

Civil Rights & Restorative Justice

The Story of 'Who is Buried in "Boot Hill Cemetery"?' at the Former Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida



Agenda

I. Introductory Remarks

- Welcome and introduction of the panelists
- Overview of the Boot Hill Cemetery Project
- Panelist opening statements

II. History Matters

- Making visible 'invisible histories': issues of dialog and multivocality
- Heritage discourses—situating representation and interpretation
- The role of interdisciplinary collaboration in heritage studies and public archaeology

III. Justice Imperatives

- Different kinds of justice for different stakeholders
- The role of forensic anthropology in restorative justice
- Why cold cases matter

IV. Professional Responsibilities

- Politics of university/community-engaged scholarship
- "Minimizing harm and maximizing justice": ethics of participatory research
- Working with many publics, anthropological advocacy, and positive policy development

Abstract

An archeological survey and excavation of the "Boot Hill Burial Ground" on the campus of the former Arthur G. Dozier School for Boys in Marianna, Florida by anthropologists at the University of South Florida has gained national attention. State and Federal leaders have responded to requests from families for knowledge about relatives who are presumed buried at the school and repatriation. Florida Senator Bill Nelson submitted letters to Florida Governor Rick Scott and US Attorney General Eric Holder asking for their assistance and support in investigating alleged crimes at the site. Ultimately, permission was arranged by Attorney General Pam Bondi and the Florida Cabinet for the complete excavation and analysis of all children buried there. This AAA roundtable will highlight the multiple ways in which an interdisciplinary team of anthropologists has been instrumental in engaging future publics by addressing a seemingly simple yet unanswered question about the past—Who is buried in "Boot Hill Cemetery"? The USF research team began work in 2011 to document the burial ground and identify who may have been buried there and determine the circumstances surrounding deaths that occurred from 1914-1960. This initiative is a multi-disciplinary project that incorporates forensic and cultural anthropology, archaeology, legal medicine, and library sciences. Project personnel also collaborate with many different institutions and organizations, and support the work of allied projects, such as the Cold Case Justice Initiative at Syracuse University, which investigates unsolved homicides during the Civil Rights era and seeks to expose the imperatives for justice that arise from these crimes. One outcome of the Boot Hill Burial Ground Project is the documentation of the cemetery findings in a USF Digital Library Collection, <http://guides.lib.usf.edu/dozier>.

Panelists

Antoinette T. Jackson is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of South Florida, Director of the USF Heritage Research Lab, and the Ethnography Program Manager for the National Park Service Southeast Region. Jackson is interested in issues of identity and representation at National Heritage sites. Her research focuses on heritage tourism and the business of heritage resource management in the U.S. and the Caribbean. Jackson is a Federal Commissioner on the Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor Commission representing the State of Florida. She has worked extensively with communities in Nicodemus, Kansas to Archery, Georgia USA (site of the Boyhood Farm of President Jimmy Carter) primarily aimed at soliciting descendent knowledge and facilitating the incorporation of the history and heritage of underrepresented groups into the public record at a national level. On the Dozier project, her research focuses on the underrepresented experiences of black men and boys and the impact and implications of slavery and segregation on school operations and community relations. Her latest book is *Speaking for the Enslaved—Heritage Interpretation at Antebellum Plantation Sites* (Left Coast Press 2012). For more information: anthropology.usf.edu/faculty/jackson

Paula C. Johnson is Professor of Law at Syracuse University (SU) College of Law. She co-directs the Cold Case Justice Initiative, which investigates unsolved racially-motivated killings during the Civil Rights era. She is a co-founder of the SU Haiti Support Committee, which was formed after the 2010 earthquake and helps to coordinate the SU—State University of Haiti student exchange program. She is a member of the Democratizing Knowledge Interdisciplinary Collective at SU, faculty advisor to the SU College of Law Black Law Students Association, and previously served as co-chair of the SU Senate Committee on Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered Concerns. She was co-director of the Sierra Leone UN War Crimes Tribunal Project at SU College of Law, and was the founding director of the SU Law in Zimbabwe Program. She is a former co-president of the Society of American Law Teachers. Her teaching includes criminal law, criminal procedure, voting rights and electoral processes, women in the criminal justice system, and professional responsibility. Her writings included *Interrupted Life: Experiences of Incarcerated Women in the United States* (Univ. California Press 2010); and *Inner Lives: Voices of African American Women in Prison* (NYU Press 2003). For more information on CCJI: www.syr.edu/coldcaselaw

Erin H. Kimmerle is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the University of South Florida and Scientific Director of the Forensic Anthropology Laboratory and International Consortium for Forensics, Anthropology, and Human Rights (www.icfah.usf.edu). She is the Principal Investigator of the Boot Hill Burial Ground Project, and has received funding for its investigation from the Florida Legislature and the National Institute of Justice. She also manages the Florida Cold Case Project, and has performed forensic casework throughout the United States, Balkans, Nigeria, and Peru. Some of this work is discussed in her co-authored book (with Jose Pablo Baraybar, CRC Press 2009), *Skeletal Trauma: Identification of Injuries Resulting from Human Rights Abuse and Armed Conflict*.

E. Christian Wells is Associate Professor of Anthropology and Director of the Laboratory for Archaeological Soils Research at the University of South Florida, and currently serves as Global Coordinator of *Current Research Online* for the Society for American Archaeology. At USF, he has served as the founding Director of the Office of Sustainability, Deputy Director of the Patel College of Global Sustainability, and Graduate Director for Applied Anthropology Programs. His research draws from applied archaeology, ecological anthropology, geoarchaeology, and geoforensics to investigate human-environmental dynamics throughout Central American and the Caribbean. He has consulted for the USF International Consortium for Forensics, Anthropology & Human Rights on a number of cold cases, and continues his relationship with this organization by serving as Co-Principal Investigator of the NIJ-funded Boot Hill Burial Ground Project. For more information: uweb.cas.usf.edu/~ecwells