loop through Center City from the art museum to Penn's Landing.[21] In 1998, the city took its most overt step in governing tourist perspectives of Philadelphia when the Office of the City Controller proposed the construction of an enclosed walkway between the Convention Center and Independence Mall as a means of funneling hesitant conventioneers from the central business district to the city's historic district.

Altogether, Philadelphia's carefully packaged districts and the maps, signposts, and purple buses connecting them work to create a safe, easily navigable city for consumption by tourists and visitors. At the heart of these plans, however, rests an urban paranoia based in social and economic upheavals of the postwar years. The city controller's proposal for an enclosed walkway between the Convention Center and Independence Mall addresses this paranoia directly:

> Many visitors are intimidated by the urban environment and, despite any efforts to make Philadelphia more hospitable, some visitors may need to ease into the urban experience. Even though the Pennsylvania Convention Center is located just more than five blocks away from Independence National Historic Park, many visitors do not make the trip. To encourage visitors to make excursions beyond meeting rooms and ballrooms, the City could create a completely enclosed walkway from the Convention Center to the Park area. Such a connection could remove pedestrians from the streetscape. But, because the buildings along the route include department stores and The Gallery mall, a connection from the Convention Center to the adjacent building and the construction of two pedestrian bridges could link visitors from the Convention Center—through major Center City retail establishments—directly to the nation's most historic square mile.[22]

Reminiscent of the "militarization of space" in Los Angeles described in Mike Davis's *City of Quartz*, the city controller's proposal outwardly acknowledges the strong influence of urban paranoia in the creation of carefully packaged, nostalgic visions of the city and, using tourism as a justification for removing pedestrians from the city's streetscape, reveals a prioritization of particular public-private interests over critical issues raised by the proposed pathway, including pedestrian right-of-way and access to public space.[23] Moreover, the proposal makes clear that for city developers and politicians, Center City's landscape exists as a collection of specific sights categorized within special historic, cultural, and commercial districts and united by a network of privatized pathways, which, even if not yet closed off entirely as proposed by the

Office of the City Controller, allow visitors to experience Philadelphia behind the lens of comfortable, controlled urbanity.

Such steps taken by the city to create a sanitized urban utopia for its visitors to enjoy have significant implications on the sociopolitical consequences of tourism, particularly in relation to race relations within the city. The urban paranoia or "unease" described by the city controller stems from social and economic unrest of the 1960s, during which race became synonymous with the plight of U.S. cities and took center stage in a national discourse of urban decline.[24] Projections of an "urban crisis" centering on fears of rising poverty and crime racialized the problems of disinvestment and migration affecting urban centers across the country. As Robert Beauregard explains, "Crime meant blacks, blacks meant ghettos and riots, and ghettos and riots were threats to investments whether they were downtown department stores, new apartment buildings, or inner-city factories."[25] This racialized paranoia fuelled white migration to the suburbs and resulted in the uneven development patterns that pocketed hyperghettos among the gentrified communities cropping up across the city's landscape.

The rise of a service-sector economy following economic restructuring in the 1970s and the gradual filtering of young white professionals to urban centers gave new meaning to these racialized visions of the city. In the symbolic economy of the late 1970s and 1980s, racial and ethnic difference became a form of cultural currency highly valued within the cityscape.[26] Easily packaged in cultural forms such as the arts and cuisine, racial and ethnic differences represent cultural diversity and remain highly marketable elements within contemporary urban economies. Ethnic heritage houses in Historic Philadelphia, museums, and special districts across Center City such as Chinatown or the Italian Market substantiate the city's vision of itself as a birthplace of American democracy and equality even as they promote Philadelphia as a multicultural cosmopolitan center. Surrounding Historic Philadelphia, the product of late 1970s regeneration led by Philadelphia's "white backlash" mayor Frank Rizzo, these districts signify a simultaneous embrace and seclusion of the city's ethnic and racial heritage within Philadelphia's overall reflection of itself, which points to troublesome questions surrounding the commercialization of history across the city's public and private spaces.[27] Center City Philadelphia, its carefully constructed districts, and its pathways present a city devoid of the undesirable elements associated with the urban environment in which middle-class, predominately white, and almost certainly suburban consumers can socialize, eat, and most important, shop. When caught up in what Christine Boyer describes as "the art of selling," however, this network of historic sights and retail spaces simultaneously obscures and perpetuates the social strife, class dissension, and racial anxieties marking the city both past and present.[28]

Questions remain over how race and ethnicity are lived amid these projections of the city and their overall relationship to the carefully constructed

spaces and places making up the city's symbolic economy. Philadelphia's African American tourism industry provides a window to examine this intersection of race and city development within postindustrial Philadelphia's political economy. Over the past fifteen years, Philadelphia has become a prime destination in a national African American tourism market. Consistently named one of the nation's top tourist destinations for African Americans, Philadelphia is home to a large set of public and private promotional companies and tour groups dedicated to improving the city's image and reputation among African American travel agents, businesses, and families across the nation. As a result, black tourism has become a major revenue generator for the city.[29] It is important to ask, then, both how this African American industry constructs race within the city and what these constructions reveal about contemporary racial politics in the city of Philadelphia.

To answer these questions, it is necessary to understand not only the history of Philadelphia's African American tourism industry and its place in the city's regeneration but also the relationship between this history and that of the city's African American community. Black history in Philadelphia has a long and strong heritage.[30] As a port city just miles from the Mason-Dixon Line, the history of Philadelphia in many ways reflects the painful and illogical history of American slavery itself. Quaker influences helped pass the first gradual abolition statute in the British colonies, while the city's geographic proximity to the South and favorable economic conditions made Philadelphia home to the largest free black population in the English-speaking Western hemisphere well into the nineteenth century. Home to strong abolition and anticolonization movements, as well as the pre–Civil War National Negro Convention Movement, often considered the first African American political organization, Philadelphia's black community helped define an African American identity stretching far beyond the city's limits. As war and, later, the Great Migration brought blacks northward, Philadelphia's favorable housing and employment opportunities drew these newcomers to settle in West and North Philadelphia. Yet the same conditions that made the city so favorable to African Americans—Quaker beliefs, geographic location, and economic opportunity—turned Philadelphia into a highly contested terrain on which blacks and whites struggled for access to the city's prospects. Frederick Douglass commented in 1862, "There is not, perhaps, anywhere to be found a city in which prejudice against colour is more rampant than in Philadelphia."[31] Struggles over neighborhood boundaries and political and financial resources brought the city through the twentieth century, while racial politics, residential segregation, and increasing isolation of the city's poorest black neighborhoods have marked the landscape with the legacy of Philadelphia's turbulent racial history.

The history of Philadelphia's black community is deeply intertwined with the city's physical, social, and contextual development from a strategic political and commercial colonial port, through its days as a major industrial capital,

and to its rebirth as a modern convention city.[32] If this is the case, race is clearly a key element in forging the city's future, as Philadelphia's racial history becomes a major marketing point for a city greatly dependent on its place within a service and tourism-oriented economy. Moreover, if the city's political economy is becoming more and more intertwined with its physical redevelopment into a service-providing business and tourism center, the emergence of a strong African American heritage industry in Philadelphia perhaps points to a new outlet for facilitating urban racial politics. I conclude, then, with an examination of the history and development of Philadelphia's African American tourism industry and its injection of African American history within the city's heritage industry to show how Philadelphia's African American tourism industry and its place within the city's postindustrial political economy understand and give new meaning to race and race relations in the postindustrial city.

BLACK TOURISM IN PHILADELPHIA

Multicultural business and leisure tourism generates $40 billion across the nation each year. In 1988, the city of Philadelphia set out to capture a corner of that market by establishing MAC to promote and facilitate the city's minority tourism. From its inception, MAC boosted the city's minority convention bookings from a mere six in 1987 to well over one hundred for the early 1990s. MAC expanded its efforts throughout the 1990s, working with local heritage sites, museums, tour groups, and retailers to compile marketing promotions and literature geared to minority groups. By far, MAC's greatest success has come in generating African American tourism. Advertisements in black interest and lifestyle magazines and specially geared television campaigns that feature black celebrities such as Bill Cosby, Oprah Winfrey, and Julius Irving espousing their ties to Philadelphia have generated increased interest in Philadelphia among African American tourists across the country. Once in Philadelphia, African American visitors find special brochures, such as the annual *African American Historical and Cultural Guide* and *Sojourner*, which highlight everything from historical sights, to cultural events, to minority-owned businesses and restaurants. Described by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce as the "premier example of a well-developed minority tourism destination in the United States," Philadelphia has accrued over $400 million in African American tourism since MAC's inception.[33]

Philadelphia's African American heritage industry is made up of black history and culture museums, the preserved homesteads of Philadelphia's most notable black residents, and cultural arts events either based in the city's black community or aimed toward the city's black visitors.[34] Founded in 1976 for the city's Bicentennial celebrations, the African American History and Culture Museum was the first national museum dedicated entirely to African

American history in the United States. The homes of Marion Anderson, Paul Robeson, John Coltrane, and W. E. B. Du Bois, among others, and the headquarters of key institutions, including Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church or the Pennsylvania Abolitionist Society, are popular destinations for black visitors. Independent African American tour groups such as Nubian Tours or A Tour of Possibilities guide visitors interested in the city's African American history through these historical and cultural sights. MAC also provides inclined guests with hospitality lists of black-owned hotels, restaurants, and retailers. Finally, MAC draws attention to the city's major African American community and cultural events, including events such as Odunde, the annual North Philadelphia Celebration of Life Festival, the Black Family Reunion, and Unity Day.[35] Through MAC, Philadelphia's African American tourism industry caters to the overall cultural, educational, and commercial needs of its black visitors.

But how does this tourism industry and its particular investment in celebrating black heritage relate to the city's wider heritage projects? Furthermore, what does this relationship reveal, if anything, about race relations in the city? When considered one distinct element within the city's tourism economy, MAC's endeavors could be seen to support narratives of democracy and equality instilled by the city's heritage industry. Indeed, in some ways, these two projects substantiate one another. Many of the city's major historical attractions embody multiple narratives of the city and its past. For example, the First African Methodist Episcopal Church, or Mother Bethel, in Society Hill forms part of Historic Philadelphia's spatialized memorial to the city's institutional development as the oldest parcel of land continuously owned by African Americans in the nation. At the same time, as one of the nation's first and most influential black institutions since its establishment in 1794, Mother Bethel represents a key moment in the formation of an African American identity. In another example, the Liberty Bell, one of the city's most prominent and popular tourist attractions, one deeply attached to themes of revolution and liberty, was given its designation by a Philadelphia-based abolitionist group.

It would be fair to say that the city's African American tourism industry constructs the city's black history both within and beyond Philadelphia's larger heritage projects. For example, private tour groups such as Nubian Tours are dedicated to inscribing African American heritage within the city's major historical sights. Nubian Tours include stops at some of the city's most popular heritage sights, including Independence Hall and Penn's Landing, to relate their specific places in African American history as sites of antebellum race riots or as home to Philadelphia's colonial slave trade, respectively.[36] The Pennsylvania State Historical Marker Project, under the direction of historian Charles L. Blockson, maps black history across the city's landscape by marking important sites and events in African American history along the city's streets (see Figure 3).[37]

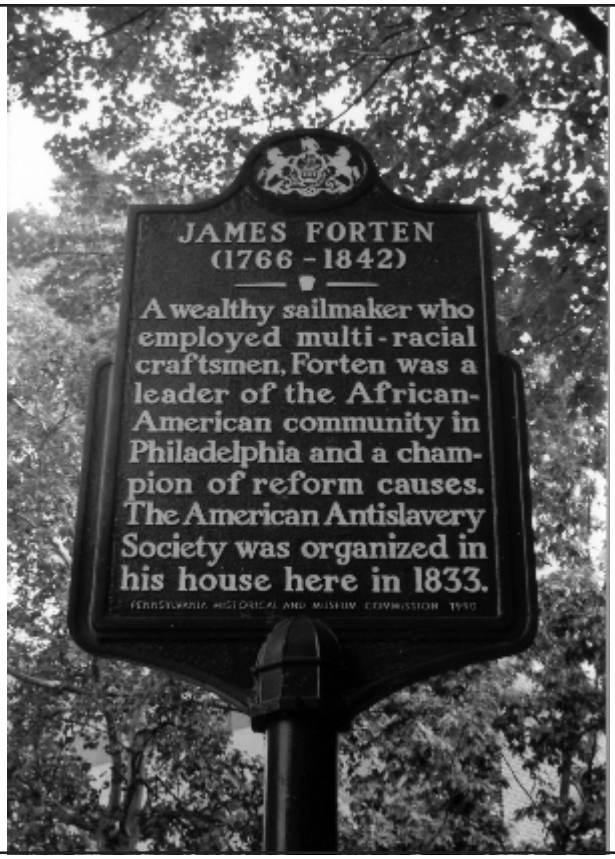

Figure 3: Pennsylvania State Historical Marker Project
SOURCE: Photograph taken by author (2002).

Philadelphia's African American heritage industry simultaneously supports and undermines the city's overall heritage project by paying tribute to the turbulence and violence of American black history even as it celebrates the foundations of a specifically African American identity. While this conflation of narratives and its implications on the place of African Americans in national heritage perhaps can be resolved only through the subjective positioning of the tourist, when placed in context with the city's postwar economic shifts and consequent spatial reorganization, the blending of American and African American historical narratives in Philadelphia's tourism industry is perhaps not as subjective as it may seem. While sights commemorating African American history and culture form a critical part of Philadelphia's tourism industry, this industry and the development and neighborhood regeneration attendant to it are noticeably limited to Center City and its historic sights, an imbalance with strong repercussions for poorer, working-class, predominately nonwhite communities outside Center City's gentrified areas. The question remains, then, does the cultural currency attached to race and racial identity by

postindustrial urban economies carry any real significance in contemporary urban politics?

This question must be posed at the intersection of urban and racial history. Shifts in Philadelphia's urban economy toward service and tourism and the attendant spatial changes accompanying this shift coincided with the election of Philadelphia's first black mayor, W. Wilson Goode. In his study of Goode, John F. Bauman points out that the special demands facing African American leaders of economically and racially stratified cities have resulted in an increased emphasis on entrepreneurial politics and leadership.[38] Having to meet African American needs for improved employment opportunities and political representation without the state-backed programs of the postwar era, black leaders such as Goode turned to speculative redevelopment projects based in service provision and tourism to provide their constituents with a source of income and capital. Development projects of Goode's administration were part of the mayor's pledge to address African American unemployment. For example, plans for the Gallery II, successor to James Rouse's successful Gallery Mall project, set specified levels of minority employment not only in the provision of construction contracts and jobs but also in the distribution of retail space within the completed shopping mall.[39] As a historical figure, Mayor W. Wilson Goode represents the link between racial politics and the urban growth machine injecting new meanings in the symbolic landscape of the postindustrial city. The impact of heritage tourism, then, can be measured only in its distribution among the various cultural groups and economic classes composing the city, a valuation that ultimately touches the very power structures of the city and their effect on contemporary issues such as residential gentrification, economic turnaround, and urban development.[40]

BLACK TOURISM IN AMERICA'S FIRST CITY

Philadelphia's Avenue of the Arts project provides a good starting point for exploring the relationship between race, urban tourism, and urban development. The Avenue of the Arts Inc. (AAI) was founded in 1993 as "an independent non-profit organization . . . to coordinate and support cultural and related development along North and South Broad Street in Philadelphia." AAI works with the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, the city, and corporate and private foundations to "develop Broad Street into a premier cultural destination."[41] Running along Broad Street from massive sports and entertainment arenas in South Philadelphia to Temple University at Cecil B. Moore Boulevard in North Philadelphia, the Avenue of the Arts combines major entertainment complexes, including the new Kimmel Center for the Performing Arts, the historic Academy of Music, and Walnut Street Theatre, as well as smaller, independent theatres and arts foundations. The heart of Philadelphia's cultural district, the Avenue of the Arts forms the axis of the city, bridging the business-

minded Rittenhouse district with the historic parks of Old City and connecting North and South Philadelphia to the regeneration of Center City. On close inspection, the Avenue of the Arts provides a physical representation of the city's diverse cultural heritage. Foundations and theatres celebrating Italian, Irish, Puerto Rican, African, and African American cultural practices running along this cultural corridor form a spatial tribute to the city's ethnic heritage right in the heart of Center City.

In 1995, AAI released plans for a $60.6 million project to extend the Avenue of the Arts into North Philadelphia.[42] A move described by the *Philadelphia Inquirer* as "pure politics," the Avenue of the Arts North Broad extension is pertinent to this discussion of African American tourism for several reasons. First, the North Broad initiative heralded millions of dollars in neighborhood regeneration for North Philadelphia, the city's first distinct African American community and one of the city's most blighted regions. The initiative targeted historic African American cultural institutions lining North Broad Street, including the Black United Fund, the Black Family Reunion, the Coalition of African American Cultural Organizations, the Blue Horizon Gym, and the Freedom Theatre. Ultimately, these were to combine much-needed neighborhood revitalization and community services with the prospect of a new tourism economy.[43] Second, while North Philadelphia and its cluster of African American historic sights and cultural organizations would enhance African American presence along the avenue's linear manifestation of Philadelphia's multicultural heritage, North Philadelphia would remain distinct in its specifically community-minded approach to regeneration. Activists and planners in this historically African American neighborhood had struggled for years to organize regeneration campaigns centered on North Philadelphia's historic sights and cultural arts venues, and the possibility of uniting with AAI seemed to secure the region's development.[44] In 1995, President of the Black United Fund Linda Richardson said of the AAI North Broad initiatives: "We've always seen North Broad from a community-development perspective, as well as from an arts perspective. The needs are great in terms of cultural programs. There is a need for neighbourhood stabilization. And revitalization is also part and parcel of what the community is interested in."[45] The projects making up the North Broad initiative, unlike the hospitality and tourism-driven projects lining South Broad Street, were targeted to meet specific community-minded objectives, suggesting a segregation of African American community projects from the city's greater interest in promoting Philadelphia's tourism industry.

The AAI North Broad initiative highlights the strategic value placed in tourism-driven regeneration by city politics. On a superficial level, the public-private negotiations behind AAI's North Broad proposal centered on the place North Philadelphia was to occupy in the city's overall redevelopment into a tourist destination. Representative Dwight Evans makes this clear when recalling his instructions to fellow AAI members: "Link it up. We need North

Broad. We don't need North Philly versus South Philly versus the convention center. We need to hook them together."[46] The Avenue of the Arts North Broad initiative was seen and is remembered as a move to unite the diverse neighborhoods and communities of the city in the benefits of urban regeneration. When placed in context with the city's larger tourism industry, however, the North Broad extension and the debates surrounding it symbolize a battle over the place Philadelphia's African American community was to have within the city's emerging tourism economy. In many ways, as the *Inquirer* points out, the North Broad extension was viewed as a way for the newly elected Mayor Rendell, white successor of the city's first black mayor Wilson Goode, to reach out to his African American constituents with the "bread and circuses" of late-twentieth-century urban regeneration his administration was already delivering to the city's more central districts.[47]

While the North Broad extension drives home how African American history and culture, as cultural commodities much coveted by city governments desperate to pump their tourism economies, became a valuable political tool for neighborhoods such as North Philadelphia, a recent debate over the redevelopment of Independence Mall framed the complexities surrounding race and tourism within the city's most vital attraction, Historic Philadelphia. Conceived in the 1940s as a place of public reflection and reverence for the newly established Independence National Historic Park, Independence Mall saw little change until plans were released for its redevelopment in the late 1990s. Aiming to satisfy the millions of tourists visiting Historic Philadelphia each year, the City and the National Park Service announced a dramatic makeover that would result in three new structures for the mall: a new home for the Liberty Bell, a visitors center, and the multimillion-dollar National Constitution Research Center.

Discord over the mall's redevelopment began with an article by Philadelphia historian Edward J. Lawler, published in the January 2002 edition of the *Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography.* The piece is an exhaustive survey of the house that served as the executive residence of Presidents Washington and Adams for the ten years Philadelphia was the nation's capitol. Erased from the landscape when it was razed in the 1830s, the President's House largely dissolved in public memory until Ed Lawler restored 190 High Street to its place in history. His painstaking research into the precise location and exact dimensions of the house accounted for every detail of every room at 190 High Street, including the conversion of Morris's smoke house into quarters for President Washington's enslaved black stable hands. Carefully resurrected within our historical consciousness, 190 High Street cast a shadow over the activities taking place on the 500 block of Market Street in the twenty-first century. Lawler writes, "An extraordinary juxtaposition will be in place when the [Liberty Bell Center] is completed [on Independence Mall], one which seems to have occurred by accident. . . . The last thing that a visitor will walk

across or pass before entering the Liberty Bell Center will be the slave quarters that George Washington added to the President's House."[48]

A long debate pitting historians and community leaders against the National Park Service ensued. A campaign led by historians Gary Nash, Randall Miller, and Charles L. Blockson demanded that the Park Service represent the site in its true context. Doing so would involve not only recognizing the President's House and the existence of slavery within the House but also exploring the historic and symbolic relationship between slavery and the Liberty Bell. The "delicious irony," as it was described by Nash, of laying the foundations for new and elaborate shrines to American liberty upon the earthly remains of America's most "peculiar institution" provided a unique opportunity to consider the meaning of black experiences in celebrations of certain American values.[49] Moreover, argued historians, the Bell itself—christened "Liberty" by nineteenth-century abolitionists and adopted as a symbol of reconciliation following the Civil War—was an ideal vehicle for exploring the paradoxical existence of slavery within narratives of American freedom and democracy.[50] Black Philadelphians spurred by the *Philadelphia Inquirer*'s extensive coverage of the debates came forward with their own views on the site. In May 2002, prolific African American historian Blockson told the *Inquirer* of disquiet among the city's black community: "We are getting calls in the African-American community—people want to go down and protest. People are angry."[51] True to Blockson's word, public advocacy groups were taking shape across the city. On June 11, the African People's Solidarity Committee led demonstrations outside the Liberty Bell Pavilion to demand a redress of thinking at the Park Service. Committee Chair Alison Hoehne explained, "[The National Park Service is] deliberately burying the truth about slavery of African people here in the heart of the so-called birthplace of American democracy and freedom." She added, "We don't want these truths hidden anymore."[52] Under increasing pressure, the Park Service made gradual concessions. Over two days of intense negotiation between historians, community leaders, and the Park Service in May 2002, the entire Liberty Bell exhibit was overhauled. On August 11, the *Inquirer* printed a piece on the new collaborative display under the headline "Slavery Story to Be Part of Bell Site."[53]

The cloud of discord hanging over Historic Philadelphia whirled around the matter of history, its interpretation, and its representation of American nationhood. The campaign on the Park Service led by Gary Nash and Randall Miller aimed to exploit the unique historical coincidences and contradictions present on Independence Mall to guide the interpretation of history in the new Liberty Bell Center. In many ways echoing the culture wars of the mid-1990s in which Nash himself was a key figure, the debate over the Liberty Bell Center concentrated equally on the accurate and equal representation of Africans and African Americans in the interpretation of national history and recognition for the significant role Africans and African Americans played in the city's

development. The battle to reflect the diversity of peoples that once lived and worked in eighteenth-century Philadelphia was about inviting new authors and audiences to take part in the interpretation of that history. The representation of race and nationhood on Independence Mall, however, holds a different meaning when placed in context with Philadelphia's substantial African American tourism industry. Lawler's highly publicized discovery opened an incredible opportunity for leaders of the city's black heritage industry to stake their claim on the city's principal tourist attraction—Independence National Historic Park. MAC's Executive Director Tanya Hall warned that Philadelphia's very position as a top destination among black tourists hung in the balance of debates over representation and interpretation raging between historians and the Park Service.[54] Indeed, amid these negotiations, representatives of Philadelphia's African American History and Culture Museum, Mother Bethel Church, and other institutions approached the Park Service with proposals to link important landmarks of black history and culture to the park through a new Heritage Trail.[55] Underlying the appeal to include African and African American people in the Park Service's construction of American history ran a fundamental desire to open the great social and fiscal opportunities represented in the new buildings on Independence Mall to the city's black community, cultural institutions, and enterprises.

CONCLUSION: A CRITICAL VIEW OF RACE AND URBAN TOURISM IN PHILADELPHIA

The rise of African American tourism has an important impact on the way in which cities like Philadelphia situate themselves within interurban competition. Linda Richter's study of minorities and women in urban tourism explains that African American groups are paying increasing attention to urban hospitality trades as a space in which to exercise economic power:

> There is, however, encouraging evidence of greater sophistication and willingness to mobilize economically among the African-American community [in regard to tourism] and it appears to be paying off. Increasingly convention tourism decisions are being made on the basis of many other factors besides price. For example, black convention organizers are selecting cities on the basis of the attractions they offer for blacks, on the percentage of blacks in positions of political and economic responsibility and the kinds of facilities that are provided for the conventioneers.[56]

Across the nation, African American tourism-generated revenue totaled $25 billion by the early 1990s, making black America the fastest growing market in the U.S. travel industry.[57] As cities vie to corner this market and begin catering to an African American consumer group, black business representatives

and private interests have become an important influence on the direction and development of a significant sector of contemporary urban planning that touches economic and political currents of power. Together, inner- and interurban emphasis on African American representation in the social, economic, and political dynamics shaping the postindustrial city point to new values of race in the construction of urban spaces and places.

Tourism forms a critical component of Philadelphia's postindustrial political economy. Heritage drives this industry, and African American heritage provides the city with substantial cultural currency to compete among other cities for business- and leisure-tourism dollars. The city's symbolic landscape provides a forum for staging African American political presence, as debates over Independence Mall have shown. In the midst of this row, Mother Bethel Church Pastor Jeffrey N. Leath argued that together, the new Constitution Center and his historic parish formed "gateways to the historic district."[58] Defining the symbolism attached to institutions of American and African American identity in their spatial relationship to Historic Philadelphia, Leath attempted to unite Philadelphia's heritage industries into one and to eradicate the racial distinctions marking Historic Philadelphia from its ethnically defined neighbors. Leath's bid to link Mother Bethel with Historic Philadelphia symbolized a greater attempt to access the economic and political opportunities embedded within downtown Philadelphia. The spirited campaign of black Philadelphians to control the redevelopment of Independence Mall has shown that despite limitations placed on black heritage tourism by downtown Philadelphia's distinct districts and ethnically defined cultural attractions, the cultural currency of black heritage provides a viable entry to city politics.

However, the political value afforded the city's African American communities by tourism can be measured only in terms of its economic and political impact among these neighborhoods. In Philadelphia, this point is driven home by the comparative development of the North and South Broad areas on the Avenue of the Arts. Five years after the open houses and outdoor festivals that marked the avenue's inception, North Broad stands in stark contrast to the overwhelming success of South Broad Street. The North Broad initiative's collapse under financial strain and shifting political priorities was exacerbated by complaints that the city had failed to provide minorities with the arts education and training included within the avenue's initial development proposal. In 2000, AAI's newly appointed executive director, Karen A. Lewis, pledged to follow through with arts initiatives on North Broad. Three years later, the Blue Horizon Gym and the Apollo Theatre stand vacant as the Freedom Theatre struggles against financial ruin.[59]

The abandonment of the North Broad proposal points to a gradual slowing of Philadelphia's tourism-directed development rooted in a general economic slowdown over the past few years. With the city's continued expansion to the suburban fringe and a national tightening of belts, the regenerative properties of urban tourism seem to have lost some of their magic sparkle. This shift was

evident in the 1999 and 2003 mayoral elections when former Deputy Mayor John Street soundly defeated Sam Katz, a real estate developer and president of the development corporation Greater Philadelphia First.[60] Since his inauguration, Street's pledge to revisit the city's neighborhoods with programs focusing on housing, crime, and community development—a commitment to local concerns that has earned Street his nickname of the "Neighbourhood Mayor"—has supplanted the major tourism campaigns of the Rendell administration.[61]

I conclude this critical perspective by highlighting the impressions heritage tourism and the development projects discussed have left on the city. Philadelphia's heritage industry has had a major impact on the city's physical development, economic regeneration, and political practices. At the same time, the production of race and racial identity as marketable commodities within this industry has given new meaning and value to race within the city's political economy. MAC and the city's African American tourism industries have opened great commercial opportunities for the city's African American commercial, business, and hospitality outfits. Even more pertinent, the city's investment in black cultural heritage provided some of Philadelphia's most troubled neighborhoods a gateway into city politics and an opportunity reap the benefits of Philadelphia's regeneration. Yet these advantages, like the panacea of urban tourism itself, are fleeting. As the city deepens its attachments to a global economy moving further and further beyond its control, its future becomes increasingly unstable. Ultimately, tying political power with valuations of race and racial identity made in an unsteady world market sets contemporary urban racial politics on a slippery slope. The limited effects Philadelphia's tourism industry bears on the city's most deprived neighborhoods, coupled with the threats economic downturn and the War on Terror bear on a global tourism industry, make the city's rich black past an unstable platform for securing the economic and political future of Philadelphia's black community.

NOTES

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also David Harvey, *The Urban Condition* (Oxford, 1989); Harvey, *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change* (Oxford, 1990); Harvey, "Between Space and Time: Reflections on the Geographical Imagination," *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 80 (September 1990): 418-34. William Wyckoff's survey of postindustrial Butte provides a solid case study of Harvey's work on entrepreneurial urban politics. See William Wyckoff, "Postindustrial Butte," *Geographical Review* 85 (October 1995): 478-96.

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9. Teaford, *The Rough Road to Renaissance*, 151.

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25. Ibid., 189.

26. Zukin, *The Cultures of Cities*, 42.

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