

# American Anthropological Association Statement on Ethics (2012)

Anthropological researchers have primary ethical obligations to the people, species, and materials they study and to the people with whom they work. These obligations can supersede the goal of seeking new knowledge and can lead to decisions not to undertake or to discontinue a research project when the primary obligation conflicts with other responsibilities, such as those owed to sponsors or clients.

These ethical obligations include:

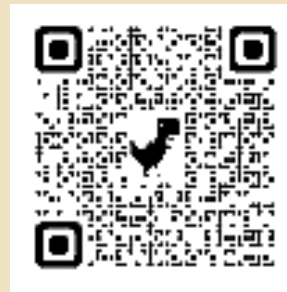
- *To avoid harm or wrong: negative for the people or animals worked with or studied*
- *To respect the well-being of humans and nonhuman primates*
- *To work for the long-term conservation of the archaeological, fossil, and historical record*
- *To consult actively with the affected individuals or group(s), with the goal of establishing a working relationship that can be beneficial to all parties involved*

These ethical tenets can only be enacted in open communication with tribal nations, including agreement on project design, research objectives and plans for processing, cataloging, analyses, publication, media outreach and final disposition of artifacts.



## Our Homelands:

To see if your fieldwork is planned for Mohican & Munsee homeland or historic areas of Stockbridge-Munsee Community settlement, scan the QR code to view our Traditional Homeland /Areas of Interest map.



The most recent version of is brochure can be found online at:  
<https://www.mohican.com/services/cultural-services/historic-preservation/>

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# Archaeological Ethics for Field Schools



## Stockbridge-Munsee Community Historic Preservation Office

Tribal Historic Preservation Extension Office  
86 Spring St.  
Williamstown, MA 01267  
413-884-6029

# Institutional Review Boards

Unlike other social science research conducted in academia, archaeologists rarely submit their prospective research designs to Institutional Review Boards (IRB) at their respective colleges and universities. However, archaeology can and does impact living individuals and communities in profound ways, and we urge archaeologists to subject their projects to IRBs in recognition of the three core principles for human subjects research outlined in the Belmont Report (1978)<sup>1</sup>:

- 1) **Respect for Persons**
- 2) **Beneficence**
- 3) **Justice**

The application of these ethical principles involves informed consent, in this case, active consultation with the tribal nations within whose homelands the proposed projects are conducted and whose ancestors are the subject of inquiry.

# Protocols for Fieldwork in Stockbridge-Munsee Homelands

## Start "without trowels."

Prioritize relationships rather than just the archaeological fieldwork. Explore the socio-historical dimensions of archaeological research, including the history of archaeology, colonialism, genocide, tribal history and culture, and feature Native voices when possible. Support the Stockbridge-Munsee and help protect their history, heritage & ancestors.

## Respect for Tribal interests.

The archaeologist and Stockbridge-Munsee Community should agree on the site choice, schedule and duration of work, research goals, research design, techniques of collection/data recovery as well as plans for processing, cataloguing, analyses, treatment, storage, publications and final disposition of artifacts. This consultation should take place via outreach to [thpo@mohican-nsn.gov](mailto:thpo@mohican-nsn.gov) at least 90 days before planned fieldwork.

## Go beyond archaeological training.

Training students in field archaeology alone is not justification for conducting an archaeological field school. The Stockbridge-Munsee must agree that the goals/scientific purpose of the field school justifies the disruption/destruction of archaeological and cultural resources consistent with its national interests the American Anthropological Association Statement on Ethics.<sup>2</sup>

# Archaeological work must be done for and with Indigenous people.

Embrace an archaeology that is responsive to Indigenous needs, sensibilities, histories, and perspectives. Please remember that your project directly affects living communities like the Stockbridge-Munsee who have a vested interest in their ancestors, their material culture, the stories they tell and their community's collective heritage. Protocols for the discovery of human remains should be established in conjunction with existing law.

## Recognize archaeology as anthropology, a social science.

Archaeology, like other social sciences, affects living people and communities. As such, archaeological projects in our region should undergo examination by Institutional Review Boards to ensure that the Stockbridge-Munsee are receiving informed consent and benefitting from the tenets of Respect for Persons, Beneficence, and Justice as featured in the Belmont Report.<sup>3</sup>

1. National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioral Research 1979 The Belmont Report: Ethical Principles and Guidelines for the Protection of Human Subjects of Research. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

2. American Anthropological Association Statement on Ethics 2012 <https://ethics.americananthro.org/category/statement/>

3. For a fuller discussion of IRBs in archaeology, see: Bendremer, Jeffrey C. & Kenneth A. Richman 2006 Human Subjects Review and Archaeology: A View from Indian Country, In Chris Scarre & Geoffrey Scarre (eds.), The Ethics of Archaeology: Philosophical Perspectives on Archaeological Practice. Cambridge University Press. pp. 97–114.