

Investigating Cemetery Related Crimes

Debi Hacker
Michael Trinkley, Ph.D.
Chicora Foundation, Inc.
PO Box 8664
Columbia, SC 29202
803-787-6910

- What are cemeteries?
 - Legal definition
 - How they appear in reality
- What are the SC statutes concerning cemeteries
 - Damage and desecration
 - Ownership and access
- Cemetery issues
 - Boundaries
 - Abandonment
 - Trespass
 - Vandalism
 - Theft
 - Expert witness
 - Who you need, qualifications, evaluation
- Boundary Issues & the Shrinking Cemetery
 - Typically presented as “graves are missing,” “cemetery is missing,” “burial grounds are smaller”
 - Issues in the African American community
 - Political and public relations issues
 - Recent cases
 - Hart’s Bluff Cemetery, Wadmalaw, Charleston Co.
 - Campfield Plantation, Georgetown Co.
 - Cantley Landing Cemetery, Williamsburg Co.
 - Dr. White Cemetery, St. Helena Island, Beaufort Co.
 - Investigative techniques
 - Legal instruments
 - Maps
 - Aerial photographs
 - Ground penetrating radar and penetrometer
 - Oral history
 - Visual clues
 - Potential for prosecution
- Vandalism
 - Typical offenders and damage
 - Recent cases

- SC
 - Distinguishing vandalism from natural events
 - Evaluating damage and associated costs
- Theft
 - The market
 - eBay and antique dealers
 - Recent cases
 - SC
 - Texas
 - Problems in documentation
 - Evaluating damage and associated costs
- Desecration of Human Remains
 - Accidental
 - SC example
 - Investigative techniques
 - Purposeful
 - Religious implications
 - ❖ Voodoo & gris-gris
 - ❖ Palo Mayombe
 - Forensic psychology

Handouts:

- Current SC Cemetery Law
- Information on Subsurface Investigative Techniques & Associated Costs
- Power Point slides
- Booklet on African American Cemeteries