Laura Dean

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ent: Friday, November 04, 2005 3:02 PM
To: Laura Dean
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Subject: Comments on Proposed ACHP Burial Policy

Here are some thoughts regarding the proposed ACHP guidelines.

The wishes of the descendents should prevail whether or not to allow scientific inquiry, even in those situations where someone (who???) could argue that scientific values outweigh cultural values and there should be curation "in perpetuity". This is a human rights issue that is being addressed in other fora.
However this isn't the forum (ACHP Burial Policy) to resolve these fundamental issues and the ACHP policy cannot predetermine an outcome; NHPA really is a process for weighing rights, interests and values.

The absence of national resolution, aside from NAGPRA with its balanced approach which influenced this draft policy, puts decision makers in a very difficult position. That hasn't changed from NAGPRA, but at least under those implementing regs there is a time and place for dispute resolution.

It is better than the status quo, but we need more than "clarification" of the intersection between NAGPRA and NHPA.