Why SAA needs RPA: The Path toward Professionalism in the United States

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19th Annual Meeting of the European Association of Archaeologists
Pilsen, Czech Republic 2013
Standards and Ethics

- The dilemma posed by CRM
  - Who is qualified?
  - What standards must be followed?
  - What ethics must be maintained?
  - Who decides?
Separation of Powers - 1976

- Society for American Archaeology
  - Membership
- Society of Professional Archaeologists
  - Certification
  - Accountability
Register Sites, Not Archaeologists

- Research freedom
- Personal vs discipline ethics and standards
Accountability?

- Latin America and US archaeologists
- Public money and the public’s right
Register of Professional Archaeologists – 1998

- Registration, not certification
- Sponsoring Organizations
  - SAA
  - Archaeological Institute of America
  - Society of Historical Archaeology
  - American Anthropological Association – Archaeology Division
Register of Professional Archaeologists

- A voluntary list of archaeologists meeting specific criteria
  - Advanced degree
  - Evidence to conduct archaeological research
- RPAs explicitly agree to abide by
  - A Code of Ethics
  - Standards of Research Performance
- RPAs agree to be subject to a grievance process
  - Anyone can bring a grievance
Are we there yet?

- Society for American Archaeology – 7,000 members
- Registered Professional Archaeologists – 2,500

The answer is clearly, “no!”
Can we get there from here?

- Will we ever get all American Archaeologists to Register? Probably not
- Can we get “others” to believe in the Register? Most certainly
  - The importance of being relevant
    - Grievances
    - Ethics Training
    - Capacity Building
Trading places to make it so!