



ABC CLARION

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Is Boredom Really That Bad

by Harvey Wang

An average of 42% of people would shock themselves instead of sitting alone in a room for 15 minutes. People today have many different views on boredom and whether or not it is really necessary in life. While some believe that boredom is destructive and terrible, evidence suggests that we could benefit from a little more boredom in our lives. With benefits toward the brain as well as sleep, boredom undoubtedly is an essential part of one's health.

Primarily, being bored improves the functions of the introspective part of the brain. Introspective thinking involves creativity, daydreaming, and imagining, various areas that people rely on to develop. The lack of boredom, however, hampers this part of the brain, as demonstrated by the words "...if you never pause

to use the introspective part of your brain—because your phone is always buzzing, or you're always running from one activity to the next—it will get out of shape." (Lewis 29). Clearly, the hustle and bustle of daily lives is removing the chance for your creativity to be released by boredom. Furthermore, statistics provided by greatest.com show that America has actually been experiencing a creativity decline since the 1990's, demonstrating how being bored is desperately needed in this country particularly. In no uncertain terms, the introspection area of the brain is not receiving the nourishment it needs due to scarceness of boredom nowadays.

Similarly, being bored can be extremely helpful with sleep. As stated on lifehacks.org, "Watch almost any animal. If they're stuck

somewhere with nothing to do, they go to sleep. It's the natural thing to do. We do it too." In other words, boredom stimulates the body to go to sleep. When someone is constantly thinking, it is difficult to fall asleep with the thoughts flying in his/her head. Reading off screens at night, for example, is a bad habit the majority of Americans have. Giving in to boredom and unplugging the phone allows for reduced stress, and a result, more sleep. According to medicaldaily.com, 30% of American workers are sleep deprived, sleeping less than six hours per day. This extreme number should be reduced, and boredom is a simple and efficient way to do so.

Some say that boredom can be an agonizing experience, and that coping with boredom causes drug

and alcohol abuse. While this may be true, these tough encounters with boredom are contributed toward the minimal exposure to being bored in the first place. Without routine experiences with boredom, how can one be comfortable being placed in an uneventful situation? The bestbrainpossible.com explains why boredom is an important part of life, and how dealing with it at first can be made easier. For instance, "Rather than try to push this boredom away and fill up the space with something—stay with the present moment, the feeling, and to learn to relax into the space of nothing happening." Obviously, the inexperience with boredom and the negative connotation of

the term itself cause people to wrongly assume that boredom is a harmful object, while in truth, it is vital to humans.

In summation, instead of trying to resist boredom, reminding oneself of its advantages towards the brain and daily sleep helps realize how important being bored is. Being bored has the potential to open up a new realm of imagination and introduce what life is like without being tired. The effects of boredom unquestionably greatly improve both the mental and physical health of people. Undeniably, boredom's ability to help the human body makes it clear that this country is in dire need of a little boredom.

Home

by Oscar Chen

Home- the walls that protect you from the invading armies of worry,
You can return to base or expand your turf for greater glory.
As long as you feel safe from home, there is no need for sorry,
But remember to come back home once you've created your own story.

If home is more than a house, more than a court, more than a place...
What is Home? My home is a refuge more than one distinct experience.
The hours became days, days became weeks, weeks became months,
when you forgot about what responsibilities awaited you at your other home.

Home may be where people love you silently every day, but...
Our real home seems to be where the connection comes naturally to us,
Not as a result of blood, but as a result of kinship, fated. No one knows
your problems, and that's fine with you.

Because your home is where people share the same passions—
There's never hostility because no one cares about who you really are,
They just interact with who they get at that moment.

It was always home where no one cared about you and your problems.
Comfort often meant laziness for me, so
For my real world self, Home actually means for me
Where no one cares about your future and only appreciate the limited
time shared, together.

So I guess in my home, I have no "true" friends, if you think that way.
But for myself, what is my example of home?
My home is my neighborhood basketball court.
People come and go as they please.
They might know you by name, and you
ALWAYS hung out with people from your own clique.
There I felt welcome at home
Your personal issues of concerns in life became nonexistent.
My home is of "No Diving" shallowness, but represents
Pure Happiness and Pure Fun.

Trust me, these people wouldn't leave you to die.
These were your fellow ballers...
They knew you for your parts that you hid from your serious life.
And no one cared about personal life at this home...
You were there to play ball.
You were not there to play life.
You were at home, home tough home.

Book Sporkings

by Sydney Peng

Criticize any type of media, and more often than not, one fan will pipe in with "If you don't like it, then why watch it?" Entertainment exists to be enjoyed, and if you derive no enjoyment from something, then perhaps you should consider looking elsewhere. However, vitriolic critiques can become just as entertaining or enjoyable as the actual work, while also providing helpful tips or highlighting pitfalls. It can also make someone more selective with the media they consume and teach helpful analysis skills. While it can certainly be annoying that someone is dissecting a show or book and tearing it to pieces, by no means it is a completely worthless pursuit.

One such trend of vitriolic criticism, the book sporking, has emerged recently, especially when Twilight was at its peak. Despite the strange term, the concept is simple: on a blog or website, the sporker would go through the book, usually chapter-by-chapter, and subsequently point out all the flaws, ranging from grammatical mistakes and sloppy writing to plot contradictions, characterization errors, and strange or creepy themes or messages. Twilight was a rather common victim, as well as other paranormal romances re-

leased during that time. Another frequent target was Eragon, usually with people playing Name That Fantasy Cliche, or the sudden influx of YA dystopic fiction after The Hunger Games became famous.

These sporkings seem like exhausting wastes of time--scathing film reviews may follow the same spirit, but at least those movies only eat up about an hour or two. A book both takes time to read, and going through each chapter hunting for mistakes sounds about as fun as editing an essay.

This attention to detail may serve as a drain on time, but it's also very helpful to both the reviewer and the reader. The reviewer practices comprehension skills by zeroing in on lines and their implications, grammar, and contribution to the story; they hone their own writing abilities to express their opinions in (hopefully) entertaining ways; and they gain a better understanding of what plots, characters, or writing styles work in a novel.

Readers, meanwhile, can receive helpful tips about their own writing, such as avoiding audience alienation, maintaining character or world consistency, skillful foreshadowing, and playing with overused elements. They

also learn to become more reflective, thoughtful consumers who can now articulate why they think a novel isn't that top-notch, or, conversely, why they think that this new bestseller deserves the hype. Sporkings can help people think about the books they read and learn to analyze or share their reactions in a more communicable manner.

Of course, being the target of a book sporking isn't much fun, especially if a lot of the critique seems overly fussy or concerned with small details. However, authors can always learn from their audience, and improvement need not be perfect. By taking those negative readers into account and choosing which criticisms they can address, an author is already polishing their work.

These excessively-in-depth critiques can seem spiteful and trifling, yet it also provides an exhaustive source of helpful information and inspiration. Sporkings are, effectively, book dissections. To learn about anatomy, you take it apart. So goes the philosophy here: to learn about literature, you examine it piece-by-piece, line-by-line, and thus learn how it fits together, or, like evolution, what bits are vestigial and no longer necessary.

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