Working with Indigenous Site Monitors and Tribal IRBs

Practical Approaches to the Challenges of Collaborative Archaeology

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ABSTRACT

Archaeologists have an obligation to conduct research that is relevant and responsive to the desires, interests, values, and concerns of Indigenous descendant communities. Current best practices for collaborative, community-based archaeologies emphasize long-term engagement and "full collaboration," including the coproduction of knowledge and total stakeholder involvement. The present-day structures and demands of archaeology—especially in CRM and graduate student research contexts—can serve to make such fully collaborative work difficult, if not impossible. Oftentimes, these difficulties result in a complete abdication of collaboration or even consultation beyond the bare minimum required by law. However, professional archaeologists must strive in all instances to work alongside Native communities in respectful, responsive, and mutually beneficial ways even if this work may often fall short of the loftiest ideal. In this article, the authors present two case studies in collaboration from recent projects conducted in the North American midcontinent. These case studies clearly demonstrate how tribal fieldwork monitoring, working with tribal institutional review boards (IRBs), and other related forms of "imperfect" collaboration can still help move us toward a more ethical, inclusive, and respectful future archaeology.

Keywords: collaborative archaeology, descendant communities, cultural resource management, community-based participatory research, archaeological ethics

Los arqueólogos tienen la obligación de realizar investigaciones que sean relevantes y respondan a los deseos, intereses, valores y preocupaciones de las comunidades indígenas. Las mejores prácticas actuales para las arqueologías colaborativas basadas en la comunidad enfatizan el compromiso a largo plazo y la "plena colaboración", incluida la coproducción de conocimiento y la participación total de las partes interesadas. Las estructuras y demandas actuales de la arqueología, especialmente en contextos de Gestión de Recursos Culturales (GRC) y de investigación de estudiantes de posgrado, pueden dificultar, si no imposibilitar, esta colaboración total. A veces, estas dificultades dan como resultado una renuncia total de la colaboración o incluso de la consulta más allá del mínimo requerido por la ley. Sin embargo, los arqueólogos profesionales deben esforzarse en todo momento por trabajar junto con las comunidades nativas de forma respetuosa, receptiva y mutuamente beneficiosa, aunque a menudo esta labor no alcance el ideal más elevado. En este artículo, los autores presentan dos estudios de caso en colaboración con proyectos recientes realizados en la región central de Norteamérica. Estos estudios de caso demuestran claramente cómo la supervisión tribal del trabajo de campo, el trabajo con los consejos tribales de revisión institucional (IRB) y otras formas relacionadas de colaboración "imperfecta" pueden ayudarnos a avanzar hacia una arqueología futura más ética, inclusiva y respetuosa.

Palabras clave: colaboración arqueológica, comunidades descendientes, Gestión de Recursos Culturales (GRC), investigación participativa basada en la comunidad, ética arqueológica

DESCENDANT COMMUNITY COLLABORATION AND CURRENT BEST PRACTICES

In the three decades since the passage of the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), the discipline of archaeology has transformed from what Vine Deloria Jr. (1992:596) called a "suspicious science for Indians," which exploited Indigenous communities while claiming exclusive ownership and authority of the archaeological record, into a field that increasingly recognizes the obligation to conduct relevant research that is responsive to the desires, interests, values, and concerns of Indigenous descendant communities. This transformation is, of course, still incomplete (Atalay et al. 2016).

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TABLE 1. Colwell's (2016) Collaboration Continuum Modes.

Colonial	Resistance	Participation	Collaboration	Indigenous Control
Goals are set solely by archaeologists	Goals develop in opposition	Goals develop independently	Goals develop jointly	Goals are set by the tribe
Information is extracted and removed from the community	Information is secreted	Information is disclosed	Information flows freely	Information is proprietary and controlled by tribe
Descendants are involved as laborers	No stakeholder involvement	Limited stakeholder involvement	Full stakeholder involvement	Archaeologists are employees or consultants for tribes
No voice for descendants	Little voice for descendants	Some voice for descendants	Full voice of descendants	Full voice of descendants is privileged
Acquiescence is enforced by the state	No support is given/ obtained	Support is solicited	Support is tacit	Support is authorized by tribe
Needs for science are optimized	Needs of others are not considered	Needs of most parties are mostly met	Needs of all parties are realized	Needs of tribe are privileged
Archaeologists ← Control and Power → Tribes				

However, many—if not most—of the large-scale academic and cultural resource management (CRM) projects in North America today make at least some effort to involve stakeholding Indigenous communities in the archaeological research process. Many Native communities have developed their own CRM and archaeological research programs, and as Navajo archaeologist Davina Two Bears (2008:190) reminds us, "It is no longer accurate to frame discussions as between Indians and Archaeologists because in this day and age many Indians are professional archaeologists."

As archaeology moves toward a more collaborative, community-based paradigm, current best practices have begun to place a greater emphasis on long-term engagement and "fully collaborative" research. As defined by Barbara Gray's (1989) criteria, collaborative research requires "(1) pooling of appreciations and/or tangible resources, e.g., information, money, labor, etc., (2) by two or more stakeholders, (3) to solve a set of problems which neither can solve individually" (Gray, quoted in Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000:xiii). In its fully realized—perhaps idealized—form, truly collaborative research involves joint goal development on equal footing, "full stakeholder involvement" in every aspect of the research process (Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008:11), a community capacity-building (Atalay 2012) or capacity-sharing aspect (Liboiron and Pijogge 2021), and the coproduction of knowledge (Heckenberger 2008:251).

Collaborative archaeological practices exist on a continuum, however (Colwell 2016; Colwell-Chanthaphonh and Ferguson 2008; see Table 1). Consultation-based approaches that solicit the almost always limited involvement of federally recognized tribes and occasionally other local stakeholders as consulting parties are surely the forms most prevalent in CRM archaeology. With projects involving federal land or funding, US federal law mandates consultation, as do some states under certain circumstances. This type of collaboration generally falls under Colwell's "Participation" category, at best. Tribal consultation is crucially important in that it gives Indigenous groups some say in these bureaucratic processes that have real impacts on their well-being and cultural heritage, but it is often collaborative only in a technical sense. Although these practices vary regionally, in our experience working in the US Midwest, many archaeologists are unaware of tribal consulting obligations, tribal archaeological compliance requirements, and the proper procedures for engaging with tribal governments and historical preservation entities. As a result, consultant parties are sometimes engaged with only late in the compliance process, if at all. Furthermore, Native communities can view compliance consultation as perfunctory, superficial, and sometimes disrespectful (Menzies 2001:21) as well as lacking in authenticity, honesty, and earnestness (Gold 2014).

Collaborative archaeologies utilizing a Community-Based Participatory Archaeology (CBPA) approach, on the other hand, aim for respectful, mutually beneficial reciprocity between all partners. Valuing information from diverse knowledge systems, including traditional knowledge, is one of this approach's central tenets (Atalay 2012; Handley 2018). CBPA projects incorporate five common principles: "(1) They utilize a community-based, partnership process; (2) they aspire to be participatory in all aspects; (3) they build community capacity; (4) they engage a spirit of reciprocity; and (5) they recognize the contributions of multiple knowledge systems" (Atalay 2012:59). This approach attempts to shift the power of defining research problems, setting the research agenda, and interpreting the results from the researcher alone to both the researcher and the stakeholder communities involved.

THE POTENTIAL OF IMPERFECT ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLABORATION

Despite the many benefits of a community-based participatory approach, its elements are rarely implemented in CRM projects, even in ones that do incorporate some collaborative or semicollaborative elements. CRM projects, especially Phase I surveys, often focus solely on expedient site identification and the satisfaction of only the most basic legal requirements. In our experience working in CRM, full involvement of descendant communities and other stakeholders in defining research problems and designing research plans has often been framed by those in charge as impractical or impossible—another case where "the capitalistic, expedient, and regimented regulations of the industry" work to structure and limit archaeology's collaborative potential (Beaudoin 2022:119). Despite these inherent constraints, archaeologists must strive to move beyond the consultation model

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and implement appropriate elements of the CBPA framework in all situations, even if their implementation of it is imperfect.

This kind of "imperfect" collaborative work can still contribute to broader transformations within archaeology. As Watson and colleagues (2022) have recently demonstrated with archaeological compliance terminology, small changes in language use and practice can impact the relationships between Indigenous communities and archaeologists. Michael La Ronge, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer for the Sokaogan Chippewa Community, has also observed that modest shifts in the terminology archaeologists use when discussing projects with members of descendant communities—such as using "precontact" rather than "prehistoric"—can improve relationships between these parties (La Ronge 2022). In Canadian commercial archaeology contexts, Matthew Beaudoin (2022:121) has argued that even "pedantic" changes, such as moving away from assigning cultural affiliation to sites in favor of a categorization system based on temporal period, would help open up CRM research to increased Indigenous participation and oversight. Limited, imperfect collaboration can strengthen tribal sovereignty, prevent further harm to Indigenous communities, and help set the table for more fully collaborative research in the future.

Here, we present two examples that illustrate the promises of such "imperfect" collaboration from the authors' recent experiences. The first looks at the results of fieldwork collaboration and tribal site monitoring program in a large CRM survey. The second is a case study involving consultation and collaboration with an independent tribal institutional review board (IRB) in a smaller doctoral dissertation project. Neither of these practices constitutes "full collaboration" or a total adoption of all elements of CPBA, but this kind of limited but substantive collaboration can make a significant impact by facilitating partnerships between outside researchers and Indigenous communities, fostering mutual respect, preventing harm, and repairing some of the damage done by archaeologists to Native communities in the past.

COLLABORATIVE SITE MONITORING: A RECENT CRM EXAMPLE

Recently, cohorts of archaeologists performed multiple renewable energy projects throughout the midwestern portion of the United States working alongside members of several Indigenous Nations who served as fieldwork monitors. Tribal monitoring of CRM projects dates to at least the 1970s in the United States and is increasingly commonplace today. Indigenous monitoring of commercial archaeology did not begin in Canada until 2002 (Meier 2020:27; Warrick 2017:93) but has grown quickly as part of a trend toward increased Indigenous oversight of development in the country. Over the last 20 years, roughly 120 Indigenous Guardian programs have been established by Canadian First Nations and other Indigenous groups that actively "monitor development projects . . . and maintain cultural sites" (Land Needs Guardians 2023) in order to protect environmental and cultural resources. Archaeological monitoring in both countries, however, still tends to be organized on an ad hoc, project-to-project basis, although some tribes and First Nations groups have well-established programs and protocols. In the United States, there are no current federal guidelines or recommendations specifically concerning tribal monitoring of archaeological projects. California is one of the only states that has considered this in any substantive capacity, establishing a set of core competencies and enforcement roles for tribal monitors through the California Native American Heritage Commission (Gold 2014). Even in the absence of state-sanctioned requirements, tribal monitors are often formally trained in archaeology, allowing them to ensure that surveys follow baseline standards of practice. However, debate surrounds the term "monitor," whose role is often interpreted as "policing" archaeologists, suggesting a lack of trust between both parties (Meier 2020:85). These perceptions can significantly hinder productive collaboration and relationship building.

Not all tribal monitoring protocols are created equal. A successful monitoring program should be well coordinated and involve tribal members as active participants, not just as passive observers (Lightfoot 2008:213; Meier 2020). In the specific case discussed here, despite planning fieldwork based primarily on state regulations and requirements, the researchers were still able to implement several elements of a CBPA approach. Tribal specialists participated in every aspect of survey to ensure compliance with federal and state regulations and to ensure proper, respectful treatment in the case of human remains or objects of cultural patrimony discovery. The familiarity and camaraderie fostered by these everyday interactions went a long way toward easing misperceptions on both sides, including avoiding any feelings of "policing" on the part of participating archaeologists. Archaeologists and tribal specialists decided together on specific fieldwork methods based on the condition of areas within the project, and their traditional knowledge helped archaeological workers avoid disturbing certain landscapes and objects of cultural significance. Specialists performed culturally appropriate ceremonies at the beginning and end of each workday. As the crew developed trust, these specialists invited the archaeologists to join their ceremonies.

This type of archaeological practice, though not fully collaborative and still subject to time and financial pressures, proved mutually beneficial. Client expectations and other outside pressures made it difficult in this case to develop goals jointly with descendant community representatives prior to the start of the project. However, during the project, input from tribal representatives was encouraged and valued, and information flowed freely between archaeologists and tribal monitors. At the end of the project, an informal survey was conducted by the principal investigator, which indicated that both site monitors and project archaeologists felt that their needs had been met—as well as understood—by everyone else involved. These practices helped move this project from wholly within Colwell's "Participation" category toward true "Collaboration."

On an individual level, crew members and tribal monitors developed friendships that have continued since the conclusion of the project. Tribal representatives who were involved expressed relief by the knowledge that the project was conducted in accordance with their cultural values and in a way that prioritized avoiding harm to their ancestors and present-day communities. They also reported that their attitudes toward archaeologists changed for the better. Archaeologists reported increased attention toward certain types of landscapes and material culture identified by the monitors that they had not previously considered to be of any

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particular importance. These landscapes and types of material culture were entered into the fieldwork logs and recommended for project avoidance, resulting in significantly enhanced protection of these cultural resources. In the future, archaeologists who participated in this project will be able to identify similar culturally important items and places more effectively with the benefit of this specialist attention and knowledge.

These benefits and positive experiences mirror those reported in other archaeological projects involving similar types of monitoring by members of Indigenous descendant communities. The involvement of Kashaya Pomo tribal members in excavations at the Fort Ross State Historic Park in California is perhaps the best-known example of a successful implementation of this approach. Across multiple seasons of field school excavations, Kashaya leaders, elders, and other tribal members served as instructors to university students, participated in and monitored survey and excavations, and helped construct a research plan and a set of fieldwork protocols that would not violate Kashaya Pomo cultural values and beliefs (Dowdall and Parrish 2003; Gonzalez et al. 2006; Lightfoot 2008). Like the authors here, Dowdall and Parrish (2003:100) reported that this collaborative monitoring program resulted in improved "inclusivity, reciprocity, and mutual respect." More recently, studies of Canadian archaeological monitoring projects—while acknowledging their clear limitations—have also demonstrated the ability of these practices to transform archaeology in positive ways, create and strengthen collegial partnerships between Indigenous communities and archaeologists, and reinforce Indigenous sovereignty (Dent 2016; Meier 2020; Warrick 2017).

THE ROLE OF TRIBAL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARDS IN COLLABORATIVE ARCHAEOLOGY

Not all Indigenous research oversight takes place in the field. Although the slow process toward increased tribal research oversight had been set into motion following the passage of the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act in 1975, it was not until 1991 that the Indian Health Service (IHS) established a system of regional institutional review boards to review and regulate medical research on tribal communities (Morton et al. 2013). Including the National IRB at the IHS headquarters near Washington, DC, they currently operate 11 regional IHS IRBs across the United States. Many federally recognized tribes have followed their lead and established their own independent tribal IRBs. At present, there are 10 independent tribal IRBs registered with the US Department of Health and Human Services (2022). Many tribal colleges and some other pan-tribal institutions—such as the Indian Health Council Inc. and private nonprofit organizations such as the Association of American Indian Physicians—also operate their own IRBs. Some tribes require relevant research to go through a designated external IRB, often at a tribal college or local academic institution, and some have established tribal research review committees, community advisory boards, and/or tribal advisory committees that provide research oversight but do not meet the federal requirements to function as a formal IRB (National Congress of American Indians Policy Research Center [NCAI] 2019:2–3). Including IHS and Tribal College IRBs, there are around 50 total formal entities providing research oversight for Indigenous communities in the United States (Around Him et al. 2019:92).

Like IHS IRBs, all independent tribal IRBs registered with the US Department of Health and Human Services currently limit their scope to proposed medical research and research involving living human subjects, as do many other research oversight entities operated by Tribal Nations, including all Tribal College IRBs. Tribal IRBs and other research oversight entities can, however, extend their jurisdiction beyond the traditional medical and "human subjects research" associated with IRBs and into the humanities, archaeology, and other historically oriented social sciences. Recent revisions to the so-called Common Rule, established by the Federal Policy for the Protection of Human Subjects, "[honor] tribal laws on research" and acknowledge the right of tribes, as sovereign nations, to pass laws and regulate research that affects their communities and enforce these laws and regulations as they see fit (NCAI 2019:3). Even without these provisions, federally recognized tribes are sovereign nations and "all tribal governments have the power and authority to provide research oversight in the absence of having authorized another entity to do so" (Around Him et al. 2019:77).

Engaging with tribal IRBs and research review boards should not simply be a matter of rote legal compliance for archaeologists. In addition to being an ethical imperative and sometimes a legal necessity, the tribal IRB application and approval process provides many benefits for both the communities they serve and non-Indigenous researchers. First, a robust review process protects Indigenous communities from exploitation and from the kind of irreparable cultural harm caused by archaeologists in the past, both intentionally and unintentionally. IRB review ensures that proposed studies are culturally appropriate, respectful, and in alignment with the social mores and cultural customs of the studied group, and it helps end this cycle of harm and exploitation.

Past exploitation of Indigenous Nations by non-Native researchers has understandably led to a lingering, socialized mistrust of outside researchers in Indigenous communities. In turn, this mistrust has led to missed opportunities for further study of their histories and cultures by non-Indigenous researchers. For instance, the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin boasts a strong and robust culture and oral history, but additional study examining these strengths from different research paradigms and methodologies—by people outside the tribal community—can still help explore Ho-Chunk culture and history in new and different ways. Outside researchers, working in concert with the Ho-Chunk Nation IRB, have the potential to bring their training and experience to the Ho-Chunk Nation and its citizens. Such collaboration can strengthen understandings of tribal history as well as provide insights on current challenges and support the Nation and its members through new opportunities. Tribal IRBs can serve as a bridge between social science researchers and Indigenous Nations and facilitate the telling of their stories. In these ways, IRB reviews are a profound assertion of tribal sovereignty: they can help make sure Native stories get told while simultaneously giving Indigenous groups a voice in the way these stories are told by others. At this point, it is important to note that tribal IRBs that review archaeological and historical research are not replacements for Tribal Historic Preservation Offices (THPOs), or vice versa. Rather, they are

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complementary and potentially collaborative entities, each of which has an important role to play in the oversight of archaeological research. IRBs with expansive jurisdiction can help tribes regulate archaeological and historical research that falls outside the very limited bounds of NAGPRA and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and ensure that this research does not harm their communities.

Finally, for a wide variety of reasons—including political tensions, the positionality of researchers, and (in this author's experience) the lack of publicly available contact information—establishing the kind of affective, long-term connections necessary for building intensive collaborative research programs with descendant communities can be difficult for non-Indigenous archaeologists, especially those early in their career (Atalay 2012; Supernant and Warrick 2014). In tribes that have them, THPOs often serve as the first line of contact for researchers interested in historical and archaeological topics related to their communities. But these offices are usually small, with limited funding, and THPOs themselves typically receive hundreds of messages every day, making it difficult to respond to anything but the most urgent non-compliance-related questions and requests (Quackenbush 2022a). Tribal IRBs and other research oversight entities tend to receive far fewer applications. For example, the Ho-Chunk Nation IRB on average receives 10 or fewer requests to review social science research projects every year. This allows for timely review and feedback as well as direct interaction and discussion between potential outside researchers and members of the IRB. For researchers who come from outside of their chosen research community, IRBs provide an invaluable way to start building these necessary connections with descendant communities, a formalized—albeit limited—framework from which deeper relationships can be constructed.

WORKING WITH TRIBAL IRBS IN PRACTICE: NOTES FROM A RECENT COLLABORATION WITH THE HO-CHUNK NATION INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

The Ho-Chunk Nation Institutional Review Board (HCN-IRB) is one of the most comprehensive independent tribal IRBs in scope, and by our count, it is one of only nine tribal research oversight entities where a plain reading of their tribal research code currently gives them clear jurisdiction over nontraditional IRB subject matter (3 Ho-Chunk Nation Code § 3). Some of these entities limit their jurisdiction to research conducted on reservation or land in trust, but with the Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Research code, its enforcement extends "outside the jurisdiction of the Nation as applicable law permits" in certain cases (3 Ho-Chunk Nation Code § 3:3). The HCN-IRB is not, technically speaking, a formal institutional review board under 45 CFR 46, the "Common Rule" of the Department of Health and Human Services code for the protection of human subjects. However, like the other strong tribal IRBs operated by the Oglala Sioux Tribe, the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, and several others (see Table 2), this entity gives the Ho-Chunk Nation the ability to "approve, disapprove, and monitor" a wide variety of research and research products in order to protect tribal sovereignty and facilitate research beneficial to the tribe. Such entities should be—and in most cases, legally must be—treated by researchers as functionally equivalent to registered IRBs.

The HCN-IRB was established in May 2005 through an amendment of the recently adopted Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Research Code. Based on a model code published by the American Indian Law Center (1999), the Ho-Chunk Nation Tribal Research Code (3 Ho-Chunk Nation Code § 3:3–4) requires IRB review and approval of "all research"—including anthropology and archaeology specifically—"conducted within the Nation's Territory, whether involving human subjects or not, and all research regarding materials wherever located as to which the Nation has a claim of intellectual, cultural or other ownership, legal or equitable." The code is unequivocal: it applies to *all* explicitly anthropological and archaeological research, and although it does not mention history or ethnohistory specifically, given these fields' reliance on sources such as folklore, oral histories, and ethnographies—all "materials . . . to which the Nation has a claim of intellectual, cultural or other ownership"—it would certainly seem to apply to those as well. Over the past several years, the majority of research proposals reviewed by the HCN-IRB have in fact involved social science–oriented studies rather than medical ones. The first (known) application to the IRB for an archaeological and ethnohistorical project was made by the corresponding author in 2019. After discussing the process with other researchers working on similar topics, several more archaeologists submitted IRB applications soon afterward. As this pattern shows, researchers are quite often more than willing to submit their research for tribal IRB review but lack knowledge of their existence or their scope. As Ketchum and Meyers (2018:2) pithily put it, tribal IRBs "are out there. You just might not be aware of it."

Addison Kimmel's experience working with the Ho-Chunk Nation Institutional Review Board on his dissertation project clearly demonstrates the value of the IRB review process to both Indigenous Nations and archaeologists. After a series of reconnaissance surveys confirmed the location of a nineteenth-century Indigenous village, Kimmel submitted an application to the HCN-IRB in late 2019 seeking approval for a limited excavation program in the vicinity of a probable long lodge–type structure. Initial contact with the IRB was made using contact information from the Indian Health Service website, after a conversation with a colleague with close personal connections to the Ho-Chunk Nation prompted him to more closely examine the Tribal Research Code and reassess its applicability to the project. The application was reviewed within a week by the HCN-IRB. After review of this initial proposal, some members of the IRB indicated that the project, as written, violated tribal beliefs about avoiding "disturbance of the earth." Given that this question concerned Wąąkšik Woošgą, the Ho-Chunk way of life, the IRB referred the application to the Ho-Chunk Traditional Court—"a decision-making body that is comprised of [sic] male Ho-Chunk elders who are both fluent in our [Ho-Chunk] language and cultural traditions"—for their opinions before making a final ruling (Marcus F. Lewis to Addison Kimmel, personal communication 2020).

The approval process continued into February 2020, when the Ho-Chunk Nation declared a state of emergency due to the COVID-19 pandemic. At that time, Traditional Court meetings were suspended indefinitely. After waiting for a few months, it became clear that it was unlikely that the Traditional Court would

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TABLE 2. Tribal Research Oversight Entities That Review Archaeological and Historical Projects.

Research Oversight Entity	Reviewable Research Topics	Website
Colorado River Indian Reservation	Anthropological, archaeological, linguistic, geological, and ethnobotanical research	https://www.crit-nsn.gov/crit_contents/ordinances/Human-and-Cultural-Research-Code.pdf
Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians Cultural IRB	Cherokee cultural practices; does not accept submissions "dealing with traditional medicine or religious practices. Such information is not deemed appropriate for dissemination outside of the tribe."	https://phhs.ebci-nsn.gov/medical-institutional-review-board/ https://www.wcu.edu/WebFiles/WCU_IRB_EBCI_STATEMENT.docx
Ho-Chunk Nation IRB	Anthropological and archaeological studies, and any research using materials "as to which the Nation has a claim of intellectual, cultural or other ownership"	https://tribalinformationexchange.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Ho-Chunk-Nation-Tribal-Research-Code.pdf
Hopi Cultural Preservation Office	Research concerning "ethnology, history, biogenetics . . . ethno-botany, agronomy, ecology, anthropology, archaeology, and microbiology"	https://www.hopi-nsn.gov/hopi-cultural-preservation-office/
Oglala Sioux Tribe Research Review Board	Projects related to "language and culture"	https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/view/6868175/oglala-sioux-tribal-research-review-board-unmc
Pascua Yaqui Tribe Research Review Committee	Archaeology, ethnography, ethnohistory, and ethnobotany	https://www.pascuayaqui-nsn.gov/tribal-code/ch-7-1-research-protection/
Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation	Permit required for research on any topic conducted on the Colville Reservation	https://www.colvilletribes.com/forms
Confederated Tribes of the Coos, Lower Umpqua, and Siuslaw Indians Tribal Council	Permit required for research on any topic conducted on tribal land	https://narf.org/nill/codes/cooscode/1_1-10.pdf
Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians Research Review Board	Anthropological, archaeological, linguistic, geological, and ethnobotanical research	https://tnrg.org/research-review-board

be able to make a determination on this project within the time frame necessary for timely completion. The Traditional Court was established to serve as an easily accessible consulting body on issues involving Ho-Chunk traditional knowledge, and historically, it has met frequently (Quackenbush 2022b). The ongoing pandemic severely disrupted its meeting schedule, given that its members are all Elders, and many live in remote areas. The IRB, on the other hand, began meeting remotely soon after the emergency declaration. In collaboration with Marcus Lewis, the HCN-IRB chairperson (and coauthor of this article), Kimmel created a modified research plan that would be acceptable to the entire board without requiring the Traditional Court's input. To address concerns about disturbing the earth, this new proposal replaced invasive excavation with additional GPR survey. The newly formulated research proposal satisfied the HCN-IRB, and an approval letter was issued in December 2020.

Going through the IRB application and reapplication process was time consuming—a reminder that researchers would be well served to heed Ketchum and Meyers's (2018:2) advice to plan ahead: "Research plans and timelines can be terribly disrupted if one does not factor in tribal sovereignty and the distinct politics that undergird research with AI/AN communities." It also required substantial changes to the original research plan—changes that were not always viewed favorably by outside observers, most notably grant reviewers. Several months after the initial application to the HCN-IRB, Kimmel applied for a National Science Foundation Doctoral Dissertation Improvement grant. The hope had been to have the IRB process completed prior to this application, but the pandemic had extended the project timeline. This initial submission received a relatively strong set of three reviews but was not funded. A second application to the NSF of the modified project was made several months later after receiving IRB approval. Although the ratings were similar, the reactions to the reformulated research plan—especially those of repeat reviewers—was mixed. One reviewer maintained their "Excellent" rating of the proposal, but the exclusively effusive tone of their first review was tempered in their second, which noted that although this collaboration was admirable, its results had negatively impacted the project's archaeological potential. Another repeat reviewer praised the project's collaborative aspect but downgraded the initial rating slightly, due in large part to the limitations that the IRB's input had placed on data collection. These mixed messages about collaboration and its impacts on research design show some ambivalence about the shifting balance of authority toward greater Indigenous oversight of archaeology.

Even though these changes necessitated not collecting some types of data, it still allowed for the collection of other types of archaeological data useful for answering the project's stated research questions. Noninvasive GPR survey, although not a one-to-one replacement for full excavation, allowed for the delineation of some postcontact structure locations at the site and helped confirm site layout and boundaries. In conjunction with the data collected from earlier reconnaissance surveys, original arguments about Ho-Chunk life in the nineteenth century were able to

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be constructed, which are of interest to non-Native archaeologists and the Ho-Chunk Nation community alike. This is not to say that the data ultimately collected were, from our own Western perspectives, ideal for answering all archaeological research questions. Frankly, as some NSF reviewers worried, they were not. But collaboration with the Ho-Chunk Nation IRB in a way that centered Ho-Chunk perspectives did not, in any real sense, impede the project or prevent archaeological investigations from taking place. It certainly did not result in the censorship or suppression of scientific knowledge, as some critics of Indigenous collaboration and consultation in archaeology allege (see Weiss and Springer 2020). Rather, refraining from excavation and taking a more cautious and empathetic approach working with the HCN-IRB allowed for the expansion of archaeological knowledge in a way that guaranteed all further cultural harm to the Ho-Chunk Nation would be avoided.

Prior to engaging with the HCN-IRB, Kimmel was largely unaware of traditional tribal beliefs about disturbing the earth, aside from vague references in the ethnographic literature and one recent project that intentionally utilized nondestructive survey techniques after consultation with tribal elders. IRB review foregrounded this traditional knowledge and alerted the author to the range and depth of tribal beliefs concerning the disturbance of the earth. This additional cultural knowledge can now be considered during future research planning, prior to IRB submission. The most surprising and fulfilling result was that the process itself, although frustrating at times, opened the door to new opportunities and created the personal and professional connections that resulted in this article. For so long, outside researchers—including archaeologists—exploited and disrespected Indigenous people and Indigenous communities. By honoring tribal sovereignty and working respectfully with the HCN-IRB, the groundwork was laid for more fully collaborative research and the telling of many new Ho-Chunk stories in the future.

CONCLUSION

Working with site monitors and tribal IRBs is an "imperfect" form of archaeological collaboration. Tribal monitoring can be difficult to organize, places much of the burden on tribes and individual tribal citizens, and can create feelings of resentment on both sides. Indigenous monitors commonly encounter racism and discrimination while working in the field (Gold 2014). Even when their jurisdiction is extended beyond medical and human subjects research, tribal IRB reviews are inherently limited in scope, and IRBs alone cannot protect tribal communities from all potential research-related harms (Around Him et al. 2019). Most pressingly, at the present time, many tribes simply do not have them: although there are 574 federally recognized tribes in the United States (USA.gov 2022), along with over 60 state-recognized tribal groups, there are only around 50 formal research reviewing entities that serve Indigenous communities. Only 26 of these are listed on the IHS website, the closest thing to an IRB clearinghouse available at the time of publication.

Despite these challenges and limitations, these kinds of imperfect collaboration between archaeologists and Indigenous communities, built on the principles of community-based participatory research, are one step toward a more inclusive future for our discipline. Tribal and First Nations monitoring programs are growing quickly, and the early results—including the ones described here—are heartening. Indigenous monitors feel more deeply connected to their culture and their ancestors through their work (Meier 2020:88), and all reports suggest that experiences working with tribal monitors help archaeologists do better archaeology and improve historically tense relationships. Over the past several years, tribes in the United States have increasingly sought to establish IRBs and other research oversight entities (US Department of Health and Human Services 2022) and, as the case study presented here makes clear, these entities help facilitate the kind of respectful interactions and long-term engagements between archaeologists and Indigenous communities that were sorely lacking in the past. Taken together over time, these small advances accrete, ultimately resulting in transformative change within the discipline.

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No original data were used.

Competing Interests

The authors declare none.

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