Relationship between the Liberal Arts and Democratic Principles

The liberal arts, a study that provides insight on aspects such as humanities, the arts, natural and social sciences, makes one more articulate to participate successfully in civic life. The liberal arts date back to the renaissance era and the subject is still taught today. Although the liberal arts have transformed over the centuries of its teaching, one aspect of liberal arts has remained the same; the purpose to create a person that is cognizant to their surrounding daily life. Daily life might imply things such as understanding literature and picking up on rhetoric, but it also includes a crucial part of daily life; politics. The United States of America boasts a democratic government and along with that form comes its respective principles. One of the key principles of democracy is citizen participation. Citizen participation includes voting, running for office, attending community meetings and, most importantly, being informed. The relationship between the liberal arts and democratic principles is the dependence of the success of a democracy based on the knowledge of the liberal arts.

According to Merriam-Webster, a democracy is “a form of government in which people choose leaders by voting” and it is often referred to as government chosen by the people, ran by the people for the people. With that in mind, it is certain that there resides a huge power within the populous body of the country; hence, the quality of the democracy resides in the quality of the people’s decisions and votes. Liberal arts plays into the democratic principle of citizen participation because the liberal arts are a foundation of knowledge of how politics work in one’s life. From my personal observations, it is not uncommon for people to vote or have a political stance based on other’s opinions simply because they are not educated enough on an issue to formulate their own. The liberal arts teach one the skills to formulate an educated opinion in politics. The liberal arts does this by acquainting a person with many areas of study. When all components are combined there is a now a diverse knowledge and understanding that allow for a self-driven opinion. The self-driven opinion that one has created is the pure form of their beliefs. Now, to tie this back with democratic principles, the principle of citizen participation is greatly influenced by the presence of the liberal arts. The liberal arts allow democracy to have its intended purpose by nourishing the democratic principle of citizen participation. Democratic principles rely on the liberal arts to prepare and educate the government of the people, for the people, by the people.

The relationship between the liberal arts and democratic principles is extremely important. The liberal arts are essential for one to form an educated and purposeful opinion which they can transfer to the democratic principle of citizen participation. The liberal arts act as a portal to success in the practice of democracy because they allow the makers of government to make that government with an educated mind.