



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE

# Humanities Quotes

Testimonials about the value of the humanities are ubiquitous and come from leaders in a very wide range of endeavors, from business to the military to the physical sciences.

“When military leaders talk of winning the hearts and minds of the populace in another country, they are talking about understanding language, culture, values, religion and history.... Just as surely, the State Department, Department of Homeland Security, and intelligence agencies will only be as effective as their analysts are educated in the humanities.” -David J. Skorton (President, Cornell University)

“Too many mistakes have been made over the years because our government and military did not understand – or even seek to understand – the countries or cultures we were dealing with.” -Robert M. Gates (former Secretary of Defense)

“Managers draw upon all of the knowledge and insights of the humanities and social sciences—on psychology and philosophy, on economics and history, on the physical sciences and ethics . . . [and] focus this knowledge on effectiveness and results.”  
-Peter Drucker (the late management guru)

“It’s technology married with liberal arts, humanities, that yields us the result that makes our heart sing. And nowhere is that more true than in these post-PC devices.”  
-Steve Jobs (the late founder and CEO, Apple) on the iPad2

“It is sometimes said that the study of history, or government or politics, or other social science and humanities disciplines can help us ask the right questions, but cannot provide us specific answers to contemporary challenges. Certainly, a typical grad school experience . . . does help us to ask the right questions. However, in many cases, graduate school [in the humanities] also provides real skills, knowledge and expertise . . . .”  
-Gen. David A. Petraeus

“The goal should be that everybody gets a chance to read great books and participate in the richness that humanities brings us.” -Bill Gates (founder and Chairman, Microsoft)

“The ‘deep’ civic function of the humanities . . . is something understood very well by totalitarian societies, which tend to keep close tabs on them, and to circumscribe them in direct proportion to how stringently the population is controlled.”  
-Mark Slouka (contributing editor of *Harper’s Magazine*)

“After the rigged Iranian presidential elections in 2009, the Islamic regime attacked the ‘humanities’ as the main source of protests, the most effective tool used by the West, especially America, to corrupt and incite Iranian youth, and finally closed down all the Humanities departments in Iran’s universities.”  
-Azar Nafisi, author of *Reading Lolita in Tehran*

“The academic atmosphere, produced mainly by the humanities, is the only atmosphere in which pure science can flourish.” -E.W.R. Steacie (Canadian physical chemist)

“The value of an education in a liberal arts college is the training of the mind to think something that cannot be learned from textbooks.” -Albert Einstein