THE SAN DIEGO GRAVESTONE PROJECT

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OVERVIEW: THE HISTORICAL ARCHAEOLOGY OF LEGEND

- Anthropological analysis of local mortuary culture
- Simultaneous study of San Diego's dead and how modern San Diegans treat them
- Research and historic preservation: grave markers are a nonrenewable cultural resource
- Today: temporal, spatial, and formal trends analyzed through our gravestone GIS

Henry Lukeman’s bronze Angel of Death at Greenwood Cemetery
FINDING LOST CEMETERIES

- 1982 Journal of San Diego History article lists the county’s 38 cemeteries
- We have found 112 additional cemeteries!
- Old maps, photographs, survey, word of mouth, etc.

Then (1930) and Now (2013):
San Diego's 1st Jewish Cemetery

Just off Midway Drive in the Roseville neighborhood
CHRONOLOGY OF SAN DIEGO CEMETERIES

Prehistoric cremations: 7-10,000 year indigenous periods
Mission & Indian cemeteries: 1769-1847 Spanish, Mexican periods, & later
Pioneer cemeteries: 1848-1907 Early American and Victorian periods
Mega-cemeteries: 1908-now Expansion and Modern periods

Mission San Diego de Alcala
Protestant Cemetery
Mount Hope Cemetery
CHANGE IN GRAVESTONE TYPE OVER TIME

- Six general types
- How to read
- Shorter over time
- Decade of 1910s is key
1880-1914: MONUMENTALISM

- La Vista Cemetery
- Fallbrook OddFellows Cemetery
- San Luis Rey Cemetery
1915-1960: MODERN PLAIN

La Vista Cemetery

Oceanview Cemetery
- Castigated humility following arrogance
  - 1910s
  - WWI
  - Influenza epidemic
- Victorian celebration of death is gone (cremation, literature, etc.)
- Granite more durable ($)
- Both non-granite peaks match economic hardship
- Social types and economic materials
- Modern brass thefts at various cemeteries and SDSU Aztec Bowl
WHERE IS THE CENTER OF SAN DIEGO (IN TERMS OF GRAVESTONE CHANGE)?
THREE CENTERS OF CHANGE

- Spatial seriation
- Vectors of change
- Multi-centered modeling

- Stepwise regression results
- Issues of resistance and community boundaries