

We Should Encourage Corporate Sponsorship of Culture and the Arts

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If you walk into an art gallery in Europe, you will see a common theme between them. Many of the art galleries, exhibitions, installations, and outdoor events are often sponsored by large corporations that have little connection to the art and culture they are donating to. For instance, from 1990 to 2016, BP, which is one of the world's largest oil extraction companies, had donated money to the Tate Galleries in the UK as well as the Edinburgh International Festival. Both venues are world-famous for their display of creativity, art, and culture, and given their sponsorship you would see BP logos dotted around each event. Though it is true that art and culture are often underfunded and in need of cash to develop projects, critics are keen to point out that it is immoral for big corporations to continue this behaviour. They note that their intentions are dubious and can compromise the purpose of art for society. In the case of BP, they refer to its history of environmental disasters and so aligning itself with the arts is an attempt to improve or soften the image of the company.

Corporate funding has become a large source of income for public galleries, theatres, and opera houses in recent years as government funding has been cut. Being able to find new and alternative sources of income can only be positive for the arts and culture which only widens access to these places of wonder and creativity. Companies are also part of our global community and they too have a voice and right to support high-quality art and performances. Combined with this, they are supporting local communities, creating jobs, and more importantly, they are financing dancers, artists, musicians, and other creatives to continue their work. Their activities in a business are not connected to the projects they support as a charitable endeavour. If people have a problem with BP, perhaps they should stop using their products and contact their MP (or government representative) instead.

There is a strong relationship between business and culture



Agree

Businesses throughout history have been great sponsors of art and culture we enjoy today. Artists like Leonardo da Vinci and inventors like Nikola Tesla were working closely with business people, governments, and patrons to produce their finest work. Art and culture is a partnership that benefits all who take part.



Disagree

It is true that business does provide financial support for artists, writers. Without financiers, it would be impossible to enjoy culture and art as we see it today. The problem is more subtle. For instance, it is well known that artists often collaborate with their sponsors and in doing so means they are encouraged to be less adventurous and experimental with their work, just in case it might offend their boss. Their presence in art means that only works they prefer, enjoy, and desire will be made. Is it common with life now, what the people enjoy is very much the opposite of what the upper classes with money enjoy. Art and culture are made for and by everyone and so needs to be inclusive from beginning to end.

Businesses only care about their image and not about art



Agree

Businesses, at least in pro-business capitalist societies, are only concerned about making more profit and increasing the number of customers. If they sense that consumers enjoy art and culture then they will also work to join in. Companies often use artistic movements, like flash mobs, to bandwagon onto popular culture. They understand that culture is universally enjoyed and seen to be a neutral space. Their involvement is designed to develop a favourable image of themselves. It is an unfortunate circumstance, but it's the truth.



Disagree

Business does care about art. Companies like the Tate Sugar Company, Rowntree, Cadbury, and many others have worked to build schools, hospitals, art galleries and more. Some companies do understand their social contract to create a better community around them. What needs to be done is to promote a different type of company culture and governance where working to help social issues is also part of a company's responsibility.

Art and culture belongs to everyone, not just the public



Agree

Culture and art are products of human beings. That means that everyone, where ever they work, are also custodians, or owners of the art of a culture they interact with. These concepts are not in the ownership of one person, and you cannot ban anyone from producing it. So, this means that art and culture is the work of everyone at the same time. We can travel and become immersed in a different history of art and culture and yet it can be seen and enjoyed by all. Culture is not a commodity that can be bought and sold, it can only be shared.



Disagree

There are many types of art not just "art". There is classical, opera, theatre, and gallery exhibitions as examples of high art, which requires lots of financing and time to create. It is often time and labour intensive. Regular pop concerts and other events are part of popular culture. It is true those too are often quite expensive to make but their audience is far greater so it is easier to make a profit. The opera is a live performance enjoyed by a small group of people. It is a smaller economic model and so needs all the money it can get. Having new sources of income means this art form can last for many years to come.

Useful language to use in formal debates

In general, you would need to come up with 4-5 main arguments to support your team's debating position. It's also important to remember to also anticipate the opposition's arguments to help you defend your team's point of view.

Building your Argument

Introducing your point: To begin with... First of all...

Connecting your points: Also... Furthermore... What's more...

Showing importance: More importantly... What's worse... Above all else...

Giving examples: For instance... For example...

Opinions, Preferences:

In my opinion..., The way I see it..., As far as I'm concerned..., If it were up to me..., I

suppose..., I suspect that..., I'm pretty sure that..., I honestly feel that, Without a doubt...

Disagreeing:

Don't you think it would be better..., Shouldn't we consider..., But what about..., I'm afraid I

don't agree..., Frankly, I doubt if..., The truth of the matter is..., The problem with your point

of view is that..., It's a fact that..., According to ..., The reality of the situation is..., The

numbers show that..., The fact is this:..., Here's the deal...

Partially agreeing:

I agree with you to a point however..., I see where you are coming from but..., I see what you

are saying but ...,

Delaying Strategies

I can't answer that directly..., I'll need time to think about that..., That's a very interesting

question, because..., That's a difficult question to answer,

Asking someone to repeat

Pardon me? Pardon? Excuse me? Sorry? I'm sorry? I beg your pardon.

Holding the floor

Hold on..., Hold on a second..., Yes, I was about to mention that..., Well, I was about to come

to that..., Sorry, I haven't finished yet..., I haven't made my point yet ... a

Expressing solutions and alternatives

The solution is to..., Then you will..., The best way to ... is ...,

To ..., you really must, There are many choices....,