

Who should pay essay examples

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The recent debate regarding whether or not the federal government should continue funding the National Endowment for the Arts is a controversial one, and says volumes about the way Americans perceive art, and its importance to culture. Proponents for the NEA purport that art is an indelible, important facet of our culture and civilization, and so the federal government has a responsibility to maintain it. However, opponents to 'cultural funding' by the government state that it is a misuse of state funds, and that many of the uses of that grant money include immoral art that is only for a specific subset of the American people. Despite this opposition to use of government funds, art is absolutely something that should continue to have support by the federal government.

First, art is an absolutely essential component to culture and continued heritage in our country (and all others). While not being a practical, material need for humans to continue surviving, it is one of the hallmarks of culture and civilization. Many people live for art, and use it to express or ignite their imaginations, which is a fundamental part of the human experience. To that end, as it is vital to the continued ability for an entire culture to express itself and its experiences, the federal government has a responsibility to maintain that ability.

Secondly, arts funding takes up a surprisingly low percentage of the federal budget. If the perspective for cutting funding is to actually save money, there are many other programs and expenses that could be cut that would be far less needed (e. g. defense). Despite defense being the largest allotment of our budget, many of the same lawmakers who would cut the NEA would not touch a cent of defense; this is because they personally value

defense much more than the arts, not because it acts in the best interests of the people. NEA-sponsored and funded things, such as Sesame Street, are educational and informative, and provide an incredible return on investment by exposing people to learning and art that would not otherwise be available. To that end, arts should be kept as its removal would not free up a substantial amount of the federal budget.

Thirdly, art should not be punished by lawmakers simply because it is distasteful or repellant to them. Gingrich's arguments for cutting the NEA included that art was simply for 'elitists,' and that many works of art funded by it were 'amoral.' Whether or not he truly believes this, that is a subjective value judgment, it does not play into its value as art. It is up to the individual to appreciate and admire certain kinds of art over others, not judge the value of art on a case by case basis.

In conclusion, arts funding should continue as much as it can. Arts funding is absolutely essential in maintaining an important aspect of our culture. Funding the arts provides an incredible return on investment compared to other cuttable, more expensive spending like defense, and the reasons opponents have to the art the NEA spends the money on are spurious and unnecessary. To that end, there is simply no reason why the arts funding (which is low enough already) should be cut; the federal government has an investment in all aspects of society, from the economy to defense to culture. With that in mind, the government should not abandon one of those now.