

# Is graffiti art or crime? essay sample

[Art & Culture](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In the late 1960's, graffiti became more than just a political statement or gang mark, it became a hobby and an art to some. But this past time required breaking the law and vandalizing others property. It was widely seen by society as a nuisance and problem. However, to the youth behind this movement, it was the only way of creatively expressing themselves in an oppressed society. However, was this reason enough for the graffiti to be tolerated or accepted as a part of society? Since the 60's and especially the 70's, graffiti has had a great impact on U. S. society. It has sparked many arguments and brought up many important questions to society. The effect of this art is underestimated, and more often than not it is unappreciated. The questions graffiti bring up are not just about graffiti, but about the functions and ways of U. S. society. People usually see it as just a nuisance, but especially today, what is it?

“ Graffiti” is the name given to writings, drawings, paintings or scribbling on walls, pavements, monuments and other surfaces of public or private property, which became very common in the second half of the 20th century and can be seen around today.

These graffiti vary from names and swear words written by children for no better reason than that they have learnt to write and feel like writing something, to political slogans, to elaborately drawn pictures, which can indeed be seen as “ works of art”.

What makes a “ graffiti” a crime is not its content or artistic quality, but the fact that in most cases “ graffiti” are written or painted on an item of property that belongs not to the author of the “ graffiti”, but to somebody

else, and this somebody else had not given to the “ graffiti” writer permission to use his property for the purpose of “ graffiti”.

Of course graffiti can be a crime, and many times is, but it isn’t always. With that said, the more important part of this answer is that regardless of its legality, Graffiti is art. Regardless of public acceptance, graffiti is without a doubt a form of artistic expression. It takes incredible skill and ability to accomplish what modern graffiti artists are doing. It is evident in their work that only a true artist could create such intricate and beautiful works as they do. Few would be ignorant enough say that work with such perspective, depth, color, and detail is not art. To say that graffiti is not art would be like saying Raphael, Michelangelo, and Leonardo Da Vinci weren’t artists. And what makes the spray- can so much different than the paintbrush? Just because many times it isn’t done legally, doesn’t mean it should be disqualified as art. If Raphael did his School of Athens in the Vatican without permission, would it be vandalism or art? This does not mean that it is okay to illegally paint someone’s property, but it should be accepted that regardless of its location, many graffiti pieces take extreme artistic skill, and not just anyone can do it. However does this still give the right for graffiti to continue?

Graffiti doesn’t have to be allowed to continue, it will no matter what, and that has to be accepted. Even if the strictest laws possible about graffiti are enforced, it wouldn’t matter, because today, there is plenty of graffiti art done legally, in fact, more than ever. It is being accepted more and more by people and used very often in pop culture. Some cities even provide legal walls in order to encourage it. It is an art unconcerned with legality. Now it’s <https://assignbuster.com/is-graffiti-art-or-crime-essay-sample/>

becoming more about the art. The more it is encouraged, the more it will be done legally, contrary to society's fear that it will be done more illegally if it is encouraged. However, graffiti will always be done illegally because it is part of the culture. If it weren't ever done illegally, the pioneers would have never evolved it into the precious art it has become today. It is also become part of the culture because since society refuses to give fame to graffiti artists, they seek it among their peers by "getting up". If graffiti is accepted by society completely, artists would get up by their skills in the gallery rather than having the most tags around the city.

Most times painting is done illegally because it is the most convenient or easiest way for an artist to show their work. Since it won't gain fame in a museum just because it is 'graffiti', artists do their work in the same place where it is respected and appreciated- the streets. When people appreciate it in a museum, it will be in a museum, instead of a wall. But until then it will be in the streets where the people who experience the world as it really is are. Graffiti is not a crime – trespass and damage to property are. And the failure by politicians, educators, "sociologists" and journalists to understand this fact is just another proof of their incompetence. But the greatest of all crimes is the crime of abuse of government powers – the crime of politics.