

CHAPTER 8 — Indian Rights and the Repatriation Act

Tradition - belief or custom passed from generation to generation

Rituals - the established form for a ceremony

Artifacts - objects of human workmanship

Customary - commonly practiced or used

NAGPRA - passed in 1990 to ensure that any materials found on federal lands associated with Native American culture would be returned to the respective tribes

Repatriated - to restore or return to the country of origin, allegiance, or citizenship

ARPA - passed in 1979 to protect resources and sites located on federal and Indian lands

Archaeological - study of past human life

For thousands of years, Native Americans have worked to carry on tradition. One of their most sacred rituals involves religious burials. When bones and artifacts are discovered on their territory, tribes feel a strong need to perform customary ceremonies.

In 1990, President George Bush signed the Native American Grave Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA). This act was written to ensure that any materials found on federal lands that were associated with burials or Native American culture would be **repatriated** to their rightful owners.

NAGPRA is not the only act that claims ownership of materials found on federal lands. The Archaeological Resources Protection Act (ARPA) was written in 1979 to protect archaeological sites. The ARPA is intended to preserve artifacts for scientific study.

The NAGPRA is designed to protect Native American culture. The ARPA is designed to promote scientific research. Both acts have specific and important goals, but they do not always agree on whose goal is more important. Native Americans value their religious rituals over science, but scientists think that their studies are more important than tribal traditions.

**Who should have control of archaeological remains?
Can you think of ways for scientists and tribes to
work together?**