

# IMAGINE NO MUSEUMS, PART 6: OUR FAVORITE RESPONSES

A 2023 ANNUAL SURVEY OF MUSEUM-GOERS DATA STORY

**We're just going to say it. Museum-goers are hilarious. And lovely. And thoughtful. And so much more.**

As we read through thousands of responses from museum-goers who **imagined what they, and their communities, would be like without museums,**

there were many that we loved. Some are just too good not to share.

Underscoring all of these thoughts, however, is a common theme: care.

Overwhelmingly, museum-goers deeply care that museums exist, and they find immense value in what we do and what we share.

So in this *Data Story*, we present our favorites, in no particular order. Enjoy!

*"It would be different in that connecting to the natural world, science, and other cultures would not be as convenient or accessible. (Also, you wouldn't get to see Dinosaurs. My advice: always bring in more traveling Dinosaur exhibits whenever possible.)"*



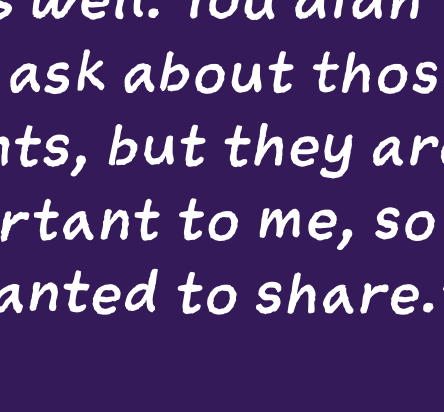
*"Why would you horrify me with visions of an apocalyptic dystopia?! Museums are my safe place, my refuge, my inspiration, my destination, my exploration. They offer stimulation without shopping (much), education, ideas, beauty, and usually a pretty okay meal and a decent cup of coffee."*



*"If no museums, I guess we would have a lot more stuff at home. I think sometimes people hang on to stuff because they think it is important and museums give us a chance to protect that stuff and also share it. Maybe we would have more hoarders and house parties."*



*"It's time for breakfast. I like eating at museums and enjoy museum gift shops as well. You didn't ask about those elements, but they are important to me, so I wanted to share."*



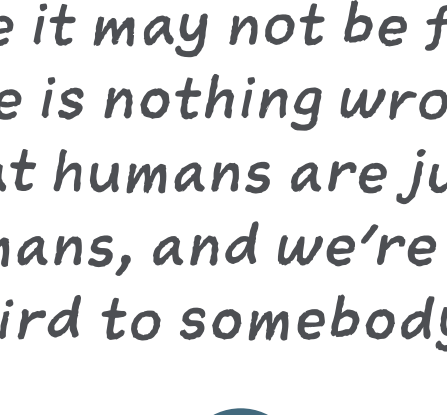
*"I could not live without museums and I know our nation and world would be overrun by fools. If it hasn't been done, this would be an interesting screenplay and movie. The effects would be devastating."*



*"My middle child, age 7, didn't remember what museums were by the time we had vaccines and were ready to go back to museums. He just had no idea. We took him to the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Franklin Institute, and the Please Touch Museum, and he was amazed at the idea that there were so many big things and so many beautiful things. I had known that COVID caused many losses, but this was one I hadn't expected--my child didn't know about museums! He literally had no idea what to expect from them. I'm glad we were able to change that for him, but my god, what if it were permanent? Such a loss."*



*"Most of the interactions folks would have would be the news/internet telling them what to think to convince them to act in certain ways instead of being allowed to explore and experience the wonderful, wild, and sometimes weird variety of the human experience. Museums allow people to encounter something 'weird' and accept that while it may not be for them, there is nothing wrong with it, that humans are just humans, and we're all weird to somebody."*



Annual Survey of Museum-Goers Data Stories are created by Wilkening Consulting on behalf of the American Alliance of Museums. Sources include:  
\* 2023 Annual Survey of Museum-Goers, n = 107,187; 228 museums participating  
\* 2023 Broader Population Sampling, n = 2,002  
\* 2017 - 2022 Annual Surveys of Museum-Goers

\*Data Stories share research about both frequent museum-goers (typically visit multiple museums each year) and the broader population (including casual and non-visitors to museums). See the Purpose and Methodology (Update) Data Story from September 12, 2023 for more information on methodology.

More Data Stories can be found at [wilkeningconsulting.com/data-stories](https://wilkeningconsulting.com/data-stories).