We warmly thank Pieterjan Deckers, Morag Kersel and Joe Watkins for their responses to our debate piece. As our views align closely with those expressed by Deckers (2020), we welcome his contribution but will not say much more about it in this response. Both Kersel and Watkins also seem generally to agree with our perspective, although they raise several points with which we wish to engage. Kersel, for example, responds to our plea that archaeologists adopt a nuanced perspective towards collector engagement with the suggestion that we "also ask whether the responsible and responsive acquisition of artefacts—by stewards or collectors —causes harm" (2020: 1060). For us, that question has been asked and answered. In our introduction (Thomas & Pitblado 2020: 1060), we state that collecting does cause harm, as documented by an extensive literature.

Our piece points out that archaeologists can, without contradiction, simultaneously acknowledge the harm collecting can cause and work to mitigate that harm by engaging with law-abiding collectors who share the archaeologists' interest in 'thinking from' rather than 'about' things (sensu Wylie 2002). Engaging people simply requires will and effort. Once engaged, archaeologists can share why context is so important to us and how one can be the best possible steward of material in the private sphere. These messages can prompt receptive private artefact stewards to donate material they already have to museums and to cease further collecting—both clear mitigations of harm (Pitblado 2014).

Kersel also emphasises what she sees as the importance of the definition(s) that archaeologists use to refer to non-archaeologists who collect, and she characterises our definition of 'collector' as unclear. While we sympathise with the desire for black and white categories, we have found in our own work that hard and fast labels are generally unhelpful and sometimes counterproductive. Nevertheless, we can offer a general synopsis as to how we conceptualise and characterise those who amass material culture.

To us, the term 'collector' is too general, and should not be used without a modifier or context. Anyone who acquires material 'collects'; both archaeologists and looters are 'collectors' in the strictest sense. Archaeologists collect artefacts legally, document their finds thoroughly, care not about the artefacts per se but about the people who made them, and ensure that their finds come to rest in the public sphere. Looters collect and/or sell artefacts illegally on the private market, caring neither about their provenance nor the people who made them.

Myriad other individuals fall somewhere along the archaeologist/looter spectrum (see also Thomas 2016: 143). Importantly, whether any form of acquisition—including that practiced by archaeologists—is ethical depends upon one's vantage point (Colwell-Chanthaphonh 2004). For some descendant communities, as we (Thomas & Pitblado 2020) and Watkins (2020) both noted, the answer is 'no', and archaeologists are arrogant to proclaim themselves the group most entitled and best positioned to collect the world's material heritage.

Similarly, it is noteworthy that from the perspective of many archaeologists, saving data is the most crucial ethical point of reference. A more encompassing ethical practice, however, can and must incorporate more than the sterile world of data. Indeed, many archaeological ethical codes (e.g. https://worldarch.org/code-of-ethics/) prioritise the needs of present-day communities, and those needs may not align with the wishes of archaeological science and its practitioners (e.g. Atalay 2012). Again, it is important to recognise that ethics are situational.

The 'sweet spot' for the collaboration that we advocate lies at the intersection between archaeologists and those collectors who acquire material legally and who either already share with professionals a fundamental interest in the past or who are receptive to that worldview. These are the people that the Society for American Archaeology (SAA) and we refer to as 'responsible and responsive stewards'. Kersel

describes her pilgrims to the Holy Land in search of certificates of authenticity as being "like stewards" (Kersel 2020: 1074); and despite her concerns, she recognises the value of engaging with them. By our definition, these pilgrims are 'responsible or responsive stewards'.

Kersel also raises the question of how cooperation between archaeologists and private stewards benefits local populations. In 2020, this is an important question for every practicing archaeologist, and we are happy to address it in the context of our argument. In general, local populations care about their own heritage and that of others who occupied a place before them. We (and the SAA) advocate engaging responsible local collectors because doing so makes that heritage more accessible to them. Kersel understands this through her own experience, pointing out that collectors of legally acquired objects from the Holy Land "love to speak with archaeologists about the artefacts in their possession" (Kersel 2020: 1074).

Kersel closes her response with the suggestion that "engagement must be one that highlights the clear connection between demand for artefacts and the destruction of archaeological sites and objects" (Kersel 2020: 1074). This is certainly true, and it is a core premise around which the SAA's position statement was crafted. The only way we can convey this important message is by first engaging our potential allies (Deckers 2020).We must all act in this regard, including Kersel herself, who has learned through interviews that collectors fail to see a direct link between their desire for objects and looting. What a wonderfully teachable moment.

Joe Watkins, in his role as President of the SAA, rightly highlights Society bylaws and principles that denounce looting. He does this, however, without also recognising the importance of equally relevant principles and bylaws related to stewardship (e.g. Principle 1) and public education (e.g. Principle 4) and, of course, the SAA's own Statement on Collaboration. SAA members do not have the luxury of attending only to those bylaws and principles most aligned with their personal code of conduct.We believe that meaningful and scaled-up attention paid to these other principles by the professional archaeological community, whether working in museums, universities, heritage-management companies, local government or elsewhere, will attend to the problem of looting and irresponsible collecting, while simultaneously increasing public appreciation of archaeology. Watkins also expresses concern about the "ongoing disturbance of archaeological sites" (Watkins 2020: 1071), which, as we noted earlier, is an occupational hazard of the invasive methods of professional archaeologists, as well as those of hobbyists and looters. As archaeologists
we mitigate these invasive methods by documenting as much as possible. It is problematic, however, to assume, as Watkins seems to do, that only archaeologists can capture or share trustworthy contextual information. This is an example of the stereotyping of nonprofessionals by professional archaeologists that we take to task in our debate piece. It assumes that all archaeologists, regardless of level of education or experience, work to sufficiently high standards professionally (which is arguable), while also insulting those private collectors and hobbyists who collect and share detailed contextual information.

We share the concern of all our respondents about the destruction of known or newly discovered archaeological sites by unauthorised digging, whether by collectors or looters, or through agricultural or other practices. Yet the archaeological materials already retrieved from the ground cannot be returned to the earth. In order to establish "what's missing from the archaeological record?" (Watkins 2020: 1071), we can only find out by asking those who know, and surely doing just that is part of ethical archaeological practice.

References
Atalay, S. 2012. Community-based archaeology: research with, by and for Indigenous and local communities. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Colwell-Chanthaphonh, C. 2004. Those obscure objects of desire: collecting cultures and the archaeological landscape in the San Pedro Valley of Arizona. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography 33: 571–601. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891241604266989

Deckers, P. 2020. Archaeology's awkward allies. Antiquity 94: 1068–1070. https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2020.50

Kersel, M.M. 2020. Engaging with demand and destruction. Antiquity 94: 1074–1076. https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2020.62

Pitblado, B.L. 2014. How archaeologists and artifact collectors can—and should—collaborate to comply with legal and ethical
antiquities codes. Advances in Archaeological Practice 2: 338–52. https://doi.org/10.7183/2326-3768.2.4.338

Thomas, S. 2016. The future of studying hobbyist metal detecting in Europe: a call for a transnational approach. Open Archaeology 2: 140–49. https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2016-0010

Thomas, S. & B.L. Pitblado. 2020. The dangers of conflating responsible and responsive artefact stewardship with illicit and illegal collecting. Antiquity 94: 1060–1067. https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2019.201

Watkins, J. 2020. Not with the same brush. Antiquity 94: 1071–1073. https://doi.org/10.15184/aqy.2020.45

Wylie, A. 2002. Thinking from things: essays in the philosophy of archaeology. Berkeley: University of California Press.