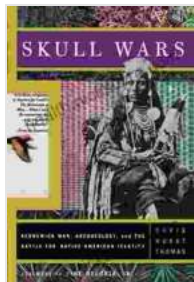


Kennewick Man Archaeology and the Battle for Native American Identity



Skull Wars: Kennewick Man, Archaeology, And The Battle For Native American Identity by David Hurst Thomas

★★★★☆ 4.5 out of 5

- Language : English
- File size : 2036 KB
- Text-to-Speech : Enabled
- Screen Reader : Supported
- Enhanced typesetting : Enabled
- Word Wise : Enabled
- Print length : 373 pages

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The discovery of Kennewick Man, an ancient skeleton found in Washington state in 1996, sparked a fierce debate about Native American identity and the ownership of cultural heritage. The skeleton, which was nearly complete and remarkably well-preserved, was initially believed to be about 9,000 years old. However, subsequent research revealed that Kennewick

Man was actually much older, dating back to around 8,500 BCE, making him one of the oldest human remains ever found in North America.

The discovery of Kennewick Man raised a number of important questions, including:

- Who were the ancestors of Kennewick Man?
- What was his relationship to modern Native American tribes?
- Who had the right to study and control the remains of Kennewick Man?

These questions sparked a legal battle between Native American tribes and scientists, and ultimately led to a landmark decision by the U.S. Supreme Court.

The Legal Battle

In 1996, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, which had jurisdiction over the land where Kennewick Man was found, turned the remains over to the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture in Seattle for study. A group of Native American tribes, including the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, filed a lawsuit to prevent the museum from studying the remains, arguing that they were the descendants of Kennewick Man and that his remains were sacred.

The case made its way through the legal system, and in 2002, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit ruled in favor of the tribes. The court ruled that the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act

(NAGPRA) required the museum to return Kennewick Man's remains to the tribes for reburial.

The museum appealed the decision to the U.S. Supreme Court, which ruled in 2017 that NAGPRA did not apply to Kennewick Man because he was not a Native American. The Court also ruled that the museum could keep the remains for further study.

The Ethical Considerations

The Kennewick Man case raised a number of important ethical considerations, including:

- The rights of Native American tribes to control their cultural heritage
- The importance of scientific research
- The balance between these two competing interests

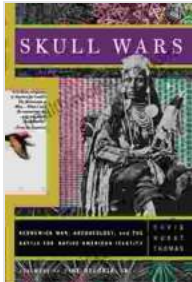
Some people argued that Kennewick Man belonged to the Native American tribes because they were his lineal descendants. Others argued that Kennewick Man was a valuable scientific resource that could help us to understand the origins of humans in North America. Still others argued that the remains should be reburied out of respect for the dead.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the Kennewick Man case did not resolve all of these ethical questions. The case continues to be debated by scholars, policymakers, and Native American leaders.

The discovery of Kennewick Man was a major archaeological event that sparked a fierce debate about Native American identity and the ownership of cultural heritage. The legal battle over Kennewick Man's remains raised

important questions about the rights of Native American tribes, the importance of scientific research, and the balance between these two competing interests. The U.S. Supreme Court's decision in the case did not resolve all of these questions, and the debate continues today.

The Kennewick Man case is a reminder that the past is a complex and contested terrain. The discovery of ancient human remains can raise important questions about our origins and our relationship to the land. It is important to approach these questions with sensitivity and respect for all parties involved.



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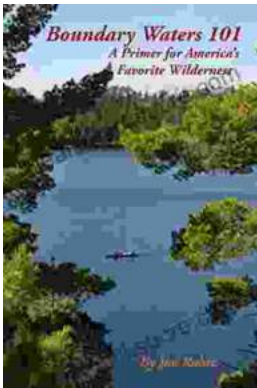
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