

AR 480/780: WHO OWNS THE PAST? ARCHAEOLOGY, ETHICS, AND LAW

Nov. 21st: Dead and gone?

READING:

- Elisabeth Bumiller, “Seizing a Last Chance to Find Lost G.I.’s as WWII Memories Fade,” *NY Times* 9/6/09;
- Jim Dwyer, “From Bones of Immigrants, Stories of Pain,” *NY Times* 10/14/2009;
- Kate Galbraith, “New Homes Confront Old Burial Grounds,” *NY Times* 6/17/2007;
- R. H. McGuire, “The Sanctity of the Grave: White Concepts and American Indian Beliefs” in *Conflict in the Archaeology of Living Traditions*, R. Layton ed. (Unwin Hyman, London: 1989), pp. 167-84;
- Elaine Sciolino, “French Dispute Whether Maori Head is Body Part or Art,” *NY Times* 10/26/2007;
- Michael Slackman, “In a New Age, Bahrain Struggles to Honor the Dead While Serving the Living,” *NY Times* 9/17/2009;
- J. Jeremy Wisniewski, “What We Owe the Dead,” *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 26 (2009), pp. 54-70.

IN-CLASS DISCUSSION: When is a cemetery a site?

You are a member of a panel that advises on ethical, cultural, and intellectual issues that arise in connection with the discovery, recovery, study, storage, and/or reburial of human remains. The panel includes a philosopher (Wisniewski), an archaeologist (McGuire), a museum director (Cuno), and a Native American tribal elder. Before hearing your first case, you must first discuss and agree on some basic points.

It is in your interest to collect your thoughts so that you are prepared for the meeting. Compose short answers (no more than 2 paragraphs each) to **all** of the following questions.

- Exactly what sorts of harms might the dead suffer?
- Are any of these harms brought about by archaeological excavation or museum display?
- Are any of these harms mitigated by archaeological excavation or museum display?