

Poll Shows Strong Public Support for Archaeology and Robust Opposition to Site Looting and Artifacts Smuggling

Americans call for measures to investigate and prosecute smugglers of looted archaeology.

91% of American adults agree that

“Information from archaeological sites is a critical part of understanding humanity’s past.”

86% of American adults agree that

“U.S. Customs officials should make a greater effort to investigate and prosecute those who smuggle looted archaeological objects into the U.S.”

84% of American adults agree that

“Looting an archaeological site (i.e., the unscientific, unrecorded, and usually illegal removal of artifacts, typically for commercial purposes) is wrong.”

78% of American adults agree that

“Since many looted archaeological artifacts wind up in the U.S., the adoption of laws here in the U.S. can help curb the looting of archaeological sites abroad.”

77% of American adults agree that

“The U.S. government should be involved in the preservation of archaeological sites in the U.S. and worldwide by providing additional funding for scientific research and protection.”

Methodology

The survey was conducted online within the United States, between February 15-19, 2013 among 2,252 adults (aged 18 and over) by Harris Poll, on behalf of the Archaeological Institute of America (AIA) via Harris’ Quick Query omnibus product. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error, which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with non-response, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100 percent response rates. These are only theoretical, because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

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