

Introduction to Archaeology: Class 20
Applied archaeology and ownership of the past

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- Pure (basic) science vs. applied science
- Examples of applied archaeology
 - CRM
 - often involves tourism or education: reconstruction, consolidation, trails and signs, museums
 - applied in the sense of being a legally required step in road, dam, building, and other projects
 - University of Arizona Garbage Project
 - started off pure research: testing methods
 - ended up applied: to landfill planning, correcting surveys, etc.
 - Forensic archaeology
 - mass graves, war crimes, genocides
 - crime scene data collection
 - Reconstructing useful ancient technologies
 - raised fields around Lake Titicaca
 - Public education
 - adding to historical site interpretation, as at the Alamo
 - museums, documentaries, popular books, etc.
 - practical reason: if we don't make archaeology relevant to the public, the public won't support archaeology
 - ethical reason: what right do we have to dig up other people's past without involving them?
- Question of ethics and politics: who owns the past?
 - Alamo example
 - Daughters of the Republic of Texas were caretakers of the Alamo
 - wanted focus on the “13 days to glory” fight against Spain
 - archaeologists felt that the long Spanish history of the mission should also be told
 - granting equal history and pride to Chicanos and Mexican-Americans in the San Antonio region
 - Bighorn Medicine wheel example
 - sacred to Native Americans; a curiosity to others
 - Nazi archaeology example
 - pseudo-archaeology used to promote nationalist ideology
 - Kennewick Man
 - Archaeologists felt the bones were important data
 - Various Native Americans felt the bones were their own ancestors and should be given a decent burial
 - whose claim is stronger?
- The best solution: get everyone to agree

- not always possible
- but it surprisingly often is
 - when archaeologists are respectful and collaborative
 - this was recently the wave of the future, but now increasingly the norm