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Burying key evidence: the social bond between dogs and people

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Abstract

People have been burying or otherwise ritually disposing of dead dogs for a long time. They sometimes treat other animals in such a fashion, but not nearly as often as dogs. This presentation documents the consistent and worldwide distribution of this practice over about the past 12,000–14,000 years. Such practices directly reflect the domestic relationship between people and dogs, and speak rather directly to the timing of canid domestication. In doing so, they contradict recent genetics-based inferences, thus calling into question the legitimacy of focusing mostly on genetic factors as opposed to other factors. This discussion seeks to work towards a sound framework for analyzing and thus understanding the social compatibility between people and dogs. That compatibility is directly signified by the burial of dogs, with people often responding to the deaths of individual dogs much as they usually respond to the death of a family member. Moreover, that special social relationship continues, as illustrated clearly by the establishment, maintenance, and ongoing use of several modern dog cemeteries, in different countries of the world.



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Keywords

Dog burials; Prehistory; History; Sociality; Spirituality; Cemetery

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My Dog's Just Like Me: Dog Ownership as a Gender Display, Karl Marx and Vladimir Lenin worked here, but the song "All the Things She Said" ("I'm crazy" in Russian) uses a structural complex of aggressiveness.

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