

Example of leisure the basis of culture book review

[Media](#), [Television](#)



2. The difference between the “ common need” and the “ common good” is readily apparent in a capitalist, free market society, based on the hierarchy which we use to make decisions. When we work towards a need, matters become utilitarian in a hurry. When we force ourselves to consider a good, the entire calculus changes. The role of philosophy is to give us a mandate to stop serving our short-term interests and to consider the deeper, less visible ramifications of the decisions that we make. Consider, for example, the recent hullabaloo over the statements made by the founder of Chick-Fil-A regarding his own support for traditional marriage. The rush for both the Left and the Right to make their reactions known held the attention of the 24/7 news cycle for a full handful of days, as boycott was matched by a day of support for the restaurant, and then followed by same-sex kiss-ins at locations. One man even lost his job for filming himself bullying a drive-thru worker at one of their locations and then posting it online. The philosophical approach would be to step back from the heat of events and consider the common good instead of rushing to fulfill what one thinks is the common need. In this case, realizing that the First Amendment both guarantees his right to be in favor of traditional marriage as well as another person's right to be in favor of gay marriage, polygamy, or whatever relationship structure one can imagine. The republic will survive differences of opinion, and our social civility should be allowed to as well.

3. Watching television or playing video games may well be a suitable leisure activity, but they are in no way a substitute for the practice of meditation or even relaxation. Even though one is not laboring while performing those activities, the fact remains that the brain undergoes entirely different types

of activity while watching television or playing games. The sort of in-depth thought that goes into reflection is found nowhere in the act of watching television; rather, the brain only soaks in stimuli. By reflecting, the brain undergoes a rigor in its critical analysis that is not found with electronic stimulation. This rigor is not only stimulating but also relaxing, in the sense that the brain can sense the relief of working out its longer-term muscles, much like a distance runner loping along in his warmup plan. Without this unique type of activity, the brain will begin to atrophy in certain areas.

4. I would argue that education in the United States offers far more of its students access to the contemplative. While in many countries, students are herded into different tracks based on a regimen of testing that can begin in elementary school, every student in the United States has access to the same sort of education. In Europe and in other parts of the world, most students start their training to enter a trade by the age of 15. The United States is virtually unique in its view that all children can succeed regardless of racial, ethnic or even socioeconomic background. Because of this the American numbers, on average, are lower than other developed nations. We can reward everyone, but in particular those who excel the most are the highest achievers. Without this difference between the high performing and the rest, if we were allowed to just test the best, we would be lying to ourselves.

Works Cited

Pieper, Josef. *Leisure: The Basis of Culture*. San Francisco: Pantheon Books, 1952.