

I appreciate the opportunity – and honor – of being asked to serve as a discussant for this session and especially appreciate the kindness of authors who provided advance copies of their papers. We had a wide range of papers, providing context and background, exploring the use of cemeteries as outdoor classrooms, explaining the roles of several agencies in caring for cemetery resources, and exploring both Euro-American and African American burial grounds.

All researchers have biases and I am no exception. While trained in archaeology, my several decades in cemetery research have involved far broader concerns than simply archaeology. Much of my work in cemeteries involves broad issues of preservation and conservation. I am a conservator, with specialized training in stone and ironwork. I have served as an expert witness in a number of South Carolina civil suits involving cemeteries, especially African American burial grounds, testifying in Charleston, Beaufort, and Georgetown, South Carolina Circuit Courts, as well as Charleston District Federal Court.

I noticed after glancing through the papers that the sources cited were rather constrained. Of course many of the scholars here today made use of Ruth Little's *Sticks and Stones: Three Centuries of North Carolina Gravemarkers* and I don't wish to denigrate her contribution. However, the germ of her publication can be found in articles she wrote for the Association of Gravestone Studies' annual journal, *Markers*.

Historical and cultural geographers have examined cemeteries for several decades, producing some of the first – and finest – studies. Especially notable is Gregory

Jeane {SLIDE 1} who first recognized the distinctive upland South cemetery and Southern folk cemetery. Other research worthy of mention is Gary Laderman's two seminal publications, *The Sacred Remains* and *Rest in Peace*. Even earlier is James Farrell's *Inventing the American Way of Death, 1830-1920*. An excellent overview of cemetery evolution is Sloane's *The Last Great Necessity: Cemeteries in American History*. More specialized studies – of which there are dozens – include *Death and Dying in Central Appalachia: Changing Attitudes and Practices* by Crissman and Hallam and Hockey's *Death, Memory & Material Culture* – and I haven't even touched on African American cemetery research or the work in African American folklore. Nor have I mentioned the outstanding work being conducted in other countries, such as the exceptional {SLIDE 2} *Grave Concerns: Death and Burial in England, 1700-1850*, edited by Cox and published by the Council for British Archaeology.

Thus, if archaeologists are to make significant contributions to mortuary studies, it's critical that we expand outside our own field and make use of the extensive research available to us. For example, commercial monuments had real values – and those values can be relatively easily calculated. A 1935 Sears, Roebuck and Co. catalog {SLIDE 3} tells us that a simple granite die on base 3 feet high would cost just over \$76, while adding 10 inches to its height would increase the cost to \$121. A simple lawn marker in gray granite, however, would cost only \$28.75. For a child's grave a simple marble lamb marker would cost as little as \$43. These catalogs also provide information on the cost of inscriptions {SLIDE 4} and other lettering (for example, in 1937 each letter in marble

cost 18¢, while each letter in granite cost 45¢). They provide information on shipping {SLIDE 5} (in 1937 shipping to Charlotte for Mississippi granite was only .82¢ per hundredweight, while shipping on Vermont marble was \$1.03 per hundredweight – with stones ranging from about 100 to 900 pounds). In the Chicora collections we have similar catalogs ranging from 1902 through 1960. The potential for economic scaling seems limitless.

Yet, are such studies telling us about the wealth and status of the individual – or simply telling us what that individual (or their descendants) wish us to know. While it's convenient to explain the lack of monuments {SLIDE 6} in African American burial grounds as reflecting the poverty or social status of the community, is this accurate? We know that many African American families provided expensive and elaborate funerals {SLIDE 7}, yet failed to mark the grave – at least in Euro-American terms. But what of living memorials or other non-conventional markers? {SLIDE 8} And at least one researcher suggests – with good evidence – that some African Americans did not feel the permanent marking of a grave was of critical importance. Of greater concern was the sense of place – the homecoming.

Many of the Sears and Montgomery Ward catalogs include long lists of “suitable” inscriptions {SLIDE 9} – ranging from the ubiquitous “Asleep in Jesus” for .32¢ to “Like a flower, she passed away, Destroyed in all her bloom; She left this world and all her friends To moulder in the tomb” for \$2.40. Are there temporal, regional, social, or other differences?

I notice something approaching myopia when it comes to the way archaeologists view cemeteries and burial grounds. Many of my colleagues seem to view cemeteries only – or primarily – as research opportunities. Cemeteries are much more. First and most fundamentally, they are sacred places. {SLIDE 10} They are the repositories of human remains placed there in trust by loved ones. Thus, I deeply appreciate how Dr. Stine works to educate her students on proper conduct in cemeteries. Cemeteries are also artistic resources – they are sculpture gardens and outdoor museums, permanent collections of three-dimensional artifacts. They are archives – storehouses of genealogical information and they represent our individual and collective pasts. They are also scenic landscapes – likes parks or open spaces. Fundamentally, cemeteries are not simply archaeological artifacts, they are also social, historic, and architectural resources. When there is little else physically remaining of a community's earliest history, there will often be a cemetery that provides a unique tie to the past that would otherwise be lost. However, each of these resource types or characteristics requires consideration and often very different care.

To that end, if archaeologists wish to have a role to play in cemetery preservation, we must broaden our horizons and range of expertise. Cemetery preservation involves issues of vandalism, site security {SLIDE 11}, roads, pathways, drainage {SLIDE 12}, pedestrian access, hardscape {SLIDE 13}, conservation {SLIDE 14}, and history {SLIDE 15}. We must become experts in turfgrass, correct pruning, and arboriculture. We must become far more conversant in the Secretary of the Interior's

Standards for Preservation {SLIDE 16}, as well as the AIC Code of Ethics. We must be as quick to be concerned as the retention of historic fabric as we are about archaeological investigations. This will require a significant mental shift and extensive retraining.

I applaud the effort of John Mintz and Tom Beaman to expand the use of penetrometers {SLIDE 17}. We have used this device on over a hundred cemeteries in South Carolina, North Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia, on a variety of soil types. The penetrometer provides a quantitative – as opposed to qualitative – assessment. Its use is replicable and not based on the “feel.” I have gone into court and successfully defended its use – explaining the technique and results to attorneys, judges, and juries.

But what I really want to comment on is both the value and limitation of technology. Several of our speakers mentioned GIS. But what of those cemeteries buried in the woods where satellite reception is limited? Total stations {SLIDE 18} are the perfect response and we have found that using a Sokkia 530R3 we are able to map about 300 stones a day – certainly comparable to GIS.

Likewise, while ground penetrating radar is another valuable tool, there are significant areas in North Carolina where the potential for GPR is at best moderate to low {SLIDE 19}. Tree roots present another significant problem in many cemeteries – as revealed by Ken Robinson and his colleagues. We should perhaps also begin to better understand the qualifications associated with GPR work. When we use GPR at Chicora, we retain a firm that complies with ASTM D6432 - 99(2005) *Standard Guide for Using the Surface Ground Penetrating Radar Method for Subsurface Investigation*. That firm does not

allow employees to operate solo without 1,000+ hours teamed with another operator. As tribute to the firm's ability in grave identification, they have a multi-year contract with Stewart Enterprises, to identify "lost" burials in cemeteries they have acquired. We are confident that, should the necessity arise, this firm is able to serve as an expert in court cases.

Turning to conservation issues, I am particularly interested in the observations by Jennifer Friend and Dr. Carnes-McNaughton concerning the large scale failure of blind pin repairs conducted using nylon pins. The use of nylon pins was especially common a decade ago, but unlike the individual consulted by Fort Bragg, I have seen many of these repairs fail through the southeast {SLIDE 20}. When we examine the properties of nylon pins we immediately see why they so frequently - and so quickly - fail. They have a very low yield strength {SLIDE 21} and this results in their tendency to fatigue. Since we see this fatigue occurring in a variety of circumstances, I doubt that the military can be blamed for the problem. The situation, however, does point out why only a conservator who is a member of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works and who has broad experience should be entrusted with conservation treatments.

Mary Hollis Barnes provides an interesting account of the slow evolution of North Carolina's cemetery survey. Although certainly not perfect, North Carolina has shown an interest in cemetery issues that my own state - South Carolina - seems to have studiously avoided. My differences are relatively minor - I do not like the term

“abandoned” since it is loaded with meaning and the word alone can be pejorative. Likewise, I fear that survey efforts are too dominated by the mindsets of those focused on architectural surveys, where easily recognized resources lead to the belief that a survey is “completed.” I doubt seriously that it will ever be possible to say that any county has have a thorough and complete cemetery survey.

Finally, I want to touch on the issue of eligibility and research potential. One of my undergraduate professors, the forensic anthropologist Dr. Ted Rathbun, taught under a banner that read *Mortui Vivos Docent: Let the Dead Teach the Living*. I notice that relatively little mention has been made of using National Register Criterion D: yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important.” Under Criteria A, B, and C, cemeteries must meet Criteria Considerations – under Criterion D, there is no such need.

There is so much information obtained through bioanthropological studies that I find it difficult to conceive of a site that doesn’t offer the potential to make a significant contribution. In North Carolina – as in most other states – too many burials have been removed under NC General Statute 65 – what I refer to as dig and plop {SLIDE 22} – rather than utilizing careful bioanthropological techniques mandated by NC General Statute 70, Article 3.

The papers today offer an initial glimpse into the variety and promise of cemetery studies. I hope that next year we see even greater interest and wider participation.