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Universities Returning Native American Remains and Artifacts Isn't Just About Physical Objects – It's About Dignity and Justice

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Many universities and museums in the U.S. have long held **Native American burial artifacts**, other sacred objects and even human remains.

Most of these collections were acquired **in the late 19th and 20th centuries**. They came from grave excavations, anthropological research and other practices carried out without the consent of Native American communities.

In 1990, Congress passed the **Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act**, or NAGPRA. This law requires federally funded institutions, including museums and universities, to identify Native American artifacts, consult with tribes and return them to descendants, tribes and Native Hawaiian organizations.