

THE IMAGINED FRONTIER:
THE IMPACT OF VISUAL MEDIA ON THE PRESERATION
OF THE AMERICAN WEST

By

JOSHUA K. BODENWEISER

A THESIS PRESENTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF THE UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF HISTORIC PRESERVATION

UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA

2009

© 2009 Joshua K. Bodenweiser

To my wife who heard me say, "I'm almost finished," approximately one million times.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank my family, friends and committee members for sticking with me throughout this process and believing that I could finish when I doubted myself.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>page</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	4
LIST OF FIGURES	7
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	9
ABSTRACT.....	10
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION.....	12
2 PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC PLACES.....	17
3 THE WESTERN MYTH IN FILM AND TELEVISION.....	19
4 CASE STUDY: THE ALAMO IN SAN ANTONIO, TX.....	23
History of the Alamo	23
The Alamo in Film.....	28
Tourism at the Alamo	32
Managing the Alamo.....	32
Conclusions.....	38
5 CASE STUDY: DODGE CITY, KS.....	48
History of Dodge City.....	48
Dodge City in Film	53
Tourism in Dodge City	55
Managing Dodge City	56
Conclusions.....	59
6 CASE STUDY: THE LITTLE BIGHORN BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT, HARDIN, MT.....	68
History of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.....	68
The Little Bighorn in Film	73
Tourism at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.....	75
Managing the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument	77
Conclusions.....	80
7 CONCLUSION	88
LIST OF REFERENCES.....	94

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH..... 98

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>page</u>
4-1 Alamo Village.....	43
4-2 The Alamo, circa 1889-1910	43
4-3 The Alamo Plaza 1919	44
4-4 Cenotaph	44
4-5 Emily Morgan Hotel and the Alamo	45
4-6 Detail of limestone.....	45
4-7 Detail of limestone and wood window.....	46
4-8 Wall of History	46
4-9 Inside the Long Barrack	47
4-10 Japanese Memorial	47
5-1 The Mueller-Schmidt House	61
5-2 Carnegie Art Center	61
5-3 Santa Fe Depot	62
5-4 Boot Hill Museum	62
5-5 1879 Victorian house.....	63
5-6 Front Street, South Side.....	63
5-7 Front Street, North Side, circa 1880's.....	64
5-8 Front Street reconstruction	64
5-9 Front Street with empty store fronts.....	65
5-10 Statue of Wyatt Earp	65
5-11 Cowboy Statue	66
5-12 Santa Fe Trail Remains.....	66
5-13 Ft. Dodge, late 19 th century	67

5-14	Ft. Dodge, 2009	67
6-1	Map of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument.	82
6-2	7th Cavalry Memorial	83
6-3	7th Cavalry scouts on Last Stand Hill	83
6-4	Custer National Cemetery	84
6-5	White Swan Memorial Library.....	84
6-6	Inside the Visitor Center	85
6-7	Spirit Gate at Indian Memorial	85
6-8	Bronze warrior tracings at Indian Memorial	86
6-9	Interior wall of Indian Memorial.....	86
6-10	Red granite marker.....	87

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- ACCEPTED HISTORY (ACCEPTED). History that is accepted to be true but may not have evidence that can either prove or disprove its factuality.
- IDEAL HISTORY (IDEAL). Perceived or preconceived idea of history or image of a site based upon representations in visual media and/or general knowledge of the site's real and accepted history.
- REAL HISTORY (REAL). History that can be considered factual based upon archeological evidence or verifiable written accounts.
- VISUAL MEDIA. Media such as film, television, the internet.

Abstract of Thesis Presented to the Graduate School
of the University of Florida in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Historic Preservation

THE IMAGINED FRONTIER:
THE IMPACT OF VISUAL MEDIA ON THE PRESERATION
OF THE AMERICAN WEST

By

Joshua K. Bodenweiser

December 2009

Chair: Peter E. Prugh
Cochair: Sara K. Williams
Major: Historic Preservation

In the minds of many Americans there exists a romance with the Western frontier. When one thinks of “The West,” images of cowboys and Indians, small towns with false fronts on buildings, or pioneers settling the wild frontier come to mind. Much of this is attributed to the influence of film and television on developing the American psyche in regards to history. The Western stories presented by visual media greatly impact how the early days of settlement in the West is interpreted.

This paper examines how several sites in the American Old West have traditionally been interpreted and preserved and explores how sites of this era can use media as a means to interpret or re-interpret their history, increase the awareness of historic preservation issues, and serve as an educational tool for the public in the preservation of other historic sites.

Employing mixed methods, the research for this study involved the exploration of myth and realism as written about by various authors, and careful examination of written histories concerning the Alamo in San Antonio, TX, Dodge City, KS, and the Little

Bighorn Battlefield National Monument in Hardin, MT. Research also included personal visitation to said sites with video documented interviews of curators and employees as well as the viewing and critique of numerous films and television programs on the subject. The research here illustrates the issues and challenges these three sites face in their interpretation and preservation of the various histories of events.

CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

There has long existed a romanticism with America's Western frontier. When one thinks of "The West," images of cowboys and Indians, small towns with false fronts on buildings, or pioneers settling the wild frontier for America may come to mind. Much of this can be attributed to the influence film and television has had on developing the American psyche in regards to history. The western stories presented in visual media have had a great impact on how the early days of settlement in the West is interpreted.

Before the advent of the motion picture, newspapers and dime novels were sensationalizing the West. It was a wild frontier with savage American Indians; a land being won and tamed by heroic pioneers, soldiers and generals, cowboys and lawmen. For many living in the East at this time, these stories seemed to be "true" depictions of life in the American West. With the arrival of the motion picture came the genre of western films. The stories of western themed dime novels laid the foundation for the story plots found in many western films.

The general storyline of the western however, is not a new one. The story of the hero on a journey, facing seemingly insurmountable challenges, often returning victorious has been a part of the human fabric since the dawn of time. It is myth and legend and when applied to the right story, it becomes history. Traditionally myths were passed on orally or were written down for future generations. At the turn of the 20th century mythic stories had a new outlet: the motion picture. The old saying "seeing is believing" made it easier for mass audiences to witness and carry on the mythic stories of heroes.

The film and television industries boomed in the 1940s – 50s and the western was at the center of it all. Stories were being told in such a new way that those watching would not have to think or imagine what a place looked like; they could see it presented both on the silver screen in theaters or on television in their living room. The public was inundated with the Old West, and its image, whether real or fictional, was embedded in the American psyche.

The popularity of the western genre in film elevates some historic sites in the American West to mythological status. This presents a challenge to the field of historic preservation. While media can provide a boost in tourism to historic sites of the Old West, those managing the sites must struggle with preserving the fabric and real history of a place while also engaging the tourist whose image of a site may be different than that of reality.

In 1979 D.W. Meinig asked several key questions that will be applied in the chapters to follow. “What were the landscapes which have served as the basis for these symbols really like? How do actual landscapes become symbolic landscapes? How can we assess the impact, the power of the symbol? How do we define and assess the significance of the difference between the ideal and the real?” (Meinig, ed., p. 164-177)

How do you interpret a site mythologized in the American psyche? How do you preserve a site whose real image may differ from its representation in film and television? How can the field of historic preservation use visual media (film, television, and the internet) to promote historic sites accurately? In a time when younger generations are gathering their knowledge primarily from film, television, the internet,

and even video games, the field of historic preservation must adapt and develop new methods to educate the public about historic sites.

Historic preservation is difficult on its own in terms of research, documentation, funding, and implementation of treatment plans. When the public has strong opinions about a particular site, it only makes it more difficult. Managing a site that has iconic value and draws strong imagery can pose unique challenges. Perhaps more than any other site that holds such fervent imagery in the minds of Americans are those sites considered part of America's Old West.

Three sites were selected and researched as case studies based upon their popularity in the media, their controversial histories, and their variance of historic fabric. The Alamo in San Antonio, TX was chosen for the building, the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument in Hardin, MT for the physical landscape, and Dodge City, KS for its reconstruction of several buildings of the era. This research hoped to find a way for historic sites that have been mythologized in film and television to use that visual media in their interpretation and preservation of real history versus Hollywood's mythologized history. What was discovered is that while the three sites researched discuss the differences in their interpretations of history versus that of Hollywood's, the ultimate question lies in the interpretation itself. An accurate definition of "true" history cannot be defined within the limits of these three sites due to a lack of, or conflicting eye witness accounts of events that helped shape the historic relevance of the sites.

Several details concerning the Battle of the Alamo as told by the surviving women differ from those recounted by the Mexican troops involved as well as inconsistencies among the Mexican troops themselves. Near the turn of the Twentieth

century, the townspeople of Dodge City and its city fathers attempted to eradicate the dark history of Dodge, replacing its saloons and dance halls with Victorian architecture, churches, and schools while downplaying or denying the raucous stories that made Dodge the “wickedest little city in America.” Just outside of Hardin, Montana lies the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, where for years the details of George Armstrong Custer’s last stand with his soldiers against surrounding American Indian warriors came from US soldiers who were not present at that fight.

With conflicting or missing accounts of historic events, these three sites have come to rely on archeological evidence to support or deny the theories of truth of events. This evidence combined with various written accounts leads to what can be considered “real” history. The creativity of Hollywood provides stories that can be based on real history and events and embellishes them for one reason or another. Perhaps because of the mass market of film and television and often the inability to neither prove nor disprove some of the representations of historic events in visual media and print, what has developed is an “accepted” history.

When visitors arrive to these historic sites they may have a general knowledge of the real and accepted history of a site but may also have preconceptions of what the site looks like based on what they have seen in film and television; constructing an “ideal” history. Those managing the sites must be able to educate visitors on the “real” history while also acknowledging both the “accepted” and “ideal” histories.

The following chapters will examine the ways in which historic sites are preserved; the role visual media can have in the field of historic preservation; and how

several sites in the American West whose places in history are intertwined with visual media manage their image and treatments for historic preservation.

CHAPTER 2 PRESERVATION OF HISTORIC PLACES

When discussing historic preservation it is important to understand the treatment approaches. The National Park Service maintains the standards officially known as the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties. The Standards are guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, restoring, and reconstructing historic buildings. The National Park Service defines the four treatments in hierarchical order:

“Preservation means the act or process of applying measures necessary to sustain the existing form, integrity and materials of an historic property. Work, including preliminary measures to protect and stabilize the property, generally focuses upon the ongoing maintenance and repair of historic materials and features rather than extensive replacement and new construction. New exterior additions are not within the scope of this treatment; however, the limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical, electrical and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a preservation project.

Rehabilitation means the act or process of making possible an efficient compatible use for a property through repair, alterations and additions while preserving those portions or features that convey its historical, cultural or architectural values.

Restoration means the act or process of accurately depicting the form, features and character of a property as it appeared at a particular period of time by means of the removal of features from other periods in its history and reconstruction of missing features from the restoration period. The limited and sensitive upgrading of mechanical,

electrical and plumbing systems and other code-required work to make properties functional is appropriate within a restoration project.

Reconstruction means the act or process of depicting, by means of new construction, the form, features and detailing of a non-surviving site, landscape, building, structure or object for the purpose of replicating its appearance at a specific period of time and in its historic location.” (Birnbaum, 1994, p.13)

That said, when choosing a treatment plan, consideration of funding often plays a part in the decision making process. Even though a site may be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Federal funding is rarely provided. Register listing provides some protection by means of guidelines and standards and while the owner(s) of a site follow the Secretary of Interior’s Standards, a site’s funding often impacts the level of treatment that can be done. Tax incentives and grants are sometimes available which may allow budget room for preservation efforts, but typically funding is provided in various ways by the public. This can come in the form of donations, fees, and tourism revenue.

CHAPTER 3 THE WESTERN MYTH IN FILM AND TELEVISION

The Old West has come to symbolize freedom, the American spirit for perseverance, and has given us images of heroes and villains. When we think of the West two things often come to mind: Hollywood and westerns. That's understandable considering that westerns are the major defining genre of the American film industry. It was a western that is considered to be the first American film to have a storyline. The Great Train Robbery, a silent film by Edwin S. Porter made in 1903, holds this title and the western film has been a mainstay in film and television ever since. While the western novels from authors like Louis L'Amour, Zane Grey, and Max Brand had their own impact on the perception of the American West, to attempt to include the western novel would reach beyond the scope of this research.

The western has endured with its recognizable plots, scenery, and characters. The gunfighter must fight villains for some cause, sticking to his code of honor and usually coming to the rescue of a damsel in distress. The hero always had a trusty steed and was a crackshot with a gun. The good guys wear white and the bad guys wear black. The good guys always win. Over time, westerns have been re-defined, re-invented and expanded, dismissed, re-discovered, and spoofed. This cycle of reexamining cultural myths has been happening for thousands of years.

Joseph Campbell explains in "The Hero with a Thousand Faces" that the hero myth has been around since the first stories were being told. He asserts that, "It has always been the prime function of mythology and rite to supply the symbols that carry the human spirit forward, in counteraction to those constant human fantasies that tend

to tie it back.” (2008, p.7). He compares the hero stories across cultures and identifies a basic journey that all heroes of myth venture on.

Myth does not have to mean false or fiction. Max Westbrook notes that a myth is also “the organized and shaped values of a people...[and also]...a special type of religion in which history, philosophy, literature, and religion are one.” (Meldrum, ed., 1985, p.19) Likewise, reality does not always equate to real. When mythic stories are used to explain events often they become perceived as actual, or real, history, such as the myths of King Arthur or the lost city of Atlantis. Similarly, real histories can have mythic properties and thus develop into mythic stories, such as the Spartan army’s triumph at the Battle of Thermopylae. This is evident in nearly all western films.

The commercial success of big-budget movies based on historical events such as James Cruze’s 1923 *The Covered Wagon*, a film about Westward expansion, spread the idea that the western relied on historical fact. (Blom, 1999, p.65). However, the reality that evolved was that the western film would continue a convention of blurring fact with fiction, real with myth.

One major issue with the western has always been whose myth, real or fictional is being told and by whom. Traditionally, western films have been dominated by storylines focused on the European American; often vilifying American Indians, Mexicans, and African Americans. Early westerns, and some even into the 1970’s, often used white Americans to portray characters of another race. “Hollywood’s Indian” a book edited by Peter C. Rollins and John E. O’Connor chronicles the portrayal of the American Indian in film from the earliest westerns on into the 1990’s. Rollins and O’Connor show how even when stories were sympathetic to American Indians, the

major roles were still played by white actors and the scripts were always written by European Americans; making it difficult, if not impossible, to truly tell a western story from the American Indian's perspective.

Widely considered one of the best westerns of all time, legendary film director John Ford's 1939 *Stagecoach* helped to reinvent the western. It was a social commentary on the idea of the frontier as well as current views toward ethnicity. The film showed that a western could be more than just the hero journey entertainment; it could challenge the way society and history are viewed. Ford's 1956 film *The Searchers* again challenged the perception of the western film. He addressed racism during a time in which America was wrought with it. He also introduced the anti-hero into the western, breaking ground for a newer, flawed hero in movie myth-telling.

Just as integral to the story of the western was the landscape in which it was filmed. Early westerns were filmed mostly in Hollywood studios but when location shooting became more common, producers and directors used remote areas of states such as New Mexico, Utah, Arizona, Texas, and California. John Ford began using landscapes as more than just a background; they became characters themselves. Ford's storytelling and use of landscapes helped give rise to the epic western; a longer, more character driven and complex type of western.

Those familiar with Monument Valley associate the park with westerns. Those familiar with westerns associate Monument Valley with John Ford; he used the setting in nine of his westerns. Association of historic sites and landscapes with film and television is not a rare occurrence. Many people know Devil's Tower in Wyoming from the film *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* or the Alamo Mission site in San Antonio, TX, from

the films about the Battle of the Alamo. If some historic places and landscapes are made famous in film and television, how is their interpretation effected and can such sites harness visual media to be used in their preservation?

CHAPTER 4 CASE STUDY: THE ALAMO IN SAN ANTONIO, TX

Perhaps one of the most powerfully symbolic sites in America lies in San Antonio, TX: the Alamo. It will forever be remembered in American history, but how did it come to achieve such symbolic status and how does it deal with the dichotomy between the ideal and the real history? To answer the question, “What were the landscapes which have served as the basis for these symbols really like,” the history of the Alamo, without embellishment, must be understood.

History of the Alamo

The Alamo mission compound began in 1718 as an adobe structure known as Mission San Antonio de Valero located near the San Antonio River. The mission moved to its present location in 1724; expanding over the next few decades to cover 3 acres. The mission served as home to missionaries and their American Indian converts for nearly seventy years. (DRT, 1997.)

The first permanent building was likely the two-story, L-shaped stone residence for the priests, now known as the Long Barrack. The building formed the west and part of the south edges of an inner courtyard, known as Convento Courtyard. Constructed of limestone blocks, the Long Barrack is one of the few existing structures remaining today. Up to 30 adobe buildings were constructed to serve as workrooms, storerooms, and homes for the American Indian residents, however none of these have survived.

The most recognizable structure on the compound is the church, now known as The Shrine. Construction of the church began in 1758. It is located at the south end of Convento Courtyard. Constructed of 4 feet thick limestone blocks, it was intended to be three stories high, topped by a dome, with bell towers on either side. Its shape is a

traditional cross, with a long nave and short transept. Although the first two levels were completed, the bell towers and third story were never begun. Four stone arches were erected to support the planned dome, but the dome itself was never built. (Thompson, 2005, p.18.)

Niches were carved on either side of the door to hold statues. The lower-level niches displayed Saint Francis and Saint Dominic, while the second-level niches contained statues of Saint Clare and Saint Margaret of Cortona. Carvings were also completed around the chapel's door. (Thompson, 2005, p.18.)

In 1793, Spanish officials secularized Mission San Antonio de Valero and the mission was soon abandoned. Ten years later the Second Flying Company of San Carlos de Parras, a Spanish military unit from Alamo de Parras in Coahuila, occupied the compound. The mission may have derived its new name from the grove of nearby cottonwood trees, known in Spanish as álamo or by the name given to the company, Alamo Company. (Thompson, 2005, p.19.) The post's commander established the first recorded hospital in Texas in the Long Barrack. (DRT, 1997.)

The buildings were transferred from Spanish to Mexican control after the Mexican War of Independence (1810-1821). During the Mexican occupation, the soldiers likely demolished the four stone arches and used the debris to build a ramp to the rear of the church where three cannon were placed. Additional fortifications included a palisade joining the church with the South Wall where Crockett held his position during the Battle of the Alamo. (Thompson, 2005, p.20.) At the time, Texas was still part of Mexico but the Mexican government wanted Americans to settle in the area, hoping they would convert to Catholicism and abolish slavery. The settlers included both

Americans and Mexicans known as Tejanos. The settlers would neither convert nor give up slavery. Dr. Bruce Winders, curator and Alamo museum historian, stated in an interview that one of the reasons the Texians, as the white settlers called themselves, fought for independence was for the right to own slaves. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009).

In 1835, Mexican President and General, Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna disbanded the democratic Congress that had been formed in 1824, amending the Mexican Constitution and creating a centralized government. The Texians organized their own provisional government in opposition to the Centralists. An uprising ensued, and the settlers began the seizure of the Alamo from Mexican troops.

In December of 1835, Ben Milam led Texian and Tejano volunteers against Mexican troops quartered in the city. After five days of fighting, they forced General Martin Perfecto de Cos and his soldiers to surrender. The volunteers then occupied the fortified Alamo and strengthened its defenses. In January of 1836, 300 of the approximately 400 volunteers were led away to engage in an attack elsewhere, leaving only 100 soldiers to guard the post. Additional men were requested but rather than send reinforcements, General Sam Houston sent Colonel James Bowie and 35-50 men to help move the artillery and destroy the Alamo.

Rather than destroy the Alamo and abandon the town of San Antonio, the soldiers made the decision to stay and hold the Alamo. In early February the governor of Texas sent Colonel William B. Travis and 100 men to reinforce the Alamo. Several days later, the famed politician from Tennessee, Colonel David Crockett joined the Texians.

On February 23, 1836, the Mexican army, under the command of General Antonio Lopez de Santa Anna, arrived in San Antonio and began the siege of the Alamo in an effort to retake the fort following the defeat of his predecessor, General Cos. The defenders held out for 13 days against Santa Anna's army. Colonel Travis sent out couriers carrying pleas for reinforcements. Eight days into the siege, a band of 32 volunteers from Gonzales arrived, but it was far less than hoped for and needed. The Alamo garrison believed the Mission was a key element in the defense of Texas, and they were ready lay down their lives in its defense. (DRT, 1997.)

On the morning of March 6, 1836, the Mexican army began what would be the final assault of the Alamo. Cannon and small arms fire from inside the Alamo beat back the first two attacks but succumbed to the third. The Mexicans scaled the walls and rushed into the compound. Most of the Texians retreated to the Long Barrack or the church. The Mexican soldiers captured a cannon and turned it on the Long Barrack and church, blasting open the barricaded doors. The Texians held out as long as they could but they were outnumbered. It is believed that only two defenders, aside from women and children, survived; one because he was a slave, and another because he claimed he was being held prisoner.

Word of General Santa Anna's victory spread, sparking an exodus of Texian colonists. On April 21, 1836 the Texian army, under command of General Sam Houston attacked General Santa Anna and his army in the Battle of San Jacinto. It is this battle that many of the Texians began to shout, "Remember the Alamo!" General Santa Anna was defeated and his troops were forced from Texas.

Following the Battle of San Jacinto, the Mexican soldiers stationed at the Alamo

spiked the cannons, tore down many of the Alamo walls, and set fires throughout the complex before abandoning the compound. Very few of the buildings survived. The chapel was left in ruins, most of the Long Barrack was still standing, the well in Convento Courtyard lay untouched, and the building that had contained the south wall gate and several rooms was mostly intact. (Thompson, 2005, p.20.)

In the 1840s debris from the Alamo compound was sold to tourists and by the end of the decade even the four statues on the front wall of the church were removed. When the U.S. military occupied the Alamo in the 1850s, they rebuilt the church and mission walls, adding a roof to the church as well as the now-famous bell-shaped façade, better known as “the hump”. (Thompson, 2005, p.103.) (Figures 4-1 and 4-2.)

In 1876 the army abandoned the Alamo and the Catholic Church sold the Long Barrack, known also as the convent, and courtyard. A two-story wooden building was added to the complex around this time and the convent and new building functioned as a mercantile grocery store operated by the Hugo and Schmeltzer Co. (Figure 4-2). Hugo and Schmeltzer sold the convent and courtyard in 1903 to the newly established Daughters of the Republic of Texas, or DRT. In 1883 the Church sold the chapel to the State of Texas and in 1905 the State named the DRT official custodians of the Alamo church and convent. Shortly after acquiring the property, the DRT had the Hugo and Schmeltzer Co. addition removed. (Figure 4-3). The state purchased the land between the Alamo church and Crockett Street in the 1930s and in 1950 the DRT opened the Daughters of the Republic of Texas Library in a building located directly east of the church.

To commemorate the 100th anniversary of the battle, the state of Texas erected

a large cenotaph carved with the likenesses of several of the defenders as well as all of the names of the Texians known to have fought and died inscribed on its base. The cenotaph was placed in the center of Alamo Plaza, in the approximate center of the original Alamo compound. (Figure 4-4). That same year saw the construction of the Sales Museum, also known as the gift shop. It is the primary source of income for the Alamo.

The Alamo was designated a National Historic Landmark on December 19, 1960 and in 1968, the Long Barrack was roofed and turned into a museum. Few structural changes have taken place since then. The Alamo is now a 4.2 acre complex though it is dwarfed by its surroundings. The original site has largely been replaced by shops, hotels, restaurants, and other tourist oriented businesses. Where the West Wall, or Alamo headquarters, once stood there is now a Guinness World Records Museum, Ripley's Haunted Adventure, Tomb Rider 3D adventure ride, as well as an entrance to the Riverwalk, an outdoor mall of sorts with restaurants and tourist oriented shops selling coonskin caps and other Alamo-related items. The North Wall has been replaced by a Federal Building while the skyline around the Alamo reveals skyscraping hotels and a multi-story shopping mall. (Figure 4-5).

The Alamo in Film

How do actual landscapes become symbolic landscapes? For the Alamo, its status as a symbolic landscape comes from its numerous incarnations in film and television. According to the Internet Movie Database, as of 2008, thirty-four films and television programs have been made about the Alamo (www.imdb.com/keyword/alamo); the first of which, *The Immortal Alamo*, appeared in 1911, only 75 years after the actual battle. It's possible that at the time this movie was released, some people really did

remember the Alamo. The most notable of all though are John Wayne's 1960 *The Alamo* and the 2004 film of the same name starring Billy Bob Thornton. Given the dramatic storyline of brave men fighting to the death against overwhelming odds, and the participation of such legendary figures as Davy Crockett, Jim Bowie, and Sam Houston, it's no surprise that the Alamo has intrigued Hollywood since before there really was a Hollywood. With so much exposure it's hard not to remember the Alamo.

Through its numerous depictions, the Alamo has come to symbolize courage and sacrifice for freedom. The church at the Alamo has come to be one of the most recognizable buildings in American history. Because of its importance in the Texas Revolution, almost immediately after the battle, stories of mythic proportion were being told. A number of myths and misconceptions that people accept as fact exist in large part because of various re-tellings of the story in books and visual media. Many films and television programs took to this story and embellished the battle and characters. It's these stories that most people remember and expect to be validated when visiting the site. However, since the battle, evidence has surfaced that contradicts a number of the popular myths and misconceptions, but with so few Texian survivors of the battle, it can be argued that the myths may in fact be reality.

The most controversial Alamo mystery involves the death of the battle's most famous participant: David Crockett, the former U.S. congressman from Tennessee. He was a writer whose exploits on the frontier, many of them fabricated for the sake of entertainment, had already made him a major celebrity in North America. In most film versions of the Alamo, Crockett goes down fighting. The image of the "King of the Wild Frontier" many have is John Wayne's portrayal of Crockett swinging his torch at the

Mexican army or Fess Parker's portrayal of Crockett swinging his rifle like a club before he is finally killed. The truth may have been a bit different. In 1955, a diary surfaced, supposedly written by one of Santa Anna's officers at the siege, José Enrique de la Pena. In it, de la Pena reported that Crockett and several other Alamo defenders survived the battle and were taken before Santa Anna, who had them executed immediately. (Long, 1990, p.258).

The idea that Crockett survived the fighting is not revisionist history. The notion that Crockett was captured and executed was accepted as doctrine for years after the battle. The 1915 D.W. Griffith film, *Martyrs of the Alamo*, depicts several survivors being executed after the battle but for story telling purposes, especially in Hollywood, it's a better story if the hero dies in action. Consequently this is not seen in film again for over eighty years. Several books have been written on the subject of Crockett's death, some in support of the de la Pena diaries, others contesting the authenticity of the diaries and contending that Crockett died fighting.

Colonel William Barrett Travis likely did not draw a line in the sand with his sword while asking the Alamo defenders to choose between surrendering, attempting to escape or fighting to the last man. Again, this makes for a great Hollywood scene, but there is no evidence to support this action.

It is not true that there were no male survivors among the Alamo defenders. At least four managed to survive or escape the final battle. Travis's slave, Joe, was spared possibly because he was assumed to have been a non-combatant or to serve as witness and warning to all Texan rebels. (Long, 1990, p.264) Another survivor, Brigado Guerrero, a former Mexican soldier, belonged to Captain Juan Seguin's unit serving

under Travis. He escaped death by claiming to have been held prisoner by the Texian rebels. Bowie's slave, Sam, was reported to have survived but his role in the battle is unknown. Henry Warnell, managed to reach Dimmits Landing, where he died of wounds suffered either before or during his escape. (Long, 1990, p.254-256). A fifth man, Louis Moses Rose, has the most controversial story. He is believed to have been the only man not to have crossed Travis's infamous "line in the sand." His story did not surface until thirty-five years after the fall of the Alamo and it was penned by a reporter who admitted to the embellishment of some of his other articles. (Long, 1990, p.232-234). Nevertheless, Moses Rose appears in nearly all of the films about the Alamo.

Finally, 8,000 Mexican soldiers did not attack the Alamo or suffer casualties of 1,500 to 6,000 men. Those numbers are closer to 1,800 total soldiers, of which approximately 600 were casualties.

What is missing from every Alamo film is the history of the Alamo itself. Every film centers around the battle, and understandably so. What often goes overlooked are the details and history of the Alamo Mission compound. Several films depict the Alamo with the "hump" even though it was not added until the 1850s. Others like *Martyrs of the Alamo* show the Alamo ornately decorated, almost palatial. John Wayne's version, while claiming to be the most accurate to that date, has the Alamo facing a different direction and situated near the Rio Grande rather than the San Antonio River. There are captions typically at the beginning of each Alamo film telling a brief history of the site prior to the Texas Revolution, but unless it is a modern day film, such as *Pee Wee's Big Adventure*, the Alamo's life after the battle is never discussed. However, even that film erroneously claims that the Alamo has a basement.

Despite the various myths and misconceptions, or perhaps because of them, people come in masses to visit the immortal Alamo. Many arrive with preconceived notions of what the Alamo will look like and may have a general idea of the history of the battle that occurred there. Still others will visit just because they're in San Antonio and the Alamo is a must see attraction. Whatever the case may be, millions people visit the Alamo annually, leaving an impact on the site and the city of San Antonio.

Tourism at the Alamo

How can we assess the impact, the power of the symbol? The simplest way is to look at the site in terms of tourism. The Office of the Governor, Economic Development and Tourism reports the Alamo as the number one attraction in the state of Texas. San Antonio has five of the top ten destinations in the state and reports over 21 million visitors each year and an annual economic impact of tourism over 8.7 billion dollars. (www.sanantoniotourism.com). While there is no charge to visit the Alamo, it is safe to say that the number one attraction in the state plays a significant role in the economic impact of tourism.

The impact of the symbol cannot be measured in tourism revenue alone. This is where the power of the symbol enters a grey area. How exactly can you measure the impact a place has on someone's mind? Most everyone knows the line, "Remember the Alamo!" but it is difficult to measure what people remember. A study would have to be performed on visitors to the Alamo inquiring what they associate with the site, what they know of its history, and how they learned the history.

Managing the Alamo

How do we define and assess the significance of the difference between the ideal and the real? Although the State of Texas holds the deed to the buildings, the

Alamo has been under the custodianship of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas since 1905. They are “dedicated to the preservation of the Alamo as a sacred memorial to the Alamo Defenders. The Daughters of the Republic of Texas is committed to the conservation of the historic grounds and the research and study of Texas History.” (DRT mission statement)

How though does the DRT manage to preserve a site that is so iconic; whose imagery is embedded in America’s psyche? There are several key issues that the DRT faces in its preservation and interpretation of events at the Alamo. The first is the most basic: which Alamo do they preserve; the Alamo that is in the imagination of many Americans or the realistic Alamo that is a battered building in the middle of downtown San Antonio?

The DRT has chosen a combination of both the real and the ideal in the preservation of the Alamo. The site is treated both as a museum, and a shrine. Men must remove their hats before entering, loud noise is not permitted, and photography is not allowed in the Shrine. The DRT has long since turned down efforts to reconstruct the Alamo as it was before the battle. They want to leave it as close to it was when the battle was over. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009).

The historic preservation treatment method they have employed would be considered “rehabilitation”. The mission, through its colored history is withstanding the test of time. However, it is at risk from environmental and human factors. The limestone used to construct the buildings was taken from the banks of the San Antonio River. Over the years, a combination of moisture infiltration and the severe temperatures of Texas are eroding the limestone and many of the carved details on the walls. In addition

to this, for many years, visitors were allowed to touch the walls, some visitors even graffitied sections where some soldiers had etched their names in the 19th century. Due to the number of people making contact with the walls, oil built up and a black film developed on the limestone. (Figures 4-6 and 4-7). The management has undertaken cleaning efforts to remove the film using non-abrasive techniques such as poulticing, but some of the details, including the etched names, are still being lost. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009).

In continuing with the treatment as a sacred memorial, there is no charge to visit the Alamo. All money used in preservation efforts comes from donations and sales in the Alamo Gift Museum.

Visitors coming to the Alamo are often a little disappointed with the site, but not for any lack of quality. Dr. Bruce Winders, historian and curator of the Alamo, states that many visitors thought the site would be bigger, or that they didn't realize that the Alamo was in the middle of downtown, surrounded by skyscrapers with an outdoor mall across the street. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009).

The Alamo is rarely depicted in visual media in its modern day context. In a matter of scale, the Alamo Mission is dwarfed by its surroundings. Multistory shops, hotels, and businesses obstruct any view of the Alamo for a visitor unless they happen to be standing in the Alamo Plaza. For those seeking to find the experience of the ideal Alamo depicted in films and television programs, they will have to venture outside of the city to the Alamo Village in Brackettville, TX. It is a reconstruction of the Alamo built for John Wayne's epic as well as the site for later film and television versions and documentaries on the subject of the Alamo. (Figure 4-1). It celebrated its fiftieth

anniversary in 2009, making it technically eligible to be the second Alamo on the National Register of Historic Places.

Another key issue in the interpretation of the Alamo is the sequence of visitation. When visiting the Alamo, it is difficult to gauge where to begin a tour of the site. There are several entrances to the complex, and while Dr. Bruce Winders states that the tour should culminate with a tour of the church, or Shrine as it is now called, most visitors choose to begin their tour here. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009). Inside are artifacts associated with the heroes of the battle and the serene feeling of a battleground. Exiting the Shrine, one will find the Alamo Gardens with their carefully manicured lawns and flower beds and the Wall of History, an outdoor diorama spanning the 300 years of Alamo history. (Figure 4-8). In the middle is Convento Courtyard, where every half an hour you can hear a live history talk of the battle. To the west of the Wall of History and across the Courtyard is the Long Barrack Museum. Opened in 1968, the museum contains the Clara Driscoll Theater where visitors may view a seventeen-minute film on the Alamo, a film produced by The History Channel exclusively for the site. The Long Barrack Museum also houses exhibits on the Alamo that explain its evolution from mission to fortress and finally to Shrine. (Figure 4-9). Directly across from the Shrine exit is the Alamo Gift Museum. Built in 1936, the building contains exhibits on the Alamo and Texas History. For further history of Texas and all things associated with the Alamo, study visits can be made to the DRT library located in a building on the eastern side of the church.

All throughout the Alamo complex are plaques and small monuments dedicated to those who fought and died during the battle as well as to those who fought for the

preservation of the site. In addition to that are plaques and three dimensional maps displaying the history of the site from its beginning to its present status. For an in depth tour, a visitor can either rent or purchase an audio tour produced by Discovery. The DRT and Discovery partnered in 2008 to create an audio experience that includes narration by historians and auditory re-enactments of key moments of the battle all cued to small numbered markers placed throughout the complex.

Dr. Winders stated that the Alamo staff would love to be able to update the short History Channel film shown in the Long Barrack but they lack the funding to do so. Currently it is formatted in video and the quality is slowly being lost. The staff would also like to have interactive displays but cite again the lack of funding and space is already limited in the Long Barrack. Another issue the staff sees is that the Alamo is not trademarked. In San Antonio hundreds of businesses use the image and name of the Alamo to the point when a new staff member mentions that they work at the Alamo, people ask which one. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009).

Perhaps the largest issue at the Alamo is that of whose story is being told. Over the years several different groups have challenged the state of Texas as to who should have custodianship of the Alamo. In her essay "We Run the Alamo, and You Don't: Alamo Battles of Ethnicity and Gender," (Brundage, ed., 2000, p.299-317) Holly Beachley Brear discusses the various issues raised against the DRT and their management practices. She claims that the DRT are holding on to the mandate given them in 1905 by the state to "be maintained by them in good order and repair, without charge to the State, as a sacred memorial to the heroes who immolated themselves

upon that hallowed ground.” (From plaque at the Alamo). Brear raises the issue of the Hispanic community’s involvement in the history of the Alamo and its lack of proper representation at the complex and in festivities held there throughout the year. The DRT, as explained by DR. Bruce Winders, maintains that the site is a monument and museum to those who fought and died at the Alamo in Texas’s war for independence. The complex is not just a memorial to the Anglo-Americans who fought, but also to the black slaves and Tejano men who fought alongside the Anglo Texians. The tours given at the Alamo attempt to tell both the Texian rebel side and the Mexican side of the battle in a non-biased way. The DRT attempts to present the history as the traditional story and place it in context with the events that were occurring locally, regionally between Texas/U.S. and Mexico, and internationally with what was going on in the world at that time. Dr. Winders compares the issue of representation and memorials to that of the Battle of Chapultepec during the Mexican-American War. The Chapultepec Park has a monument dedicated to the Ninõs Heroes who fought and died for their country while it lacks a monument to the Americans. The Ninõs Heroes, or Child Heroes, were six Mexican military cadets who fought to their death rather than retreat from an invading United States military. In the same way, the Alamo serves as a physical memorial to the members of the garrison while remembering all those involved through oral interpretation.

The Alamo story reaches beyond borders in that people all over the world can relate to the simple story of a small number of men facing insurmountable odds giving their lives for what they believe. It is because of this story of courage, devotion to duty, and self-sacrifice that the site has grown to mythological status. Over the years the

Battle has been likened to that of Thermopylae and the garrison soldiers have been dubbed the “Band of Spartans.” (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009). An example of this far reaching story is the oldest monument at the Alamo. (Figure 4-10). It was given to the Alamo in 1914 by a professor from Waseda University in Japan, Shiga Shigetaka. It serves as testament to the fact that the story of the Alamo and its defenders was known around the world long before Fess Parker and John Wayne. The professor likened the Battle of the Alamo to that of the Battle of Nagashino in 1575. Similarly, the battle at Nagashino featured a small contingent of men holding out in a castle being sieged by overwhelming odds. (Japanese Monument placard, 2009). The irony of this now is that an argument could be made that many people in the present day may only know of Thermopylae from film and television and the Battle of Nagashino from film and video games.

Conclusions

The popularity of the Alamo films and the mass audiences these films have reached continue to introduce more people to the events and history that occurred over 175 years ago.

The DRT is not doing a bad job in its preservation and interpretation of the site, but they can do more. According to Dr. Winders, the DRT has recently received a sizeable donation to the preservation of the Alamo. It is partly because of this donation that the management is able to afford the limestone cleaning that is underway. The management would like to purchase their own scaffolding and conduct inspections and cleaning on a regular basis. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009). If the DRT is to ensure the preservation of the Alamo for future generations, a routine maintenance program would have to be implemented with an

allocated budget set annually. Whether the funds come from donations such as the one recently received or allotted from the annual budget, the maintenance has to be made a necessity more than something on a wish list.

When it comes to the notion of which Alamo the DRT is preserving, the historic Alamo or the mythologized Alamo, the interpretation can get a bit complicated. The reality is that the Alamo Mission site contained barracks and an unfinished church. By taking those two buildings and rehabilitating them as a museum and shrine, the DRT has helped to perpetuate the idealized and mythologized stories associated with the site and those involved in the battle. If the DRT were to remove the “hump” and restore the church to the 1836 appearance, no one would recognize the Alamo. It would not have its famous façade or a roof and the church would be further exposed to the elements and deterioration. The Long Barrack would likely suffer the same fate. The decision to rehabilitate rather than restore is likely the reason that the Alamo Mission has survived. When visitors come to the Alamo, many expect to see the bell-shaped façade and may assume that the church is all there is to the Alamo. Dr. Winders states that one of the main topics the guides discuss in their tours is the explanation that the Alamo Mission was much more than one building. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009). This may be an uphill battle as the image of the Alamo is repeatedly depicted only as the church.

Throughout the city of San Antonio, the Alamo’s bell-shaped façade is seen in the logos of numerous businesses, all claiming the Alamo as part of their name. There are auto dealerships and car rental companies, car washes, cafes, insurance companies, hotels; the list goes on. The Alamo Mission suffers from a branding issue.

Unfortunately, it is not likely that the Alamo Mission will ever be able to copyright its name and image. The image of the church does however open up an educational window to teach visitors about the original size of the Mission and the scope of the battle.

The men who fought and died in the defense of the Alamo are highly revered in the United States and more so in the state of Texas. In rehabilitating the church as a shrine to the members of the defending garrison, the DRT has helped to elevate the men to a god-like status. Dr. Bruce Winders, states that David Crockett, James Bowie, and William B. Travis are even referred to as a Holy Trinity by Alamo scholars. (Personal communication with Dr. Bruce Winders, 28 January 2009). When such a status is bestowed upon these men, it becomes difficult to interpret their involvement as anything less than a mythologized account of history. Visual media has played into this mythology. Only recently with the 2004 film, *The Alamo*, has there been a real attempt to portray the Alamo defenders with a more realistic or mortal approach. By that time, however, the mythic image of the defenders had already been cast.

One way that the Alamo can capitalize on its image and the mythological status applied to it is to use the very media that has perpetuated this ideal image and history. The Alamo Mission lacks the space for any interactive displays, as the sheer volume of visitors would likely render any such display ineffective. The DRT could instead set certain nights for public viewings of films about the Alamo, followed by discussions of the portrayed events versus the real history. Each Spring the city of San Antonio conducts Fiesta, an eleven day celebration honoring the heroes from the battles of the Alamo and San Jacinto. This would be an opportune time to showcase the films and

educate some of the 3 million visitors who participate in the events of the festival.

Another issue that the DRT faces is the sequence of visitation. Dr. Winders feels that the visitation should conclude with the tour of the Shrine, but as the church is the primary reason visitors come to the Alamo, it is typically the first stop on their tour. There are several entrances into the Mission and maps are available, but the only prescribed sequence of visit is through the rental or purchase of the Discovery Audio Tour. The audio tour offers a more in depth history of the Alamo and the battle, however, it does require a fee and even the audio tour makes an early visit to the Shrine. If the DRT implemented a system for a prescribed sequence, it would have to be different from the numbering system used for the audio tour, but to do so would inevitably cause confusion. One area that could be addressed is the lack of signage noting where the original boundaries of the Mission are located. There are a few small scale models of what the site originally looked like but there is only one display in the Long Barrack museum that shows a pictorial overlay of the original Mission on the current city of San Antonio. Simple street markers could note where the various walls and buildings stood. This would give interested visitors a physical idea of the size and scope of the Alamo Mission while also increasing the probability that the visitors would explore the surrounding shops and attractions.

Finally, the issue of whose story is being told can be addressed in a similar manner as the forum for showcasing films about the Alamo. The Alamo Mission is by order of the state of Texas, a memorial to those “heroes who immolated themselves upon that hallowed ground.” (From plaque at the Alamo). The site serves preeminently as a memorial to the members of the garrison who fought for Texas’ independence.

While there may not ever be an additional memorial to the Mexican soldiers who gave their lives for their country during this battle, there can be better interpretation of their role and view of the battle. An opportunity to explore the Mexican side of the battle during the annual Fiesta celebration could go a long way in appeasing a portion of the Hispanic population that longs for more involvement in the Alamo's interpretation of events.



Figure 4-1. Alamo Village, Bracketville, TX. Church seen on right without the bell-shaped façade or “hump.” (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 4-2. The Alamo, circa 1889-1910. Church seen with addition of the bell-shaped façade or “hump.” Hugo and Schmeltzer Co. addition to the Long Barrack in background. (photo courtesy of the DRT, 2009. Photographer unknown)



Figure 4-3. The Alamo Plaza 1919, after Hugo and Schmeltzer Co. had been removed. (photo courtesy of the DRT, 2009. Photographer unknown)



Figure 4-4. Cenotaph. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 4-5. Emily Morgan Hotel in background. Shrine and Long Barrack can be seen in foreground. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 4-6. Detail of limestone: upper niche, front of Shrine, contains biological growth. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 4-7. Detail of limestone and wood window, Long Barrack. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 4-8. Wall of History. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 4-9. Inside the Long Barrack. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 4-10. Japanese Memorial. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)

CHAPTER 5 CASE STUDY: DODGE CITY, KS

Perhaps there is no town in America that better embodies the mythic West than Dodge City. Its history helped shape the way western stories are told and in a turn of events, the mythic West has shaped the enduring history of Dodge City.

History of Dodge City

The opening of the Santa Fe Trail in 1821 brought settlers to the west in search of fortune and land claims. The Trail became a great commercial route stretching from Franklin, Missouri to Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 1865, the U.S. military opened Fort Dodge in Kansas on the north bank of the Arkansas River. The fort was to provide protection for wagon trains, the U.S. postal service, and to serve as a supply base for troops engaged in the American Indian wars. (Faulk, 1977, p.25).

In 1866 Richard M. Wright secured a contract to supply firewood to the fort and the following year he had opened the post sutler's store, a supply store similar to the modern day convenience store. There Wright sold to the soldiers among other things, whiskey. Colonel Richard I. Dodge assumed command of Fort Dodge in the spring of 1872 and found his enlisted men and officers drunk on duty. Shortly thereafter he ordered an end to the sale of alcohol to his soldiers. With buffalo hunting centered around the area, soldiers with money to spend, traffic from the Santa Fe Trail, and the coming of a railroad, Wright and several other business men looked to form a township outside of the fort's jurisdiction. (Faulk, 1977, p.41-43).

A few buildings had already been erected west of the fort, the first of which was a three-room sod dugout house erected by rancher Henry L. Sitler in 1871. His home became a frequent stopping place for buffalo hunters and traders. In the spring of 1872

George M. Hoover began the first bar in this new location when he drove his wagon load of whiskey five miles west of the fort and out of jurisdiction. There he erected a tent around two posts of sod where he laid a board as a bar and sold whiskey by the shot. Others, including Wright, soon followed; setting up a general merchandise store, a barber shop, restaurant, and dance hall, all operating out of tents. (Dodge City CVB, 2009). Wood framed buildings began to spring up and by the time the new Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad drew near in 1872, a new town was waiting.

Originally named Buffalo City, due to the booming buffalo trade, it was forced to change its name because there was already a Buffalo, KS. Residents agreed that Dodge City would be an appropriate choice for a town near Fort Dodge and commanded by Colonel Dodge. Many businesses sought to make their fortune by catering to the baser needs of the hunters and soldiers. Drinking, gambling, and prostitution were allowed and the buffalo hunters spent their money as soon as they earned it. Buffalo were hunted and slaughtered at a horrendous pace. Unfortunately the buffalo were being killed so rapidly that by 1880 they were nearly extinct. By 1876 the town needed a new source of income. Texas cattlemen driving a new breed of cattle, the Texas Longhorn, north along the Chisholm Trail needed a place to feed the cattle before shipping them off to market. Dodge City promoted itself as a place where the cowboys and all their vices would be tolerated. The town quickly gained a reputation as a lawless, anything-goes, gun-slinging town with the center of corruption on Front Street. (Vestal, 1972, p.89)

Front Street was split over the railroad tracks. The north side was respectable while the south side contained every type of debauchery, leading the city to be called

the “wickedest little city in America.” Richard M. Wright, one of the founders of the city and author of “Dodge City, The Cowboy Capital,” makes a point to note that the town had its share of reputable men and women and that any who wished to cause trouble were promptly dealt with. Peace in the town was kept by several now famous lawmen and gunfighters such as Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday, Bill Tilghman, Ben Thompson, Luke Short and Bat, Ed and Jim Masterson. There was a substantial amount of sin occurring in the city but not as much as east coast newspapers wrote about. (Wright, 1975, p.139). Newspapers wrote of gunfights, gambling, loose women, and Boot Hill, the infamous cemetery on the hill northwest of Front Street. Here is where many gunfighters slightly slower on the draw were interred. They died with their boots on and buried just as they were, giving rise to the name. Other towns may have their own Boot Hill but Dodge City had the first. (Vestal, 1972, p.16). Boot Hill was used until 1878 when the real estate was deemed too valuable to be used as a cemetery and it was sold. The bodies were removed from Boot Hill by the following year and were re-interred in the new Prairie Grove Cemetery northeast of town. (Faulk, 1977, p.151).

The town continued to grow and prosper and Front Street came to represent all that was the Wild West. It had its balloon framed buildings with false-fronts, dusty streets roamed by gunfighters and cowboys, gamblers, and women of ill-repute. It was more than the wickedest city in America; it was the Cowboy Capital and the Queen of the Cowntowns, and its tenure was brief. In 1885 two fires ravaged Front Street, destroying several blocks; rumored to have been the work of town prohibitionists. As the second fire burned, a signal flag used by the local weather bureau forecasted a blizzard. The worst storm since the founding of the town in 1872 hit Dodge City on New Year’s

Day 1886 with a second storm hitting January 13th. An estimated half to three-quarters of the cattle in the county died and the winter of 1886-1887 was even worse. When spring came, cattlemen decided to head elsewhere and with many ranchers and businesses bankrupt, the town became farm country. (Faulk, 1977, p.187-189).

The farmers were not patronizing the saloons and dance halls and so Dodge City became like so many other Kansas towns, surviving off of wheat and trying to hide its sordid past. In the years to follow and into the 20th century, books and magazines were printing stories about the Wild West, particularly stories about Dodge City. The town and the city fathers were busy trying to eradicate all that was the wickedest city, constructing a mixture of buildings of various architectural styles. The oldest building still on its original site is the Mueller-Schmidt House, also known as the Home of Stone, dating to 1881. Constructed of native limestone quarried north of Dodge City, it was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972 and is home to the Ford County Historical Society. (Figure 5-1). Dodge City currently has eleven sites listed on the National Register, most dating from the end of the 19th century post-cowboy era, to the 1920's pre-Depression era. Buildings such as the Carnegie Center for the Arts built in 1907, a classical style building incorporating a tiered dome center and the original home of the Dodge City Library, served to establish the town as a respectable community, safe for families and travelers. (Figure 5-2). To welcome visitors to Dodge, the city constructed a new depot in 1897, complete with a hotel and restaurant, to replace the original 1873 depot lacking in resources and a reminder of the wild past. (Figure 5-3).

The years following the Great Depression breathed new life into Dodge. Motion pictures and the western movie brought about a renewed interest in Dodge City. A town

that had spent the last several decades trying to erase its past was now quickly embracing it and has not stopped since. The 1939 film, "Dodge City," starring Errol Flynn and Olivia de Havilland brought 50,000 fans to the city when it premiered in Dodge with its stars in attendance. Several other films soon followed and the town was cashing in. A new museum was built at the Boot Hill site in 1947 containing pioneer artifacts and western memorabilia as well as a rebuilt cemetery with catchy epitaphs. An annual Boot Hill festival celebrating the history of the town was begun shortly thereafter. (Faulk, 1977, p.197).

Then *Gunsmoke* arrived in 1952. It ran on as a radio broadcast show from 1952 to 1961 and on television from 1955 to 1975. Set In Dodge City in the 1870's, it centered on the adventures of United States Marshal Matt Dillon, his friend and town doctor Doc Adams, and "Miss Kitty" Russell, proprietor of the Long Branch Saloon. Tourists flocked to the city to see the Old West where Matt Dillon laid down the law. In 1958 a three-quarter scale replica of one section of Front Street was added to the Boot Hill Museum. (Figure 5-4). Visitors could dine and watch a show performed by "Miss Kitty" in the Long Branch Saloon or step out in the street and witness a gunfight or ride in a stagecoach.

1970 brought promise and change to the city. As tourism boomed, Dodge City fell prey to urban renewal in an effort to expand its downtown and build a convention center and motel. In the process, the city tore down several blocks of Front Street, demolishing the Victorian style brick buildings constructed after the fires of 1885. The convention center was never built. Instead, the space created was filled by fast food restaurants and souvenir shops.

Little has changed since then. The replicated Front Street is still there alongside the Boot Hill Museum which now has an exhibit showcasing a 1960's era living room dedicated to *Gunsmoke*. The museum has moved an 1879 two-story Victorian house to the property as well as a restored 19th century one room school house. (Figure 5-5). While the museum does pay homage to its various film and television incarnations, its main focus is the factual history of Dodge City; with exhibits ranging from the Plains Indians, the cowboy era and Victorian Kansas.

Dodge City does the best that it can with what it has. The south side of Front Street is now industrial business while much of the historic fabric of the rest of town has been destroyed. (Figure 5-6). Dodge City may not be the "Cowboy Capital" anymore but it still is "Queen of Cownowns." The city is home to two beef processing plants, processing an average of 10,000 cattle a day; making Dodge the number one beef processing city in the world. (Personal interview with Bob Lancaster, 2 February 2009). What historic buildings remain are cared for and showcased and the reconstruction of Front Street can be just as valuable to the historic preservation and interpretation efforts of Dodge as the authentic fabric. In this case, since many of the original buildings are no longer present, the reconstructed Front Street can provide visitors an idea of what the area may have looked like in the Old West as well as providing a contextual contrast to the present Front Street and the city of Dodge. (Figures 5-7, 5-8, and 5-9).

Dodge City in Film

How did Dodge City become a symbolic landscape? Through film, television, and print the Wild West came alive and was embodied in Dodge. According to the Internet Movie Database, as of 2008, at least fourteen films and television programs have been made about Dodge City (www.imdb.com/keyword/dodge-city-kansas), the most

recognizable ones being the 1939 Errol Flynn film *Dodge City* and the radio and television program *Gunsmoke*. Other films and programs have featured storylines with Wyatt Earp or Bat Masterson as the lawmen of Dodge but none of these received more acclaim or brought more visitors to Dodge City than the aforementioned titles. Both *Dodge City* and *Gunsmoke* follow the adventures of a fictional lawman, or good guy, who battles a criminal(s), or bad guy.

Dodge City featured all of the “western” elements. It had a race between a locomotive and a stagecoach, a cattle drive and stampede, gunfights, fistfights, and barroom brawls, barroom ladies and can-can girls, a beautiful heroine and a shady lady as a counter, and of course, a good guy wearing a white hat and a bad guy wearing black. The film blended facts with fiction, incorporating a plausible fictional storyline into actual historic events occurring in and around Dodge City circa mid-1870’s. While the Dodge City in the film had several “real” locations, such as the train depot and the Lady Gay Saloon, the actual film was shot in California with a landscape far different than that of the flat plains of Kansas. *Gunsmoke* featured many of the same western elements and similar storylines. *Gunsmoke* was also filmed in California and featured the Long Branch Saloon. Historically, the Long Branch, while it did feature singing and piano, did not feature dancing or a stage. The Long Branch Saloon in the reconstructed Dodge City resembles a saloon more similar to that of the television show than the Long Branch of factual Dodge. In reality, the Long Branch was on the respectable north side of Front Street whereas the dancing girls could be found on the south side in the Lady Gay. (Faulk, 1977, p.96).

Aside from minor discrepancies like this, the films and television programs give a fairly accurate portrayal of Dodge City's history as depicted in news print in the late 19th century. Because of its history, Dodge City cannot provide a truly "authentic" experience for visitors. But what visitors want when they do go to an Old West town like Dodge City is not authentic either. The stories written in newspapers and dime novel books taken to be history were often exaggerated for danger and excitement. Odie B. Faulk states it well when he wrote:

"Yet modern Americans, beset by pressures and living in an insecure world, want – even need – to believe that such a place existed and that by visiting the site they can touch that less complicated era when a man met an insult, real or fancied, with fist and gun. Old Town at the west side of Dodge City satisfies a need. Boot Hill Cemetery with its fake gravestones satisfies a need. In a commercial society the tourist pays for this gratification." (Faulk, 1977, p.199).

Tourism in Dodge City

Can the impact of the mythologized Dodge City be measured in tourism revenue? In the mid 20th century during the heyday of the western, it would have been easier. During that time, visitors were flowing into Dodge to see Matt Dillon, Miss Kitty, Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday, and the Masterson brothers lived. The combination of Interstate 70 replacing Highway 50 in 1970 and *Gunsmoke* ending its twenty year run in 1975 led to a drop off in tourism to Dodge City. Whereas 70,000 people may have shown up to the world premiere of *Dodge City* in 1939, today the city may get 70,000 visitors all year. The economic impact is low, with most of the money being continually recycled by the residents. (Personal interview with Bob Lancaster, 2 February 2009).

In the next few years, Dodge City hopes to change that. Bob Lancaster, arts and tourism coordinator for the city, explained in a 2009 interview that the city is opening a casino and hotel near Boot Hill. The first phase is set to open in December 2009 with phase two opening in 2011. The casino will be the only one in the state and will have an Old West theme. The city hopes to draw more visitation, and given its proximity to downtown Dodge, provide more of an economic impact in the years to come. (Personal interview with Bob Lancaster, 2 February 2009).

In the meantime, Cathy Bell, assistant curator at the Boot Hill Museum stated that now that the western has faded from its glory days, she finds that more visitors are coming for the history of Dodge rather than for its place in Hollywood. *Gunsmoke*, however, is in syndication, becoming popular among international tourists who still come to see the Wild West. (Personal interview with Cathy Bell, 2 February 2009). The comment made most often by new visitors to Dodge is that they thought there would be mountains and hills like in the movies. Locals have to then explain that the films and programs made about Dodge City were filmed in California. (Personal interview with Bob Lancaster, 2 February 2009). This often leads to discussions on real history versus Hollywood history, a topic most locals are well versed in.

Managing Dodge City

How do we define and assess the significance of the difference between the ideal and the real? This has been at the heart of discussion in Dodge City since the advent of the western story. Most of the authentic historic properties in Dodge City have been destroyed, whether by the fires of 1885 or the urban renewal that took place in the 1970's. Given that the city cannot undo its past, Dodge does what it can with what it does have. With tourism numbers steadily declining since the end of *Gunsmoke* in 1975

and the current recession the city struggles to find money for site management. Many of the historic properties are owned or operated by the city and with funding in short supply; it is hard to make Dodge City an attractive place to visit. The Santa Fe Depot has recently been restored to its beauty of 1897 but is not open to the public except by advance appointment. Such is the case with many of the historic buildings in Dodge. The only way to see the historic Dodge is by taking the walking tour.

The Convention and Visitor's Bureau provides a self-guided tour map with an accompanied audio CD available for rent or purchase. The city also has the Trail of Fame, a walking tour of the historic district marked with bronze medallions in the sidewalks dedicated to the various citizens of Dodge, real or fictional, as well as several sculptures and statues. (Figures 5-10 and 5-11). While the audio tour does a fine job of giving a brief history of the city and the stops along the way, it is not enough to distract a visitor from the lack of sites along the way to the next destination. Downtown Dodge is plagued by empty storefronts and buildings and not enough attention paid to attractions other than Boot Hill Museum. Nine miles west of Dodge is a historic marker for the Santa Fe Trail Remains. Added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1966, visitors can see the remains of the wagon trail that was used from 1821 to 1872. (Figure 5-12). It is owned and managed by the Boot Hill Museum. East of town, visitors can see Fort Dodge. Serving as the Kansas State Soldiers Home, several original buildings still remain, including the commanding officer's quarters, enlisted men's barracks, and the post hospital. (Figures 5-13 and 5-14). Unfortunately, none of the original buildings are open for viewing.

Boot Hill Museum remains the top attraction in Dodge, offering a variety show and gunfights during the summer. But much like the city's financial problems, the museum struggles with funding. The museum cannot afford to staff year round entertainment or living history personnel and the three-quarter scale replica of Front Street is over fifty years old and needs continual maintenance. The museum is restoring a 19th century one room school house but lacks the additional funding needed to properly maintain the 1879 Victorian house located in the back corner of the property. Ongoing maintenance such as painting and repair to walls and doors is relatively inexpensive but the museum has a small staff and general maintenance can be time consuming. Aside from that, the commercial development over the years has detracted from the museum's location on Highway 50. The museum is situated between two restaurant chains, and the open concrete parking lot in front of the museum provides the sights and sounds of the highway; reminding visitors of the disparity that is Dodge City. The museum's entrance is confusing. Visitors try to enter through the iron gate that fronts the museum's parking lot side instead of going through the Great Western Hotel that is the gift shop and entrance. The traffic flow throughout the museum is also unclear. There are painted footsteps that lead from the gift shop to the cemetery and museum but these can be missed because as the visitor exits the gift shop, the eye is immediately drawn to the replicated Front Street.

The overall experience at the museum, however, can be pleasant. The exhibits are well organized, though some in need of updates, and most visitors will not know that the Long Branch Saloon's interior did not look the way it is reconstructed. It resembles more of the Long Branch from *Gunsmoke* and is oriented with the bar on the opposite

side than that of the real saloon. The museum's management knows and understands its challenges and must find ways to address them. The city and museum staffs hope that the future casino and hotel will draw visitors and improve the economic impact, providing much needed funds for preservation projects. (Personal interviews with Bob Lancaster and Cathy Bell, 2 February 2009).

Conclusions

Dodge City reflects a fascination with the Old West and represents a town finding a balance between myth and reality. Boot Hill continues to be the main attraction of the city but Dodge needs to draw more attention and visitation to the other sites the city has to offer. Despite the fact that much of the historic fabric has been destroyed and replaced with modern additions, a valuable and rich history can be told.

Like the Alamo, Dodge City has an opportunity to make use of the visual media that has helped create the city's image for use in its preservation and interpretation. Every summer the city celebrates its history with Dodge City Days, a ten day festival that features events such as concerts, a rodeo, parades, and staged gunfights. During this time, the Boot Hill Museum and the Convention and Visitors Bureau could screen films about Dodge City and conduct forums discussing the differences and similarities of Dodge's onscreen representation with that of Dodge's real history. The challenge with this is that there is little tangible authentic history left in Dodge City. To showcase a film or television show may serve as a stark reminder of the destruction of the city's historic fabric. In the same respect, the city could turn that into a teachable moment about the importance of historic preservation.

As it stands, Dodge City is an interesting mixture of preservation and interpretation. The Santa Fe Trail Remains are one of the last real vestiges of the city's

Old West while the Trail of Fame is a modern attempt to reclaim Dodge's weathered past. The irony of the Trail of Fame is that there are more inductees from film and television than there are real persons who lived in Dodge. The Boot Hill Museum includes a reconstruction of a portion of Front Street whose interiors bear a resemblance to those seen in *Gunsmoke* as well as an authentic 19th century Victorian home. While the home did not originally exist on Front Street, the museum should be commended for the effort to preserve the structure for interpretive use.

Dodge City seems to celebrate and promote more of an idealized history than a real history. For Dodge, the ideal, or mythological image *is* its history. Early on, Dodge City was written about in a larger-than-life image and film and television perpetuated the ideas. Dodge City is somewhat unique in that its old history inspired a mythic perception while the same mythic perception inspires the city's present history and its interpretation of its past.

Dodge City looks forward to the construction and operation of the Boot Hill Casino and Resort. It is expected to increase visitation and provide a sizable economic boost to the city. It would be wise to tie the new casino to Dodge's gambling history. Visitors may come to the casino for the gambling and entertainment but if Dodge City cannot provide the history of the Old West, the casino may suffer the same fate as the empty stores that populate downtown Dodge. This is not to say that Dodge City should create an entertainment atmosphere at the expense of its preservation and education. Rather, the city should find ways to make its preservation, interpretation, and education more entertaining. Tapping into the film and television industries to do so would be a logical step.



Figure 5-1. The Mueller-Schmidt House, aka the Home of Stone. Home to the Ford County Historical Society. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-2. Carnegie Art Center, formerly Dodge City Library (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-3. Santa Fe Depot. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-4. Boot Hill Museum, Front Street replica in background. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-5. 1879 Victorian house. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-6. Front Street, south side. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-7. Front Street, north side, circa 1880's. (photo courtesy of the Boot Hill Museum, 2009. Photographer unknown).



Figure 5-8. Front Street reconstruction, north side. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-9. Front Street with Pizza Hut and empty store fronts. (photo: J. Bodenweiser, 2009)



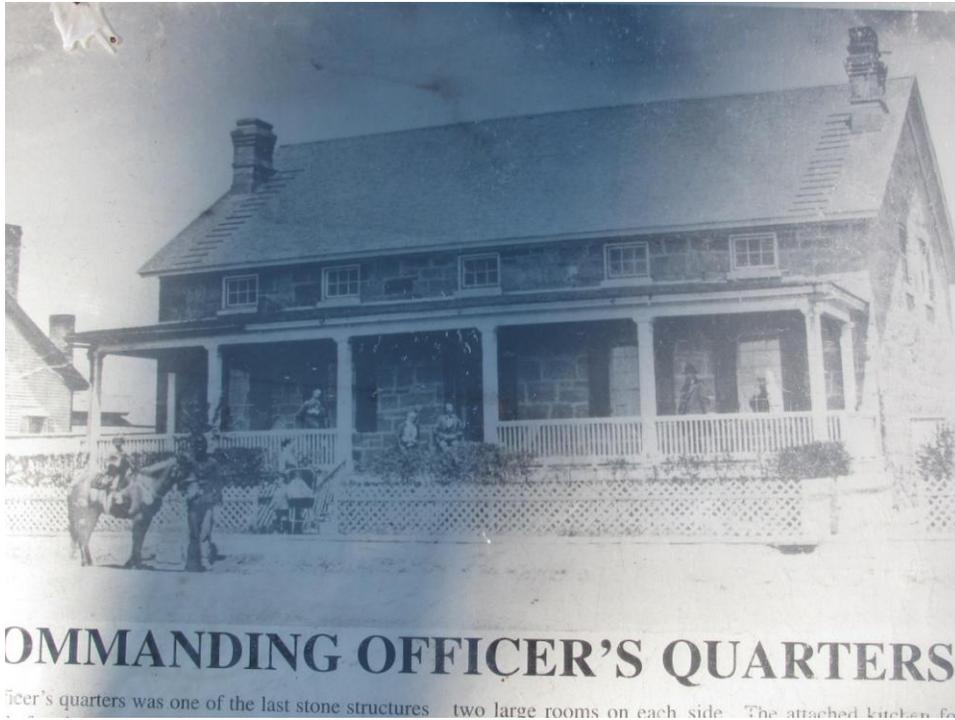
Figure 5-10. Statue of Wyatt Earp on the Trail of Fame. (photo: J. Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-11. Cowboy Statue outside of Old Municipal Building. (photo: J. Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 5-12. Santa Fe Trail Remains (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



COMMANDING OFFICER'S QUARTERS

The quarters was one of the last stone structures... two large rooms on each side... The attached kitchen for...

Figure 5-13. Commanding Officer's Quarters at Ft. Dodge, late 19th century. (photo from placard in front of building, 2009)



Figure 5-14. Commanding Officer's Quarters at Ft. Dodge, 2009. (photo: J. Bodenweiser, 2009)

CHAPTER 6
CASE STUDY: THE LITTLE BIGHORN BATTLEFIELD NATIONAL MONUMENT,
HARDIN, MT

The Battle of the Little Bighorn is perhaps the most renowned fight in the white American's settling of the West. It is also one of great contention and myth. Hollywood has made numerous films about the battle and Lt. Colonel George Armstrong Custer and thousands of books have been written on the subject. To attempt to detail the battle and the misconceptions and controversies would be a large undertaking of similar fashion. What is important is the influence film and television has had on the site and its preservation.

History of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

Gold was discovered in the Black Hills of South Dakota in 1861, creating an influx of prospectors and settlers to the area considered sacred by the Lakota (or Sioux) Indians. In an effort to cease hostility towards pioneers and people building the railroads, the U.S. government signed the Fort Laramie Treaty with the Lakota in 1868. This treaty granted the land west of the Missouri River to the Lakota and prohibited settlers and miners from entering the Hills without authorization. (Hatch, 1997, p.73). Settlers continued to enter the area and reports of gold circulated.

Lt. Colonel George Armstrong Custer was commander of the United States Army's Seventh Cavalry and a veteran of the American Civil War and the American Indian Wars. Victorious in an 1868 campaign to establish a supply camp in American Indian territory known as the controversial Battle of Washita River, Custer was sent to the Black Hills in 1874 to find a suitable location for a fort. Along with him in this expedition were a sizable outfit of geologists and miners. (Hatch, 1997, p.18-21). Custer announced the presence of gold and by 1876, reports estimated approximately 10,000

people were settling in the Hills. In 1875 the federal government attempted to purchase the Black Hills; if the tribes refused, rations and provisions at the reservations would be terminated. Unsurprisingly, the Lakota tribes refused. Whether in an attempt to gain control of the land or to protect settlers, an ultimatum was issued by the United States ordering all Lakota and Northern Cheyenne people to report to reservations by January 31, 1876. The Great Sioux War of 1876-1877 had begun. (Hatch, 1997, p.16-18).

Located on federal land near Crow Agency, Montana, the Little Bighorn River and the lands surrounding is the site of one of the most famous battles in American history. (Figure 6-1). In June 1876, the U.S. Army was dispatched to force those American Indians who ignored, or were unaware of the order, onto reservations. The ensuing Battle of the Little Bighorn and defeat and death of Custer and his five companies proved to be a catalyst in the army's campaign to seize the land and claim ownership of the Black Hills. This remains the most controversial issue for the Plains Indians.

In his book "The Day the World Ended at Little Bighorn," Joseph M. Marshall III explains:

"If the Battle of the Little Bighorn had been a victory for the U.S. Seventh Cavalry, it would have been an expected part of the pacification campaign. And if Custer had split his forces in that scenario and won, he probably would have been called a genius. But in real life he split his command and lost. Consequently, he is vilified for not following orders because he did not wait for General Terry, for attacking prematurely, and for further tempting fate by splitting his forces. Custer's defeat and death became an opportunity to win public support. Now the government *had* to subjugate the Lakota

for what happened at the Little Bighorn. That was the rallying point. The 'Indian wars' became something of a holy war because American blood had been spilled in the cause of Manifest Destiny. Uncivilized minions had blasphemed civilization. There was nothing to be done but punish in the name of righteousness." (2007, p.227)

On June 28, 1876, the bodies of Custer and his command were buried at or near where they fell. Just weeks after the battle, plans were being made for a memorial to Custer and his men. Newspapers circulated stories about half-buried bodies; so the public and Army lobbied Congress for a cemetery. One year after the battle, Company I of the Seventh Cavalry returned to the site to exhume the bodies of the officers for burial elsewhere and the proper burial of the enlisted soldiers where they had fallen. (Hatch, 1997, p.114). Custer's body was buried at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY. On August 1, 1879 Custer Battlefield National Cemetery was established. On Custer Hill, now named Last Stand Hill, a log memorial was erected and individual graves were marked with wooden stakes. Two years later the log memorial was replaced with a white granite obelisk bearing the names of the soldiers, scouts, and civilians killed in the battle. At this time the remains of the rest of Custer's command were reinterred in a single mass grave near the monument. (Figure 6-2). In 1890 the Army erected 249 granite headstone markers across the battlefield denoting where Custer's men had fallen. (Figure 6-3). (NPS, 2007). The involvement of the American Indians in the Battle of the Little Bighorn has been the most contentious issue in the interpretation and management of the battlefield site.

An 1886 order by President Cleveland defined and set aside an area for military purposes. This created the National Cemetery of Custer's Battlefield Reservation. This

was later shortened to Custer National Cemetery; the first change in a process of controversial re-namings. The cemetery contains the remains of nearly 5,000 veterans from the American Indian Wars to Vietnam. (Figure 6-4). Notable veterans interred are Maj. Marcus Reno, Custer's second in command, and several of Custer's scouts, including Curly, White-Man-Runs-Him, and Goes Ahead. The first building erected on the site was the two story stone cottage, known as the Stone House. (Figure 6-5). When the first superintendent, Andrew N. Grover, arrived in 1893, construction began on a home for him and his family. Today it functions as the White Swan Memorial Library, named after one of Custer's scouts whose ledger art hangs in galleries around the country, including the Smithsonian. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, Chief of Interpretation at LBHBNM, 5 February 2009).

In 1930 the Reno-Benteen Defense Site was added, expanding the battlefield to just over 765 federal acres. The site consists of two parcels: the main parcel containing the ridge where Custer made his last stand (Last Stand Hill), and the second parcel containing the site of the Reno-Benteen defense perimeter. The two parcels are connected by a 4.1 mile national monument road. In 1940 the United States War Department transferred jurisdiction of the battlefield to the National Park Service. In 1946 the site was renamed Custer Battlefield National Monument. It was renamed once again in 1991 by an act of Congress to Little Bighorn National Monument in order to recognize the participation of the American Indian in the battle. The same act ordered the construction of an American Indian Memorial. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009).

The park opened a Visitor Center and interpretive museum in 1952. The museum features U.S. military and American Indian artifacts, dioramas depicting the battle, artwork, documents, photographs, and maps. (Figure 6-6). Inside the Visitor Center is a bookstore selling a wide array of printed material on the subject of the battle. Here visitors pay the park fee to tour the battleground and in the summer time, listen to a ranger talk about the battle.

In 1966 the site was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. For years the site remained a memorial only to the U.S. soldiers. A fire in August of 1983 scorched the battlefield; in the process unearthing new artifacts that revealed new information concerning the events that happened in 1876. Archeological surveys began the following summer and continued in 1985, 1989, 1991, 1994, and 1999. (NPS trail marker). This new evidence confirmed early American Indian reports of the battle, including details of where skirmishes occurred and where soldiers fell. These findings helped lead to the advocacy of the construction of an American Indian memorial and acknowledgment of their version of events.

With the change of the park's name in 1991 came an order to erect an American Indian memorial near the 7th Cavalry memorial on Last Stand Hill. A design was selected in 1997 and the memorial was dedicated on June 25, 2003. Selected for the theme of "Peace Through Unity," "The Spirit Warriors" design consists of an earthen enclosure with three large scale bronze tracings, representing Sioux, Cheyenne, and Arapahoe warriors. A spirit gate opens on an axis connecting and revealing the 7th Cavalry monument. (Figures 6-7, 6-8, and 6-9). Texts, narratives, quotes, crafts, artifacts, offerings, petroglyphs and pictographs cover the interior walls of the enclosure.

In 1999 the National Park Service began erecting red granite markers where Cheyenne and Lakota warriors are known to have fallen. (Figure 6-10). Some white markers were placed for the Arikara Indians, enemies of the Cheyenne and Lakota, who fought on the side of the U.S. Army. There are currently eighteen red granite markers; so few because after the battle many of the American Indian warriors' bodies were removed and given tribal burials. Because of this, there is no known definite number of American Indian warriors who died at the Battle of the Little Bighorn.

The Little Bighorn in Film

How did the Little Bighorn become a symbolic site, what is it symbolic of, and how has it reached mythic proportions? The first and third parts of that can be answered by the influence of media. George Armstrong Custer was a self promoter and one who enjoyed not only fame, but the fight of battle. He gained notoriety for his success in the Civil War and his campaigns against the American Indians in the West. Custer had more pictures taken of him than Abraham Lincoln and was considered a national figure, much like a movie star of today. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009). Because of Custer's prominence in the media at the time, it is likely that the Battle of the Little Bighorn was destined for the history books and film regardless of the outcome. The battle has reached mythic proportions due to the inconsistency of the many recounts of the battle and the animosity felt towards the American Indian people since the early days of Manifest Destiny.

News media and Hollywood have provided a platform for the various sentiments of the battle over the years. Soon after the battle, Anheuser-Busch, a St. Louis, Missouri beer brewing company, commissioned a painting of "Custer's Last Stand" distributing a print of it to saloons all over America. The painting itself was so common that it became

a cultural icon itself. It can be seen in the Custer Battlefield Museum in nearby Garryowen, MT, with reprints available for purchase. Some prints are believed to still be found in some bars. The painting has been regarded as highly inaccurate, but it's to be expected when there were no white survivors of Custer's command and the recounts of the American Indians were for a long time ignored, or misinterpreted by the media of the time. Any reports made by U.S. soldiers were speculation as they would have arrived after the battle.

It should come as no surprise then that Hollywood has been enamored with the myths surrounding Custer since the advent of the motion picture. The first film on the subject was *On the Little Bighorn or Custer's Last Stand* in 1909. It was a silent film directed by Francis Boggs that featured three Sioux who were present at the battle. The film no longer exists. Several more films were made about Custer over the next few decades; most notably *They Died With Their Boots On*. The 1941 film starred Errol Flynn as Custer and Olivia de Havilland as his wife, Elizabeth. The film had its share of inaccuracies, but it was made during WW II at a time when Custer was still a national hero. The film is clearly a call to arms for Americans to support the war, going so far as to even have Flynn's Custer dying in front of an American flag blowing in the wind.

Errol Flynn's Custer likely had more influence on the public's perception of Custer and the battle than any other film on the subject until Arthur Penn's 1970 film *Little Big Man*. While the film is about the life of fictional Jack Crabb, a white man raised by Cheyenne who was present at the battle, Richard Mulligan's portrayal of Custer as a mad man changed the public perception of Custer and the events of the battle. Like the 1941 epic film, *Little Big Man* was filmed during war time. The Vietnam War had been

going on for several years and *Little Big Man* served as a social commentary on the war; comparing the Battle of the Washita River to the raiding of Vietnamese villages and killing of women and children by U.S. soldiers. While many of the details surrounding Custer and the Battle of the Little Bighorn were erroneous, *Little Big Man* is one of the few films actually filmed on the Crow Agency Reservation. Most of the films prior to this, including *They Died With Their Boots On*, were filmed in California; giving visitors to the battlefield a false sense of place.

Son of the Morning Star in 1991 was filmed primarily in South Dakota and is generally lauded as the best interpretation of the characters and events of the Battle of the Little Bighorn. It presents both the U.S. Army's version and the American Indian version of events in an unbiased and historically accurate manner. Gary Cole's portrayal of Custer is neither the perfect American hero nor a raving lunatic, but a well-balanced and complex character whose actions that day in June 1876 will never be fully understood.

Tourism at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

It was not long after the battle that visitors began coming to the site. Ken Woody, Chief of Interpretation at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument stated in an interview that at least once a year the surviving U.S. soldiers and American Indian warriors would return to the site, paying respect to those who died and retelling the events of the battle. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009). A Burial of the Hatchet ceremony took place in 1926 during the fiftieth anniversary of the battle just south of the Little Bighorn Monument in the town of Garryowen, site of the first skirmish of the battle. The event occurred in front of 50,000 observers, white and American Indian alike.

Ken Woody explains that the National Park Service has attendance records dating back to around 1900 and that a graph has been developed showing the visitation trends. He has noticed the fluctuation positively and negatively during the times of war and various economic crisis, and sharp increases occurring shortly after the release of a film about the battle or the area. A dramatic increase took place after the release of *Dances with Wolves* in 1990 and *Son of the Morning Star* in 1991. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009).

The National Park Service maintains park statistics on their website (2008) and show a dramatic decrease in attendance, or “Total Recreation Visits for the Fiscal Year,” from 426,650 visits in 2003 to 263,690 visits in 2008. The park draws a lot of its visitation from people traveling to the Glacier, Yellowstone, and/or Black Hills National Parks. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009). However, upon further examination of these park statistics, while the Little Bighorn’s attendance has been on a steady decline, the other parks in the vicinity have maintained a relatively steady number of visitations; all significantly higher than the Little Bighorn. (NPS, 2009). One reason for this may be the park’s location. Unlike the other National Parks in Montana, there is little development in the area surrounding the Little Bighorn. Its remoteness may add to the reverent feel of the site but it may also detract visitors who wish for more activities.

The numbers show positive fluctuation concurrent with the release of films about the area, prompting Ken Woody and the staff at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument to have a running joke that they need another good western movie to be distributed. Woody hopes that the Ken Burns miniseries *The National Parks: America’s*

Best Idea broadcasting on PBS at the end of September 2009 will increase attendance. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009). If the PBS miniseries does happen to increase visitation, a proper study of the impact of film and television on attendance at historic landmarks could be warranted.

Managing the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument

“The primary purpose of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument is to preserve and protect the historic and natural resources pertaining to the Battle of the Little Bighorn and to provide visitors with a greater understanding of those events which lead up to the battle, the encounter itself, and the various effects the encounter had on the two cultures involved.” (Court and Co., 1995, p.3). Managing the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument has had its share of issues over the years since its inception, the largest of which is the memorialization of American Indian tribes involved in the battle.

Initially set aside as a monument to Custer and the fallen U.S. soldiers, little to no regard was given to the American Indian side of events. Well into the latter half of the 20th century, Custer and his command were given the hero treatment while American Indians were often vilified. Not until the American Indian Movement (AIM) was founded in 1968 did American Indians truly begin to receive recognition for their role in the battle. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009). Still, it took 115 years after the battle and an act of Congress to change the name from Custer Battlefield National Monument to its more inclusive present name and the order to erect an American Indian Memorial in proximity of the 7th Cavalry monument. The monument was to “formally acknowledge the American Indian perspective and to recognize and honor Native Americans who struggled and died to preserve and defend their homeland and

traditional way of life.” (Wester, ed., 2008, p.57-58). It took an additional twelve years to see the implementation and completion of the new monument.

Over its 133 year history many ideas and interpretations of what actually happened during the Battle of the Little Bighorn have surfaced and played out, often in Hollywood films. The National Park Service has had to find a balance of realism versus myth in its interpretation of events. Ken Woody, Chief of Interpretation at the site, admits that the NPS has not always done a good job of that. Many former park rangers were of the mindset that Custer was a true American hero and faultless in his role in history. Whether the early park rangers intended to or not, they often tainted the image of the American Indian in the history of the battle. As Hollywood changed and the AIM became more involved in the site, the Park Service began to take a more unbiased approach in its interpretations. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009). Still the challenge of breaking myths supported by Hollywood is presented on a daily basis. After all, the site is run by the National Park Service and the rangers have to be mindful of how they present the facts. Ken Woody states that the occasional visitor gets distraught over the way the history is presented. Some have strong opinions about Custer and/or the treatment of the American Indian tribes and these visitors’ feelings and beliefs are sometimes hurt in the process.

In the 1930’s on into the 1950’s park rangers unwittingly gave away bullets and casings as souvenirs to visitors, simply because there were so many to be had. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009). Management of archeological artifacts and evidence is better cared for today, especially since the fire in 1983 that unearthed artifacts that supported the American Indian perspective of the battle.

Archeological surveys were since conducted and are slated to continue, with the uncovered artifacts often gaining placement in the interpretive museum inside the Visitor Center. Museum entrance is free with paid entrance to the battlefield.

As there is very little development at the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument, the cost of maintenance at the site is kept fairly low. Occasionally the marble markers in the field, headstones in the cemetery, and memorials have to be cleaned using non-toxic, non-abrasive cleaners. The road connecting the two parcels of the site has to be snow plowed in winter and cracks in the road and sidewalks have to be repaired each spring. Signage has to be checked and repaired as necessary but that occurs less frequently. The cemetery grounds are kept mowed and clean while the battlefield is allowed to grow. The fire of 1983 has led to the practice of the occasional prescribed burning to promote new growth and the prevention of future fires. Since the site is a part of the National Park Service, it is subject to federal funding. Proceeds from the bookstore and visitation are given to the Park Service, with funding then allotted to the site for maintenance. (Personal interview with Ken Woody, 5 February 2009).

With visitation number low over the past several years, the park has had to change some of the ways it manages its tours. Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, visitors can take part in live ranger programs and talks as well as the fee-required Little Bighorn College Apsaalooke Native American guided bus tour. Given the lower attendance, the park ranger tours are less frequent and cover less material. The park does offer year-round self-guided tours with pamphlets as well as an audio tour available for an additional fee. Throughout the park are signs with text and pictures

explaining how and where the battle was fought with comparative maps highlighting the physical landscape.

The preferred flow of the tour suggests the visitor start with an eighteen minute video in the Visitor Center that gives a brief overview of the battle. This should be followed by a ranger talk and then the tour of the battlefield beginning at the Reno site and culminating at the 7th Cavalry and American Indian Memorials. After this, visitors are encouraged to browse the museum and visit the Custer National Cemetery.

Conclusions

The biggest issue that the National Park Service traditionally faces in its preservation and interpretation of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument is that of whose story is being told. In the years since the battle, the interpretations have grown more inclusive of the American Indians. The perception of Custer as a faultless hero and the American Indians as horrible villains has changed. Films and television programs have evolved their interpretations of the history of the battle as have the NPS. Since the park is run by a governmental institution, it is not likely that the site would have showings of the various film and television depictions of the Little Bighorn. The park rangers could however hold discussions on the evolving interpretations of events at the site as seen in visual media and at the site itself. Another outlet to conduct this could be through websites such as www.friendslittlebighorn.com, operated by The Friends of the Little Bighorn Battlefield with a link from the NPS website. The Friends... is the official National Park Service cooperating association affiliated with the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. The website details the known and accepted history of events as well as maintaining current and historic photos of the battlefield and articles about Custer and the American Indians.

Aside from the day to day operation and management, the park rangers also face the challenge of attracting visitation. As mentioned, some of the park rangers feel the need for another western film to be distributed in order to increase visitation. The problem with this is that it becomes a cycle. The rangers daily face the issue of having to dispel the myths perpetuated in film and television, yet they feel the way to create buzz and visitation is by having more films released. Visual media may impact the visitation to an extent, but the NPS and park rangers cannot count on it. The state of Montana does a great job of advertising the site in various tourist magazines that are available for free at any Montana rest area. The NPS can capitalize on this idea and advertise the Little Bighorn in the other NPS parks in Montana and surrounding states. Yellowstone National Park attracts millions of visitors each year and is located just over 230 miles west of the Little Bighorn. The distance may seem great but there are several sites and attractions one hour away in Billings, MT. Further research would have to be conducted to develop an idea of what percentage of visitors to Yellowstone goes on to visit the Little Bighorn. If the Little Bighorn can attract a fair amount of Yellowstone visitors, they may be able to budget for an increase in frequency of ranger talks and develop more interpretive programs.

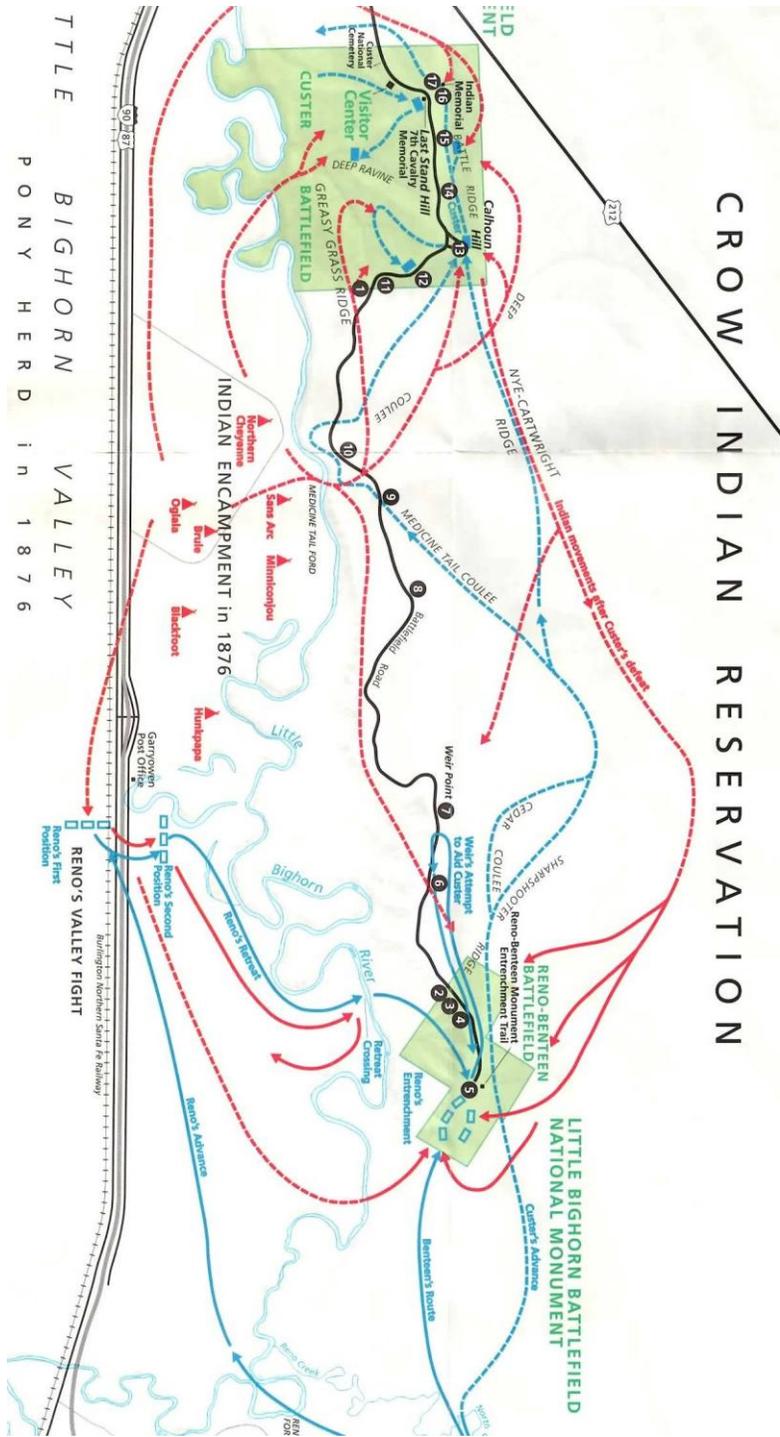


Figure 6-1. Map of Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument. The cemetery is to the left of the Visitor Center, 2007. (reproduced from NPS map received upon visitation of site, 2009)



Figure 6-2. 7th Cavalry Memorial, 1881 (photo: David F. Barry, 1881, reprinted from postcard, 2009)



Figure 6-3. 7th Cavalry scouts on Last Stand Hill, 1913. L-R: White-Man-Runs-Him, Hairy Moccasin, Curly, and Goes Ahead. (photo: Rodman Wanamaker, 1913, reprinted from postcard, 2009)



Figure 6-4. Custer National Cemetery. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 6-5. Custer National Cemetery with White Swan Memorial Library in background. (photo: NPS photo, date unknown, reprinted 2009)



Figure 6-6. Museum displays inside the Visitor Center. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 6-7. 7th Cavalry Memorial viewed through Spirit Gate at Indian Memorial. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 6-8. Bronze warrior tracings at Indian Memorial. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)

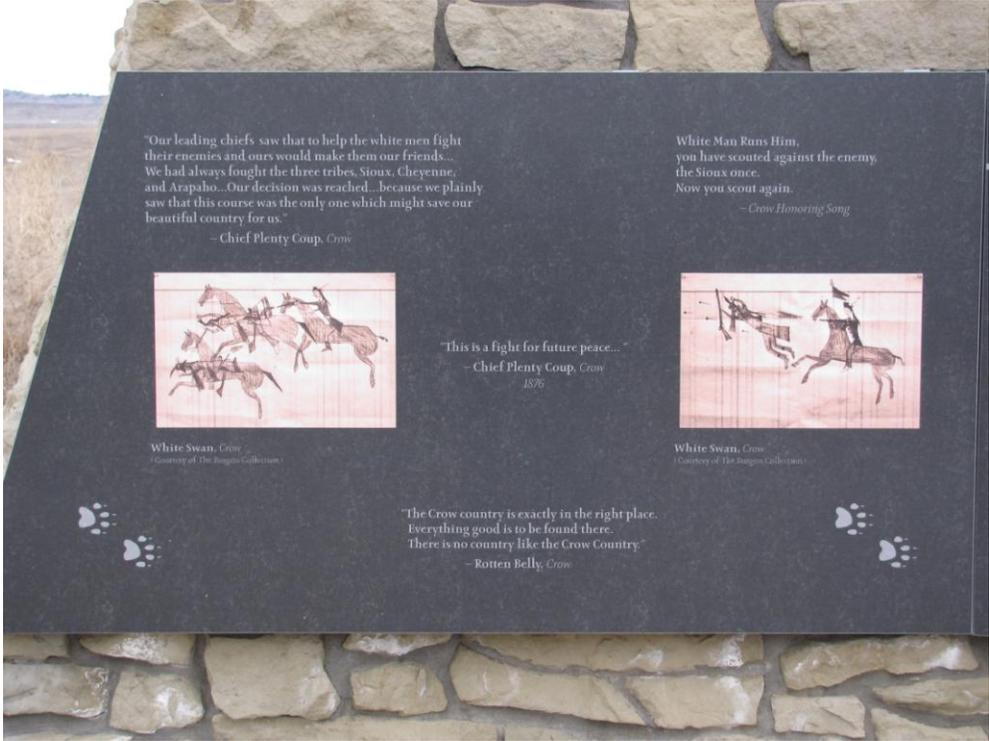


Figure 6-9. Interior wall of Indian Memorial showing ledger drawings by White Swan. (photo: J. Bodenweiser, 2009)



Figure 6-10. Red granite marker for American Indian warrior, map marker in foreground. (photo: J.Bodenweiser, 2009)

CHAPTER 7 CONCLUSION

Frederick Jackson Turner, an American historian in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, declared in his thesis “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” for the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair that the American frontier was closed. In it, Jackson describes how the frontier shaped the American spirit and how westward expansion changed people’s cultural views. The frontier may indeed be closed but it lives on in the realm of film and television. The western is such a part of our film history that often when one thinks of an historic event or site of that era, images from films and television are what people recall as representative of true history. Odie B. Faulk wrote:

“Because of constant repetition in magazine, book, film, and teleplay, most Americans today believe in the myth of the western ‘good guy’ and western outlaw. The West to them was a place where bad guys rode black horses and wore black hats: cattle rustlers, horse thieves, whiskey peddlers, gun runners, unscrupulous American Indian agents, train robbers, Army deserters. The good guys rode white horses and wore white hats: sheriffs, deputies, town marshals, train detectives, cattle association agents, Wells Fargo men, Pinkerton operatives, U.S. Marshals. The two sides each had their own following in the form of gang and posse, and they clashed in gunfights at high noon when men were ordered to leave town before sundown... This was a lawless, restless, brawling, fighting, eye-gouging, ear-biting land, every man carrying a gun low on his hip, holster tied securely to thigh, ready to draw and fire with incredible speed and accuracy. It never existed.” (1977, p. 199).

Americans, and to an extent the world, want to believe in such a West and feel that by visiting an Old West site they can experience a part of its history. The problem

that occurs, as Harold P. Simonson stated in 1989, is that too often there lies the tendency to over symbolize, or mythologize a place to the extent that the actual place, people, and history is eclipsed by myth. (p.170). This is evident in the cases of the Alamo in San Antonio, TX, the city of Dodge City, KS, and the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument in Hardin, MT.

All three sites struggle with trying to balance the popular image of the site versus the real history. Each site's history is unique, but given the blurring and sometimes overlapping mythologies developed in Hollywood films, the line between myth and realism is confused. The public may be aware of the names of each of these sites and associate images of the Old West with them but it is likely that few people could positively explain why each site is important.

To briefly summarize, the Alamo Mission was nearly completely destroyed after the Battle of the Alamo in 1836, but due in large part to the efforts made by the Daughters of the Republic of Texas, the site has been preserved and rehabilitated as a museum and shrine. Its role in film and television has often been incorrect; its story subject to speculation due to the lack of survivors.

Due to the fires in 1885 and the urban renewal that swept the city in 1970, little remains of Dodge City's colorful past. Unlike the Alamo and Little Bighorn, Dodge City tries to play up the myths that fill its history. The city highlights its role in film and television with the successes of *Dodge City* and *Gunsmoke*. While the city as a whole acknowledges the inaccuracies of each, it recognizes the need of visual media to attract visitation.

The Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument is one of the most controversial battlefields in the United States, in turn garnering much attention throughout Hollywood's romance with the western. The battlefield has been scrutinized by the American Indian people for years, who until recently did not have any memorial of their own at the site.

The sites have their varied issues with preservation techniques, funding, and tourism. The common thread is the interpretation of events at each site. Each site's history is re-imagined in Hollywood, often erroneously, and therefore the respective management must spend time exposing myths in its own interpretation at the site. So how can these sites and other historic sites with similar issues harness the attention given by Hollywood and use media to encourage visitation, educate visitors, and encourage preservation of the sites?

One way, as discussed earlier, is to showcase the films and television shows that depict the sites, followed by a discussion of the differences and similarities of the portrayed histories in media and the presented histories of the site. The three sites researched are all currently using media by offering short, historically accurate videos on site as well as self-guided audio tours. All three sites acknowledge their place in Hollywood history whether by signage or personal talks with tour guides and park rangers. However, with the ever evolving advances in technology it is becoming easier to offer more visual media to a mass audience while keeping costs down.

Most cell phones can now record video and handheld camcorders are becoming smaller, lighter, cheaper, and easier to use. It may be safe to say that most visitors to a historic site have, on hand, the capability to record video images of their visit to a site

and upload these videos to the internet with little turnaround time. For just a few dollars a month, the management of a historic site can host a website where these videos can be posted. A forum like this can offer unique perspectives and variable viewpoints of a sight.

The research for this thesis involved personal visits to each site, interviews with the curators, and documentation of it all on a high-definition hand held camcorder, digital voice recorder, and digital camera. Even after reading extensively on each of the three sites, preconceived notions of what each site would look like abounded. The real history of the site was known, and what was not certain truth was made acceptable truth. The number of men killed and the more notable names of those involved in the events were known. That was real history. The notions that David Crockett did not surrender and Custer died with his boots on were acceptable histories. But despite knowing for certain that Dodge City does not have mountains, an idealized image of the city based on *Gunsmoke* was firmly ingrained in the mind's eye. Looking at these sites through the viewfinder of a camera became an experience in its own right.

Examining a site through a video camcorder and then editing the footage into a finished product creates a hierarchy of events. Films and television shows have done this for years and certain historic events may have become more important than they really were simply because they were depicted in film. There is little question of the importance of the Battle of the Alamo and its involvement in the Texas Revolution. Its significance in American history has been the subject of many films and television programs. Is the story of the USS Maine, a battleship whose explosion and subsequent

sinking helped provoke the Spanish-American War, any less significant simply because it has not been depicted in a major film or television show?

This experience raised the question of, “What is truth,” when applied to the history of a site? The majority of what is accepted as true history is based upon evidence that can be verified with written or oral accounts of events. In the cases studied, the histories of the sites are not entirely known. There were few survivors of the Texian garrison, a denial and possible exaggeration of events that occurred in Dodge City, and no United States survivors of the combat involving Custer and his men. Because of the lack of evidence, it became easy to elaborate and elevate the events to the point where they have been mythologized.

Some history, like that of the Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument has changed dramatically over the years. For nearly one hundred years after the battle, Custer was depicted as a nearly faultless hero and the American Indian was seen as a villain. This was accepted as true history; no evidence suggested otherwise. As time waged on, other viewpoints, particularly those of the American Indians involved in the battle, began to surface. Archeological evidence and corroborating accounts of events gave credibility to the American Indian viewpoints of events. The “truth” concerning the history of the battle changed. American Indians were no longer vilified and their place in the site’s history has been memorialized and Custer was cast in a different light; maybe not any less brave, but shown to have faults. So much like a scientific theory, “true” history is only true until evidence suggests otherwise.

Claude Levi-Strauss wrote, “But nevertheless the gap which exists in our mind to some extent between mythology and history can probably be breached by studying

histories which are conceived as not at all separated from but as a continuation of mythology.” (1995, p.43). Hollywood has perpetuated the myth of the West; the wild frontier whose borders may be physically closed but whose imagined presence lives on in perpetuity. Winston Churchill said, “We shape our buildings and afterwards, our buildings shape us.” In the same manner, our history creates myths and our myths create our history.

Our interpretation of history evolves as our understanding of our various cultures evolves. Sara L. Spurgeon wrote, “Literature from and about the West allows us to continually reimagine how multiple cultures should coexist, how humans should interact with nature, what we should think and how we should feel about our history and our future.” (2005, preface p.ix). Each historic site has a history that pre-dates the major event(s) just as it has a post-history. The preservation of a site, that is the physical treatment, is part of this history and should be interpreted as such. The three sites studied and any historic site preparing its interpretation should be willing to include multiple versions of history. Not all versions will be the same or even legitimate. Each visitor will bring their own preconceived ideas of a site and what it should look like. Therefore the challenge for those managing the site is to undertake the seemingly impossible task of presenting an unbiased and true history, with the understanding that there may not be a “true” history.

LIST OF REFERENCES

- Birnbaum, C.A. (1994). 36 *Preservation Briefs: Protecting Cultural Landscapes: Planning, Treatment, and Management of Historic Landscapes*. Washington D.C.,
- Blom, M. B. (1999). *Stories of Old: The Imagined West and the Crisis of Historical Symbolism in the 1970s*. Uppsala: Uppsala University. National Park Service
- Brear, H. B. (1995). *Inherit the Alamo: Myth and Ritual at an American Shrine* (1st ed.). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Brundage, W. F. (2000). *Where These Memories Grow: History, Memory, and Southern Identity*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- Burns, K. (Producer). (2009). *The National Parks: America's Best Idea* [Television Series]. United States: Public Broadcasting System.
- Campbell, J. (2008). *The Hero with a Thousand Faces* (3rd ed.). Novato, CA: New World Library
- Carnes, M. C. (1995). *Past Imperfect: History According to the Movies* (1st ed.). New York: H. Holt.
- Cinema Center Films (Producer). (1970). *Little Big Man* [Motion Picture]. United States: National General Pictures.
- Columbia Pictures Corporation (Producer). (1977). *Close Encounters of the Third Kind* [Motion Picture]. United States: Columbia Pictures.
- C.V. Whitney Pictures (Producer). (1956). *The Searchers* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures.
- Daughters of the Republic of Texas (1997). *The Story of the Alamo: Thirteen Fateful Days in 1836*. San Antonio, DRT
- Dodge City Convention and Visitors Bureau. (2009). *Dodge City History*. Retrieved February 9, 2009, from <http://www.visitdodgecity.org/index.aspx?NID=66>
- Faulk, O. B. (1977). *Dodge City, the Most Western Town of All*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Fine Arts Film Company (Producer). (1915). *Martyrs of the Alamo* [Motion Picture]. United States: Triangle Distributing Company.

- Hallowell, T. (Executive Producer), & Hancock, J.L. (Director). (2004). *The Alamo* [Motion Picture]. United States: Touchstone Pictures.
- Hatch, T. (1997). *Custer and the Battle of the Little Bighorn: An Encyclopedia of the People, Places, Events, Indian Culture and Customs, Information Sources, Art and Films*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Co.
- Internet Movie Database. (2008). Alamo film search. Retrieved December 17, 2008, from <http://www.imdb.com/keyword/alamo>
- Internet Movie Database. (2008). Dodge City film search. Retrieved December 17, 2008, from <http://imdb.com/keyword/dodge-city-kansas>
- Jackson, J. B., & Meinig, D. W. (1979). *The Interpretation of Ordinary Landscapes: Geographical Essays*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Levi-Strauss, C. (1995). *Mythand Meaning: Cracking the Code of Culture*. New York: Schocken Books.
- Long, J. (1990). *Duel of Eagles: The Mexican and U.S. Fight for the Alamo* (1st ed.). New York: Morrow.
- MacDonnell, N. (Producer). (1955-1975). *Gunsmoke* [Television Series]. New York: Columbia Broadcasting Company.
- Marshall, J. (2007). *The Day the World Ended at Little Bighorn: A Lakota History*. New York: Viking.
- Meldrum, B. H. (1985). *Under the Sun: Myth and Realism in Western American Literature*. Troy, N.Y.: Whitston Pub. Co.
- Melies, G. (Producer). (1911). *The Immortal Alamo* [Motion Picture]. United States: General Film Company.
- The National Park Service. (2007). *Little Bighorn Battlefield Map*. Washington D.C., National Park Service
- The National Park Service. (2009). *Strategic Plan*. Retrieved January 20, 2009, from <http://www.nps.gov/libi/parkmgmt/planning.htm>
- O'Connor, J. E., & Rollins, P. C. (2003). *Hollywood's Indian: The Portrayal of the Native American in Film* (Expa ed.). Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.
- Paramount Pictures (Producer). (1923). *The Covered Wagon* [Motion Picture]. United States: Paramount Pictures.

- Preston Stephen Fischer Company (Producer). (1991). *Son of the Morning Star* [Motion Picture]. United States: American Broadcasting Company.
- San Antonio Tourism Council. (2009). *Tourism Research*. Retrieved January 20, 2009, from <http://www.sanantoniotourism.com/tourism.aspx>
- Selig Polyscope Company (Producer). (1909). *On the Little Big Horn or Custer's Last Stand* [Motion Picture]. United States: Selig Polyscope Company.
- Simonson, H. P. (1989). *Beyond the Frontier: Writers, Western Regionalism, and a Sense of Place*. Fort Worth, TX: Texas Christian University.
- Spurgeon, S. L. (2005). *Exploding the Western: Myths of Empire on the Postmodern Frontier* (1st ed.). College Station: Texas A & M University Press.
- Thompson, F. (2005). *The Alamo*. Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press
- Tig Productions (Producer). (1990). *Dances with Wolves* [Motion Picture]. United States: Orion Pictures Corporation.
- Vestal, S. (1972). *Queen of Cowtowns: Dodge City, "The Wickedest Little City in America," 1872-1886*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Wallis, H.B. (Producer), & Walsh, R. (Director). (1942). *They Died With Their Boots On* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Bros. Pictures.
- Walt Disney Pictures (Producer). (1954-1956). *Disneyland*. United States: American Broadcasting Company.
- Walter Wanger Productions (Producer). (1939). *Stagecoach* [Motion Picture]. United States: United Artists.
- Warner Brothers Pictures (Producer). (1939). *Dodge City* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures.
- Warner Brothers Pictures (Producer). (1985). *Pee Wee's Big Adventure* [Motion Picture]. United States: Warner Brothers Pictures.
- Wayne, J. (Producer/Director). (1960). *The Alamo* [Motion Picture]. United States: United Artists.
- Windolph, C. A., Hunt, F., & Hunt, R. (1947). *I Fought with Custer; The Story of Sergeant Windolph, Last Survivor of the Battle of the Little Big Horn, as Told to Frazier and Robert Hunt, with Explanatory Material and Contemporary Sidelights on the Custer Fight*. New York: Scribner.

Wright, R. M. (1975). *Dodge City: The Cowboy Capital and the Great Southwest*. New York: Arno Press.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Josh Bodenweiser received his Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2003 from New York University where he majored in theatre. Since then he has traveled throughout the United States for various film and music projects. He has always held a passion for history and historic preservation. When his wife, Crystal, decided to enroll in a graduate program at the University of Florida, Josh followed suit and enrolled in the Master of Historic Preservation program in the College of Design, Construction, and Planning at UF. He hopes to one day be able to combine his degrees and create films about historic preservation.