Investigating Cemetery Related Crimes

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• What are cemeteries?
  o Legal definition
  o How they appear in reality
• What are the SC statutes concerning cemeteries
  o Damage and desecration
  o Ownership and access
• Cemetery issues
  o Boundaries
  o Abandonment
  o Trespass
  o Vandalism
  o Theft
  o Expert witness
    ▪ Who you need, qualifications, evaluation
• Boundary Issues & the Shrinking Cemetery
  o Typically presented as “graves are missing,” “cemetery is missing,” “burial grounds are smaller”
  o Issues in the African American community
  o Political and public relations issues
  o 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.
  o Investigative techniques
    ▪ Legal instruments
    ▪ Maps
    ▪ Aerial photographs
    ▪ Ground penetrating radar and penetrometer
    ▪ Oral history
    ▪ Visual clues
    ▪ Potential for prosecution
• Vandalism
  o Typical offenders and damage
  o 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