



HISTORIC HARLOTS OF OLD ATLANTA

...A FORGOTTEN POSTBELLUM-TO-PROGRESSIVE ERA RED-LIGHT PROSTITUTION DISTRICT

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lib.gsu.edu/historicharlots

DATA!

MAP OF ATLANTA - 1899

Collins District (1869-1910)

Scattered in 1880 Census - often rooms/tenements in multi-family dwellings

TODAY: GSU Library!

Popular Prostitution Streets*	Count	% TTL
Collins St + Georgia RR St	196	45.8%
Courtland St (once N Collins)	47	11.0%
Decatur St	53	12.4%
Line St	23	5.4%
Thompson St/Madison Ave	16	3.7%
Peters St	20	4.7%
S Broad St	14	3.3%

*US Federal Census, 1880, 1900, 1910

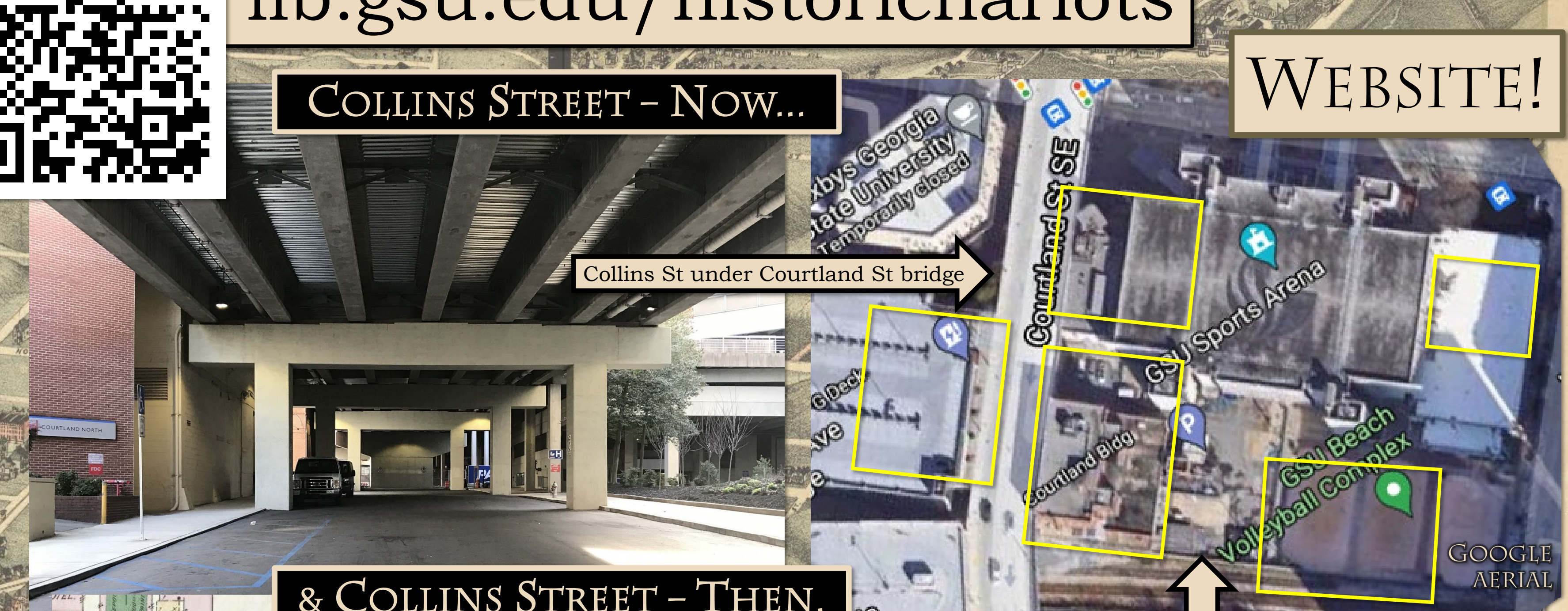
	1880	1900	1910	ALL
Madam/Prostitutes	98	149	181	428
Madams	9	23	23	55
Prostitutes	89	126	158	373
Households	33	25	23	81
Avg per Household	2.97	5.96	7.87	5.28

*US Federal Census, 1880, 1900, 1910

play with the DATA!

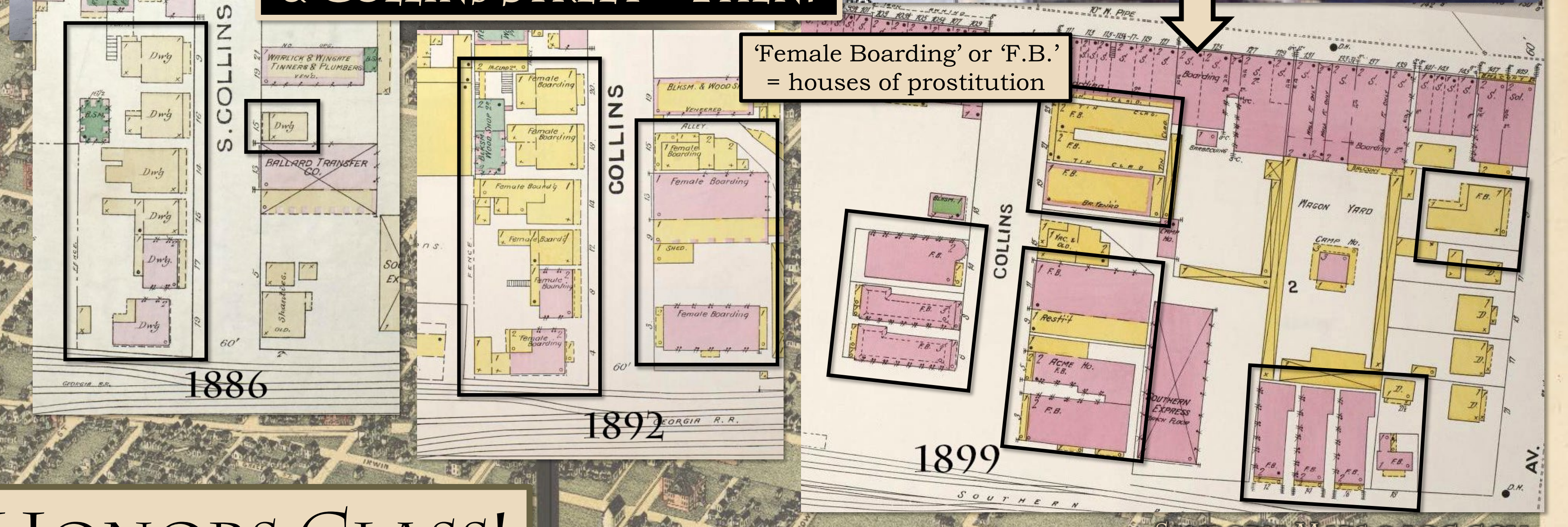


WEBSITE!



COLLINS STREET - NOW...

& COLLINS STREET - THEN.



This project details the rise and fall of the bawdy brothels lining Downtown Atlanta's Collins Street from the late 1800s to the early 1900s, located within what today is the heart of Georgia State University's campus. Showcasing tantalizing tidbits from newspapers, census records, city directories, property records, maps, and more, the project transports us to those bygone days when sin and Southern hospitality went hand in hand - with tales of madams and their painted ladies (some classy, some brassy, but always sassy), the shenanigans and scandals, the sociopolitical complexities of the turn-of-the-century prostitution trade, and what finally brought the Collins district to its demise after a 40-year run.

"Peters Street for wagon yards, Whitehall Street for stores, Peachtree Street for dressy feet, and Collins Street for whores..."

- pithy rhyme (origin unknown) quoted in *The Bordello Cookbook* (1999), *To Build Our Lives Together* (2004), and *Rage in the Gate City* (2009)

INSTAGRAM!

@historicharlotsatl

ATL'S RED-LIGHT DISTRICT
 - in the shadow of the State Capitol, 1 1/2 blocks from City Police Headquarters, and a block's stroll along tracks from the Union Passenger Depot...

AIRWAVES!

ARCHIVE ATLANTA PODCAST

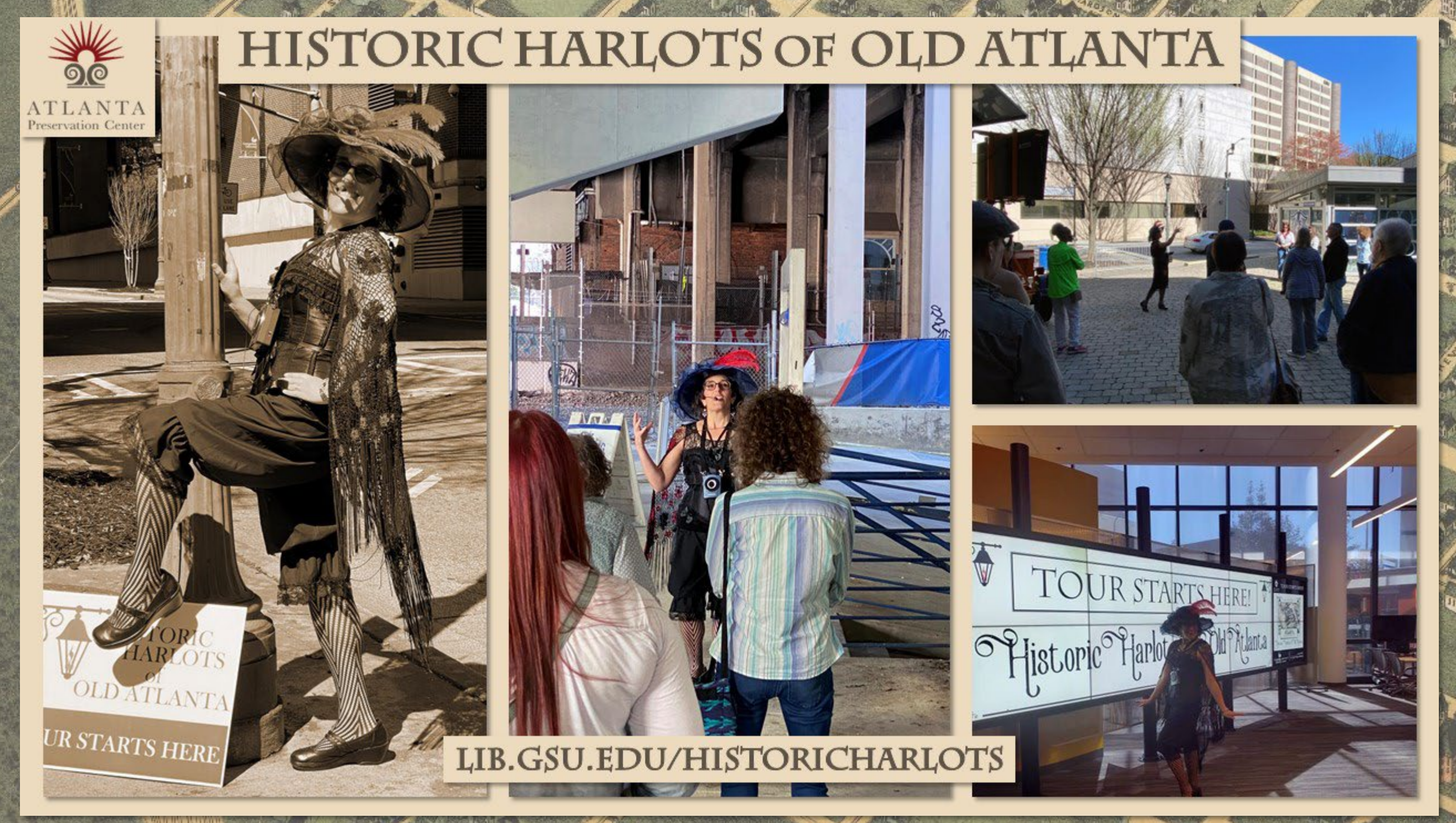
Episode 182, 8/5/2022

Celebrate a dead madam with SQUEEZEBOXING!

GUEST SPOT ON WREK 91.1 FM "LOST IN THE STACKS" FEB 9 2024 @ NOON!

Episode 581, 3/9/2024

WALKING TOURS!



- **INTRO TO HHATL PROJECT** + broader sociohistorical context in South and the US.
 - **HANDS-ON RESEARCH DAYS** to explore different resources used to create the HHATL project: historical news, Census records, city directories, data/statistics, maps, etc.
 - **FINAL PROJECT:** Submit brief 'pitch' for content to contribute to the HHATL project with opportunity to continue work on the project in the future.
- ...and starting Fall 2025: **RESEARCH ASSISTANT!**

TALKS!

"REAL MADAMS OF OLD ATLANTA"

Learn about the women who led the way for establishing Atlanta's Collins Street red-light prostitution district that existed unabated for 40 years in the heart of downtown - from **Madam Lizzie Clifton** (who jumpstarted it in 1869), to **Madam Abbie Howard** (oft-attributed as inspiring *Gone With the Wind's* Belle Watling), to the sister sets of classy **Madams Annie & Fannie Price** and brassy **Madams Willie & Belle Burton**, to **Madam Minnie Cole** alias Alda Dugant (New Orleans' transplant and one of only two mixed-race/Black madams in the Collins district).

"DATA OF HISTORIC ATLANTA'S DEMIMONDE"

Explore data mined from Atlanta's 1880, 1900, and 1910 censuses, including geographic origins, age, race, marital status, children born/living, and literacy rates among Atlanta's madams and prostitutes of the era - examined within the sociohistorical contexts of class, gender, and racial politics of Atlanta, the South, and the broader US.

"RACE & SEXUALITY IN ATLANTA'S POSTBELLUM-TO-PROGRESSIVE ERA PROSTITUTION TRADE"

Drawing from historic Census data, city directories, maps, newspapers, arrest records, and legal code, we explore Black and mixed-race women's experiences in Atlanta's prostitution trade at this time - contextualized in the broader sociohistorical/sociocultural considerations of social construction of race, Jim-Crow segregation and racial violence, social inequalities and intersectionality, and racialized sexual politics.

BACKGROUND: "Bird's Eye View of Atlanta" Map - Augustus Koch, illustrator. © 1892 Saunders & Kline [loc.gov/item/75693189]

1. State Capitol
2. Fulton County Jail
3. Chamber of Commerce and City Office
4. Courtland St
5. Union Passenger Depot
6. S. S. & Company Store
7. The Grady Mansion
8. Grand Hotel
9. Equitable Building Property of the East Atlanta Land Company
10. Grand Hotel
11. General Building
12. "The Hub"
13. Georgia Electric Light Company
14. National Equitable Company's General and Building
15. "Bridle Path" Rowell and other Apartments. Property of Atlanta Trustee Company
16. Atlanta University and Grounds
17. Atlanta Paper Co.
18. Atlanta Trustee Company
19. De Land Mill Manufacturing Co.
20. The Atlanta (St. Mark)
21. Equitable Annex
22. Shaw Block
23. The Hotel and Boarding
24. The Kimball, Chen
25. Capital French College
26. Grand Opera House
27. De Land Mill Manufacturing Co.
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