Anthropology 19  
Winter Quarter 2006

Instructor: Russell Thornton  Classroom: Haines Hall 310  
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WHO OWNS OUR PAST?

Native Americans in the United States recently have been successful in obtaining the passage of federal and state laws not only preventing the further disenfranchisement of human skeletal remains and cultural objects but also repatriating remains and objects to appropriate tribes and individuals. The seminar will examine this phenomenon. Topics will include a history of federal and state legislation pertaining to repatriation; the role and strategies Native American leaders have used in bringing about this legislation; historical practices of "collection" for museums and scholars; native objections to the study of this material; the various types of scientific and scholarly knowledge obtainable from skeletal remains, etc.; the complexities and difficulties involved in the actual repatriation process; and new relationships which are developing between Native Americans and scholars and scholarly institutions. Seminar material will be drawn from a variety of sources and disciplines, including recent repatriation cases from the Smithsonian Institution and state museums and universities.

Readings:

Books and Articles On Reserve in the Department of Anthropology  
Reading Room: (Note: Thomas can be purchased at Book Store [Anthro C269R].)

