

Heritage, Ancestry and Law: Principles, Policies and Practices in dealing with Historical Human Remains



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Almost daily, the media reports some new discovery of important human remains, some new claim to the return of existing remains, or some extraordinary scientific or historical advance achieved through studying human remains or the objects buried with them. Due to such discoveries, this volume examines questions such as: What is the extent to which holding institutions should disclose the presence and identity of human remains in their collections? What are the implications of the discovery and movement of deceased monarchs and other persons of importance? What is the impact of the European Convention on Human Rights and national legislation on the holding and treatment of human remains? What are the ecclesiastical attitudes? What are the obligations of those involved in construction projects where human remains have been discovered. The book's contributors include lawyers, museum staff, academics, and others. They discuss how to interpret aspects of law, policy, and ethics when creating displays, curating collections, and undertaking research. They also explore what is meant by respect for human remains, and how we should demonstrate this, and they examine how some remains are treated differently than others (the recent dead vs. the ancient dead, as well as the different 'categories' of people), why this is, and where the boundaries are. The different uses of remains (for exhibition, teaching, or scientific research) are also covered. This topical collection of essays will be essential reading for anyone involved in the discovery, moving, display, or study of human remains. The book is a basis for further philosophical and religious debate on the treatment of human remains. [Subject: Legal Theory, European Law, International Law, Museum Studies, Religious Studies]

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