

REPATRIATION AT THE SMITHSONIAN



Smithsonian

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Virginia Association of Museums Annual Conference
March 9, 2020

Repatriation at the Smithsonian

- Pre-1989 policy – return illegally or unethically acquired materials
- National Museum of the American Indian Act (1989)
- Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (1990)
- Amendments to NMAI Act (1996)



National Museum of the American Indian



Repatriation at the Smithsonian

- National Museum of the American Indian Act (1989)
 - Federally Recognized Tribes
 - Includes 7 Virginia tribes recognized by Congress (6 recognized in 2018)
 - Human Remains
 - Associated Funerary Objects
 - Repatriation Review Committee
- Amendments to NMAI Act (1996)
 - Unassociated Funerary Objects
 - Sacred Objects
 - Objects of Cultural Patrimony



Repatriation at the Smithsonian

- **National Museum of the American Indian**

- 540 individuals (187 remaining)
- 29,646 funerary objects
- 994 sacred objects
- 19 objects of cultural patrimony
- 430 sacred objects/objects of cultural patrimony
- 31 unethically acquired items
- 224 consultations

- **National Museum of Natural History**

- 6298 individuals
- 221,000 funerary objects
- 55 sacred objects and objects of cultural patrimony



First step: Consultation



International Repatriation



Cuba



Maori – New Zealand

International Repatriation at the Smithsonian

- **National Museum of the American Indian**

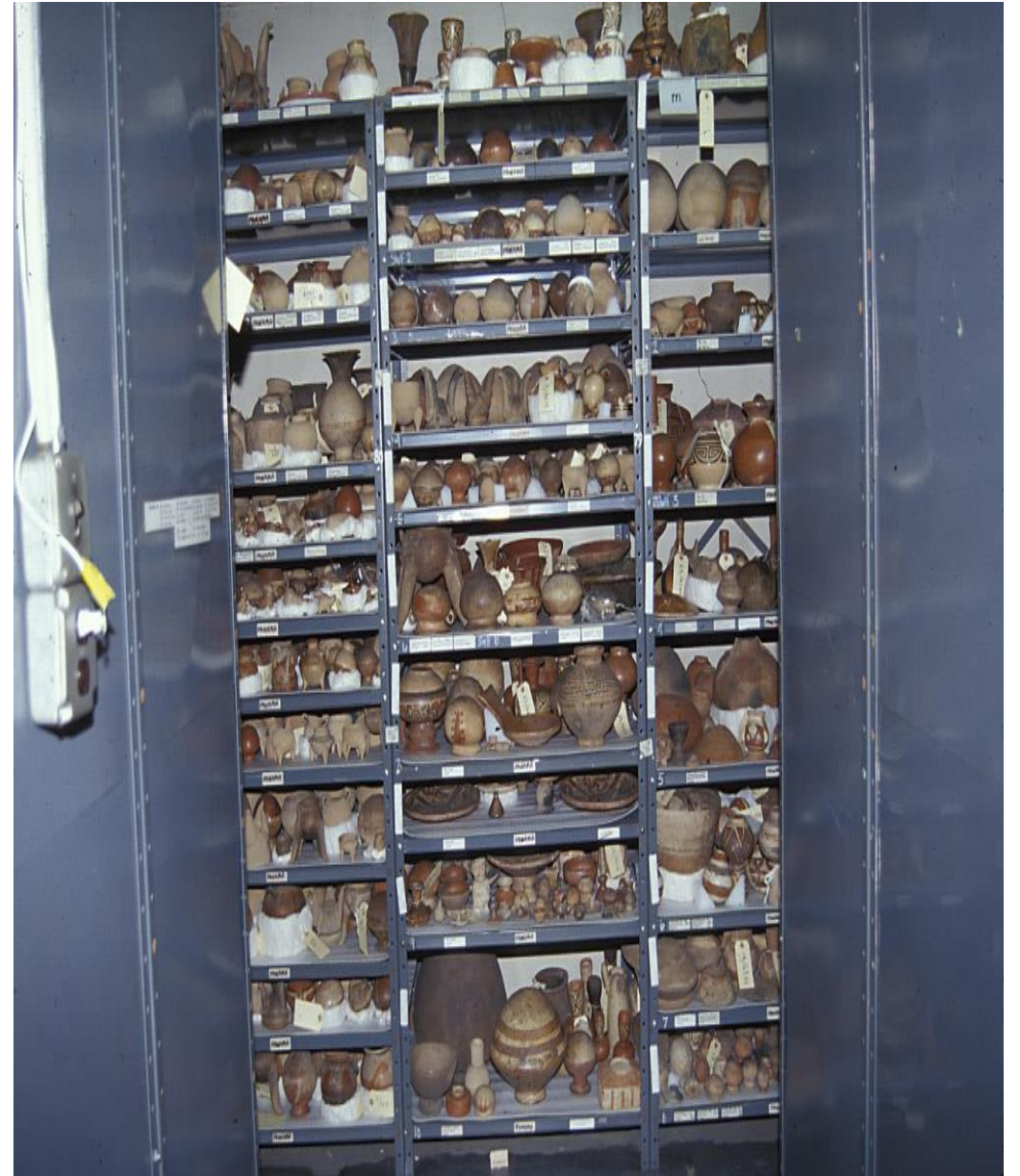
- Canada
- Chile
- Cuba
- Ecuador
- Peru

- **National Museum of Natural History**

- Australia
- New Zealand



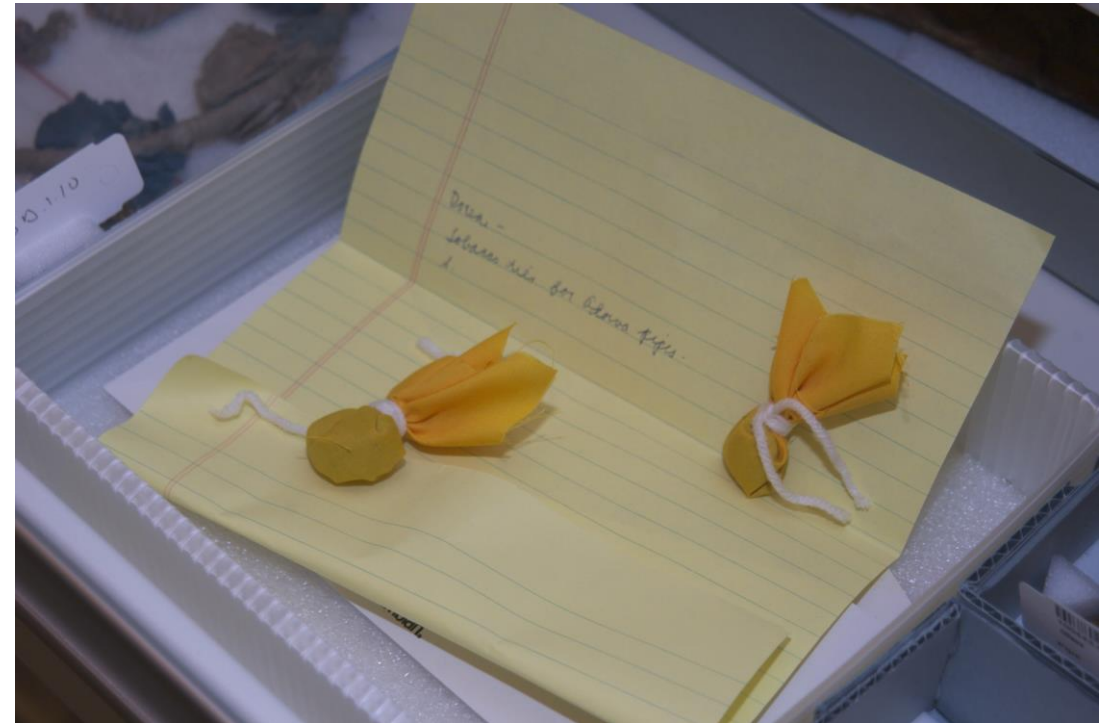
Collections Care



Traditional Care



Traditional Care



Tribal Collaborations – Tlingit Tribe of Alaska

- Killer Whale Hat
- Sculpin Hat
- 3D Replicas



Shared Stewardship of Collections

Principle: The Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage acknowledges and respects the rights of artists, performers, participants, community-based scholars, and knowledge-keepers to collaboratively steward representations of themselves and their intangible cultural heritage in media produced, curated, and distributed by the Center.

Shifting perspective: Individuals and communities represented in our collections are joint stewards, not subjects.



Shared Stewardship of Collections

Goals:

- Foster sustained dialogue with source communities;
- Promote greater engagement with their heritage collections;
- Enhance and refine cultural documentation and associated metadata;
- Ensure culturally appropriate collection care and display;
- Recognize source community interest in the digital return and physical repatriation of archival collections in our care.



<https://folklife-media.si.edu/docs/folklife/Shared-Stewardship.pdf>