

# Humanities

An Introduction

# What are the Humanities?





“  
THE HUMANITIES is a somewhat  
academic term. But if I ask you  
if you enjoy reading, or going to  
the movies, or listening to music  
*—everyday life is full of the humanities.*

PRESIDENT RICHARD H. BRODHEAD, DUKE UNIVERSITY  
”

# What are the Humanities?

- Art, literature, philosophy, religion, music, theater, architecture, history, film, poetry, dance, sculpture.
- Answer the big questions:
  - What is the purpose of life?
  - What is good or has value?
  - What does it take to live a happy life?
  - What is our relation to God or a higher power?
  - What is love or romance?
  - How should society be organized?
  - What do we learn from our emotions? What should we do with our emotions?
  - How do we deal with adversity? Failure?

# Why do we study it?

- Your choice to explore the meaning and value in the humanities will lead to some wonderful discovery about the arts, and ultimately about yourself.
- Sensory experiences are very important in living a fulfilling life.
- Discovering the the cultural values of various civilizations
- They will help you develop critical thinking.
- Analyzing the arts will help you learn how to evaluate what is praiseworthy and what is not, in our cultural world.
- They broaden our vision of the world and help us understand ourselves.

# Aesthetic Experience

- When we have an enjoyable interaction with art, music, literature, dance, etc., that provides us knowledge about ourselves.
- What is beauty to you?