

Contested Holdings

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Going beyond strictly legal and property-oriented aspects of the restitution debate, restitution is considered as part of a larger set of processes of return that affect museums and collections, as well as notions of heritage and object status. Covering a range of case studies and a global geography, the authors aim to historicize and bring depth to contemporary debates in relation to both the return of material culture and human remains. Defined as contested holdings, differing museum collections ranging from fine arts to physical anthropology provide connections between the treatment and conceptualization of collections that generally occupy separate realms in the museum world.