

## Investigating Stakeholder-Defined Values of Heritage Sites

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Over the last several years Mounds State Park and Strawtown Koteewi Park have become the focus of debates that reveal a variety of perspectives on the value of heritage sites among different groups of community stakeholders. To explore how different groups perceive the physical remains of the past, IUPUI faculty from the anthropology, education, and tourism departments are investigating what we are calling the "stakeholder-defined values" of these heritage sites.



Our goal is to understand the complexity and range of meanings of the sites for different people, including educators, volunteers, archaeologists, people who sit on boards or work at the sites, and Native people. We are using a methodology based on one that was developed in New Zealand by the Te Papa Museum to assess the significance of their collections to the Maori. The methodology invites people to articulate why the sites are meaningful based on their own ideas, beliefs, experiences, and interests to produce

"meaning maps".

While we are making some assumptions about the shared affinities within these groups, we also recognize the internal diversity present in all of these constituencies. Our methodology therefore uses a two-phase approach to try to figure out the extent to which views are shared or divergent. In the first phase, we propose to conduct focus groups and interviews with representatives of various stakeholders from each constituency. We will then develop a survey based on the meaning maps that the focus groups come up with. The survey will be sent to larger groups of people, and we will see if there is a correlation of the values identified by the different stakeholder groups.

In addition to letting people know about the project, we are recruiting participants who are interested in participating in the study, either in the interview/focus group phase or in the survey phase. A formal recruitment letter with contact information is attached.

If you have any questions, would like to participate in the study, or are interested in learning more about the project, please contact Elizabeth Kryder-Reid by email ([heritage@iupui.edu](mailto:heritage@iupui.edu)) or phone (317-274-1406).