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# The Mall Ain't Dead Yet! An Aristotelian argument for the continuation of physical retail space with the rise of modern technology

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Claremont McKenna College

**The Mall Ain't Dead Yet! An Aristotelian argument for the  
continuation of physical retail space with the rise of modern technology**

submitted to  
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by  
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for  
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## **ABSTRACT**

According to Aristotle, for a human being to live their best life, that is a life that flourishes, is to live a political life. A political life is lived best in a *polis*, or a self-sufficient community, so therefore, the most flourishing human life is one lived in a *polis*. Also, for a *polis* to be self-sufficient, its citizens must be flourishing, so there exists a special sort of constitutive relationship between the *polis* and its citizens. There are certain capacities available to human beings in the *polis* that promote their flourishing (namely loyalty and trust) that help fulfill important human needs. These capacities are best carried out through various subcommunities in the *polis*. Subcommunities range in size and interest, but the ones that best fulfill important human needs also contribute most to the *polis*, and thus contribute most to human flourishing. In this paper, I will argue that physical retail space is a particular kind of subcommunity that can fulfill an important human need. While it is popular opinion that the shopping mall, and more-broadly physical retail as a whole, does not have a place in the increasingly technologically savvy community, physical retail space offers humans a place to engage that is necessary for their flourishing.

## PART ONE

### 1.1 What human need can physical retail space serve? First pass

According to Aristotle, every thing and every action has the potential to ultimately be done in the best way according to its function. Aristotle further claims that every thing and every action's end aims at some good.<sup>1</sup> So, to maximize the thing or action's doing according to its function is to achieve that thing or action's end, which is its good.<sup>2</sup> For something to be good is to have maximized its function and thus to achieve its end. He gives many examples of ends: the end of medicine is health, of shipbuilding— a vessel, of strategy— victory, of economics— wealth.<sup>3</sup> This is his teleological argument, that things are defined by their function.

Through his teleological argument, Aristotle believes that the end of a human life is to live a life that flourishes, or a life that maximizes happiness, because flourishing is the defining function of a human, like driving nails is the defining function of a hammer. To do best as a hammer is to drive the best nail; to do best as a human is to live our best life: to flourish. Now, driving the best nail is a hammer's "good" because serving this function is what makes a hammer a good hammer. A person can use a hammer in an action that does not aim at serving its function, but this is using it rather as a means to fulfill a different end.<sup>4</sup> They can use it to murder another person, for example. The act of murder aims at some "good" too, that is to make the person dead for purposes of eliminating a rival,

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<sup>1</sup> Aristotle, and W.D. Ross. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1966.  
<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/nicomachaen.html>. Book 1, Part 1, Para 1.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid. Book 3, Part 5, Para 1.

exacting revenge, ending someone's suffering, etc., but using a hammer in ways that do not serve its function, as a means to achieve murder, keeps the hammer from achieving its own end and good. In this way, individuals may do things in their life without the intention of doing them to their best ability. For example, I can enjoy ice skating with friends without having to excel at it. Doing a thing or action in this way—a way that does not maximize ice skating's end—is what Aristotle calls pleasure, which he defines as “the life of enjoyment.”<sup>5</sup> Receiving pleasure from doing some thing or action does not maximize that thing or action's end, but rather “honour, pleasure, reason, and every virtue we choose indeed for themselves, ... we choose also for the sake of happiness, judging that by means of them we shall be happy.”<sup>6</sup> Doing things for pleasure is doing things for the sake of feeling happy. “Happiness, on the other hand, no one chooses for the sake of these, nor, in general, for anything other than itself.”<sup>7</sup> So, happiness—flourishing—is an end “for this we choose always for self and never for the sake of something else.”<sup>8</sup>

Since human beings seek to achieve their ultimate and unique end (flourishing), they must be engaged in some sort of activity that is also unique only to human beings. Aristotle believes this activity involves engagement in some sort of communicative capacity:

Now, that man is more of a political animal than bees or any other gregarious animals is evident. Nature, as we often say, makes nothing in vain, and man is the only animal whom she has endowed with the gift of speech... The power of speech is intended to set forth the expedient and

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid. Book 1, Part 5, Para 1 and Part 6, Para 3

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. Book 1, Part 7, Para 3.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.



inexpedient, and therefore likewise the just and the unjust. And it is a characteristic of man that he alone has any sense of good and evil, of just and unjust, and the like, and the association of living beings who have this sense makes a family and a state.<sup>9</sup>

Because “nature makes nothing in vain” and only man has a sense of morality, the uniquely human ability to speak (be political) must serve some purpose ie. to form a family and a state. Only humans can distinguish between expedient and inexpedient, just and unjust, good and evil, so the purpose of speech must be to practice moral engagement. So, what it is to do well as humans is to flourish and that involves using communicative capacities as means.

An individual can engage in communication, however, in ways that do not serve his or her function (flourishing). Nothing prohibits us from using our ability to speak in ways that do not contribute to our flourishing. Rather, our ability to communicate is simply being used as contributory means to ends that aim at some other “good” i.e. to beat someone in an argument, to express anger, etc.. Living a good life, as the aim of every human, depends on our ability to maximize our uniquely human means, namely our capacity for just communication.

Communication can be used as a means to ends other than flourishing, but the only way to flourish is to maximize our communicative capacities by engaging in just speech. Therefore, just speech is necessary for our human ability to achieve a good life.

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<sup>9</sup>Aristotle, and Benjamin Jowett. *Politics*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1885.  
<http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/politics.html>. Book 1, Part 2, Para 13.

So, the human end can only be achieved through engagement with fellow human beings. “He who is unable to live in society, or who has no need because he is sufficient for himself, must be either a beast or a god [because] social instinct is implanted in all men by nature.”<sup>10</sup> Social instinct, the ability to communicate, is a unique human capacity necessary for flourishing, so without ways to engage in interaction with others, humans cannot flourish. Therefore, what human beings need to flourish is a form of interaction that involves moral communication. To live a flourishing life is to live a life rich with human associations and just interactions like those available as part of a family or the state.

## **1.2 What human need can physical retail space serve? Second pass**

What human beings need to achieve flourishing is more than just interaction, though, because interaction is a means to achieve a good life, not an end in itself. Since human beings are naturally political, basic human interaction happens without prompting.<sup>11</sup> To maximize human interaction, and thus to flourish, humans require a sort of space in which interactions naturally occur more frequently. So, it is interaction within a certain kind of space, particularly a community, that humans need to live a good life.

There are close ties between living a happy, flourishing life and living in a *polis*.

Aristotle states:

No one denies that [happiness of the individual is the same as that of the state]. For those who hold that the well-being of the individual consists in his wealth, also think that riches make the happiness of the whole state, and

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid. Book 1, Part 2, Para 14.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid. Para 1.

those who value most highly the life of a tyrant deem that city the happiest which rules over the greatest number; while they who approve an individual for his virtue say that the more virtuous a city is, the happier it is.<sup>12</sup>

Happiness is a human being's individual end, so while the wealthy member, the tyrannical member, and the virtuous member of society may all view the relationship between citizen and community differently, all measure their happiness in accordance with their community's success. So the member benefits personally from the success of the whole community and individual flourishing flows from living in a community.

For Aristotle, to live the best life involves living in a community of some kind: a community defined as a group of people who share in a common aim or good.<sup>13</sup> Every community is formed by people who share in a common wish to maximize their means (to engage), in pursuit of a common good at which they aim (to flourish), so "every community is established with a view of some good."<sup>14</sup>

Communities aim at achieving some good just as individual human actions do. This logic seems somewhat trivial for Aristotle because it's obvious that the formation of a community aims at some good if every human's action within that community aims at some good, but this step is crucial to understanding the intentions of the formation of the community and the role it plays in human flourishing.

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<sup>12</sup> *Politics*. Book 7, Part 2, Para 1.

<sup>13</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 1, Part 7, Para 4.

<sup>14</sup> *Politics*. Book 1, Part 1, Para 1.

Fred Miller, in *Nature, Justice, and Rights in Aristotle's Politics*, identifies three motivations for living a political life that defend Aristotle's inference that humans' ends are to be political:

(1) humans desire to live together even when they do not need mutual assistance; (2) the common advantage brings them together, in so far as a part of the noble life falls to each of them; and (3) they come together and maintain the political community for the sake of life itself, because there is perhaps a noble element and natural sweetness in living as such (provided life does not involve excessive hardship).<sup>15</sup>

Motivation (1) recognizes that humans choose to surround themselves with other humans not just out of necessity but out of preference. Humans are social creatures, each of us contain a "natural pre-reflective desire to live together regardless of any further benefits from communal living."<sup>16</sup> Even when we see no quantitative value in forming relationships, we simply prefer to live among other humans over not.

Motivation (2) focuses more on the unique and practical benefits that being a part of a community provides the individual as they relate to self-sufficiency. Aristotle defines self-sufficiency as "that which, when isolated, makes life desirable and lacking in nothing; and such we think happiness to be,"<sup>17</sup> meaning that happiness is the ultimate end and cannot there be used as means to anything else. "Individual human beings as individuals are not self-sufficient, i.e. they cannot attain their natural ends on their own. "Only in a [self-sufficient community] do they have the resources to live the good life. This involves, of

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<sup>15</sup> Miller, Fred D., Jr. *Nature, Justice, and Rights in Aristotle's Politics*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1995. 35.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* 36.

<sup>17</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 1, Part 7, Para 4.

course, the idea that [this community] can provide more resources and better security for its members than can [individuals].”<sup>18</sup> For this reason, living a political life “appeals to self-interest and the desire for survival, which can be most efficiently secured by entering into social-cooperation.”<sup>19</sup> Living amongst a group that shares in its common resources is more effective and efficient than living independently of other individuals. When communities form from the joining of many households, each household reaps the benefit of being a part of a larger whole. In the case of human beings and communities, all human beings want to be a part of a greater whole because “all men journey together with a view to some particular advantage” advantage being the ability to flourish.<sup>20</sup> Living in a community allows each member to specialize in a particular set of skills and promotes engagement among its unique members. Thus, interacting and trading with others rather than having to live independently results in a more diverse and specialized community.

A community does more than just allow individuals to live more efficient and productive lives, though. Motivation (3) points to non-quantifiable value we receive from living in the company of other people supplementary to the quantifiable value that motivation (2) describes, citing an intrinsic sweetness and nobility available to those whose lives are shared. Humans value living in a community because the types of interactions a community promotes enable them to achieve their own individual ends. Speaking, and therefore sharing in substantive conversation, (abilities that solely belong to human beings) can only be practiced in the company of other human beings. A solitary human will never

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<sup>18</sup> Miller. 35-36.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. 35.

<sup>20</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 8, Part 9, Para 2.

be able to live a good life because political engagement requires the cooperation of two or more individuals communicating with each other. It is to each other's "common advantage" to engage with the other to achieving flourishing because a human being's ability to achieve his/her own ends is dependent on there being another human to engage *with*. With many people sharing in a common aim and a common location, a community secures an individual's ability to interact with other individuals, which, according to Aristotle, is necessary for human flourishing. Therefore, human beings need to live amidst other human beings because only in doing so can they maximize their unique means that allow them to achieve their own end, i.e. happiness.

According to a study on subjective well-being done by Pavot, Diener, and Fujita, there is a relationship that exists between extraversion and happiness.<sup>21</sup> "Individuals generally experience greater levels of positive affect when in social versus non-social situations, and the greater levels of negative affect when alone."<sup>22</sup> This shows that we receive some benefit from interacting with other human beings that we do not receive when we are alone.

Another study, conducted by Mehl, Vazire, Holleran, and Clark, investigates whether happy and unhappy people differ in the amount of small talk and substantive conversation they have.<sup>23</sup> According to the study, happiness is more commonly found in

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<sup>21</sup> Pavot, William, Ed Diener, and Frank Fujita. "Extraversion and happiness." *Personality and Individual Differences* 11, no. 12 (1990): 1299-306.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/019188699090157M.1299>.

<sup>22</sup> Pavot. 1305.

<sup>23</sup> Mehl, Matthias R., Simine Vazire, Shannon E. Holleran, and C. Shelby Clark. "Eavesdropping on Happiness: Well-Being Is Related to Having Less Small Talk and More Substantive Conversations." *Psychological Science* 21, no. 4 (February 18, 2010): 539-41.

<http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0956797610362675>. 539

a social life than a solitary life, also showing that living in a community proves beneficial to individual happiness. Sandstrom & Dunn, in *Social Interactions and Well-Being: The Surprising Power of Weak Ties*, extend the idea of face-to-face interactions being important to personal well-being and happiness from those mostly of strong ties (family members and close friends) to also those of weak ties, or “relationships involving less frequent contact, low emotional intensity, and limited intimacy.”<sup>24</sup> In their study, fifty-three community members were given clickers to document the number of both strong and weak ties for a total of six days. The results show that people who interacted with more weak ties than others, or interacted with more weak ties than usual, experienced a great feeling of belonging to the community they were a part of.<sup>25</sup> This suggests that every-day interactions with strong as well as weak ties contribute to our individual well-being within a community.

These three psychological studies identify personal benefits human beings receive from living among other human beings in a community, namely happiness, or more specifically, the ability to feel happiness. Exemplifying Miller’s motivation (1) for living a political life, these studies are representative of the idea that engaging in in-person interaction (whether it be substantive conversation or small talk) provides us with opportunities necessary to engage in just speech as it contributes to human flourishing.

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<sup>24</sup> Sandstrom, Gillian M., and Elizabeth W. Dunn. "Social Interactions and Well-Being: The Surprising Power of Weak Ties." *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 40, no. 7 (April 25, 2014): 910-22. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0146167214529799>. 909.

<sup>25</sup> Mehl. 918.

Human beings prefer living among other human beings rather than living a solitary life because just communication grants us fulfillment in the form of belonging. Because communities offer objective opportunities to engage with fellow community members, these studies exemplify the importance of community spaces as places where people gather and interact. Because a community presupposes sharing in the same common goal or aim as that community, it is by belonging to a community that individuals can flourish. It is the feeling of acceptance that these psychological studies found in communities that corresponds with the human ability to exercise communicative capacities. Now, we have established that a certain type of space that encourages human beings to cooperate and interact with other human beings, namely a community, is necessary for each individual human to live a good life.

### **1.3 What human need can physical retail space serve? Third pass**

The type of interaction that human beings really need in order to flourish is interaction involving communication within a particular community that has maximized its self-sufficiency. Drawing from Aristotle's definition of self-sufficiency developed above (Section 1.2), the community that is self-sufficient, that is, the community that makes life desirable and lacks in nothing, is what Aristotle calls a *polis*. As happiness is the end of human beings "for this we choose always for self and never for the sake of something else"<sup>26</sup>, the *polis* is the end of the community. A community that has maximized its self-

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<sup>26</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 10, Part 6, Para 1.



sufficiency is a *polis*, so the benefits the community provides to its members that are relevant to a human's ability to flourish (guaranteed means of communication and specialization) are maximized in the *polis*. The community's ability to achieve its end depends on its members' ability to achieve their own individual ends (to flourish). Human beings need to live in a *polis* in order to flourish, but also a *polis* can only be self-sufficient if its members are flourishing. Therefore, individual human beings and the community that they are a part of share in a constitutive relationship in which each is key to achieving the other.

According to Aristotle, it is only in a *polis* where humans can achieve their full potential and thus live a good life.<sup>27</sup> The *polis* is the end of community and the community is the joining of multiple villages all of which join together to share in a common good or aim. "When several villages are united in a single complete community, large enough to be nearly or quite self-sufficing, the [*polis*] comes into existence, originating in the bare needs of life, and continuing in existence for the sake of a good life."<sup>28</sup> By this definition, it can be understood that, for Aristotle, if a community (and therefore the components that make up that community) is to become a *polis*, all contributing components must share in a common location. This is based on his understanding that the *polis* naturally presupposes the existence of physical independent villages and households and two-person relationships.<sup>29</sup> This is important because by this definition of community, communities that do not have a physical boundary such as the "Latino community" or the "Dodgers

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid. Book 7, Part 4, Para 3.

<sup>28</sup> *Politics*. Book 1, Part 2, Para 10.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. Para 1-9.

community,” are not considered by Aristotle. It seems right that for a community to be self-sufficient, it must have some sort of physical boundary that promotes the types of engagements that lead to the *polis* achieving self-sufficiency among its members, but communities not bound by a shared physical boundary still have the capacities to offer its members means to communicate. In this way, maybe it is that these communities contribute to human flourishing but not to the *polis*. So because the “Latino community” does not uphold both ends of the constitutive relationship that Aristotle establishes, it is not considered a community at all.

Peter Simpson, in *A Philosophical Commentary on the Politics of Aristotle*, connects the human end (flourishing) to the community end (the *polis*) by invoking Aristotle’s teleological argument that things are defined by their function I explained in Section 1.1. So, according to Simpson, “there must, in everyone, be a natural drive toward community life if everyone is by nature political and finds his completion and, indeed, definition in such a community.”<sup>30</sup> Because flourishing requires interaction with other human beings, and because interaction is maximized in a *polis*, humans can best achieve their ends in a *polis*.

Adriel Trott makes a similar claim: that it is by natural succession that human beings come to live in the *polis* using her genetic argument in *Aristotle on the Nature of Community*.<sup>31</sup> Aristotle’s *polis* fulfills the household’s ends, meaning that while the

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<sup>30</sup> Simpson, Peter L. Phillips. *A Philosophical Commentary on the Politics of Aristotle*. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 2002. 24.

<sup>31</sup> Trott, Adriel M. *Aristotle on the Nature of Community*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2014. 43.

household comes together for the sake of everyday needs, the *polis* is a community that “comes together for the sake of the highest and best good.”<sup>32</sup> By his genetic argument, Trott claims that because the first communities, the households, comprised of male and female and from man and slave, are natural-forming, so is the *polis* because the *polis* fills the gap between everyday needs and the best good. Trott’s genetic argument states that there is a natural drive in the first communities to be political. Trott defines first communities as those that achieve “only the basic ends of living and procreating.”<sup>33</sup> In examining the shortcomings of first communities, we may understand the necessity of political communities. Political communities extend beyond the capacities of first communities allowing humans not just to live, but to live well. This reflects Miller’s distinction between Motivation (2) and Motivation (3) for living in a community in Section 1.2. “Aristotle makes it clear that the first communities and the *polis* have distinct ends — living and living well. ...He seems to say that the *polis* fulfills the end of the first communities.”<sup>34</sup> He says that the *polis* extends the ends of the first communities from what is necessary to also include the good.<sup>35</sup> Trott therefore argues that “the *polis* is natural because it develops to fulfill ends that are natural to the human being, but developmentally speaking, become our concerns after we have dealt with necessities.”<sup>36</sup> In this way, the *polis* presupposes the maximization of the first community and that all the first

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<sup>32</sup> Ibid. 34.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. 44.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid. 45.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid. 47.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. 46.

community's components play a contributory role to the self-sufficiency of the overall *polis*.

Miller, Simpson, and Trott all analyze the arguments made by Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* and *Politics*, to come to a similar conclusion: that human beings need the *polis* (the end of community) to achieve their own end (flourishing) and a community needs happy and engaged community members to achieve its end. This is also expressed explicitly by Aristotle: “Family connections, brotherhoods, common sacrifices, amusements which draw men together... these are created by friendship, for the will to live together is friendship. The end of the state is the good life, and these are the means towards it. And the state is the union of families and villages in a perfect and self-sufficing life, by which we mean a happy and honorable life.”<sup>37</sup> So, the *polis* is the supreme and ultimate state of living and end because it is the natural succession of a human’s inclination to form relationships. Only the *polis* can maximize a human being’s potential to live the good life because only the *polis* provides the kind of environment that is necessary for a human to achieve his/her own end. Therefore, human beings need to live in a *polis* to achieve fulfillment and to flourish.

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<sup>37</sup> *Politics*. Part 4, Book 3, Para 2.

## **PART TWO**

### **2.1 What values does participating in the *polis* contribute to individual flourishing?**

I have already established that the *polis* provides something beyond an individual's basic needs met by smaller associations like the family or the village and that ultimately the *polis* allows humans to associate in ways that promote their end. (The small family unit provides basic sustenance and shelter and basic emotional needs; the village adds more variety and culture; but it is the *polis* that adds yet further opportunities to achieve an individual's own human ends through full-on just political arrangements. Each association provides the members of the community with yet greater resources for developing distinctive human capacities of reason and justice.) But what exactly does the *polis* provide that promotes human flourishing? Just communication is necessary for human flourishing; and speech, when instilled with a sense of justice, is just communication. So the *polis* must provide opportunities for its members to practice just communication. There are two capacities available to those participating in the *polis* that together play a role in developing the ability to engage in just communication, namely loyalty and trust. Loyalty and trust help instill in us a sense of justice necessary for us to maximize the function of speech. So loyalty and trust help us to form uniquely human associations necessary for our flourishing.

#### **2.1a Loyalty**

For a community member to be loyal is for him/her to have a genuine interest in, and commitment to, every other community member's ability to flourish. Deriving from

Miller's claim that a human being's ability to flourish depends on cooperative engagements with other human beings (Motivation (3) in Section 1.2), members of a *polis* rely on each other to each individually flourish. Because we all share in the goal (achieving the good life), my happiness as a human being depends on another's participation and communicative engagement in our shared community, and similarly, their happiness depends on mine. So, in sharing this codependency, we are committed to every other individual in our community's flourishing because our flourishing depends on theirs. Thus, we are loyal to others because they are crucial to our flourishing and they are loyal to us because "in [a community] each gets from each in all respects the same as, or something like what, he gives."<sup>38</sup>

Bernard Yack says something similar in *Nationalism and the Moral Psychology of Community*. Yack claims that communal relationships "take mutual concern for the well-being of others and turns it into a means of promoting our own well-being."<sup>39</sup> "Communities encourage people to identify with the experiences of the people to whom they are connected by ties of mutual concern and loyalty, to treat them with special pride and sympathy."<sup>40</sup> A community cannot achieve its end if not all of its members can meet their ends as well, so loyalty obliges community members to act in ways that help others flourish.

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<sup>38</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 8, Part 4, Para 1.

<sup>39</sup> Yack, Bernard. *Nationalism and the Moral Psychology of Community*. University of Chicago Press, 2012. 171.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.* 174.

According to Mark Woollen, Senior Vice President of Product Marketing for Sales Cloud at Salesforce, “community is nothing if not occupied by loyal members. Community begets loyalty, and loyalty is a derivative of community. You can’t have one without the other.”<sup>41</sup> As established by the constitutive relationship between the *polis* and its members in which each needs the other to achieve its own end, members can flourish only when the community is self-sufficient. So, in sharing in a community, individuals share in a common goal: to achieve self-sufficiency. In order for a community to be self-sufficient, and thus for individuals to flourish, all members must engage with one another in ways that maximize speech's function as it aids in the community achieving self-sufficiency. Loyalty plays a role in developing reasonable and just communication that lends to human flourishing, so it also plays a role in a community’s ability to achieve self-sufficiency. Therefore, with community comes loyalty.

For Aristotle, “every form of friendship involves association. [Friendships] of fellow-citizens, fellow-tribesmen, fellow-voyagers, and the like are... friendships of association for they seem to rest on a sort of compact,”<sup>42</sup> this compact being an agreed upon common system of justice. In addition to sharing in both a common aim and a common location, a self-sufficient community recognizes a common justice system defined by certain relationships and corresponding obligations.<sup>43</sup> The strength of a particular friendship between community members lends to a correspondingly strong

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<sup>41</sup> Woollen, Mark. "To Nurture Business Customer Loyalty, Foster Community." Entrepreneur. July 30, 2014. <https://www.entrepreneur.com/article/235989>.

<sup>42</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 8, Part 12, Para 1

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.* Part 9, Para 1.

expectation and obligation for justice, justice defined as a “state of character which makes people disposed to do what is just and makes them act justly,”<sup>44</sup> and just defined as “lawful and fair.”<sup>45</sup> “The extent of [members’] association is the extent of their friendship, as it is the extent of which justice depends on them.”<sup>46</sup> The members of a family unit have stronger obligations for justice than a group of strangers because a family unit shares more common property and common goals than strangers do and “the demands of justice seem to increase with the intensity of the friendship.”<sup>47</sup> Members of a community share in common property and goals similar to those present in a family unit, so members of a community have obligations to fellow members of their community similar to those within a family unit. Therefore, similar to how a family can be defined by its members’ obligations to one another, communal obligations help to identify the community to which an individual belongs.

To be loyal to the community to which you belong is to show partiality to fellow members who share in your same compact over non-members who does not. John Cottingham, in *Partiality, Favoritism and Morality*, argues that “human beings, or at least most of them, find it difficult to flourish unless they can integrate their lives into at least some network of partiality.”<sup>48</sup> For Cottingham, humans beings are social creatures who need to engage with other human beings to feel fulfilled. Similar to Aristotle’s claim that achieving our end (happiness) lies in our ability to interact and forge relationships with

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid. Book 5, Part 1, Para 2.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid. Para 4.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Book 8, Part 9, Para 1.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Cottingham, John. "Partiality, Favouritism and Morality." *The Philosophical Quarterly* 36, no. 144 (July 1986): 357-73. doi: 10.2307/2220190. 372.



each other, Cottingham believes that the success of a community lies in its ability to foster loyal relationships, and this requires partiality. A shared justice system creates a level of partiality towards an in-group over an out-group that is to be reciprocated by all its members. Because a sense of partiality is necessary for community members to be loyal to each other, partiality promotes engagement with other members in the community that, in turn, contributes to both its self-sufficiency and to human flourishing.

### **2.1b Trust**

Because loyalty is promoted through partiality, another ideal must also be promoted through the participation in a *polis* that sets the foundation for such partial treatment to exist at all: trust. Deriving from the constitutive relationship that exists between the ends of human beings and the community, there must exist a mutual, associative, disposition across all of its members that promotes partial engagement for the community to be self-sufficient. Trusting in others in your community to abide by your same social justice system certifies mutually reciprocal equal treatment and loyalty which, as established in the previous subsection, fosters engagement. So trusting in others to practice loyal values also plays a contributory role in human flourishing.<sup>49</sup>

According to Karen Jones in “Trust as an Affective Attitude,” “trust is optimism about the goodwill and competence of another.”<sup>50</sup> Jones defines goodwill as not harming

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<sup>49</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 8, Part 9, Para 1

<sup>50</sup> Jones, Karen. "Trust as an Affective Attitude." *Ethics* 107, no. 1 (October 1996): 4-25. 7.

one another “as we each go about our business” and competence as the moral understanding of “norms for interaction between strangers” specifically regarding loyalty, kindness, and generosity.<sup>51</sup> By these definitions, Jones’ “goodwill and competence” bears similarities to my definition of loyalty as genuine interest in the well-being of those who share in your community.

Her definition of trust as optimism in these capacities being reciprocated amongst community members elaborates on the relationship between loyalty and trust. These capacities help develop one’s ability to engage reasonable and just communication as is necessary to flourish. Together, “harmonized,”<sup>52</sup> or shared, levels of goodwill and competence in a community emphasize that engagement among that community’s members contributes to each individual’s flourishing. These shared levels are “grounds for the expectation that those we encounter are trustworthy.”<sup>53</sup> Jones calls these grounds, which vary according to the community that has established them, the community’s “default stance.”<sup>54</sup> For example, the default stance in New York City is probably different than that in Des Moines, Iowa because the norms for interaction on the East Coast are not the same as those in the Midwest. This “default stance,” as it is shared by and taught to all members in the community, bears striking resemblance to Aristotle’s compact for a common system of justice. The default stance establishes obligations to community members (namely harmonized values,) and similarly, Aristotle’s compact establishes

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid. 7.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. 21.

<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

obligations according to “friendships of association.”<sup>55</sup> Therefore, trusting in those who share in Jones’s default stance establishes loyalty in similar ways to how particular friendships lead to particular expectations for justice.

## **2.2 A subcommunity’s contribution to the *polis* and to human flourishing**

The capacities available to those in the *polis* (loyalty and trust) are carried out in subcommunities. For an individual to participate in the *polis* and to flourish, he/she must learn and understand these capacities in a subcommunity. So individuals engage in the *polis* as a whole by maximizing their participation in various subcommunities as parts.<sup>56</sup>

The *polis* is made up of members united by a common interest, so subcommunities within the *polis* are made up of *polis* members united by common subinterest. For a subcommunity to contribute to the *polis* in a way that promotes human flourishing, that subcommunity’s subinterest must offer the capacities that contribute to human flourishing to its members. For example, a subcommunity whose subinterest is speaking Spanish maximizes its function by speaking the best Spanish, a subcommunity whose subinterest is farming maximizes its function by harvesting the best crops. So long as the subinterest plays a contributory role in the flourishing of individual community members, by the constitutive relationship, the subcommunity contributes to the self-sufficiency of the community as *polis*.

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<sup>55</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 8, Part 12, Para 1.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.* Part 9, Para 2.

So what, more specifically, is available to *polis* members who participate in various subcommunities? Subcommunities that contribute to the self-sufficiency of the community foster the particular capacities that promote human flourishing: loyalty and trust.

Not all subcommunities that foster loyalty and trust contribute to the *polis*, however. For a subcommunity to contribute to the *polis*, the subcommunity must share in the same justice system as the *polis*. This is because, if each subcommunity had its own default stance on justice (to borrow Jones's term), there would be no greater self-sufficient community at all. While subcommunities may vary in interests, sizes, and interplay with one another, for them to play contributory roles to the *polis*, all subcommunities must share one thing in common: their justice system. This common justice system defines expectations for trust and loyalty throughout the *polis* as a whole. All community members, in sharing this same general disposition and understanding of justice, can engage in their community in the most loyal and most trusting way because, by sharing in a common justice system, all community members recognize the same obligations that they have to one another, which lends to both self-sufficiency of the community they are a part of and to their individual flourishing. As long as a subcommunity shares in the same common justice system, or promotes the same default stance, as the overall *polis*, it plays a contributory role in the community's self-sufficiency and to human flourishing.

There are, however, subcommunities that do not share in the same common justice system as the *polis*. The Mafia is a subcommunity comprised of people who share in a common goal and in common interests, but loyalty to the Mafia does not translate to loyalty to the *polis* because the Mafia's justice system, that which justifies killing and illegal trade,

is not shared by the community. Thus participating in the Mafia does not contribute to the *polis* or to individual human flourishing. Only when loyalty to a subcommunity plays a contributory role to the ends of the larger community does it play a role in human flourishing.

Being loyal to a subcommunity that does not contribute to the *polis* is similar to using a hammer in a way that is not its function. The purpose of loyalty is to encourage engagement and just communication among community members that aids in their flourishing. Like a hammer can still be used as a means to ends other than maximizing its function (ie. murder), individuals can be loyal to a subcommunity that does not contribute to the self-sufficiency of the *polis*, it's just that doing so cannot maximize their happiness in the *polis*. Participating in subcommunities whose loyalty does not translate to the *polis* is not participating in the *polis*, and we need to participate in the *polis* to flourish, so while we may participate in subcommunities that do not contribute to the *polis*, we must also participate in subcommunities that do, otherwise we cannot flourish.

This is not to say that we are forbidden from participating in subcommunities that do not help us achieve our ends, because there are subcommunities that do not play any contributory role in the *polis* at all. Rather, the function of these communities are to give us pleasure. For example, I do not participate in the local Turkey Trot because it is an opportunity to trust in or to be loyal to fellow community members, I participate because running in the Turkey Trot is enjoyable, it gives me pleasure (which, as explained in Section 1.1, actually does contribute to my flourishing but in a different way). Thus, we can participate in any and in however many subcommunities we want no matter their

contributory roles in the *polis*, so long as doing so is supplement to our participating in those that do indeed teach us about trust and loyalty and encourage engagement by fostering loyalty and trust.

Deriving from Trott's argument for the naturalness of the *polis* and that all relationships within the *polis* point to its end (Section 1.3), for a subcommunity to promote human flourishing, its end must contribute to the self-sufficiency of the *polis*. So, not all subcommunities carry out loyalty and trust in such a way as to contribute to the self-sufficiency of the community, but insofar as they do carry out these capacities, subcommunities promote human flourishing. Physical retail space, when it is designed and run in the right way, is a particular kind of subcommunity in the *polis* that carries out these capacities. So, participating in the *polis* by engaging in physical retail space contributes to the self-sufficiency of the community and therefore promotes individual flourishing.

## **PART THREE**

### **3.1 Physical retail space's contribution to the *polis* and to human flourishing**

I wish to define physical retail space as a store or group of stores that sell various types of goods and services to the public for the purpose of profit. The Annual Retail Trade Survey breaks retail down into thirteen kinds of businesses including “Food Services and Drinking Places,” “Electronics and Appliance Stores,” “Clothing and Clothing Accessory Stores,” and “Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book, and Music Stores.”<sup>57</sup>

According to Aristotle's argument that every thing has an end that is achievable by using that thing in the best way according to its function,<sup>58</sup> physical retail space has an end. While each type of physical retail space has its own function (the burger restaurant strives to serve the most delicious burger, the sweater boutique to produce the highest quality sweater, the coffee shop to brew the best tasting cup of joe, etc.), it is by maximizing their function that each can run a good business. Certain capacities are required to run a good business, but these capacities are first dependent on the business's ability to maximize profit. For a store to maximize profit is for it to sell the most product at the best price it can according to the market. Each business therefore maximizes its profit according to its function. So the burger restaurant achieves its end when it sells all of its delicious burger at the best price it can. Therefore, the end of the physical retail space is to maximize profit.

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<sup>57</sup> SSSD, Advance Monthly Retail, Monthly Retail, and Quarterly E-Commerce: retail.trade@census.gov, (301)763-2713. SSSD, Annual Retail: sssd.annual.retail.survey@census.gov. "US Census Bureau Monthly & Annual Retail Trade." Main Page - US Census Bureau. May 24, 2012. <https://www.census.gov/retail/index.html>.

<sup>58</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 1, Part 1, Para 1.

To maximize profit requires every individual involved to occupy a specialized role because each individual fulfilling their own contribution lends to the self-sufficiency of the whole. Aristotle states that “human beings live together... for the various purposes of life; for, from the start, the functions are divided, and those of man and woman are different; so they help each other by throwing their peculiar gifts into the common stock.”<sup>59</sup> When assigned roles, each individual member of the community contributes their own unique means to the “common stock.” To further the restaurant example, the supplier provides the restaurant with the ingredients, the cook flips the patty on the grill, the waitress brings the burger to the customer, the customer enjoys the burger: each role (supplier, cook, waitress, customer) is integral to the customer’s willingness to pay for the burger and thus integral to the restaurant’s achieving its ends. Thus each specialized role is part of the “common stock” and contributes to the whole end of the restaurant. So now we have established that specialization, in accordance with the store’s function, is the means by which physical retail space can achieve its end (profit maximization).

But it seems that if the only end of physical retail space was profit maximization, waves of newer and more efficient large online stores would constantly be pushing physical retail spaces out of the market. So while profit maximization is the end of any business, there must also be another function of physical retail space that contributes to human flourishing because profit maximization alone contributes nothing to human flourishing. So, in addition to profit maximization, some other capacities, specifically those that encourage a level of engagement, must be happening in physical retail space in order for

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid. Book 8, Part 12, Para 4.



physical retail space to be a sufficient way for human beings to participate in the *polis* and thus to flourish.

### **3.2 Interview**

I had the opportunity to interview former Senior Vice President of Products at Google and current advisor to Alphabet Inc. CEO, Jonathan Rosenberg on what he thinks to be the role of physical retail space. Rosenberg shares his opinions on physical retail space's current contribution to the community and what he anticipates its role to be in the future.

Rosenberg acknowledges that there is an element of engagement going to a physical store that contributes to our happiness, but he thinks the current large-space anchor model, i.e. a store having one of everything in their catalogue in stock in every size that you might want it, is going to prove not to be viable any longer. This is the future of community engagement for Rosenberg:

Instead of a Sears carrying all the things you might want in any color and any size, there are going to be anchor experiences, anchor places, where you go to meet with somebody who can help you and provide expertise.

Engagement in the physical retail space is changing. People no longer engage with retailers for the immediacy of fulfillment, rather to interact with expert product representatives. "Stores are going to be smaller and they're going to be more customized and they're going to have much more knowledgeable people in them."

For Rosenberg, there are two types of purchases: “there are the things that I know that I want that are unambiguous commodities (the lightbulb, the replacement), and then there are the things that I don’t know that I want or that require more knowledge or are more spontaneous purchases when someone needs to convince me that I need it.” The former can be fulfilled by an online medium, the latter only through interaction with retail representatives.

Interaction and engagement is no longer required for all what Rosenberg calls “unambiguous commodities” thanks to the incredibly robust shipping infrastructure available to us that makes it easy for things to show up at our doors. “As people become more accustomed to relying on this shipping infrastructure, their desire to go into physical retail stores to buy unambiguously defined things that they could otherwise search for online is going to go down a lot.” Buying a new lightbulb requires no specialized set of skills once you know what kind of lightbulb you need, thus it can be easily purchased online. But when it comes to the latter type of purchases, engagement in the physical retail space will continue to play an important role in the community:

You go to Home Depot to speak with a knowledgeable person who can explain repairs to you and who can educate you on the things that you don’t know you need for the job on your own. If you want to build a treehouse, the representative may recommend using a particular style of saw or a certain kind of glue. That is hugely valuable and that you don’t get online.

Rosenberg thinks that physical retail space will continue to exist in the future because it provides customers with opportunities to speak with people who are knowledgeable, and going to a store to speak with a knowledgeable representative about a specific good is more efficient than trying to learn about it ourselves. The point is to get

people products in the best way possible, the best way possible just happens to be by going to the store for Rosenberg's purchases of the second type.

Rosenberg thinks that the self-sufficiency of the community can still be maintained when unambiguous commodities are purchased online because conversations regarding these first type of purchases serve no greater purpose. This can be understood to mean that he thinks using our means to communicate about unambiguous commodities contributes nothing to our flourishing, or rather, that he is not actually thinking about flourishing at all. This argument conflicts with the findings made by Mehl et al. and by Sandstrom et al. described in Section 1.2 that both found that even small talk or conversations with those you share weak ties with are beneficial individual happiness. This is because Rosenberg sees conversation with knowledgeable representatives as a means to profit maximization, not a means to greater human flourishing. While I, as well as Mehl et al. and Sandstrom et al., see a greater purpose to engagement in the physical retail space, I am willing to assume that if a more efficient and profit maximizing option for the second type of purchases ever were to arise, Rosenberg would abandon conversation in the physical retail space for the option that is more profit maximizing.

As it stands, Rosenberg classifying the second type of purchases as distinctly different from the first maintains the integrity of my argument, however. Rosenberg thinks that people will never buy the second class of things online because some purchases require more specialized knowledge, knowledge that only interaction with more expert representatives can provide. "I think in the home repair space there's a place for interaction in physical retail, in the fad arena there's a place, I think in seeing how products work

together –knowing how to get the things that you buy to work with other things– there’s a place, also in the meet-up arena where people who want to go buy things can use them together (like REI is a meeting place for climbing), there’s a place.” Making purchases in these arenas online would rob us of the specialized knowledge representatives offer that may be necessary for us to make purchases correctly. Thus Rosenberg’s second type of purchases supports the idea that meaningful engagement plays a role in the community.

If Rosenberg’s dichotomy is true, the physical retail market does still contribute to the *polis* as a space that promotes engagement, but physical retail space now is required of a smaller, more niche set of products that could continue to shrink. The model that is becoming increasingly popular is this mixed-use space where there are apartments on top and restaurants downstairs and limited and interesting small places to go browse where knowledgeable people can tell you what you might be interested in. Stores in mixed-use spaces have things that are hot in stock and if that’s not what you want, you can order it and get it at home.

### **3.3 Response to interview**

Rosenberg thinks engagement in physical retail space is the most profit-maximizing option for purchases of the second type, so physical retail space will continue to exist so long as it remains so. Rosenberg, therefore, comes to the same conclusion as I do, (that physical retail space will continue to play an important part in the community) but while for Rosenberg there might be an end to this role if there ever arises a better way to buy second-type products, I think physical retail space helps fulfill an important human need

and thus will always play a role as a subcommunity within the *polis*. While we agree that in-person communication has a role to play in future consumerism, I think there is more to why small mom-and-pop stores still exist when there are much more efficient and accessible competitors. The capacities (namely trust and loyalty) must play a larger role in a business's ability to achieve its end than that what Rosenberg recognizes.

On the broadest level, human beings engage in the *polis* in order to flourish, so each subcommunity must provide a place to engage that contributes to this end. So the end of physical retail space must be more than just profit maximization, there must also be some moral end as well that promotes engagement with other human beings. Therefore, in order for physical retail space's end to promote engagement and thus contribute to human flourishing, its means must also involve the capacities available in the *polis* that contribute to human flourishing: loyalty and trust.

The relationship between specialization, trust, and loyalty in the physical retail space maximizes engagement in the *polis* which is something online outlets simply cannot do. What we value in interacting in a physical retail space subcommunity is the sense of loyal contribution to the community's end and the sense of trust that is conveyed by that mutual contribution.

### **3.3a Loyalty in the physical retail space**

Specialization establishes the sense of loyalty available to those in the *polis* in the physical retail space realm. Contributing your own unique skills to the "common stock" prompts others to do the same.

Richard L. Oliver, Professor of Management at Vanderbilt University, in *Whence Consumer Loyalty*, defines loyalty in consumerism, as “a deeply held commitment to rebuy a preferred product/service consistently in the future... despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behaviour.”<sup>60</sup> In its purest form, loyalty in the physical retail space is a “social alliance.” In the social alliance, “the consumer becomes a willing participant because of the attention provided by its members.”<sup>61</sup> The relationship among community members that results from this unique attention lends to sharing in is representative of having a genuine interest in the well-being of those who share in your community. Thus, loyalty in the physical retail space as defined by Oliver can result in what Miller also recognized as “an intricate web of human relationships in which the individual can achieve the good life.”<sup>62</sup>

At Rosa’s Fresh Pizza, a small pizza shop in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, local customers pay-it-forward and buy additional \$1 slices of pizza for the homeless when they buy some for themselves. Every slice is represented as a post-it-note on the wall, and the wall, and, since opening in 2013, is now covered in hundreds of post-it-notes. Written on every note are “words of hope, comfort or humor for those who may be having a hard time.”<sup>63</sup> This shows that Philadelphians have a genuine interest in the well-being of all of those who share in their community and points to what more physical retail spaces offers

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<sup>60</sup> Oliver, Richard L. "Whence Consumer Loyalty?" *Journal of Marketing* 63 (1999): 33-44. doi:10.2307/1252099. 34.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.* 39.

<sup>62</sup> Miller, Fred D., Jr. "The State and Community in Aristotle's Politics." *Reason Papers*, no. 1 (Fall 1974): 61-69. 63.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

us as individuals than just a place to buy a slice of pizza. According to the article, owner, Mason Wartman defines the approach as “‘an elegant solution’ to the dual need for businesses to make money and for the hungry to eat.”<sup>64</sup> So while profit maximization is important to Rosa’s keeping its doors open, the business provides people with an opportunity to engage in their community on a deeper level. Buying a slice of pizza at Rosa’s is a commitment to supporting the well-being of the community as a whole. This commitment, this “alliance,” is part of what Rosenberg misses in seeing engagement in the physical retail space only so far as it is profit maximizing. A business achieving its profit-maximizing ends is necessary for its continuation, but this end does not encapsulate its contribution to the *polis*.

### **3.3b Trust in the physical retail space**

What more a knowledgeable representative or store owner provides to a consumer is a sense of legitimacy and trust in the trade. Being a part of the same community and abiding by the same justice system ensures that the trade between retailer and consumer is trustworthy and mutually beneficial. Expanding on Jones’ definition of trust in Section 2.1b, as “optimism about the goodwill and competence of another,” Christopher Harr and Michael Johnson in *Growing the Trust Relationship* further define trust in consumerism as “the belief that a company and its people would never take opportunistic advantage of customer vulnerabilities. It is the belief, confidence, and faith that a company and its people

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<sup>64</sup> Walmsley, Katie. "How to make money with \$1 slices." CNNMoney. February 24, 2015. <http://money.cnn.com/2015/02/23/smallbusiness/rosas-pizza-philadelphia/index.html>.

will be fair, reliable, competent, and ethical in all dealings.”<sup>65</sup> In this way, Jones’ optimism is transformed into consumer confidence in that the product they are purchasing is what is advertised to be. While it is not impossible for online outlets to convey feelings of trust, without in-person interaction, there is no guarantee that an online store shares with its customers the same justice system. Mutual optimism in the transaction depends on the parties involved sharing in a common justice system.

Rosenberg seems to recognize that trust is important to profit maximization when he talks about the type of knowledge talking to a representative can provide, but he does not quite get to *why* conversations with representatives carry so much weight in our consumer decision-making. The reason why interacting with retailers is so helpful is because we trust their opinions and their contribution. I trust the local cake shop to bake me a higher quality cake than I can bake myself and the cake shop trusts me to provide them with appropriate compensation. This trust is possible because we share the same default stance (Jones). If, by chance, the cake shop was to take advantage of that trust, it would lose my loyal business to the detriment of their ability to maximize their end and also a valuable relationship to the detriment of both of our abilities to flourish.

### **3.4 The end of physical retail space**

There is a difference between a thing’s function and the good or end that thing serves. The purpose or function of a thing is to do so in the best way possible, but achieving this thing’s purpose serves as means to greater ends. For example, for Aristotle, the

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<sup>65</sup> Hart, Christopher W., and Michael D. Johnson. "Growing the Trust Relationship." *Marketing Management*: 9-19. <http://scholarship.sha.cornell.edu/articles/432/>. 12.



function of the craft of shipbuilding is the production of a seaworthy vessel while the purpose or end of making the vessel may be to use in another craft, such as trade or warfare.<sup>66</sup> Similarly, when an individual participates in the various contributory subcommunities of the *polis* well (like the government, the church, a store, their family) doing so serves as a means to flourish, but that end is not the defining function of the subcommunity he/she chooses to be a part of. Subcommunity each have their own ends according to their own subinterests, or functions. Participating in these subcommunities helps the subcommunity achieve its end and thus contributes to the *polis* and so also, by the constitutive relationship, helps the participating individual achieving his/her ends as well.

It is natural, in the current capitalistic and consumeristic state of affairs, to think that the defining function of a business is to maximize profit, but a business whose sole function is profit maximization plays no contributory role in improving the moral and just lives of the community members it serves because the single-minded pursuit of economic growth would come at the cost of community member's capacities to participate well in the *polis*. What improves the lives of community members are the capacities available in the *polis* (loyalty and trust) that help cultivate good citizens. Because physical retail space promotes the capacities that contribute to human flourishing, for its sole function to be profit maximization misses something in its ability to contribute to human flourishing. A business's function, insofar as it contributes to the *polis* and thus promotes loyalty and trust, cannot only be to maximize profit. It must also be motivated by some degree of moral

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<sup>66</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 1, Part 1 Para 1.

and ethical concern. So, when Rosenberg imagines why physical retail space exists and points to its consumer need, he overlooks the human need that physical retail space is capable of serving as a place of just engagement. This is not to say that Rosenberg is wrong, in fact we both arrive at the conclusion that physical retail space is here to stay, he just sees that the current structure is and will continue to be because it is also the most profit-maximizing option, while I wish to dive a little deeper.

The reason Rosa's Fresh Pizza has the pay-it-forward model, and the reason why it's successful, is not because it has been proven to be the most profit maximizing business structure (it likely is not), but rather because this model offers citizens a way to help their fellow community members in a way that contributes to their happiness. The function of Rosa's Fresh Pizza, therefore, is to help the homeless. Maximizing profit is only sufficient to Rosa's fulfilling its end insofar as it aids Rosa's in achieving its function. It is achieving its function, that is helping the most homeless people it can, that serves as means to the end of community. Rosa's genuine interest in the well-being of the homeless members in the community contributes the self-sufficiency of the community and the flourishing of its individuals in a way profit-maximization cannot.

Another example is the craft beer industry. Craft beer has increased in popularity in recent years (6.2% sales increase since 2015 compared to domestic beer's 0% increase<sup>67</sup>). Craft brewing is done in small, local batches and is in no way independently profit maximizing, but large competitors, like Anheuser-Busch InBev who brews

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<sup>67</sup> "Craft's New Reality: Growth in a Competitive Market." *The New Brewer: The Journal of the Brewers Association*, no. May/June (2017).

Budweiser, Corona, and Stella Artois among others, have difficulty competing with the draw a local brewery has on a community. The difference is, while Anheuser-Busch InBev's sole function is to maximize profit, craft breweries like Bristol Brewing Company in Colorado Springs, CO or Claremont Craft Ales in Southern California care about the craft of brewing beer itself. The defining function of Bristol Brewing Company is honing fine beer, making money was not the sole purpose of its creation. Mike and Amanda Bristol started a brewery because they have a passion for brewing beer and wish to do so to the best of their ability, not because it is the most profit-maximizing option for them.

Without recognizing the true function of physical retail space, opinions centered on profit maximization cannot quite explain why Domino's Pizza or Anheuser-Busch InBev haven't driven out Rosa's Fresh Pizza or Bristol Brewing Company. Domino's and Anheuser-Busch offer individuals no opportunity to engage in their community or practice loyalty or trust.

## CONCLUSION

Because of the two capacities that contribute to human flourishing (loyalty and trust), physical retail space offers its members something of great value would be lost if it ever ceased to exist. Physical retail space serves as a viable place in which individual human beings may engage with fellow community members, e-commerce cannot.

Rosenberg represents an increasingly prevalent opinion and vision among economists and large businesses alike, that purpose of physical retail space according to its ability to grow the economic pie.<sup>68</sup> This neglects the greater underlying role that physical retail space as a subcommunity plays in the greater *polis* as a place where necessary forms of engagement can occur. The reason why people are loyal to small scale, mom-and-pop stores is not only that they believe talking to a knowledgeable person is the most efficient and profit-maximizing option, it's that they see the purpose of a store as something more valuable as well. Physical retail space provides opportunities for individuals to practice loyalty and trust which allows our flourishing. Both capacities play integral roles to a community's ability to achieve self-sufficiency as *polis* and to an individual's ability to flourish and live a good life:

Happiness is something final and self-sufficient, and is the end of action.<sup>69</sup> If we are right in our view, and happiness is assumed to be [the best] activity, the active life will be the best, both for [the *polis*] collectively, and for individuals. ... A certain kind of action, is an end, and even in the case of external actions the directing mind is most truly said to act.... Hence it

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<sup>68</sup> See the Atlantic's "What in the World Is Causing the Retail Meltdown of 2017?" <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2017/04/retail-meltdown-of-2017/522384/>, The Changing Retail Real Estate Marketplace: An Introduction by John D. Benjamin, and Times' "Why the Death of Malls Is About More Than Shopping" <http://time.com/4865957/death-and-life-shopping-mall/>

<sup>69</sup> *Nicomachean Ethics*. Book 1, Part 7, Para 4.

is evident that the same life is best for each individual, and for states and for mankind collectively.<sup>70</sup>

A *polis*, comprised of many contributory subcommunity components, is where humans can collectively achieve full human flourishing because its contributory subcommittees invite us to participate in a certain kind of action i.e. just communication. Physical retail space is a subcommunity that contributes to the *polis* and is thus a viable option to fulfill the human need to interact.

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<sup>70</sup> *Politics*. Book 7, Part 3, Para 3.

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