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Affects and emotions in ghost tourism – A content analysis on tourist experiences at the LaLaurie Mansion

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Abstract:

The concept of ghost tourism provides an interesting approach to dark tourism destinations. It has been largely overlooked by scholars in the social sciences and research as it has been determined as superstitious beliefs. The belief in ghosts, however, has remained the same throughout the history, and even grown in the last decades. This has been due to the growing media interest to the dark and macabre. Ghosts also provide an interesting window to other forms of tourism such as heritage tourism. They are also emotionally ladened as this research shows.

The research is studying affects and emotions through the affect philosophy described first by Baruch Spinoza, and later continued by Henri Bergson, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and Brian Massumi. Affects are described as unconsciously experienced intensity, that when spiked can become more of an emotion that is then experienced consciously. Because of the unconscious nature of affects, they can escape retelling and can be hard to identify. The research in question is aiming to identify them in ghost tourism experiences and see in relation to what and whom they are experienced.

The empirical study was conducted as a data triangulation. The data was gathered from interviews, videoblogs, and my own autoethnographic account. The data was analysed by using thematic content analysis method. The interviews were conducted online as semi-structured interviews with photo elicitation being used as a research method. My autoethnographic text was produced around my own experience at the site when I visited the city of New Orleans in 2016. The videoblogs depicted the bloggers experiences at the mansion as well as what sort of emotions were experienced during their visits. The purpose was to study what kind of affects and emotions are produced during the tourists' visit to the LaLaurie Mansion, and in relation to what or whom they are experienced.

The study findings indicate a big role in the affectivity of the tour guide and their storytelling, as well as in atmosphere of the site. The atmosphere of the site seemed to have been created together by the tour guide and their storytelling with the tour participants. How the atmosphere is built in lighter dark tourism destinations such as the LaLaurie Mansion, provides an interesting angle to be studied further.

Key words: ghost tourism, affects, emotions, LaLaurie Mansion, ghost tour

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1. INTRODUCTION

"I clearly remember when me and my friends booked the tickets to our first ever ghost tour. We were on a holiday trip to New Orleans, Louisiana, and we all knew the legend of the place, which was ghost stories after ghost stories. We were excited to explore the city with its vast history and culture, and of course participating to a ghost tour held in the French Quarters was a must. The night came when our ghost tour started, and we had agreed to meet our guide at the corner of St Ann Street and Chartres Street. Right in front of us was an old, beautiful building with a restaurant inside, called Muriel's restaurant. As we waited our guide, we observed people going into the restaurant, meeting with friends, having a laugh and just enjoying their night. Quite soon our guide for the ghost tour arrived. She was in her late 30's and said she had been doing ghost tour guiding for the past 10 years of her life. She said she was excited for us to get to know the city's dark past, and history as well. She noticed us staring at the restaurant opposite of us and laughed. We were a bit taken back about her reaction and did not really understand why she reacted the way she did. She then said, "I will explain you once the tour starts".

We waited few more minutes for other participants of the tour to show up, and as we were all there, the tour guide started our tour. "We do not need to look far for ghosts here in New Orleans", she said and continued, "We only need to look to the opposite side of the street". As she said this, she pointed to the restaurant me and my friends had been observing. "Do you see the empty table that has been set up for one?" she asked and pointed to somewhat isolated table inside the restaurant that was visible outside, because it was close to the window. "That table there is set up every night, but you will never see anyone eating at it" she said with an eery sound in her voice. "That table, ladies and gentlemen, is set up every night for a ghost"."

The narrative above is an autoethnographic text from my own experiences in New Orleans, Louisiana, as I was visiting the beautiful city in 2016, and took part on a ghost tour. The tour visited few of the most haunted places and sites of the city, one of those places being the LaLaurie Mansion, which is the site in question in the research. The research is exploring the relatively new term of ghost tourism, as a niche of dark tourism. The aim of the research is to

find out what kind of affects and emotions play part in tourists when they visit ghost tourism sites. Through this research, I aim towards that other niches of dark tourism will gain more attention and will be studied more broadly. As of now, the attention in previous research has been put to the motivational aspects of dark tourism, and I aim to that more attention will be given in the future for affects and emotions in dark tourism.

1.1 Background of the phenomenon

The research is exploring the relatively new term of ghost tourism, which is connected to the term called dark tourism. Dark tourism as a term was first coined by Lennon and Foley in 1996, and in 2000 they published their book titled Dark tourism, which remains today the most widely cited study of the phenomenon (Lennon & Foley, 2000). As for ghost tourism, the term itself is relatively new. However, ghost tourism has been discussed and studied as a phenomenon through the context of paranormal tourism (Thompson, 2008). One of the first ones to mention ghost tourism, was historian Owen Davies (2007). Also, in regards of destination image, Inglis and Holmes (2003) have been discussing about ghosts and their significance to tourist sites in Scotland. Later, Beatriz Rodrigues Garcia did a study about ghost tourism sites and the management issues they hold (Garcia, 2012, p. 14).

When Foley and Lennon studied the phenomenon of dark tourism, they discovered that the tourist interest to death, disaster and atrocity was on the rise (Lennon & Foley, 2000, p. 3). It seemed that humans had always been fascinated about death. From gladiator games in Rome to public executions, people had been drawn to see violence and death. It is not a surprise that people now still wish to travel to sites associated with death as well (Stone, 2008, as cited in Sharpley, 2009, p. 4).

Even before Lennon and Foley, many theorists had noticed the phenomenon of dark tourism and had attempted to study it (Lennon & Foley, 2000, p. 3). One of the earliest ones to study this phenomenon was Rojek in 1993, who introduced the notion of dark sites. He called these sites black spots and fatal attractions, which usually meant that large number of people had met their untimely death at these sites (Rojek, 1993, as cited in Sharpley, 2009, p. 10). Also, within the term of heritage tourism, there has been studies conducted about sites of war and

conflict (Uzzell, 1989, pp. 33–47), and developing management frameworks for heritage sites (Turnbridge & Ashworth, 1996 as cited in Sharpley, 2009, p. 12). As for museums, John Urry (1990) was one of the first ones to study dark tourism through them as he used the Gestapo Museum in Berlin as his study case. Despite all the research done, the concept of dark tourism remains still in academic literature eclectic and theoretically fragile. Despite the numerous attempts made to define and label the concept, it still lacks research of the demand-side (Sharpley, 2009, p. 6).

As the rise of tourism, also dark tourism has grown and has become widespread and diverse. An example of this can be seen in sites such as Ground Zero in New York. More than three-and-a-half million tourists visited the site after the terrorist attacks of 9/11, which is almost double the amount that yearly visited the site before 9/11 (Sharpley, 2009, p. 5). However, Marcel (2003, as cited in Tarlow, 2005, p. 49) points out that dark tourism is much more than just sites where death has occurred, and rather talks about the sites as something that touches peoples lives through emotional perspective and can also impact people's politics and social policies. In other words, not all places of tragic events become dark tourism sites. This idea points out to the realization that dark tourism has as much to do with iconic tourism as it does with historical tourism (Tarlow, 2005, pp. 48–55).

This research explores the site of LaLaurie Mansion in New Orleans, Louisiana, United States of America. LaLaurie Mansion is a neo-classical mansion located in the heart of the French Quarter neighbourhood and is visited by tourists every year either on their own or as part of a ghost tour. The mansion has extensive history, and it has become a landmark for ghost tours in New Orleans (personal communication, January 6, 2021). In the following sub chapters, the history of the mansion is presented and New Orleans as a tourism destination is discussed.

1.2 LaLaurie Mansion and New Orleans

"In the Rue Royale stands this quaint, old-fashioned house about which so much has been written, and around which cluster so many wild and weird stories, that even in its philosophic day, few in the old faubourg care to pass the place after nightfall, or, doing so, shudder and

hurry on with bated breath, as though midnight ghouls and ghosts hovered near, ready to exercise a mystic spell over all who dare invade its uncanny precincts."

(Marie Puents, 1892, as cited in Love & Shannon, 2011).

The site studied in the research is the LaLaurie Mansion, in New Orleans, Louisiana, United States of America. It is a neo-classical mansion located at the intersection of Royal and Governor Nicholls Street. Back in 1832, LaLaurie Mansion was home to Madame Delphine Macarty LaLaurie and her third husband Dr. Leonard Louis Nicolas LaLaurie. Delphine LaLaurie was considered a wealthy socialite at the time and both her and her husband owned slaves, as it was custom during the times (Miles, 2015, p. 58).

In her later life, LaLaurie herself became known for investigations that took place at her home regarding the cruel treatment of the slaves. The first investigation took place already in 1828, but nothing was found to prove her guilty of the accusations (Miles, 2015, p. 67). In 1834, a fire broke out in LaLaurie Mansion revealing the horrible conditions of the slaves. According to a local newspaper The New Orleans Bee, seven slaves who were in horrible conditions, were carried out by the firefighters from the mansion. The firefighters said they had heard scratching and moaning coming from inside the mansion but could not locate the sounds. The realization of LaLaurie's crimes caused an outrage in the neighbourhood, and what was left of the burned mansion was eventually destroyed by the horrified neighbours. Madame LaLaurie fled with her family to France, but it is rumoured that before she died, she came back to New Orleans and was buried to St. Louis Cemetery (Miles, 2015, p. 69). The Lalauries' left the mansion to be taken care of by Auguste Delassus, until he sold it to the city in 1837 (Love & Shannon, 2011).

After the fire and demolishing of the mansion, LaLaurie Mansion was rebuilt to its current three-store configuration in 1837 and has changed owners' multiple times after that. The first owners of the mansion after the LaLauries', only owned it for three months, until they had to abandoned it. They claimed to hear noises and cries coming from inside the mansion. After this, the mansion was rented out to various business establishments, but no one lived in the mansion. The businesses did not last long either and a rumour was set out that the location was cursed (Love & Shannon, 2011).

Between 1878–1882, the mansion served as a school for black girls (lasting only one year) and as a conservatory of music and dance. Between 1889–1892 the mansion was owned and housed by Edouard Vigne, a man who kept mostly to himself. Later, he was found dead in the apartment with more than $10,000 in cash and other valuables that were later auctioned out. Also, a black crepe was rumoured to be found hanging in the doors of the mansion, to which none of the neighbours admited doing it. In 1900–1923 the mansion changed owners five times. During those times there were a lot of immigrants coming from Italy to New Orleans, and landlords were keen on buying old, abandoned buildings to transform them into apartment buildings. This is what happened to LaLaurie Mansion as well, and it became a home for Italian immigrants. During the construction work on the mansion, it was rumoured that the workers found bodies under the mansion's floorboards. This, however, has never been backed up by any reports from the time, so it is considered a rumour. During the tenant times of LaLaurie Mansion, many ghost sightings were reported from people seeing a man carrying his own arm to men being wrapped up in chains. In 1945, the mansion became a bar called Haunted Saloon. In 1950's the mansion was a furniture store, where the owner reported sightings of the furniture moving on its own. He closed the store quickly after this. By 1964 the mansion was abandoned and had become a target of vandalism and looting. In 1969 an artist called Zella Funck lived in the mansion and reported incidents with ghosts but remarked them as friendly. Between 1970–2000 the mansion was divided into about 20 apartments (Love & Shannon, 2011). In 2009, actor Nicholas Cage bought the mansion, but later lost it to bankruptcy. Not long after, his career took a turn for worse, and the people of New Orleans started to whisper that it must be because of the curse of LaLaurie Mansion (Forbes, 2013). As of since, the mansion was sold again but it is not disclosed who owns it this time.

As for New Orleans, the city is known for its iconic history, atmosphere, and many more. It is no wonder it attracts millions of tourists every year. The city has been described to fill the visitor's senses with amazing scenery of French architecture, the delicious smell of the Creole kitchen and the sound of jazz music playing in the oldest part of the city Vieux Carré, better known as French Quarter (Dwyer, 2016). In 2018 only, New Orleans attracted more than 18,51 million visitors, which was a 4,29 % of increase in visitors to the year before. The visitors spent around $9,1 billion in the city. There are over 22,000 hotel rooms in downtown area only, and more than 38,000 in the metro area. Also, there are more than 1200 restaurants

in the downtown area for tourists to enjoy traditional foods and drinks (New Orleans, 2020). Few themes from which New Orleans is advertised as a tourism destination are rich history, delicious cuisine, and entertaining music (Gotham, 2007, p. 844).

New Orleans also has a darker side, and it is considered by the American paranormal community to be the most haunted place in America, and therefore it makes an ideal destination to practice ghost tourism. New Orleans has a rich and colourful history, and it is a city with a fusion of different cultures that all bring their own folklore and tales of history into it (Dwyer, 2016). In America, numerous polls have been made for the effort to figure out how many people believe in ghosts. The first one was conducted in 1978 when 31 % of the people answering the poll said they believe in ghosts. In 2000, the number was 42 %, and in 2005 the similar number was already 75 %. This shows that a steady and increasing interest has been developed to the paranormal and ghosts. Ghosts have also gained interest in television shows and movies. Many different shows have been produced of ghosts, and in many New Orleans has been in the centre of them (Dwyer, 2016). One that brought the ghost story of Madame LaLaurie back to the wider audiences' attention, was American Horror Story: Coven, which centred in New Orleans and featured actress Kathy Bates in the role of Madame LaLaurie.

I interviewed the Chief Growth Officer Donielle E. Muller from Ghost City Tours, and annually the LaLaurie Mansion is visited through their tours by around 400 000 visitors. This tour operator organizes ghost tours in the city of New Orleans and two of their tours go to the LaLaurie Mansion. Muller disclosed in the interview that LaLaurie Mansion is one of the most visited sites of New Orleans, and one of the most frequently visited stops on their ghost tours. Muller also told that the interest to the mansion grew drastically after the show American Horror Story aired where the mansion was featured. Visitors are now more than earlier interested about the mansion and want to disclose whether the horrible stories of tortured slaves are true or not (personal communication, January 6, 2021).

1.3 Previous research

As established earlier, ghost tourism has been discussed and studied as part of paranormal tourism (see Thompson, 2008). One of the first to study ghost tourism was historian Owen

Davies in 2007. He, and many other historians, studied the presences of ghosts in premodern and modern history in England. Davies found out that the notion of ghosts varied in different historical eras. He also believed that the rise of science would decline the belief in ghosts, but this did not happen. Due to this finding, he suggested that ghosts are tied more to secularization (Davies, 2007).

Other researcher who has studied ghost tourism, and especially the sites, is Beatriz Rodrigues Garcia (2012) who studied management issues of ghost tourism sites in Toledo and Edinburgh. In her study she compared the two different ways of touring in ghost tourism sites. In Edinburgh, the ghost tours were conducted in a humorous and entertaining way, as in Toledo the tours were conducted in a more serious manner. Garcia's research and comparison of these two ghost tourism destinations, raised the question of how should these ghost tours be conducted? Should there be a fine line between making the tours entertaining but also keeping the stories serious, as the stories always tell a suffering of real people (Garcia, 2012).

Another researcher who has done extensive research about ghost tourism is Michele Hanks. Her book from 2016 tackles the notion of ghosts and ghost tourism extensively, and she has studied ghost tourism through the lenses of heritage and cultural politics (Hanks, 2016, pp. 12–15). There have not yet been extensive studies conducted about New Orleans as a ghost tourism site. Dwyer (2016) studies New Orleans in his book but rather than studying ghost tourism, his focus lies on ghost hunting in New Orleans. This research, however, is not trying to disclose the realness of ghosts neither is it trying to study ghost sightings.

Ghosts themselves have been used in many different areas of research such as postcolonialism, displaced cultural identity, and racial memory (Bergland, 2000; Stoler, 2006; Brogan, 1998; Gordon, 1997, as cited in Hanks, 2016, p. 20). Also, anthropologists have been interested in ghosts either as real or as metaphorical presences. In ethnographic research especially, anthropologists have repeated the role of ghosts in historical mourning and memory. They have examined that through storytelling people have an opportunity to critique the contemporary life as well as understand the history (Gustafsson, 2009; Johnson, 2013; Trnka, 2011; Wardlow, 2002, as cited in Hanks, 2016, p. 21).

Affects and emotions both have received attention in the field of tourism. However in ghost tourism, they have not received so much attention. Different scholars (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2009; Buda, 2015; Buda, d'Hauteserre & Johnston, 2014; Edensor, 2000, 2001; Franklin & Crang, 2001; Veijola & Jokinen, 1994) have studied affects in tourism, and other scholars have placed their interest in studying emotions in tourism (Anderson & Smith, 2001; Davidson, 2003; Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013; Nawijn, Isaac, Liempt & Gridnevskiy, 2016; White, 2005). In the context of dark tourism, affects and emotions both, have received attention as well.

As for my research, I aim to provide a deeper look into the customer experience side of ghost tourism, and I aim to understand what kind of aspects play a role in those experiences. My aim with this research is also to understand the lighter dark tourism destinations and what sort of emotional and affective states they possess. With this research, I also aim to inspire other researchers to give lighter dark tourism destinations more attention as they can provide a point of view that is worthy to study more.

1.4 Research aim

The aim of the research is to study affects and emotions in ghost tourism. Even though affects and emotions have had attention in the field of tourism, the attention has not been so extensive in the field of dark tourism and especially in ghost tourism. In dark tourism, rather than studying the affects and emotions, researchers have placed their interest in motivational aspects of dark tourism. This can be seen in the multiple studies conducted about it (Bigley, Lee, Chon, & Yoon, 2010; Dunkley, Morgan, & Westwood 2011; Isaac & Cakmak, 2014; Niemelä, 2010; Rittichainuwat, 2008; Yuill, 2003). Also, a lot of the studies conducted before in the field of dark tourism, have not been conducted about New Orleans. Many of the studies conducted before include the studies of battlefields (Miles, 2012; Upton, 2015), Holocaust concentration camps or Nazi related sites (Brown, 2014; Lennon & Foley, 1999), and war sites or museums (Antić, 2009; Basarin & Hall, 2008; Braithwaite & Lee, 2006; Cohen, 2011; George & Das, 2017). Therefore, the aim of the research is to provide a new outlook on ghost tourism, as well as to study affects and emotions in ghost tourism rather than motivational

aspects. Also, the point is not to try to disclose in any kind of way the realness of ghosts or to seek supernatural experiences. The aim with affects and emotions lie on the storytelling part of ghost tourism, and what sort of embodied experiences they bring up in tourists who have travelled to ghost tourism sites.

The research's main research question is the following:

How do affects and emotion manifest in ghost tourism experiences?

The aim of the research can be put to sub research questions that are the following:

RQ1: What kind of affects are described in relation to the stories the tour guide is telling?

RQ2: What kind of atmospheres are described to have been experienced during the ghost tour?

RQ3: What kind of emotive states tourists describe to have been experiencing?

Through this research, I aim to be able to provide new information on the customer experience side of ghost tourism sites, such as LaLaurie Mansion. Also, I aim to that the research will provide new outlook on the affects and emotions in ghost tourism, rather than in tourism in general. By this, I also aim to that other niches of dark tourism will gain more attention in academic literature and will be studied further in the future.

1.5 Research methods

The research data was originally meant to be gathered only through semi-structured interviews that would have been held online. However, the search for interviewees turned out to be difficult, and therefore I was left to search other forms of data as well. Thus, the research is using data triangulation. This refers to gathering data from multiple different sources instead of just one (Denzin, 1970, as cited in Thurmond, 2001, p. 253). One part of the empirical data was conducted as a qualitative research through semi-structured interviews. For gathering the data, photo elicitation was used in the interviews. In photo elicitation, the interviewer documents the observations of the interviewees and what kind of emotions rise to the surface when the interviewees are talking about the photos used in the interview.

Sometimes, the interviewees might discuss about different aspects and ideas that are not necessarily clear in the photos. Bigante (2010, p. 3) thinks that photo elicitation can be a useful tool to triangulate between different information sources, and therefore can bring also different insights to the research being conducted. Photo elicitation can also add validity and new viewpoints to the research (Bigante, 2010, p. 16). For photo elicitation to work fully as research method for data gathering, it needs a collective effort from both the interviewer and interviewee. It can spark interesting discussions but only if both participants are co-operating. The interviewer must also remember to facilitate the interview by drawing out what is truly needed from the interviewee. Through this, photo elicitation can act as a form of data gathering as well as data analysis (Jenkings, Woodward & Winter, 2008).

The interviewees for this research, were selected by who had personally visited the site of LaLaurie Mansion, and they were asked to bring one picture and/or pictures of the site with them to the interview. However, none of the interviewees brought pictures with them to the interview. All the interviewees explained that they had looked at their pictures of the site before the interview, and then in the interview they talked about what memories the pictures brought back for them. Therefore, the pictures were not studied or analysed in this research further.

The research also uses autoethnography as one of its research methods. This is because I have personally visited the site of LaLaurie Mansion and thus, have personal experience of it. I could therefore mirror my experiences to those of the interviewees and see if there were any similarities regarding the emotions and affects experienced during the visit. As the assumption of qualitative research is that reality and truth are build and shaped by the interaction between people and the environment where they live, this approach gives space to personal narratives, experiences, and opinions to become valuable data in the world of qualitative research (Méndez, 2013, pp. 279–280). Thus, autoethnography was chosen as one of the research methods for this study. In autoethnography, the researcher uses their own experiences as a base for their study. Autoethnography combines different characteristics of autobiography and ethnography. Ethnography is used to understand and represent a cultural practise and/or experience. Autobiography is a firsthand account of personal life, that can include memories, diaries, and personal narratives (Adams & Manning, 2015, p. 351). The

researchers can use one certain event, moment, or experience from their own past, that they then reflect to with for example interviewees. They may use for example photographs to try to bring out recall, or emotions of past experience being studied (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Ellis and Bochner (2000, p. 739) define autoethnography as a useful tool "that displays multiple layers of consciousness, connecting the personal to the cultural". In my research, I take the approach of evocative autoethnography, as my research focuses on emotions and affects which are experienced very personally (Méndez, 2013, p. 281).

First part of the empirical data of the research was conducted in 2016, as it was then when I visited LaLaurie Mansion through a ghost tour. I wrote a travel diary in which I reflected my experiences in New Orleans. I wrote down quite extensively about LaLaurie Mansion, about 5 pages, and I used that part of my travel diary as part of the empirical data for this study. Second part of the empirical data was the semi-structured interviews conducted in March 2021. In total three interviews were conducted. Third part of the empirical data came from examining internet sources, and in total three videoblogs were used in this research. The videoblogs were uploaded to Youtube and described visits to the LaLaurie Mansion.

1.6 Structure of the research

The introduction chapter gives an overview of the studied phenomenon, previous research conducted about it, and what kind of research methods were used for gathering the research data as well as analysing it. The second chapter discusses about the theoretical framework of the research. Dark tourism and the researched phenomenon, ghost tourism, are discussed extensively as well as the concept of affects and emotions. In the third chapter, the methodology of the research is discussed. This chapter discusses the autoethnography and the photo elicitated semi-structured interviews used to gather the research data. Also, the internet sources are discussed, as well as how the research data was analysed. The chapter also includes the ethical considerations of the research. In the fourth chapter, the data is analysed, and the findings are presented. The data from the interviews and videoblogs are compared to my own experience and similarities are indicated. Finally, in the conclusion chapter the whole research is drawn together and suggestions for the future research and studies are made. The limitations of the research are discussed too.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter discusses the theoretical framework of the thesis. The wider phenomenon under the study, dark tourism, is explained as well as the studied phenomenon, ghost tourism. Affects and emotions are discussed later in the chapter. For explaining dark tourism, it is also valid to understand the media attention it has gained and motivational aspects it possesses regarding affects and emotions. As Sharpley (2009, p. 6) argues in his study, people's interest to dark tourism continues to grow, and it can be seen also in the growing media attention that it receives. An academic website called www.dark-tourism.org.uk continues to get over 60,000 hits annually, and in media mentioning of the words dark and tourism is guaranteed to get attention from viewers. In the following sub chapter, the concept of dark tourism and the media attention it has received, is explored more. Also, motivational aspects of dark tourism destinations are discussed briefly about.

2.1 Fascination of death in tourism

As Lennon and Foley (2000, pp. 5–6) discuss in their study, death has earlier at least in the Western society, been considered a private event, where funerals have been held with only the closest family members of the deceased. Attending to funeral had been before the only time a person would get close to death. That, however, has changed due to media, news, popular television series and movies, which all make it possible for death to be a part of person's everyday life. Through this, people can experience death via replications such as individual deaths of a celebrity or movies about war. Death can also stimulate a person in different ways when consumed through media: some interpretations can stimulate a response while others can seem remote and almost unreal interpretations of death. One person's death can become so glamourized and publicly viewed that it almost underscores the other part of death, such as war and genocide victims (Lennon & Foley, 2000, pp. 5–6). One example of this type of glamourization can be found in Graceland, the home and gravesite of Elvis Presley. Tourists make the visit to the former king of rock 'n roll's house almost as a pilgrimage journey, and they share the emotional experience with others who have made the same journey as they (King, 1993, pp. 92–93). This type of behaviour can be seen in the LaLaurie Mansion as tourists visit the former home of Madame LaLaurie and her mistreated slaves. The motivational aspects, however, might be different as LaLaurie Mansion can be described as a

lighter dark tourism destination. This term was first mentioned by Stone (2006, pp. 145–160) and it means a destination that is "marketable reconstruction of death, suffering, or the macabre". The research is not focusing on why tourists visit the LaLaurie Mansion, but rather what types of affects and emotions they experience while visiting the site. Motivational aspects, however, deserve to be mentioned since there might be similarities, or even reasons why certain for example emotions, are experienced.

Pilgrimage is believed to be the first form of tourism by scholars (Vellas & Becherel, 1995; Lickorish & Jenkins, 1997, as cited in Lennon & Foley, 2000, p. 3). Pilgrimage has often been associated with death in untimely and violent circumstances, as well as with remembrance after the death. As in societies that share the Judaeo-Christian beliefs, the dead are remembered by visiting their gravesites, a site that has something permanent to remind people about the person who is laid to rest there. Death and remembrance tend to go together, especially in cultures that share the belief of body and soul being two separate parts of a human being and sharing the belief of an afterlife. This is shown in the studies of Sudnow (1967) and Walter (1996), who have both pointed out the industrialization of death in the twentieth century, by studying the rise of different businesses associated around death such as funeral and cryogenic services (Sudnow, 1967; Walter, 1996, as cited in Lennon & Foley, 2000, pp. 3–4). As Seaton (1996) stated, visiting places of death, such as battle sites and graves, is nothing new. Sites that are connected to death can be described as a significant part of tourist experience in many societies (Lennon & Foley, 2000, p. 4).

All though dark tourism destinations have much in common, they also have vast differences, and that alone has made the studies and research done about the subject difficult. Trying to compare for example horror houses, that are mainly an entertaining attraction, to Holocaust death camps has been a challenge (Sharpley, 2009, p. 10). In a way, LaLaurie Mansion can be seen as an entertaining attraction, as the tourists are taken there to listen to the stories about it but in an entertaining way. It still does not take away the horrible events that happened in the mansion. Ivanova and Light (2018) have studied the entertaining dark tourism sites and have discussed that the interest in tourists to visit these sites does not lie in only the representation of death, but rather in interest to horror, macabre, horror movies, and/or darker side of history. This is another aspect that can create difficulties in understanding the visitor motivations and the vast difference of dark tourism sites in general.

The list in Table 1 is showing how labelling dark tourism has proved to have been very difficult. It has also lacked the theoretical foundation, and therefore has been largely descriptive. Trying to point out the demand and supply for dark tourism has been difficult as well, all though it does not mean it has not been tried (Sharpley, 2009, pp. 7–11).

Table 1. Categorization of dark tourism.

Divisions of the dark	
Perilous places Dangerous destinations from the past and present	▪ Towns of horror ▪ Dangerous destinations
Houses of horror Buildings associated with death & horror, either actual or represented	▪ Dungeons of death ▪ Heinous hotels
Fields of fatality Areas/land commemorating death, fear, fame or infamy	▪ Bloody battlegrounds ▪ The hell of the Holocaust ▪ Cemeteries of celebrities
Tours of torment Tours/visits to attractions associated with death, murder and mayhem	▪ Mayhem and murder ▪ The now notorious
Themed thanatos Collections/museums themed around death and suffering	▪ Morbid museums ▪ Monuments to morality

Source: Constructed by author, based on Dann (1998, p. 3).

As seen in Table 1, there are numerous definitions for dark tourism. This, however, does not mean that the definitions are definitive. Even though motivational aspects of dark tourism have received attention in the academic literature, little is still known about them. Scholars like Seaton and Lennon (2004) have studied the issue through morbid curiosity, and Rojek (1997) has studied it through collective sense of identity and survival in violent disruptions of collective life routines (Seaton & Lennon, 2004; Rojek, 1997, as cited in Sharpley, 2009, pp. 11–12). Boym (2001, as cited in Tarlow 2005, p. 51) links the motivational aspects to nostalgia, and mentions two types of nostalgia: reflexive and restorative. Restorative nostalgia is usually action laden while reflexive nostalgia is more about the heart than the body. Third type of nostalgia is called tourism nostalgia, where tourists seek to heal from the past by travelling there. It is then a blend of restorative and reflexive nostalgia and means to experience danger in a safe place (Tarlow, 2005, p. 52). Tourism nostalgia can be linked to the LaLaurie Mansion as well, as it seems that tourists want to visit the mansion and hear the

gruesome stories but in a safe way. This type of nostalgia can also be linked to learning about history, or as Hanks (2016, pp. 14–16) calls it knowledge.

One of the most comprehensive lists of the motivational aspects, however, comes from Dann (1998). The list includes the following: the "fear of phantoms" (for example overcoming childlike fears), the search for novelty, nostalgia, the desire to celebrate crime or deviance, a more basic bloodlust, and "dicing with death". As Dann himself adds, the categorizations mentioned before, remain descriptive and that the definitions can be related to specific type of destination or to an individual tourist only (Dann, 1998, p. 3).

2.2 Ghost tourism

The belief in ghosts started to get recognized more in the United States of America in the 1970's, and bloomed in the 1990's. This was due to the baby boomer generation's spirituality and New Age interest to a diversity of belief traditions. At the same time, media had started to shift its focus to increasingly violent and reality-based television. Modern tourism then started to shift as well to the more macabre, hence dark tourism as scholars now recognize it as, started to form (Goldstein, 2007, p. 193). Thomas Blom (2000, p. 32) who called this type of tourism change morbid tourism, explained the tourists' interest to the dark and macabre by saying "New, different and seemingly strange experiences are in demand from the increasingly choosy tourist. Is it perhaps our relatively secure western existence that is creating a demand for the frightening, the unknown and even the supernatural?". This type of interest to the paranormal and dark can be considered to produce new types of niches that are keeping the tourism market then interesting (Goldstein, 2007, p. 194).

The actual belief in ghosts varies cross-culturally. However, it can be considered prevalent in most cultures, including in the Western culture. Social scientists, however, often dismiss these kinds of beliefs for superstition and due to this they get overlooked in research. This is because ghosts violate several different binaries that humans hold as central tenets such as body/soul, life/death, and past/present (Baker & Bader, 2014, pp. 569–584). Dean MacCannell (1973) talks in his study about staged authenticity and how tourists are always looking for authenticating the sites they visit. Ghost tourism has provided tourists an angle on

how to authenticate the places through ghosts themselves. MacCannell calls for Goffman's (1959, as cited in MacCannell, 1973, p. 590) notion on front and back regions where the tourists themselves see the front and not the back. The front region therefore by MacCannell (1973, p. 590), is the staged authenticity. Ghosts in this case can provide the tourists with a glimpse to the back region, and therefore authenticate the place for them. Continuing with MacCannell's thoughts, Sharpley and Stone (2009, p. 117) discuss about the link between the experience of the site and its contribution to the identity creation. This can be pointed out in Figure 1 below.
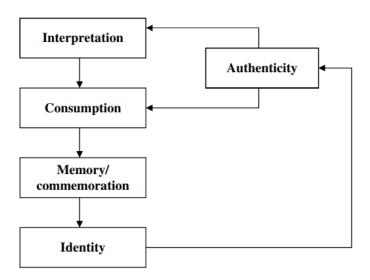

Figure 1. Dark tourism: Interpretation and identity. Source: Sharpley & Stone, 2009, p. 117.

As seen in Figure 1, the authenticity does not stem from one place but rather from multiple different components. Sharpley and Stone (2009, p. 116) continue to point out that the authentication of a place should therefore come from answering questions like why and how the places are deemed authentic. Ghosts can provide an interesting outlook on this matter as seen in Inglis and Holmes' (2003, pp. 50–51) study. In their study, they discuss about Scotland's heritage and how it is often presented through the paranormal and ghosts. The same can be seen in New Orleans too, as the city's history and heritage are presented through the paranormal in ghost tours. Through ghosts, the tourists can authenticate the places they visit. It is precisely the ghost itself that authenticates the place and connects it to the history which the tourists then wish to experience. It is also noted that tourists really seek these paranormal encounters while on ghost tours (Dancausa, Hernández, & Pérez, 2020, p. 4). This

also provides an interesting aspect to ghost tourism: the purpose of ghost stories was, at least in oral cultures, to keep people away from certain sites. As of now in ghost tourism, it is exactly the opposite that is happening. Ghost stories are the main reason why some tourists visit places associated with ghosts, and the stories have been transformed into fun rather than scary (Inglis & Holmes, pp. 56–57).

Hanks (2016, p. 14) identifies and describes ghost tourism by three different concepts: experience, knowledge, and heritage. Ghost tourists themselves tend to notice the first two very well, but the third one, heritage, is somewhat underlying. Knowledge tends to be first one that ghost tourists seek as they take part in ghost tourism. The aspect of what kind of knowledge do the tourists get at the end, is under debate. Does it count as knowledge when a tourist hears a story of a distant historical figure, or the nature of life and death (Hanks, 2016, p. 14)? Experience comes through the desire to seek knowledge, and the experience itself is for example the ghost tour that the tourists take part in. Ghosts in ghost tourism, represent tourists the option to engage with their national past, and rhetorical and embodied means to critique the presentation of the past nowadays (Hanks, 2016, pp. 14–15).

As this research is exploring the concepts of affects and emotions, the three concepts of ghost tourism can be linked to them as well. Out of the three concepts, experience and knowledge can be linked to emotions as those two concepts tend to be the most emotionally charged. By seeking knowledge before travelling to the destination, the tourists can for example feel excited and enthusiastic about the trip. This can be seen in Gnoth's (1997) study, where he marks the importance of emotions in holiday tourism, as it can be linked to the motivational aspects. Thus, emotions can be regarded active in the pre-travel stage of tourists and can therefore influence to their motivation and destination choice process. Gnoth's study, however, discusses emotions, as well as affects, regarding psychology, which is not the viewpoint this research is taking. His study should still not be overlooked in this case, as motivational aspects tend to go hand in hand with emotions.

The concept of experience is more likely to be the most emotionally charged concept, as the tourists finally get to experience what they might have been waiting for a long time. As Nawijn, Mitas, Lin and Kerstetter (2013) regard in their study, during the trip tourists'

emotions vary from day-to-day, and are connected to the experiences done during the trip. Experience can also produce affects before emotions, as in the case of the research, experience can be linked to for example the ghost tour that the tourists undertake. Knowledge can also create affects, and later when the knowledge is experienced, emotions. Heritage is somewhat underlying as Hanks calls it, because it does not necessarily connect with all the tourists on a ghost tour. It really depends on what sort of heritage is discussed and what kind of heritage do the tourists have.

Out of different forms of ghost tourism, scholars have examined the qualities of ghost walks and tours in the United States of America (Gentry, 2007; Thompson, 2010 as cited in Hanks, 2016, p. 22) and The Great Britain (Hanks, 2011, as cited in Hanks, 2016, p. 22). Also, ghosts have been examined in the manner of Scotland's destination image (Inglis & Holmes, 2003). All these scholars have foregrounded the role of ghost walks. Ghost tourism itself, according to Beatriz Rodriguez Garcia (2012, p. 14), means an interest to the supernatural and therefore visitation to sites associated with the spirit world, such as cemeteries, haunted houses, and castles. Ghost tourism also engages with several different areas of tourism such as pilgrimage, heritage studies, dark tourism and thrill-seeking. Hanks (2016, p. 22) thinks that it is time to broaden the view of ghosts in tourism in general and include ghosts to museums and heritage sites as well.

Even as the term ghost tourism is relatively new, associating ghosts with dark tourism sites is not anything new. As Ironside (2018) points out, tourism stakeholders have understood the commercial benefits with this association, and for example the site of Cock Lane in London has increased the areas' business by relating a ghost story to it. One of the reasons why ghost tourism is experiencing increasing interest by tourists, could be explained by popular culture's interest in the supernatural. Television shows like Most Haunted, Ghost Hunters and Ghost Adventures may have had an impact on tourists visiting ghost and dark tourism sites (Ironside, 2018). It is also noted that popular culture, and especially television, have selectivity in their programmes that they air. Where the programmes are based, is what tragedy the viewers will be remembering. For example, the site of Ground Zero is much more visited than the tragedy sites in Africa (Tarlow, 2005, p. 57). The site of LaLaurie Mansion gained attention as well through media by a popular TV series called American Horror Story,

and especially its third season called Coven which took place in New Orleans, and had actress Kathy Bates portraying Madame LaLaurie herself (Bass, 2014).

Also, the more haunted the attraction or site is, the more the business can increase. The "most haunted of" is a phrase that is used heavily on sites' tourism marketing strategies. For instance, New Orleans as a town, uses a lot of ghost legends to present narratives of slavery (Thomas, 2015, as cited in Ironside, 2018). Using these kinds of narratives can help the tourists connect with the past and can almost act like a form of social memory (Ironside, 2018). As Knudsen (2011, p. 58) has stated, dark tourism is about connecting with the past. She continues that the connection then is made through affect and embodying something that is no longer there. This is also shown in d'Hauteserre's (2015, p. 81) study, where it is stated that the immediate response to an experience is linked to the memories and past of the person.

2.3 Affects in tourism

In the case of the research, affect is studied through social sciences point of view rather than psychological point of view, even though there are some similarities. Affect in this case is studied through the affect philosophy, originally developed by Baruch Spinoza (2002), and later continued by Henri Bergson (1907), Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari (2013). Affect, according to Spinoza, means becomings, and he continues with a question "what can a body do?" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, p. 299). For Deleuze and Guattari, affect means an "active discharge of emotion, the counterattack, whereas feeling is an always displaced, retarded, resisting emotion" (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, p. 466). Brian Massumi, who has also worked as Deleuze and Guattari's translator, has more developed their ideas and he sums up affects and emotions well in his book from 1995:

> An emotion is a subjective content, the socio-linguistic fixing of the quality of an experience which is from that point onward defined as personal. Emotion is qualified intensity, the conventional, consensual point of insertion of intensity into semantically and semiotically formed progressions, into narrativizable action-reaction circuits, into function and meaning. It is intensity owned and recognized. It is crucial to theorize the difference between affect and emotion. If some have the impression that it has waned, it is because affect is unqualified. As such, it is not ownable or recognizable, and is thus resistant to critique. (Massumi, 1995, p. 88)

Within this philosophy, affect can be described as other-than-conscious potentiality that can be brought out (Massumi, 2002, as cited in Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 680), or an intensity that when spiked can become more of an emotion (Ngai, 2005). Spinoza himself described affect as a line of force and a capacity to act. He also described society as being relational where emotion as an active state creates modifications of the body (d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 79). Affect can emerge in the body as facial expressions, breathing and sounds (Massumi, 2002, as cited in Katila, Kuismin & Valtonen, 2020, p. 1313). It can also be described as transpersonal capacity where the body has to be affected and to affect, almost like a moment of unformed potential, that is realized outside of consciousness (Anderson, 2006; Shouse, 2005). A body, according to Deleuze and Guattari, is not defined by the organs it possesses nor the functions it fulfills. A body is then defined by longitude and latitude, elements of movements and rest such as speed and slowness, and capability of power and/or degree of potential (Deleuze & Guattari, 2013, p. 304).

Dark tourism experiences tend to arise through encounters, where tourists receive affects, that are usually associated with death. The encounters with death are shaped by intensive affects, that are hard to represent because they can escape retelling (Laurier & Philo, 2006, p. 353). Because of affect being fleeting and transitional, it can stay hidden under many circumstances or it can emerge spontaneously (Anderson, 2006; Vannini, 2015).

Affect has received attention in the field of tourism from different scholars (Bowman & Pezzullo, 2009; Buda, 2015; Buda et al., 2014; Edensor, 2000, 2001; Franklin & Crang, 2001; Veijola & Jokinen, 1994). Also, emotions have had attention (Anderson & Smith, 2001; Davidson, 2003; Knudsen & Waade, 2010; Mackenzie & Kerr, 2013; Nawijn et al., 2016; White, 2005). Even though it is considered hard to separate the two, it has not stopped scholars from trying to do so. Emotions are usually considered a conscious experience that is expressed (Anderson, 2006) while affect is considered an unconscious experience that is happening "behind the scenes". Scholars have tried to come up with a solution on this by explaining that affect is differing from emotion by intensity rather than essence (Ngai, 2005). In other words, when affect is experienced so intensively that it becomes conscious, it becomes an emotion. Whether or not affect and emotion can be considered the same thing, the

most important thing to understand, is that they are always experienced relationally and that they both affect the body (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 683).

Even as affect has been considered an unconscious experience by scholars before, Tucker and Shelton (2018, p. 73) argue in their study that it can be, in fact, experienced consciously to some extent, and more importantly, it can be directed by actors like tourist guide. However, some researchers express concerns regarding the methodological approach to affects and emotions. For instance, McCormack (2003, as cited in Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 683), argues that affects cannot be fully studied if they are considered something unconscious. Instead, he suggests that the focus of the study should be on what the bodies are doing when affected. In dark tourism sites, the affects can also be heavily manipulated by the tourism stakeholders. Tourists can be pushed towards to certain reactions that then manifest in different emotions and bodily actions (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 684).

It has also been studied, that different places and tourism sites can produce certain affects and emotions, and that they can affect the tourists even though their stay is temporary (Irvine, 2008; d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 80). Anderson (2009) has called it the "atmosphere of the site", and Ahmed (2014) has called it the mood of the site. Duff (2010, p. 884) continues with the words mood and feelings of the site, and says that they can express the "lived experience, which includes anger, shame, hope, fear, disgust, sorrow, joy, and so on". He also sites Edward Casey's study where he introduced the notion of thick and thin places as an attempt to "trace the relationship between affect and emotion" (Casey, 2001, as cited in Duff, 2010, p. 882). The thick places enhance the sense of meaning and belonging creating affective and experiential connections. In the case of the research, the ghost tour can be seen as a tool that takes the tourists to these thick places, where they then are affected by the place. As Massumi (2002, pp. 64–65, as cited in Duff, 2010, p. 892) states "affect is an attractor lingering in place awaiting its realization in practice, habit, and sensation". These places can then affect the tourists in different ways, or as Edensor (2012, p. 1106) discusses in his study, the atmospheres' capacities to affect the body varies in intensity. Atmosphere itself could be described as an emotive tone imbuing a particular environment (Böhme, 1993).

2.4 Emotions and authenticity in tourism

As Nielsen (2010, pp. 53–54) regards, emotions are a significant part of all human bodies. Humans have memories, that can vary from being painful and/or happy, and the human body is the vessel holding these emotions and experiencing them. Emotions, and affects alike, mean being embodied. They stem from corporeal self which also consists of the body. Humans are connected with others all the time through emotions and feelings, and this way are embodied with others. Regarding this research, emotions are considered from a phenomenological point of view where the body is not only seen as an object but also as a lived body (Nielsen, 2010, pp. 53–54).

As for emotions in tourism, Knudsen and Waade (2010, pp. 4–5) say that it is important to recognize the society and economy where people live. As they state, economy has shifted from sign-economy to intensive and affective economies. In sign-economy, the value of exchange is measured with what kind of non-economic values it gives, as Bourdieu (1979, as cited in Knudsen & Waade, 2010, p. 4) refers to as symbolic, cultural, and social capital. Since the shift in economy has happened, the new affective economy implies a re-investing in authenticity. The consumer, in this case the tourist, re-invests in authenticity by intensifying the experience. The value in this kind of economy depends on the amount of energy that is invested and the quality of the experience (Knudsen & Waade, 2010, p. 5).

Emotional geography is relatively new term that studies the affective aspects of places. Nigel Thrift, who has been studying these aspects, points out that the shift from looking upon affective as a lack of cognitive skills should be shifted into looking affective as a kind of thinking, that not only connects bodies to each other but also to the world. Thrift also continues that sensations and affects are ways of understanding and thinking (Thrift, 2004, as cited in Knudsen & Waade, 2010, p. 5).

All this refers to that in tourism, authenticity becomes a feeling that tourists can achieve and which they can then experience in relation to the places they visit. Globalisation makes it possible that greater attribution is put to different places. Places then become branded and shift to being objects of consumption (Knudsen & Waade, 2010, p. 5). It has been studied that

tourists consume media images of touristic places, and in a more globalised world this has also become easier. Tourists then connect with these touristic sites to enhance their emotional experience of the site (Jansson, 2002, as cited in Knudsen & Waade, 2010, p. 12). Because of this the boundaries of imaginary, symbolic and material spaces are dissolving. The tourist experience of the places is being challenged from the anthropological-phenomenological-inspired viewpoint which means that tourists are no longer just gazing at images of places but that they are also bodies performing at the sites. This is called performative authenticity which also includes body, movements, emotions, and actions. This means that the tourists are not only performing places by their actions but that they authenticate them through their emotional and affective relatedness (Knudsen & Waade, 2010, pp. 12–13).

In ghost tourism, and especially in ghost tours directed to sites such as the LaLaurie Mansion, tourists and guides both play with the authenticity of the ghost stories heard during the tours. As Hanks (2016, pp. 24–26) mentions, during ghost tours tourists seek the authentic experiences with ghosts and therefore seek also authentic experiences of the past. Hanks continues to discuss that some ghost tourists "ground their understanding of historical authenticity on encounters with ghosts" (Hanks, 2016, p. 25) and through that assess the authenticity of the sites that they visit. Thompson (2008) discusses in his study about similar aspects, as he regards that it is not the encounter itself that makes the site authentic for the tourists, but rather the possibility of encountering something. He also explores the concept of tourists' senses being open, as they seek for those encounters. As their senses are open, even a slight change for example in odour could indicate to the tourists that something paranormal might happening or an encounter might occur (Thompson, 2008).

Knudsen and Waade (2010, p. 15) also state that all kind of tourism that has an experiential dimension offers the possibility to understand the other through the body. In the case of this research, the location LaLaurie Mansion, is as well experienced through the body when hearing the stories about the living conditions of the slaves in the mansion, and the ghost stories related to it. Knudsen and Waade (2010, p. 15) continue to use the Alcatraz Prison in San Francisco as an example of this by saying that imagining the conditions of the prisoners in the prison is partially lived through the experiences. These types of re-enactments also offer the possibility to live through a certain period of time which is usually a painful time in

the history. In the case of LaLaurie Mansion, the painful historic time would be the time of slavery.

Also, emotions are usually considered intentional and specific, triggered by environment and/or event. Furthermore, they are related to action tendencies and have important role in defining human experiences (Bagozzi, Gopinath, & Nyer, 1999). Also, emotions can act almost like a feedback system to environment and/or an event and how one's motivation relates to it. In other words, people can either try to replicate an experience with positive emotions felt during it or avoid it if the feedback was negative (Baumeister, Vohs, DeWall, & Zhang, 2007, p. 172). Negative emotions are also considered important in tourism experiences, as they can affect and enhance for example the educational side of the site visited (Nawijn & Biran, 2019, p. 2393). Also, negative emotions can co-exist with positive emotions in the experience (Larsen & McGraw, 2011). For example, in the experiences at the LaLaurie Mansion tourists can feel scared and excited at the same time. Neither of the emotions hereby disregard the other, therefore they are co-existing in the same body and/or group.

Even though dark tourism is considered emotionally ladened, the time that has passed from the events that make a certain site dark, can affect the tourists who visit it. For example, Uzzell and Ballantyne (1998, p. 5) consider that the more time has passed from the events, the less emotional engagement we have with it. This can be seen in dark tourism destinations such as the LaLaurie Mansion, where considerably long time has passed from the horrible events that went on in the mansion. Hereby, the affectiveness of the site can be intensive if the tourists have strong emotional connection to the site's history and events. The site may also turn out to be less affective if the tourists do not have strong connection to the past events or the site itself. Therefore, as said earlier, the tour guides play a big role in creating the site's affectiveness and making it more emotionally ladened for the tourists who do not feel affected by it because of the lack of their emotional engagement with the site.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research uses as its research methods autoethnography alongside with semi-structured photo elicitated interviews. It also uses thematic content analyses to analyse videoblogs as well as the interviews. Therefore, the research data consists of three different components: photo elicitated semi-structured interviews (in total 3 interviews), autoethnographic text that I produced from my travel diary, and videoblogs (in total 3 videoblogs). The interview data was gathered during March 2021 and the field notes for the autoethnographic text were fist gathered in 2016, which were then produced into thick descriptions and written down again in February 2021. Two of the videoblogs were posted to Youtube in 2019 and one in 2021, and even though it is not clear when did the videobloggers visit the mansion, it is assumed they visited it the same year as their videoblogs were uploaded to the platform. The experiences of the interviewees and the videobloggers were examined and similarities of the data were then compared to my own experience at the mansion.

Originally, the research data was supposed to be collected by using only photo elicitated semi-structured interviews. The data collected from the interviews, was then supposed to be mirrored to my own experience at the LaLaurie Mansion. However, managing to get interviews proved to be difficult, and therefore I was left to think other research methods to use. Therefore, the research is now using autoethnography as its primary research method, and data was gathered from photo elicitated semi-structured interviews alongside with videoblogs, that are then mirrored to my experience at the mansion.

The paradigm used in the research is phenomenology. Phenomenology can be defined as a study of experiences and/or consciousness. Thus, phenomenology studies the ways how humans experience things, and how do these experiences affect humans. It is also characterized by sensory qualities like seeing, hearing, and feeling. Phenomenology is studying various types of experiences that range from embodied actions to emotions (Sokolowski, 2000, p. 2). As this research is studying affects and emotions in ghost tourism, phenomenology as a paradigm fits to it.

In the following sub chapters, first autoethnography is discussed, secondly photo elicitation and interviews are discussed, thirdly the videoblogs are described, and lastly the data analysis and ethical considerations of the research are presented.

3.1 Autoethnography

Autoethnography can offer novel and nuanced insights about the studied subject and about the personal life of the researcher. Gilgun (2012, p. 10) explains that autoethnographers use personal narratives which are used in social research analysis. The basis of autoethnography is that general culture flows through the specific self, in other words a person cannot exist absent of or from cultural influences. Autoethnographies should also combine storytelling, reflexivity, and recollection with practices such as fieldwork, observation, and acknowledgement of theories and research (Adams & Manning, 2015, pp. 352–360).

Autoethnography emphasizes particularity and personal experience. It foregrounds the researcher's subjectivity, reflexivity, and personal experience. It was developed in response to social research that had the tendency to privilege objectivity and researcher neutrality. Autoethnography does not aim to study others and their circumstances but rather deeply reflect of the self as a social person (Adams & Manning, 2015, p. 351). Autoethnography invokes the self (auto), culture (ethno), and writing (graphy). Autoethnographers are illustrating typically the following ways of doing a research: foreground personal experiences in writing, illustrate sense-making process, use and show reflexivity, illustrate insider knowledge of cultural phenomenon/experience, describe and critique cultural norms, and finally, seek responses from audiences (Adams, Ellis & Holman Jones, 2017, pp. 2–5).

Autoethnography combines different characteristics of autobiography and ethnography. In autoethnography the researcher uses their own experiences as a base for their study. Usually this means they use one certain event, moment, or experience from their own past, that they then reflect to with for example interviewees. They may use for example photographs to try to bring out recall or emotions of the past experience being studied (Ellis et al., 2011). Autobiographers are using a technique called showing, which means that they try to bring the

reader into a scene through emotions, thoughts, and actions (Ellis, 2004, p. 142). This technique allows the researcher to make their story more engaging and emotionally rich. Also, autobiographers many times add to the story their own perspective, in other words eyewitness account. This makes the stories more artful and evocative. When the researcher writes an autoethnography, they try to produce aesthetic and evocative descriptions of personal and interpersonal experiences, events, or moments. They first make field notes and/or interviews of a specific cultural experience and describe these through storytelling. Through this process, autoethnographic studies produce ultimately a personal experience that is culturally engaging, and through this it may reach a bigger audience that would otherwise be disregarded in research (Ellis et al., 2011).

As I have visited the LaLaurie Mansion myself, I produced an autoethnographic text of my experiences by utilizing a travel diary I had written when visiting the mansion in 2016. I have always written down my travels and experiences, not that I have any specific reason for it but rather because I wish to remember the travels and destinations later in life. In the case of the research, it proved to have been an excellent choice to write down my experiences of the mansion, as I used my travel diary as field notes for this study. It is common for autoethnographers to write about life changing epiphanies, as Denzin (2013) has called them, or about experiences that they find difficult to understand, as Ellis (2004) describes them. In my case this was true, as I considered my visit to the mansion almost like a life changing experience which had elements that I could not quite understand.

In the case of this study, autoethnography is looked through the lenses of social-scientific-orientation. Here, in the research evocative autoethnography is used. Evocative autoethnography, in which the aim is put towards the researcher's introspection of a particular topic, is used as my research strives to understand the emotions and affects experienced in ghost tourism experiences. By this, evocative autoethnography allows the readers to make a connection with the researcher's emotions and experiences (Méndez, 2013, p. 281).

3.2 Photo elicitation and the interviews

The interviewees were held online in Microsoft Teams during March 2021. The search for the interviewees began in February 2021 through social media platforms such as Facebook. As I have travelled in New Orleans and in the United States of America, I am part of few Facebook groups where I could post about my search for interviewees and expect people who might have travelled to New Orleans to answer. I also have friends who have travelled in New Orleans, and I knew that they had participated to a ghost tour that took them to the LaLaurie Mansion. Therefore, I contacted my friends and posted to Facebook about conducting a research involving New Orleans and the LaLaurie Mansion. My goal was to gather the data as semi-structured photo elicitated interviews, but the search for interviewees turned out to be difficult. After two weeks of posting to multiple different social media groups in Facebook and Instagram, I only got one answer from a person who was interested to participate in the research. This meant that I had in total three interviewees, as earlier few of my friends had expressed their interest to participate to the research. Therefore, I decided to gather the data from other sources too, and the usage of videoblogs came to my mind.

As I started to conduct the interview questions, I quickly understood that the questions needed to be complex in nature as the research was exploring personal matters and experiences, as well as being not too easily understood with one or two standard answers (Alvesson, 2011, p. 83). The position that I as the interviewer had to take was romanticism, in which the emphasis of the interview was put to developing "mini-paradigms" and co-producing knowledge together with the interviewees. In romanticism, which has also been referred to as "emotionalism" by Silverman (2006, as cited in Alvesson, 2011, p. 14), the data gathered should be about authentic and subjective experiences which are then drawn out by unstructured and open-ended questions (Alvesson, 2011, p. 14). As I had personally visited the LaLaurie Mansion, it was crucial that I did not give out too much information about the research itself (Alvesson, 2011, p. 84), as the goal of this research was to uncover emotions and affects that can be considered sometimes unconsciously experienced.

Visual methodologies are getting more acceptable in the field of qualitative research. Using visual methodologies in research can enhance the richness of data and help with the relationship of the interviewee and interviewer. It can also enable emotions and tacit knowledge come through in the interviews and encourage the interviewees to reflect on the

topic being discussed (Pain, 2012, as cited in Glaw, Inder, Kable & Hazelton, 2017, p. 2). Tourism has changed from being viewed as dislocated spaces that are then made knowable through predetermined actions and behaviours (see Franklin & Crang, 2001). It has rather emerged as a mix of "fluid and dynamic mobilities and materialities, embodied and affectual encounters" (Scarles, 2010, p. 905). Through this, tourism has become sort of in-between points and stages where the tourists move around in imagined and experientially encountered spaces. Therefore, this research uses a visual autoethnography which combines autoethnography and photo elicitation. Using photo elicitation as a research method provides the researcher different kind of outcomes, since the method can bring out emotions, memories, and information. Because the part of the human brain that processes images and other visual information is older than the part of the brain that processes verbal information, visual images such as photographs evoke deeper consciousness in humans than words do (Harper, 2002, as cited in Glaw et al., 2017, p. 3). This is one of the main reasons why photo elicitation was chosen as a research method for the research in question, because it truly tries to bring out emotions and affects that the interviewees felt when visiting the site of LaLaurie Mansion.

The interviewees were given the opportunity to take pictures with them to the interviews. However, only one of them did that. All though all the interviewees disclosed that they had looked to the pictures before the interview, only one interviewee was talking openly about the pictures and how did they make them feel and what emotions and/or memories they brought back to them. Another interviewee disclosed that instead of bringing pictures to the interview, they had read stories about the mansion to bring back the memories. Third interviewee had visited the mansion about a year ago, so their memories were still vivid compared to the other interviewees who had visited the mansion already few years ago.

The photo elicitation was therefore used mainly by myself on myself: I looked through my pictures from my travels to the LaLaurie Mansion as I produced the autoethnographic text used in the research. It evoked deeper emotions and memories that I otherwise could have disregarded from the research. Therefore, the photo elicitation could be regarded as a successful method, as I benefitted from using it on myself. It truly evoked and brought up memories I had already forgotten about, as I visited the mansion already back in 2016. Also,

one of the interviewees disclosed to have looked at their pictures from the site and discussed in the interview what sort of memories it brought back to them. This interviewee described having positive memories come through when looking the pictures. They also described remembering and reliving the special atmosphere of New Orleans through the pictures, and how they brought up memories from the time they were travelling in the United States of America. As soon as they were talking about the pictures, I could see the joy in their face. They started to smile more, and on few occasions their eyes were closed as they were retelling their experiences in New Orleans. These aspects showed that the pictures did in fact evoke deeper emotions and allowed them to surface.

The interviewees were all people who had personally visited the site through a ghost tour, and therefore, had personal experience of the site. All the tours started at evening and the groups were not too big, only 10 to 20 people in size including the tour guide. Most of the interviewees disclosed visiting New Orleans during summer. Also, few of the interviewees were visiting New Orleans with their friends, as for the others were visiting with a family member.

Since I had visited the site through a ghost tour as well, I could steer the conversation of the interviews to the right direction if needed. Sometimes in interviews that are more like conversations, the point of the interview can be misplaced, and the interviewees may deliver information that is not important regarding the research. Because I have experienced the site myself, I could therefore be the guide to direct the interview to the important issues needed for the research. The interviews were held online in Microsoft Teams. This was due to the Covid-19 pandemic and restrictions that prevented travelling. The language of the interviews was English, and the interviews were recorded and later transcribed and analysed.

3.3 Videoblogs

The videoblogs were chosen based on that the bloggers had to have visited the LaLaurie Mansion by themselves. This was a priority and reason for selecting the videoblogs. Secondly, it was crucial that in the videoblogs, at least emotions were openly discussed by the bloggers. Affects, as some researchers view them, can stay hidden under many circumstances

(see Massumi, 1995; Ngai, 2005), and therefore they were not necessarily visible in the videoblogs. This was the very reason why emotions had to be openly discussed by the bloggers, as emotions could be in some cases seen as the result of an affect which spiked out as an emotion (see Ngai, 2005). Two of the videoblogs were depicting a story of the bloggers visiting the LaLaurie Mansion whilst the third one was about tour guides discussing their experiences at the mansion while working there as guides. The third videoblog was chosen because of the diverse experience it produced. It was an interesting and important aspect regarding the research to also understand the point of view of the tour guides, even though they were not directly under scrutiny in the research. However, as it can be pointed out in the interview data, the influence of the tour guides on the interviewees was enormous, and therefore it was important to have a videoblog which provided the tour guides experiences regarding the ghost tours they conducted at the site.

The first videoblog that I used for the research was uploaded to the platform Youtube in 2019. It is seven minutes and twenty-seven seconds long. The video was uploaded by a Youtube channel called Travel Channel which produces videos of dark tourism related subjects, such as ghosts. The video used in this research, was part of their series called Portals to Hell. In this video, the two presenters investigate the hauntings of the LaLaurie Mansion. The videoblog was used because it depicts the experiences that the presenters had at the mansion, and it also provides interesting personal communications that the presenters had with people who had either lived or worked in the mansion. In the videoblog, the presenters had access to get inside the mansion, which is something that usually does not happen. Most of the tourists visit the mansion through a ghost tour, which does not take the tourists inside. As said earlier, they had also contained prior interviews of a person who had lived in the mansion at one point of their life, as well as a person who regularly visits the mansion as a tour guide (Travel Channel, 2019). The blog's aim was to investigate the LaLaurie Mansion and its hauntings. However, this research is not making a statement about whether LaLaurie Mansion is haunted or not, and its also not trying to disclose the realness of ghosts. The videoblog was used because the bloggers talked openly about their experiences at the mansion, which was considered important regarding the research questions of the research.

The second video that was analysed in the research, was uploaded to Youtube also in 2019. This video was uploaded and presented by the same person. For what the information was on the video, the blogger seemed to be an independent person uploading travel related videos to their channel in Youtube. The video therefore was not part of any series and it did not include any other people than the blogger themselves. The video was fifteen minutes and three seconds long. In the beginning of the video, the blogger talks about the history of the LaLaurie Mansion and towards the end they turn the attention to their own experience at the mansion. They visited the mansion through a ghost tour when they were travelling in New Orleans, and they also depicted that they have an interest to the paranormal and therefore they tend to visit and/or take part on a ghost tours in other destinations they visit too (Jane, 2019).

The third video analysed, was uploaded to Youtube by a channel called Haunted History Tours. This was a channel that was focusing mainly on New Orleans and had uploaded multiple different videos about the city to their channel. The video used for the research, was about the LaLaurie Mansion and had two tour guides, talking about their experiences at the mansion as they took tourists there. The videoblog was used because it depicted so well the experiences that the tour guides had seen people to have at the mansion. The videoblog was eighteen minutes and forty seconds long, and it also included statements and interviews from former residents of the mansion. Similarly, to the second videoblog, this videoblog too firstly discusses about the history of the mansion and the ghost stories related to it. Later, the tour guides on the video describe the experiences they have seen people having at the mansion while on their tours. It is important to distinguish that the tour guides are not directly under scrutiny in the research. Their presence, however, can affect and create emotions for the tourists as they are directing the ghost tour. That is another reason why this videoblog was chosen to be analysed in the research. This videoblog also contained an interview with a former resident of the mansion, which happened to be the same person that was interviewed in the first videoblog (Haunted History Tours, 2021).

3.4 Data analysis

The data of the research was analysed by content analysis. Content analysis was chosen as the analysing method because it can be used in any research, and it is not depended on what

science the research is part of (Bengtsson, 2016, pp. 11–13). More specifically, the research is using conventional content analysis. Conventional content analysis is usually trying to research a phenomenon through interviews with open-ended questions. This method also mentions other relevant theories and literature that exists of the phenomenon already (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1279). More precisely, the data was analysed by using thematic content analysis (Anderson, 2007) in which I identified different themes from the data I considered important regarding the research.

The recordings and transcriptions of the interviews and videoblogs were firstly saved to a safe domain. The videoblogs were only transcribed as they were published in a platform called Youtube where they stayed for anyone to view them. After I had completed writing down the transcriptions of the interviews and videoblogs to six individual Word documents, I began to cut off the personal information from it as well as other aspects that were not important regarding the research. Then, I began reading the transcriptions over again carefully. As I started to get more familiar with the data, I began to highlight different occurring themes from it. This happened more or less by a very conventional way, as I highlighted parts of the Word documents I had created for the data with different colours regarding which theme they belonged to and how valid they were regarding my research. The themes in question were based on my research questions. I continued to highlight every word associated with either emotions and/or affects, as well as every word connected to my research questions. As I was highlighting the words, it became clear that the text required two different types of highlighting: word and bodily action-based highlighting. As my research is studying affects, they can stay hidden under many circumstances but as some scholars have suggested (see McCormack, 2003), to study affects the focus should be put on what the bodies are doing. Hereby, I was trying to identify significant body actions that could have therefore indicated to me in which parts of the data affects were present. This refers to what Vannini (2015, pp. 10–12) describes as non-representational style in which space is given to aspects such as body movements and/or body language in general.

During the highlighting process, I shifted the focus on myself: I approached the data by making notes of my initial thoughts and impressions that I received from reading the data. I then started to identify the relationship between the interview data and my own

autoethnographic text by comparing the similarities in them. All though the interviews were semi-structured, the outline of each interview was the same. This meant that I had sectioned the interviews and questions to three parts: the pre-travel stage, on-site stage, and post-travel stage. Through this I could already make sense during the interviews of similarities between my experience and of the interviewees.

While I was still highlighting the data, I began to see different themes that started to occur. After the highlighting process was completed, I read the highlighted parts through multiple times, and eventually I was able to identify five occurring themes from it. They were the following: 1) the tour guide's storytelling, 2) the stories, 3) atmosphere of the site, 4) other tour participants, and 5) the influence of media or other sources that had mentioned the mansion. As I kept reading through the data, it became clear that out of these five themes, three were the most occurring ones. These three themes ultimately were: 1) the tour guide's storytelling, 2) the stories, and 3) the atmosphere of the site. The first two themes matched quite well with my research questions, while the third, atmosphere, was some what surprising. At first, I had trouble deciding what to do with it: to leave it out of the research or to include it in. I eventually decided to include the notion of atmospheres into my research, as the more I was clustering the data, it started to emerge in the other two themes identified.

As a research method, I used autoethnography as it can offer intimate, novel, and nuanced approach to research that involves highly personal accounts as well as theorizing (Adams & Manning, 2015, p. 362). It also offers the viewpoints of particular lives, rather than large groups of people (Adams et al., 2017, p. 2). Part of the empirical data of the research was the travel diary I wrote when visiting the LaLaurie Mansion back in 2016. In total I had written 10 pages about my travels in New Orleans, and around 5 of those pages were specifically about the ghost tour that took me to the LaLaurie Mansion. I read my travel diary again and used it as field notes which then were the basis for thick descriptions that I wrote about the emotions, affects, activities done during the ghost tour, and thoughts I had about the LaLaurie Mansion during the visit. I also looked through my photographs of the visit to help me remember how for example the mansion looked like, in hopes of evoke deeper emotions and affects to come through. The photographs, however, were not used further in the research regarding the autoethnographic part.

As I produced the text from my field notes, I produced them into an electronic form and saved them in a safe domain. The field notes were produced so that I could track down my sense-making process of the different phases of the research. Autoethnographers use sense-making to facilitate an understanding of a cultural expectations or experiences, and some use only personal experience and thick descriptions as the sole focus of the research (Adams & Manning, 2015, pp. 352–353). In my research, personal experience with thick descriptions were used to study the affects and emotions experienced in ghost tourism. As said earlier, I visited the LaLaurie Mansion through a ghost tour which was the way the interviewees also visited the mansion. Therefore, our experiences could be regarded to have been affected by similar things, such as the tour guide, other participants of the tour, and the people we went there with for example friends and/or family. This refers also to the understanding that affect is a relational dynamic between people and situations (Slaby, 2016, p. 2). My experiences at the mansion were then mirrored to the ones of the interviewees as well as with the videoblogs.

3.5 Ethical considerations

The research is conducted according to the responsible guidelines of the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity, TENK. The researcher takes care that the research ethics are strictly followed, and no physical or mental harm is done to the research subjects. Also, the research is conducted in a matter that recognizes and mentions other researchers and their studies, and in this way gives them the recognition of their findings. The results of the research are presented without falsification. The research data was processed and stored in a safe way during the research (Finnish National Board on Research Integrity [TENK]), 2019). The personal data, being the travel diary and the descriptions made from it, was handled with care and other participants mentioned in it were taken into consideration. These participants have been contacted for their consent to be mentioned in this research.

The research is studying affects and emotion, and both can be considered as sensitive research topics. The reason some topics may be sensitive to research participants, stems from the epistemological and ontological point of view that knowledge and reality can only be sought out from those who have experienced it firsthand (Crotty, 1998, as cited in Elmir, Schmied,

Jackson & Wilkes, 2011, p. 13). As Lee and Renzetti (1990) argue in their study, any topic can be sensitive, but it is more common for some topics to be more sensitive than others. Kathleen V. Cowles (1988) discusses in her study that any qualitative research, that touches or delves into the very personal and emotional experiences of the studied subjects, should be handled with more care than just mere common ethical considerations. She continued that the degree of emotional response should be considered, as well as the level of personally sensitive data, and whether or not it should be then used in the research.

The research is touching the topic of death, even though it does not directly study it. The affects and emotions studied, however, can stem from the perception of death that the site of LaLaurie Mansion portrays. Viewing dark tourism through this means that it does not come without ethical and site related issues. The question remains, whether it is ethical to promote and offer touristic consumption in such sites. It is about whose death is being commercialised through dark tourism, that provides an important ethical dimension that deserves attention (Sharpley, 2009, p. 8). The site related issues include whether the sites of atrocity should be left untouched, or whether they should be demolished to prevent tourism happening there (Sharpley, 2009, p. 9). Adding to the conversation, Biran and Poria (2012, p. 63) argue in their study that past deaths and sites associated with them are more socially acceptable than recent death sites. Therefore, the site of LaLaurie Mansion could be viewed as more acceptable dark tourism site, as the atrocities and deaths that took place there, happened a long time ago.

As the research is utilizing autoethnography as one of its research methods, there are ethical considerations to be taken account regarding it as well. As the researcher produces an autoethnographic text, it evidently provides a window to their personal self and to others around them. As Ellis (2007, pp. 13–14) describes it "when we write about ourselves, we also write about others". This creates the risk of recognition, as others around the researcher can become recognized through the text they have produced. This is also linked to consent, as other people may have not given the researcher permission to portray them the way the researcher has, or they may have given the permission but did not fully understand what it meant (Ellis, 2007). Writing an autoethnography entails being honest and ethical about the

described events as well as the choice of words used in the text about others around the researcher (Méndez, 2013, p. 283).

Part of the data gathered for the research, was done by photo elicitated semi-structured interviews that were held online. The programme used in the online interviews was Microsoft Teams. This provided the interviewees an opportunity to participate to the interviews from for example home, which can be considered as a safe and comfortable environment for them. As Speziale and Carpenter (1999, as cited in Elmir et al., 2011, p. 14) noticed in their study: the more comfortable the interviewees are, they are more likely to disclose information about their lived experiences.

All the interviewees were adults, meaning they were all over 18 years old, and therefore available to make their own decisions to participate in the research. The interviewees' anonymity was also protected during the research. Furthermore, the interviewees were given the chance to cancel their participation on the research at any time. This meant that all the interviewees participated voluntarily, and if for some reason they did not wish to participate any longer, the chance was given to them to cancel their participation without any negative consequences for them. Also, the interviewees were given information about how their data was processed and how the research was conducted. The interviewees were given an understandable and truthful view of the aims of the research, and an accurate idea of the potential of the research (TENK, 2019, pp. 9–10).

The data processing was planned before the interviews were conducted. I, as the researcher, was solely responsible for the processing of the data. Therefore, I was also the only one who had access to the research data. The data was saved to a safe platform and transcribed. Also, the personal information of the interviewees was removed from the research data after the transcribing as it was no longer needed in the research (TENK, 2019, p. 14).

4. FINDINGS

In this chapter, the research data is analysed, examined, and the findings are presented. The direct quotations of the interviewees used in the text are abbreviated to I and are marked in the chronological order of the interviews. For example, first interview is abbreviated to I1. The direct quotations of the videoblogs are abbreviated to V and are marked in the chronological order in which they were uploaded to Youtube. For example, first uploaded videoblog is marked as V1 in the text. The sub chapters are divided based on which themes repeated themselves in the data the most. These were the affectivity of the tour guide and the stories, the atmosphere of the site, and the emotions felt during the experience.

In the beginning of the interviews and videoblogs, the interviewees and bloggers interest to sites like the LaLaurie Mansion was established, and all the study subjects described an interest to the paranormal. Few of the interviewees described that their interest to the paranormal was one of the biggest motivating aspect for them to visit the mansion. Also, all the interviewees viewed New Orleans as a city where one almost "has to do" the ghost tour. Few of the interviewees had almost identical answers saying: "...New Orleans is known for being spooky, so if you don't do that (meaning the ghost tour) is like why did you even go?" (I1 & I2). This can be linked to what Tarlow (2005, p. 48) discusses in his study about tourists visiting Auschwitz: it can be about paying respects, curiosity, or just because it is the thing to do. From this viewpoint, the ghost tours conducted in New Orleans can be thought of something that the tourists want to do because it is the thing to do while visiting the city. Another aspects that was motivating the interviewees, as well as for the videobloggers, to participate to a ghost tour, was the influence of their friends and/or family. Other people's interest was mentioned in most of the interviews and blogs as a motivating aspect to take part on the ghost tour. Also, the information required before the visit was listed as a motivating aspect. Few interviewees explained their motivation to visit places that are associated with paranormal being high if they had read about it before hand. As for the bloggers, few of them had sought out information about the mansion before the visitation. All the interviewees and bloggers knew something about the mansion, but only few of them mentioned that they had extensive prior knowledge of the mansion and the stories related to it. The next sub chapters aim to answer the main research question which is how do affects and emotion manifest in ghost tourism experiences. Also, the sub research questions which are the following 1) What

kind of affects are described in relation to the stories the tour guide is telling, 2) What kind of atmospheres are described to have been experienced during the ghost tour, and 3) What kind of emotive states tourists describe to have been experiencing, are aimed to answer in the following sub chapters.

4.1 The affectivity of the stories and the tour guide

All the interviewees and bloggers described the tour guide being one of the best aspects of the ghost tour. They described the tour guide by following statements:

> I really liked her. She made everything warming and welcoming. Like she wasn't someone who was only saying scary things and doing stuff that would scare you more like I probably would not have liked it. (I1)

In one case an interviewee described the tour guide's way of telling the stories adding to the "eery atmosphere of the tour" (I3). Also, it was described that the experience would have "lacked something" (I2) if the tour guide would not have been present. There was also a fear that without the tour guide, information about the mansion "could have been lost" (I2). The tour guide was also described to have been "knowledgeable" (I3). All the interviewees also agreed that the experience would have been significantly worse if they would have just gone to the mansion by themselves without participating on a ghost tour.

The stories that the tour guides were telling, seemed to have had the biggest impact on the interviewees as well as on the videobloggers. All the interviewees expressed similar emotions such as unsettling feeling, being horrified, and being excited. Few of the interviewees brought up also the notion of slaves, and how the ghost stories were about them. When they talked about the slaves, they expressed feelings of "sadness and empathy towards the slaves" (I1). When asked about how did the stories make them feel, they said "I could understand how some people would feel sad and sorry for the slaves after hearing the stories" (I2). This can be related to what Martini and Buda (2020, p. 654) discuss in their study about having an affective response to stories that involve for example the vulnerability of humans. They continue to say that these types of stories then resonate "intimately and viscerally with the audience" (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 654), in this case the tourists at the LaLaurie Mansion.

In the following narrative, my own experiences in relation to the stories heard in the beginning of the ghost tour, are depicted and described.

"That table, ladies and gentlemen, is set up every night for a ghost". As soon as our tour guide ended her story of the empty table inside the restaurant, I got goosebumps. I did not expect to see or hear anything, but for a second, I thought I saw something moving at the table. I was not expecting a simple ghost story to affect me that way: making my imagination go wild and imagine things that were not there. My body felt the shivers as they run through it, and simultaneously my friend had crabbed my arm as she got scared of the story as well. I looked into her eyes, and thought I saw at least confusion in them, maybe even a little bit of fear...

Even though I knew the locations we were going to visit on the tour, I was still anxious and nervous at the same time. I am that type of a person who likes to know what she is getting herself into before it actually happens and participating to a ghost tour was no different. I had Googled the tour and the locations multiple times, and I had read all the stories involving the locations. But there was just something that I could not put my finger to, something that made me nervous. Almost as you would be reading a book and a page would be missing that fills you in on all the details. I may have had the information about the locations visited on the tour, but I had not been there before and therefore, I did not know how the experience would really be like, and that made me nervous.

The narrative above depicts how I felt about the stories I had read about the mansion before visiting the site. I had indeed read all the gruesome stories involving the tortured slaves and the hauntings experienced at the mansion. These stories heavily influenced me and my motivation to visit the site. Most of the interviewees and bloggers had also obtained information about the mansion and the stories regarding it before their visit. They had also, similarly to me, consumed information through media and created certain expectations of the mansion. For example, a TV show called American Horror Story was mentioned to have been a source for consuming information about the mansion. Also, websites and other people such as the caretakers and former residents of the mansion were named. Knudsen and Waade (2010, p. 5) discuss in their study about how authenticity in tourism has become a feeling that tourists can achieve and experience in relation to the different sites they visit. Tourists also

consume for example images of these places through media, and when they visit these sites, they can therefore enhance their emotional experience of the sites (Jansson, 2002, as cited in Knudsen & Waade, 2010, p. 12). As said earlier, me and the study subjects had consumed information about the mansion through media and from other people (caretakers and former residents of the mansion, as depicted in the videoblogs), and therefore had created expectations of the site. It could be said, that by visiting the LaLaurie Mansion, we wished to authenticate the expectations of the site we had created. Thus, the experience can be called performative authenticity (see Knudsen & Waade, 2010), where not only emotions played a role but also the bodies were acting at the site as well. In my case, I felt emotions such as excitement and happiness that I was finally able to visit a site I had read so much about. The authentication of the site for me came as I finally was able to stand in front of the LaLaurie Mansion and truly gaze upon it with my own eyes. As I stood in front of the mansion and just looked at it, I remember a brief moment where I was just thinking of how incredibly lucky I felt at the time to be able to stand in front of the mansion and just be there; in the same place where the mansion was.

Also, in the first paragraph of my autoethnographic text, it can be read that I was caught off guard by the story of the tour guide. I was surprised at the time about how intensively my body experienced the story. According to Massumi (2002, as cited in Martini & Buda, p. 680), affects can emerge in the body and manifest themselves for example as facial expressions, breathing, and sounds. In the paragraph, the affects experienced were the goosebumps. Before even realizing how excited I was and how much I was looking forward to the ghost tour to begin, my body acted by sending down shivers through it, and was affected because of the story told. Similarly, most of the bloggers and interviewees described being excited in the beginning of the tour and being affected by the tour guide's way of telling the stories and engaging with the tour group.

One of the stories that specifically came up from the interviewees and bloggers, was the story of a 12-year-old girl who jumped to her death from the roof of the mansion. The story depicts a young girl who was brushing Madame LaLaurie's hair and accidentally hurt her, and being afraid of the punishment, she decided to run off and jumped from the roof to her death. After this incident, Madame LaLaurie had to unwillingly give up few of her slaves after a judge

intervened by charging the LaLaurie's with slave abuse (Cable, 1889; Darkis, 1982, as cited in Rehlaender, 2019, p. 6). Even when the stories of Madame LaLaurie's treatment of her slaves clearly demonstrate that she was mistreating them, she usually found a way with her wealth to avoid the law and was therefore not punished for all of what she did to her slaves (Rehlaender, 2019, pp. 4–5). Interestingly enough, during the ghost tour, I closely paid attention to the mansion's roof, windows, and balconies, as did the interviewees and bloggers. I already knew the story of the young girl, and most of the interviewees and bloggers also disclosed knowing about the story before going to the mansion. Spinoza (1997–1678, as cited in d'Hauteserre, 2015, p. 79) has described affect as a line of force, and here the story of the slave girl could be seen as the affecting force and reason why the interviewees and bloggers, as well as myself, paid attention to certain parts of the mansion, including the roof and balconies. Also, few of the interviewees disclosed wanting to experience something at the mansion, and at the same time they feared that what if they indeed did experience something (see Goldstein, 2007). Here, as they paid more attention to the roof of the mansion, it could be interpreted that they looked in the hope that they would see something that would then perhaps authenticate the experience at the mansion for them.

4.1.1 The stories and their influence

The interviewees and bloggers had sought out information about the mansion and stories related to it before their visit. In the case of the interviewees, the information was sought out from a TV show, tour operator's website, and from internet in general. In the bloggers' case, the information was sought out from caretakers, former residents of the mansion, and through a job as few of the bloggers worked as tour guides taking people to the LaLaurie Mansion. These sources of information can be regarded as affecting the interviewees and bloggers when they visited at the mansion. In many cases the stories were the starting point of intensive experiences and emotions felt. For example, in my own experience, reading about the stories before visiting the mansion created for me an atmosphere of anticipation and excitement. I specifically remember when I read the stories of the mansion how my body started to react. I felt that I got so excited that it was hard for me to sit still. It was almost like body was telling me to go already. In the case of the interviewees, they similarly described the anticipation as well as getting more excited to visit the mansion. Also fear and hesitation were mentioned by the interviewees after reading stories and/or watching documentaries of the mansion before

the visit. Searching for information can be linked to what Knudsen and Waade (2010) discussed about in their study regarding performative authenticity. Tourists consume media images and stories about the sites they are going to visit, and the visit could, therefore, be seen as performative authenticity as both, the media images and visitation (Lüthje, 2017, p. 221), together can create the authentic experience for them. The emotions that I and the study subjects felt in the beginning of the ghost tour, were mainly stemming from the stories that the tour guide told to the group, and from the stories we had consumed beforehand. In my case, the tour guide was approachable, into the paranormal, and she knew about the history of New Orleans extensively. In all the interviewees and most of the blogger's cases, the tour guides way of telling the stories could be regarded as intriguing and passionate. In the following narrative, my immediate response to the stories the tour guide was telling, is described.

She had started to explain the history of the mansion: "This was the home of Madame Delphine LaLaurie, who lived here in the 1830's. You may know the character from the tv show American Horror Story but let me assure you that LaLaurie was a real person who lived here with her family. She was a well-known socialite of the Creole society at the time..." the tour guide's words tuned out of my hearing almost like an end of a song that fades away. I looked up to the mansion, and it seemed bigger than earlier. I started thinking of all the history that it had endured during all those years. How many different people might have lived in it, and how many different lives the mansion had seen? The saying of "if the walls could talk" came to my mind.

The tour guide had continued to tell us about the gruesome stories of Madame LaLaurie torturing her slaves, doing human experiments with them, and eventually fleeing to France without getting caught and prosecuted for her crimes. As she told the stories, I felt a lump forming in my throat and I felt sad, as I was going to start crying. I could not help but feel how cheated the people must have felt when LaLaurie and her family fled to France without any consequences of the crimes she committed. Also, the fact that all the horrible things happened to slaves who were African descendent, made my blood boil. Slaves had no rights compared to the white people at the time, so it made me angry and sad to think that they were tortured in a horrible manor and no one cared. The violence in the stories that the tour guide

told us seemed to become more and more present after each story. At first, it was about Madame LaLaurie mistreating her slaves. Then it was about her torturing the slaves. At the end, the story had turned to Madame LaLaurie doing human experiments to her slaves in the attic of her mansion. I started to suspect how much of these stories were true, but the tour guide beat me to it. She explained that the more gruesome stories started circling around 1940's after a book was published about Madame LaLaurie and the mansion. However, there was no evidence of any human experiments done by Madame LaLaurie and that most of the truly horrible torture stories were just that, stories. She continued that the mistreatment of the slaves was happening and there were police records from the time proving these incidents to be true. How bad the treatment of the slaves was, never fully became known as Madame LaLaurie fled New Orleans to France and was never convicted of her crimes against slaves. I was in shock after the tour guide told this. My friend could see the confusion on my face as my eyebrows lifted up and my mouth opened a little bit. We both looked at each other in confusion, as we both had been expecting the worse and had believed everything we had read about the mansion before. I was confused about why would anyone make up stories that were straight out from the horror movies, and better yet, keep them alive after all these years. I did not know how to feel at that moment. I felt cheated in a way. I started to wonder, if I would have known the stories to be fake before, would that have affected my motivation to come here? I think my expectations would have been different for sure, but I still think I would have come to visit the mansion. All though I must admit that I felt a little stupid and embarrassed, as I thought of myself as a smart person who knows the difference of fake and real. And here I was, completely fooled by the stories on the internet that I had believed to be true without a doubt. I noticed that my posture had somewhat come down, and I was not so enthusiastic anymore. My shoulders were hunched, and I had turned my face towards the ground. The tour guide's voice brought me back, and I lifted my head to face her. She had started to explain to us that Madame LaLaurie had become part of New Orleans' folklore and an urban legend. And as all urban legends, the stories around it tend to grow and change. I gave this idea a thought and I could see the stories evolving around Madame LaLaurie and the mansion. I still had hard time to shake off the feeling of disappointment.

When I visited the LaLaurie Mansion back in 2016, I already had an idea of how problematic the site itself was. During the times when the LaLaurie's lived in the mansion, slavery was legal and considered a common practise in the south. Because of this power unbalance, the

slaves were the most vulnerable members of the society at the time, and therefore they were subjects to abuse among other things. The LaLaurie's were no different in this matter, as it is proven by the police records from the time that slaves were abused and mistreated in the mansion. The ghost stories told during the ghost tours conducted to the mansion, stem from the mistreatment and abuse of the slaves. The ghost stories told about the LaLaurie Mansion can be seen as re-enactments that provide the tourists the opportunity to live and understand history or a certain period of time through their body. As Knudsen and Waade (2010, p. 15) discuss in their study, all kind of tourism has an experiential dimension which can offer a possibility to understand the other through the body. When I heard the stories of mistreated and abused slaves, I experienced intensive emotions. I felt hopeless, sad, and like I was going to cry. All the emotions were felt due to the stories that the tour guide was telling. This was surprising in a way, as d'Hauteserre (2015, p. 80) discusses in her study about how bodies are sharing and seeking encounters with others through their senses, such as affects and emotions. She continues to explain that bodies are moved by forces and in return they then build connection with the places where they are acting. Regarding my intensive emotions that I felt due to the stories of the slaves, my body was most likely acting on my surroundings and building connections with it. My body could have been seen as acting in a thick place, a place which enhances the sense of meaning and belonging by creating affective and experiential connections (Casey, 2001, as cited in Duff, 2010, p. 882). I cannot say that I have an immediate connection to the slaves or that time in history, but I have always been interested about it and therefore I had researched it a lot before my visit to New Orleans. This could have created the intensive emotions I felt while hearing the stories. For me, there is a distinctive difference between made-believe stories and stories that stem from a true place and time. When hearing the stories involving the mansion, I could not help but to feel sad and hopeless, as that is how I imagine the slaves must have felt.

An interesting conversation sparked with few of the interviewees about the notion of slaves and what became of the mansion after the LaLaurie's fled to France. The interviewees expressed the following:

> I remember when she said like there was a little girl who fell off like the balcony and like she definitely pushed her and that then it was made like a school for girls like after. Like that was so sad, and they literally took a place that was haunted and were tortured slaves died and like the worse possible place and made it into apartments and then bad things

started happening there like after the man died, and then like oh let's make it into a school for young girls. That sounds great, what a perfect spot. Like they just thought that was a good idea? (I1)

This type of questioning could be related to what Sharpley (2009, pp. 8–9) discusses in his study about the ethical aspects of dark tourism sites. The question that came up with few of the interviewees can be linked to what Sharpley (2009, pp. 8–9) is asking: should the sites of atrocity be left alone or even be demolished to prevent from tourism happening there. When asked about this, the interviewees answered the following:

> I don't think that they should take it down. Like you can tear down the building but what about all the dark energy and entities that are there, because you can rip it down but you can't take away what happened there. Like that still happened to all of those people. Like you can't just erase it from history. As a tourist spot, you are never able to stop people from going there. Like so many people are like super interested in these like scary things, it really like attracts people like it makes happy for people. You know like those ghost haunting shows like, people love that. So you're never going to be able to take that away. (I1)

They, however, expressed having mixed feelings about the ghost tours being conducted at the mansion, as the ghost tours are making money out of real people's suffering. Also, the stories about tortured slaves raised more questions to their minds. They explained:

> It was interesting but it was so like... It was scary but it was also like made me, because I'm also interested in history and it made me kind of like wanting to find more information and wanting to kind of like a fact check some of the things that the tour guide told us and I wanted kind of like Google, Google these things up and just find out, that okay which one is really true or is it something that he just made up. (I3)

Similarly, to my own account, I too questioned how accurate the stories of the tortured slaves were. The tour guide indeed confirmed my questioning to be valid, as she told to the group that some of the stories were exaggerated and maybe even made up. As I heard this, I experienced emotions such as disappointment, embarrassment, and shock, and my posture changed. Up until that moment, I had been enthusiastic about the tour. After I realized that some of the more macabre stories were not necessarily true, I lost my enthusiasm towards the mansion and the tour. For me, the stories were one of the most motivating aspect to visit the

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mansion. Deep down inside, I do believe that I knew the stories to be exaggerated. I was just so excited to finally be in New Orleans and being able to participate to a ghost tour that I wanted to believe the stories to be true. My eagerness to visit the mansion could be linked to Seaton and Lennon's (2004, as cited in Sharpley, 2009, pp. 11–12) findings of dark tourism motivation called morbid curiosity. This means a general interest to dark phenomenon such as death and violent. I have always had an interest to the paranormal and macabre. I had travelled to many different dark tourism destinations already before visiting New Orleans. Something that could have motivated me to visit the LaLaurie Mansion, was tourism nostalgia. Tarlow (2005, p. 52) describes it to be experiencing danger in a safe place.

Another aspect to the violent stories being told during the ghost tour, could be related to the entertaining dark tourism sites. Dann (1998, p. 3) describes in his study a list of definitions for dark tourism sites, and one of them is called horror houses. The LaLaurie Mansion can be described as an entertaining dark tourism site, hence a horror house. The stories told at the mansion are supposed to be entertaining rather than historically accurate, and it is no surprise that the stories told have a macabre side to them. Hanks (2016, p. 22) describes ghost tourism to be linked to many different areas in tourism such as thrill-seeking, and here the LaLaurie Mansion can be seen as a place where tourists seek those thrills. The most gruesome stories are kept alive and told on tours because they add to the thrill-seeking and entertaining value of the site, as well as to the atmosphere.

Few of the bloggers described the very moment when the tour came to the mansion and the tour guide started telling the stories to the group. As soon as this happened, they explained to have started "feeling really, really sick" (V1). They continued to explain that earlier they had been feeling fine, and this feeling of sickness came exactly at the moment when the tour guide started telling the stories about the mansion. The influence of the stories is especially strong here. Also, they recorded experiencing dizziness at the spots where the caretakers had told having experienced weird things. Tour guides perspective was brought up in few of the videoblogs too by describing how their storytelling ways had affected tour participants as they had felt dizzy and fainted. Therefore, one could assume that the stories told affect people who hear them and intensify their experiences at the site. This relates to Tucker and Shelton's study (2018, p. 73) where they describe that affects and emotions can be directed by for

example tour guides. This can clearly be seen in few of the videoblogs as the bloggers describe experiencing dizziness and slight tingle in their hands in the exact spots where the caretakers had reported experiencing something. Also, dizziness was described to have been felt at the mansion site right after the tour guide had started telling the stories.

One interviewee stood out from the others with the following answers, and to me deserves to be analysed more specifically. They expressed getting more excited as the stories got more violent and macabre, and they expressed this was because of "one does not hear these kinds of stories every day" (I2). As it is noted by scholars (see Causevic & Lynch, 2011) that in dark tourism experiences, tourists can experience the sense of being scared connected with excitement. When tourists experience fear and danger from a safe space, such as the ghost tour, they can "affectively perceive the grandiosity and magnificence of what happened" (Martini & Buda, 2020, p. 685), and can therefore experience the emotions such as excitement. This can be pointed out distinctively in this interviewee's case, as their overall feeling about the tour and sites visited was always mostly enthusiastic and excited. This interviewee also did not feel intensive emotions about the notion of slavery, as they commented it with words that in America that happens. They continued to discuss that these kinds of stories, even though violent and gruesome, authenticate the place and create an atmosphere of reality. They also expressed that the stories need to be told as they happened, so people will not forget the history. Ashworth and Hartmann (2005) discuss in their study about the possibility that do dark tourism sites in fact anaesthetize the tourists rather than sensitize them. In other words, does the tourist start viewing the macabre and horrible as normal and acceptable rather than shocking and disgusting. This sort of questioning is valid in the case of this interviewee, as said earlier they expressed getting more excited as the stories got more violent and macabre. Also, Uzzell and Ballantyne (1998, p. 5) discuss that this type of almost emotionless response can be because of the amount of time that has passed from the events of the stories. The more time has passed, the less emotional engagement we have with the event, and the more illustrative and interpretive techniques for example tourist guides need to make these places and events lively for those who do not have an emotional connection to it. In the following sub chapter, which starts with my own narrative, my experience after I left the mansion, is described.

4.1.2 Thoughts after the ghost tour

Soon after, I started hearing voices and footsteps of another group approaching the mansion. The tour guide started leading us away from the mansion to our next location on the tour, and as we left, I looked back at the mansion once more. The other group had already gathered in front of the mansion, and the guide was beginning to talk to them. The mansion stood still, and nothing had changed. But something had changed inside me and that was my feelings towards the mansion. It was funny to think that a building was so interesting and intriguing to me, and that when me and my friend started planning our trip to New Orleans, I immediately knew I wanted to visit the mansion. It was like a line of force was pulling me to the mansion. I was also surprised of how intensive my feelings were, when I heard the stories about the mansion and its owners. The ghost stories, even though proved to be exaggerated, still affected me in a way I could only describe as an intensive experience. My body felt tired as our group continued to walk further away from the mansion, almost like it had endured a lot of physical activity within a short amount of time. I felt that I could go back to the hotel and relax, but simultaneously I remembered that we were in the beginning of our ghost tour, and that the mansion had been one of the first stops. I struggled for a while to find energy to continue, but then I remembered all the other locations we were supposed to visit on the tour, and I felt enthusiastic again. It was then when I heard my friend calling out for me as I was beginning to fall behind from our group. Her voice brought me back to the present moment and I hurried back to her and we caught up with the group fast.

In the autoethnographic account above, I was struggling with my emotions immediately after leaving the mansion. I had massive expectations about the mansion before and high motivation to visit it. When I heard the ghost stories, that had been motivating me to visit the mansion, had been exaggerated or even made up, I felt disappointed. I also felt that my energy levels went down rapidly, and I struggled to have the energy to continue as the tour was not over yet. The affects I felt in that moment can be also pointed out clearly in the narrative. My body felt like it had gone through exhausting exercise, and it felt tired. The experience at the mansion had been so intensive, that my whole body was being affected by it. The intensity of the experience was strong because of my motivation, expectations, and at the end the realization that not all the stories were true. This can be related to what Martini and Buda (2020, p. 684) describe in their study, about how different tourist stakeholders can manipulate

the affects and emotions of tourists. Tourists can be pushed towards certain affects and emotions, and here in my case it can be clearly seen. I had read about the stories online from tourism-based websites, which can be regarded to push people who read them towards certain emotions, such as excitement or interest. These websites sparked my interest towards the LaLaurie Mansion and guided me through out the experience until the moment when the tour guide told the stories to have been exaggerated. It is also important to notice here, that my expectations about the experience and visitation were high and emotionally ladened. These aspects lead to creations of affects and how the site will be then experienced (see Duff, 2010). It could be because of this, that I felt something was pulling me towards the mansion, what I describe in my autoethnographic account a line of force. As I was so emotionally invested already to the mansion due to the stories I had read about it beforehand, I felt that the mansion was drawing me in.

Just before the tour took off to another location, few of the interviewees expressed that they were ready to leave the mansion as soon as possible, and not wanting to stay near it for too long. They said that they did not feel comfortable staying in an area or close to an area where bad energy has been reported to have been experienced. They continued to explain that after the tour left the site of the LaLaurie Mansion, they did not feel energised anymore, but rather worn down and tired. They disclosed the following:

> I think I was like ready to go, because I didn't want to stay too close to something like that because you know, it's like so freaky and like the energy is real when you're there like you're not so happy and you're not like oh I want to go do this and that afterwords, you're more like hmm like it's not a happy subject. Yeah so, I was like I'm ready to go the next place and be done with the ghost tour. (I1)

Similarly, in few of the videoblogs, the bloggers describe having witnessed similar experiences. According to them, the other tour participants felt dizzy and/or ready to move on from the site as they felt not good being so close to the mansion. This is an interesting aspect to notice, as in most of the interviewees and bloggers' cases, immediately after arriving at the mansion their emotions were mostly enthusiastic and excited. The emotions then changed towards the end of the visitation as the tour left the mansion to move to another location. This type of mood change can be because of the stories, again. The lived experience of the environment and site is produced by senses and how they shape the environment (see Duff,

2010). In other words, the atmosphere of the site changed for the interviewees and bloggers because of how the stories affected them. In the next sub chapter, the notion of atmospheres is discussed further.

4.2 Atmosphere of the site

In the narrative below, my experience as the ghost tour started, is depicted. As it can be pointed out, the surroundings and atmosphere of the city played a big role in my experiences and what sort of emotions I experienced.

Soon after this the tour guide gathered the group to walk to the next location on the tour. Me and my friend were walking in front of the group, my friend still holding my arm and me gently squeezing her hand to comfort her. She had been hesitant on going to the tour in the first place, so I knew she needed little bit of encouragement to bare through it until the end. As our group continued walking, I could see other groups passing us by on the other side of the street, as well as a group which had stopped in front of a building. People had gathered around the guide to listen to the stories, which I can only imagine were ghost stories as New Orleans was known for them. The air was warm as it was summer, and a gentle breeze touched my body as we turned the corner following our tour guide. I could smell my friend's perfume, feel her warm hand still holding my arm, hear the other groups and people around me, and see and hear flashing of cameras as people were taking photos of the streets and buildings. Also, I could smell the delicious sent of food coming from various restaurants around us. I could hear loud laughter and talking, and some people even yelling at each other. It amazed me how full of life the downtown of New Orleans was, and yet there I was on a ghost tour seeking to visit locations where death had occurred. Also, the atmosphere of the other people enjoying their evening, laughing, and having fun seemed distant to me, as my atmosphere was excited but in a nervous way.

In the narrative above, the emotions I felt could be related to what Duff (2010) and Ahmed (2014) discuss in their studies about the mood and feelings of the site. As I mention in the narrative, I felt disconnected of New Orleans in a way as the mood of the city could be interpreted to be celebratory and fun. Duff (2010, p. 881) discusses that "to experience place

is to be affected by place". According to this, I was not fully experiencing New Orleans as I did not feel affected by it yet. Instead, I felt disconnected of the mood and atmosphere of the place, and they seemed distant to me. However, this changed for me once the tour took me to the LaLaurie Mansion. Interestingly enough, Uzzell and Ballantyne (1998, p. 4) discuss in their study about atmosphere being fleeting and almost problematic. In my case, I identified that there was a clear atmosphere of the place from which I felt disconnected from. Similarly, few of the interviewees described New Orleans having a special atmosphere. Uzzell and Ballantyne (1998, p. 4) however question the concept of atmosphere as it cannot be seen. They further explain that the atmosphere then has to be a projection of ourselves and our emotions that we impose on to the scene (1998, p. 4). Therefore, the atmosphere I described in the autoethnographic narrative above, can be seen as my own emotions and feelings being imposed to the other people on the streets of New Orleans, and me feeling disconnected of them. Uzzell and Ballantyne (1998, p. 4) continue to describe how every space is endowed with an atmosphere that stems from the activities and memories of the space. The emotions I felt as taking part on the ghost tour, were nervousness and anxiousness. These emotions most likely stemmed from the ghost tour but also from the fact that the space I was "in" was scary, as I was going to visit reportedly haunted places with violent history attached to them.

In the interviews and videoblogs, it was established that the information gained about the mansion before the visit, created emotions and affects for the study subjects. Few of the interviewees for example expressed being nervous and anxious, and slightly worried that they would experience something at the mansion. They described it as "bad energy" (I1). Goldstein (2007, p. 197) discusses about having conducted interviews with ghost tour participants to require information about the authentic experience. In the study, she noticed that the participant wanted to experience something but then again, they did not. The authentication for these participants did not come from the "real" stories heard on the tour, but from the possibility to encounter a ghost (see Inglis & Holmes, 2003). In the case of the few interviewees, this type of wanting to experience something versus not wanting to experience something debate can be also seen. They expressed their opinion about not wanting to see or experience anything scary, yet later they mentioned to have been really looking for to spot something for example on the mansion's windows and its surroundings. They did not disclose whether the experience was lacking something as they did not see or experience anything paranormal, but it is an interesting aspect, nevertheless. This sort of behaviour can be linked

to the media images and stories the interviewees had consumed before visiting the mansion. They specifically mentioned a TV series called American Horror Story which is supernatural in nature. It depicts the story of the LaLaurie Mansion and the tortured slaves and therefore one could argue that the theme of the TV show is not necessarily pleasant. As few of the interviewees described being nervous and anxious at the mansion, this could be interpreted to have been because they had seen the show and were therefore expecting similar experiences.

When the study subjects arrived at the mansion, both the interviewees and bloggers, described the mansion looking well kept, historical, big, and old. For few of the interviewees, the mansion did not match what they had expected it to look like. They expressed being surprised that the mansion did not look "more haunted", and they continued to explain:

> And it's like right on an intersection. If I think like a scary haunted mansion, you would think it's like on this dark street by itself, kind of like more in the middle of nowhere. No, this is like literally on an intersection, like it sits right in a corner like where people can ride by it, and people are walking like in New Orleans a lot people walk everywhere because things are pretty close, and they just walk by it because it's all right there. It's right in the open. (I1)

This stereotype of how haunted houses should look like is implemented to people's mind from childhood. Grider (2007, pp. 148–149) discusses in her study about the folkloric way of imagining things. This can be pointed out best in a comparison of an enchanted castle versus a haunted house. A haunted house should look worn down, sit on an isolated area far off from other houses, and look dark and brooding. When tourists see a supposedly haunted house that does not look like that, it makes them surprised as few of the interviewees were when arriving to the LaLaurie Mansion. This sort of folkloric imagery is being also used in the pictures of the LaLaurie Mansion. On tour operators' websites the supposedly haunted locations are almost always pictured, and the pictures are edited to look more haunting and/or dark. For example, on one tour operator's website the LaLaurie Mansion is pictured to look almost as it would be the only house on the street. Also, some fog has been added to the picture to make the mansion look more eery. This type of picture manipulation can create certain emotions in tourists if they look these pictures before going on a ghost tour. As Krisjanous (2016, p. 344) argues in her study, websites and pictures portrayed in them can be used to guide the tourist experience and on-site performance. These pictures can even hold an opportunity to shape the

expectations of the tourists and can create an expectation of what the authentic experience should look or be like. In other words, it creates expectations that might not be met when the tourists arrive to the mansion. In the case of the interviewees, they were expecting something totally different than what they got and therefore their emotions might have ranged from being excited to being disappointed. However, some of the interviewees expressed conflicting emotions regarding to how the mansion looked like, as for them the mansion looked intriguing instead of not matching how they had imagined it to look like. They explained this to have been because the night was progressing, and it had gotten darker outside as they arrived at the mansion. They also explained the mansion being lighted with spotlights, which to them, made the mansion stand out even more. It created almost an illusion that the mansion would be the only house on the street.

As I, so did the study subjects describe other people's influence and reactions affecting them as they arrived at the mansion. For example, few of the interviewees reacted the same way as I did and felt that the excitement of the other tour participants rubbed on them. The tour guide was also pointed out to have been creating an atmosphere of anticipation before taking the interviewees to the LaLaurie Mansion. The interviewees also knew and acknowledged that the mansion had been left to be the last stop because of its reputation as being the most famous haunted house on the tour. They also described how they could see the other tour participants being and getting excited as they were waiting to get to the mansion. They themselves did not describe getting too excited, but it could be interpreted that the other tour participants' excitement rubbed on to them in some way, as it caught their attention how they were reacting before arriving to the mansion. As affects are, according to some scholars (see Anderson, 2006; Martini & Buda, 2020; Shouse, 2005), considered to be experienced unconsciously, there might have been affects experienced that did not become emotions yet as emotions are considered to be the affect that is experienced intensively (see Ngai, 2005). Also, as affects and emotions are experienced relationally, the interviewees in this case were experiencing it because of the other tour participants (see Martini & Buda, 2020). In the following narrative, my emotions and experiences are described as the ghost tour took me and my friend closer to the mansion.

Even though we stayed in the immediate downtown area of New Orleans, I could not but start to wonder that the tour guide was taking the group further away from the shops, restaurants, and people. Soon after this realization, the smells of food were long gone, as were the laughter and talking of people which had turned from loud to very distant noises. I noticed we were the only group walking on that street with only few other people surrounding us or walking by us. Everyone in the group seemed to notice this, and little hesitation rouse to my mind. It was a moment I could only describe as an eerily atmosphere, when you cannot really put your finger to what has changed but you know something has.

We continued to walk down the street and soon something changed. Me and my friend started looking around and saw that we had stopped in front of a three-store neo classical building that looked like something straight out of the movies. It was painted with the shades of grey, and it had beautiful flowers on the balconies. Curtains were hanging in front of the windows on the inside, which prevented us from seeing how the mansion looked from the inside. Even though it was nighttime, no lights were on inside. The building's front door was gated with big, black iron gates, and it seemed no one was home or even living inside the building. It still did not look abandoned, but rather very well kept.

I could hear gasps and silent mumbling from my group members. An excitement rushed through me as I heard my fellow group members' reactions, and I felt like a kid in a candy store. Not soon after this, our tour guide gathered us around her. Some group members were already searching for their cameras and phones and I soon found myself doing the exact same. I did not even know why, maybe it was a reaction to everyone else doing it.

In the first paragraph of the narrative, the atmosphere around me, as the ghost tour took me to the LaLaurie Mansion, changed. It also affected me and the group participants, as I recall, everyone started to look around them and grew a bit hesitant to follow our tour guide. The affects in this case, can be seen moving across bodies and affecting us all. Atmospheres and spaces where the bodies act, are considered important and related to each other, as one can affect the other. As McCormack (2008, p. 418) says it "atmosphere is instead a set of dynamic and kinetic affects, where affect is the pre-individual intensity of relation between bodies". In

the narrative, the atmosphere could be described as a powerful one as it affected the whole group. Thus, an atmosphere could be described as an emotive tone imbuing a particular environment (see Böhme, 1993). In the case of New Orleans, the city almost oozes old tales of history, that tourists then combine with good food, music, and entertainment in general (see Gotham, 2007). New Orleans is also known to use narratives of slavery in their tourism and more precisely express these narratives through ghost stories (see Ironside, 2018). It is no wonder that in my autoethnographic narrative I experienced an atmosphere that was almost scary to me, and that this affected me and the bodies acting around me.

As our group arrived at the LaLaurie Mansion, I noticed what the study subjects had noticed too, that the mansion looked very well kept. My thoughts about the appearance of the mansion can be linked to Grider's (2007, pp. 148–149) study and comparison done about an enchanted castle versus a haunted house. I too was expecting something more "haunted" than what I got. I also had a strong reaction to what the other tour participants were doing as we arrived at the mansion. As I state it in the narrative, my body started acting before I even realized why, as I too started to search for my phone to take pictures. Even though, I had read about all the locations visited during the ghost tour, I still forgot upon the arrival at the mansion where we had arrived. My mind did not register at which location we had arrived, and it was only after I saw the other tour participants' reactions that I understood that this must be a significant site we had arrived at. Also, it is interesting to notice how the atmosphere the whole tour group shared, changed almost immediately upon the arrival at the mansion. At first, the atmosphere could have been described as hesitant and scared, but excitement took over the tour participants as we arrived at the LaLaurie Mansion.

Another aspect that influenced the study subjects', as well as my atmosphere, was the tour guide. The tour guide's presence also created a calming atmosphere, as few of the interviewees discussed that the tour guide did not only talk about the haunted buildings or paranormal aspects of New Orleans, but that between the locations they talked and asked questions from the tour participants like "how has your stay been and have you liked it here" (I1). This made the interviewees feel relaxed and calm, and it almost prepared them for the next stop. Also, an "excited and communal atmosphere" (I2) was described to have been created by the tour guide. These interviewees also mentioned the size of the group being

good, as if the group had been any smaller the experience would have been "more intimate and scarier" (I1). As it can be seen in Goldstein's (2007, pp. 203–204) study, the tour group can provide safety and communal feeling for an individual tour participant. She continues in her study to discuss, that it is therefore most likely that if something is experienced, everyone in the group experiences it together. Regarding the research, the interviewees described indeed the tour group having a communal feeling and sharing the emotions such as excitement together, which can be linked to what Goldstein was talking about in her study. Also, the communal feeling of the tour group could have been felt regarding the mutual interest to the paranormal. As tourists meet people with similar interest, it can create a communal feeling (Dancausa et al., 2020, p. 5). Additionally, the interviewees described the tour's atmosphere to be "mildly spooky in an entertaining way" (I2). Overall, the atmosphere of the tour was described by all interviewees to have been mostly enthusiastic and excited. However, in some cases few of the interviewees and bloggers described themselves to have been scared and only feeling at ease when the tour was moving between locations. At the locations, they expressed always feeling nervous, anxious, and a little scared. The way the interviewees and bloggers felt at each sites of the tour, can be linked to what Duff (2010, p. 884) discusses about a site's mood and feeling. Different sites have certain mood and feeling attached to it and this mood can be affected by for example the tour guide. This is exactly what Anderson (2009, p. 80) discusses about in his study on how atmospheres can be shaped and manipulated by those who create the experiences for example for tourists. Tour guides presence, as shown in the earlier sub chapter of the findings, had an immense impact on the study subjects in forms of storytelling and presenting the site. The atmosphere here is not necessarily lingering in a certain space and waiting to be discovered by the tourists but is rather created by the tour guide together with the tour participants (see Böhme, 1993). It is, therefore, influenced by the tour guide and the experience could be considered being intensified through the atmosphere experienced.

4.3 Emotions felt at the LaLaurie Mansion

As Gnoth (1997) regarded in his study, emotions can be considered important in the pre-travel stage and can therefore influence the motivational aspects of why people want to travel to certain sites and destinations. In the beginning of the interviews and videoblogs, the interest of the study subjects to the paranormal was established to be relatively high. All the study

subjects commented on the interest being one of the most motivational aspects for them to visit the LaLaurie Mansion. This type of interest can be seen to have led the study subjects feeling certain emotions such as excitement and enthusiasm. The interest to the paranormal, however, can be considered to have been on very different levels. This can be shown from how different emotions were felt in the same environment and context. For example, few of the interviewees described feeling nervous, anxious, and even scared during the ghost tour, as for others explained feeling excited. However, the study subjects who expressed feeling nervous, anxious, and scared still were motivated and excited to visit the LaLaurie Mansion. This is what Baumeister et al. (2007) discuss in their study about the emotional feedback being for example positive and therefore people want to replicate the experience. However, Larsen and McGraw (2011) suggest that positive and negative emotions can be felt at the same time during the same event. For example, in the case of visiting the LaLaurie Mansion, tourists can experience nervousness and still be interested to visit the site and hear the stories told about it. Negative emotions in tourist experiences are also considered important. In the case of the LaLaurie Mansion, as few of the interviewees and bloggers discussed it too, it is important that the history and time of slavery is remembered and talked about, as it educates the tourists about these issues. Negative emotions hereby can affect the tourists and enhance the educational aspect of the site (see Nawijn & Biran, 2019, p. 2393).

As it was established earlier, the tourists and tour guides both play with the authenticity of the ghost stories heard on the ghost tour (see Hanks, 2016). This can refer to tourists trying to seek paranormal encounters on the tour and through them authenticate the site itself (see Goldstein, 2007; Inglis & Holmes, 2003). This is shown also in Thompson's (2008) study, where he discusses that the tourists' senses become more open during the ghost tours as they are seeking the paranormal encounters. This openness of the senses can be seen in affecting and creating emotions in the tourists. For example, few interviewees described being extremely excited as the tour took them to the LaLaurie Mansion. They also disclosed having tried to see or spot something in the mansion's surroundings, which confirms that they did try to seek paranormal encounters. Therefore, their senses could have been regarded as being open, and even the slightest change in for example sounds and odour, could have produced emotions such as enthusiasm and excitement, or even affect them in becoming more scared and afraid. As for the interviewees and bloggers who stood out as the most excited and enthusiastic of the study subjects, these emotions could be interpreted to have been felt due to

the possibility of encountering a ghost or experiencing something paranormal (Dancausa et al., 2020, p. 4). Nevertheless, the study subjects understood that it is unlikely that they would encounter anything (Thompson, 2008), but it was enough to have the possibility that then led them to emotions like excitement and enthusiasm. These study subjects also disclosed that their interest to visit the LaLaurie Mansion was never only because it portrays death per se, but rather because they were interested in the horror and macabre, horror movies, and/or the darker side of history (Ivanova & Light, 2018, pp. 361–362).

In few interviews and videoblogs, the notion of knowing about the site before the visitation, was discussed. Few interviewees and bloggers indicated not to even consider visiting a dark tourism site without knowing anything about it beforehand. In other words, they wanted to find out as much information as possible about the site before their visit, and then based on the information, make the decision to visit or not. The information was sought out from documentaries, internet, and through interviews with people associated with the mansion such as caretakers and former residents. As Ivanova and Light (2018, pp. 361–362) discuss in their study's findings, tourists' interest to the entertaining dark tourism sites can be because of interest to macabre, horror movies, and/or history. Finding out information about the site before the visitation can be linked to these interests. For example, few interviewees disclosed to have been interested in watching documentaries about the mansion before their visit, as well as that they were interested about the history more than anything. In the narrative below, my experiences at the mansion are depicted.

Quite soon our tour guide started to talk to our group. She began with saying that we had arrived in front of the most famous (as well as infamous) building of New Orleans, known as the LaLaurie Mansion. As soon as she said this, I felt excited. I felt my heartbeat getting faster, and I noticed that I got a little sweaty. My mouth opened to a slight smile and I looked at my friend who had tears in her eyes. I knew she did not want to come to this tour as much as I did, and she has never been that interested in supernatural. Horror movies, which are my favourite type of movies, are too much for her as she is either too scared to watch them or she will start crying. As I saw her eyes now in tears, it was my turn to crab her, and I gently hugged her and whispered to her ear that it was just a ghost story, nothing to be taken too seriously. She laughed nervously after this and wiped her eyes with her hands. As much as I

wanted to console her and make her feel better, I felt that I was too excited to do that. I was too concentrated on my own feelings of finally being in New Orleans and at the mansion, that I almost felt that nothing else mattered at that moment. As the excitement took over, I let go of my friend, and focused on listening to what our tour guide was saying.

In the narrative above, it can be clearly pointed out that my experience was heavily influenced by two different aspects. Firstly, I was on the tour with my friend who did not want to participate into the tour as much as I did. Secondly, I was on a tour rather than visiting the mansion on my own. The tour had multiple participants, and it also had a tour guide whose influence was immense as she was solely responsible of telling the stories regarding the sites visited on the tour. I mentioned earlier that my friend's reactions had an affect on me. At the beginning of the tour, I took somewhat the role of consoling her when she was feeling afraid, but later at the mansion I felt slightly annoyed that she was reacting to the stories the way she was. I know that was selfish of me, but I was too excited to pay attention to her and make her feel better. I wanted to enjoy the moment without any interruptions. Emotions that were present and felt during this moment were excitement, empathy, and annoyance. Excitement was felt because I was finally at the LaLaurie Mansion that I had wanted to visit. Empathy as well as annoyance were felt towards my friend. Empathy was felt because I could see her being scared of the stories, and annoyance was felt because I felt I could not enjoy the experience fully when being worried about her. In my experience, as in the interviewees and bloggers' experience, I was being affected by the tour participants, my friend, and of course the tour guide. With me, the affects however did not stay unconsciously experienced (see Anderson, 2006; Vannini, 2015), but I rather experienced them intensively, hence they became emotions (see Ngai, 2005). This is a significant difference for example to few of the interviewees' experiences, as they described not being affected by the other tour participants, all though they did recognize their enthusiasm and excitement. This could indicate that these interviewees in fact were affected by the other tour participants, but the affects were not experienced intensively enough to spike out emotions (see Ngai, 2005). Therefore, these interviewees could have been regarded as being affected unconsciously.

5. CONCLUSION

In the following chapter, the conclusion of the study is presented. The study findings indicated that the tourists were affected by multiple different components during the ghost tour. The findings also provided an intimate outlook on tourist experiences in ghost tourism, and more specifically in ghost tours. These insights may provide a new outlook to affects and emotions in dark tourism, and how they are created especially in lighter dark tourism destinations. The research sought out to answer the main research question which was: how do affects and emotion manifest in ghost tourism experiences? As of how the affects and emotions manifested in ghost tourism experiences, the results on this aspect were vast. It became clear from the research data that different components affected and created emotions in tourists who participated to ghost tours. Out of all the findings, the biggest influencing aspects were the atmosphere and the tour guide and their storytelling. These two aspects also co-existed together, as the atmosphere was found to be heavily influenced by the tour guide through their storytelling. These aspects also created emotions in the tourists and enhanced and intensified them and their experience in whole.

The study findings also indicated that all though different kinds of methods were used in creating a tourist experience in lighter dark tourism destination (see Stone, 2006, pp. 145–160) than in dark tourism destination, there were also similarities in creating these experiences. The data of the research indicated that the tour guides took on different approaches when presenting the LaLaurie Mansion. In the research data, it became clear that some tour guides had taken the approach of presenting the site through history and facts, and others took rather a more entertaining way of presenting the site. Nevertheless, in the findings it became clear that the atmosphere and storytelling aspects of the tours were similar in nature, as the study subjects described their experiences being relatively the same no matter what kind of an approach the tour guides took in presenting the site.

The study findings indicate a bigger role in atmosphere and storytelling than what I had anticipated for at first when starting to conduct the study. I was expecting similar experiences, emotions, and affects to have been experienced by the study subjects as in any other dark tourism related studies have presented previously. However, what I found out was nothing

similar to other dark tourism studies conducted before. First of all, the LaLaurie Mansion can be described as an entertaining dark tourism destination (see Dann, 1998) as well as a lighter dark tourism destination (see Seaton, 2006), which can create different kinds of expectations on tourists who visit the site. Rather than coming to see and perhaps understand a difficult past of the site, the tourists may merely come for the excitement and thrill-seeking possibilities that sites like the LaLaurie Mansion provide for them.

Intensive emotions were felt during the ghost tours, and they were mostly always felt regarding other tour participants, the stories, or the atmosphere. These emotions also moved across bodies between the tour participants, almost as if they were feeding off of each other. The range of emotions felt during the experiences, was also enormous. Emotions ranged from negative to positive, such as fear to excitement, and everything between. They were also experienced through other emotions, for example experiencing fear led some study subjects to experience sadness. The initial emotions felt acted sort of as a gateway to other emotions to be felt and experienced.

5.1 Limitations of the study

The research had few limitations. One of them was that I had to result to data triangulation as I could not find enough interviewees. All though the data triangulation can be considered successful, the amount of shared emotions about the experience was bigger in the interviews than in the videoblogs. Therefore, if the data would have been gathered through interviews only, I think the range of emotions and affects would have been bigger and more diverse. In the videoblogs, all though the emotions were shared by the bloggers, in some cases they were left superficial or could have been considered as a remark. It felt that in the videoblogs, the emotions were not fully explained, or they were not "dug deeper". In the interviews however, I could ask questions like "could you tell me more about that" to fully gain an understanding of what the interviewees were talking about or referring to. This was not possible in the videoblogs, so I was left with just trying to understand them through how the bloggers presented their emotions and experiences at the mansion.

Also, as the research is studying ghost tourism, the topic in academic world has been considered somewhat superstitious and because of this it has not received such an interest from scholars. Talking to people about ghosts can really divide the opinions and create questions such as "is this really an academic research". There were few occasions when I met this sort of thinking as I conducted the interviews. In one interview especially, the interviewee sort of brushed off the notion of ghosts by simply saying that they do not believe in them. The question itself was not about does the interviewee believe in ghosts, but it was understood by them in that way and therefore their reaction was maybe a bit amused. This sort of thinking could in the worst case possible result into cancelling the interview or the interviewee not taking the research seriously enough, hence their answers could change.

Also, as the research was exploring affects and emotions, which can be considered a personal matter, it could have been difficult for the interviewees to express themselves to a stranger. In one interview especially, the interviewee struggled to talk about their emotions and at the end of the interview disclosed that it was due to not having enough vocabulary to express themselves properly. As the interviews were conducted in English, this meant that English might not have been the first language of the interviewees. Here, as one of the interviewees expressed, conducting an interview in a language that is not the interviewees first language, can create some problems and difficulties.

5.2 Suggestions for future studies

As it was established earlier in the findings of the study, two aspects gained the most attention. These were the atmosphere and the tour guide with their storytelling. Atmospheres to me deserve to be studied further, especially in the context of entertaining dark tourism sites such as the LaLaurie Mansion. Dark tourism sites have received considerable attention in academic research, but most of the studied sites are considered the darkest of the dark, such as Auschwitz. It is important for researchers to remember that lighter dark tourism destinations also exist, and that they can provide interesting and new aspects to research if they are only given the chance and are studied further.

When it comes to atmospheres, it is an interesting notion to study further, how exactly the atmospheres in lighter dark tourism destinations are build. Regarding my own experience with the literature I used for this research, it is clear that the atmospheres are build differently in sites such as Auschwitz and LaLaurie Mansion. The atmosphere can also be considered more prevalent in sites like Auschwitz than in LaLaurie Mansion, where the atmosphere almost needs to be drawn out by the tour guide with the stories and tour participants. The site of LaLaurie Mansion itself might not posses as strong emotions and affects as other dark tourism sites can. This however does not mean that the atmosphere lingering or being build by the tour guide is in any shape or form less interesting than in other dark tourism destinations. It is merely built differently and this itself produces an interesting aspect to be studied further.

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