

CHRONOLOGY OF  
*VANCOUVER SUN* HEADLINES  
ABOUT MARPOLE

**September 30:** "Ancient Musqueam burial ground in Marpole to remain free of development."

- Christopher Reynolds/*Vancouver Sun*, 2012

[<http://www.vancouversun.com/travel/Ancient+Musqueam+burial+ground+Marpole+remain+free+development/7318280/story.html>]

**October 01:** "Protection of Marpole Midden celebrated by Musqueam—'Precedent-setting' provincial decision to stop all work leaves developer looking for compensation."

- Christopher Reynolds/*Vancouver Sun*, 2012

[<http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Protection+Marpole+Midden+celebrated+Musqueam/7323836/story.html>]

**October 08:** "McInnes: Halted Marpole condo development a cautionary tale—Private owners expected to pay for public heritage values, it may not be fair but it is provincial policy."

- Craig McInnes/*Vancouver Sun*, 2012

[<http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/McInnes+Halted+Marpole+condo+development+cautionary+tale/7360158/story.html>]

**October 11:** "Open season on private property?"

- Mark Milke/*Vancouver Sun*, 2012

[<http://www.vancouversun.com/technology/Open+season+private+property/7377718/story.html>]

## "Kennewick Man" Neither Native American nor Indigenous to Columbia River Valley, says Federal Archaeologist

Rich Hutchings

The names established an agenda under which the rest of the encounter would be played out. After discovering a patch of "unclaimed" land, the conqueror would wade ashore and plant his royal banner. He proclaimed that these newly discovered lands were now his patron's domain and laid claim to the new-found riches, the natural resources and the things living and inanimate—all of which was simply wilderness before being "discovered" and defined by Europeans. ... The power to name reflected an underlying power to control the land, its indigenous people and its history.

David Hurst Thomas, 2000:4

Fifteen years have passed since his resting place on the banks of the Columbia River was first disturbed, yet the 9500 year-old Ancient One ("Kennewick Man") remains politically as divisive a figure as ever. This is in large part because he still acts as a powerful energy source, continuously shedding light on the sprawling canyon that divides Western archaeology from the Indigenous people it studies and manages. This fall, the Ancient One's light once again shone fully and squarely on archaeology.

In early October, Smithsonian Institution scientist Doug Owsley presented his most recent discoveries to an audience of Columbia Valley tribal leaders. Owsley, a physical anthropologist with the National Museum of Natural History, led the nearly decade-long court battle to study the Ancient One's bones. That battle ended in 2004, when the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the remains were not protected by the federal Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA), this because the Ancient One was so old "that it was impossible to establish a link with modern-day Native Americans" (Mapes 2012). Owsley shared his findings at a private gathering hosted by Central Washington University.

According to *Seattle Times* reporter Lynda Mapes (2012), "Owsley spent most

of the day presenting his findings from the study of the skeleton." While Owsley had previously stated that the Ancient One is not of Native American descent, "he said here for the first time that he believed the man was not even from this area."

According to Owsley, "not only wasn't Kennewick Man Indian, he wasn't even from the Columbia Valley, which was inhabited by prehistoric Plateau tribes":

Isotopes in the bones told scientists Kennewick Man was a hunter of marine mammals, such as seals, Owsley said. "They are not what you would expect for someone from the Columbia Valley," he said. "You would have to eat salmon 24 hours a day and you would not reach these values. This is a man from the coast, not a man from here. I think he is a coastal man."

Pressed by Armand Minthorn of the Umatilla Board of Trustees, who asked Owsley directly, "Is Kennewick Man Native American?" Owsley said no. "There is not any clear genetic relationship to Native American peoples," Owsley said. "I do not look at him as Native American ... I can't see any kind of continuity. He is a representative of a very different people." His skull,

Owsley said, was most similar to an Asian Coastal people whose characteristics are shared with people, later, of Polynesian descent.

As reported the following month by *Crosscut.com* writer John Stang (2012), at least one Washington State archaeologist was taking aim at Owsley's methods. For University of Washington and Burke Museum archaeologist Peter Lape, the biggest question is "whether peer review, a time-honored scientific practice, is being ignored" by Owsley. Stang describes Lape as being "unhappy" with the situation.

[Lape] believes that many facets of Owsley's team's conclusions—such as the isotope results to speculate on Kennewick Man's diet and the potential elasticity of a human skull—stem from tricky aspects of forensic anthropology and he's bothered by the fact that no one outside of Owsley's team has had a chance to scrutinize the Smithsonian's data to see how the team reached its conclusions. "Any of this is open to discussion," he said. "Bones are not open books, especially not 9,000-year-old bones." ...

What bothers Lape...is the absence of peer-reviewed articles published prior to Owsley unveiling the bones' secrets. Standard procedure in the academic world is for scientists to submit articles to scholarly journals, have other experts review the articles prior to publication, and then have experts debate results after publication. While Owsley has consulted extensively with his group of experts, he has yet to publish a scholarly article on Kennewick Man. "He's never published any scientific results of his studies. There's no place for anyone to look at the actual data. ... You have to have a higher amount of scrutiny in the scientific process," Lape said.

"Discovered" in 1996, the Ancient One quickly became the focal point of an already overheated discourse (Ferguson 1996; Swidler 1997), particularly in the key areas of archaeologist-Native American relations, NAGPRA, and Native

Part of the dispute's background has been a practice of anthropologists digging up Indian remains and storing them in museums, often unstudied and violating Native American spiritual beliefs. The Smithsonian was a repository of unstudied Indian skeletons until Congress enacted NAGPRA in 1990 to begin repatriation of remains.

John Stang, 2012

American identity (Bruning 2006; Ray 2006; Thomas 2000; Watkins 2004).

Owsley's language—like others before him—is deeply troubling. For me, it recalls the politically motivated (colonialist and nationalist) rhetoric described by Don Fowler in his 1987 essay on the "uses of the past." Fowler, who shows how archaeology works in "service of the state," illustrates the "striking ways" in which "nation-states and their partisans have used archaeology, archaeological remains, and the past generally for purposes of national or chauvinistic ideology, or the legitimation of power, or all three."

Archaeologists might do well to pause and reconsider what the Ancient One stands for, what he represents. My point of departure for reflection is Fowler's (1987:241) conclusion that "interpretations, or uses, of the past are seldom value

neutral":

Nation states have long used and manipulated the past for their own needs and purposes. Since its inception as a field of study and later as a discipline, archaeology has been immersed in, and conditioned by, the economic, political, and governmental institutions of nation states. In various nation states at various times, some archaeologists have analyzed and interpreted the past to fit the ideological requirements of those states. That is one end of the spectrum. The other is the implicit and therefore unquestioned acceptance of ideological tenets and values from within the archaeologist's culture and how they influence the archaeologist's uses of the past.

Vivian Harrison, NAGPRA coordinator for the Yakama, said it was disturbing to look at the slides Owsley showed, with the bones presented on a platform to be scrutinized from every angle. "Really, to me, it's sad. This is a human being and his journey has been interrupted by leaving the ground." ... The day's presentation was "subtly traumatic," said Johnny Buck.

Lynda Mapes, 2012

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