

# Controversial images in art

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The Controversial “Piss Christ” Photo What the photo conveys The red and yellow photo, which has been on displays in many parts of the New York City has ignited many controversies. This photo was created by Andre Serrano in 1989. Despite all the controversies surrounding his artistic work, Serrano claims that he did not have anything to pass across through his photo. He says that the photo is just a reflection of his work, not only as an artist, but also as a Christian. However, it is believed that the urination portrayed in the photo was meant to pass a message across. Actually, it was a sign of maleness. Urination images in art are signs of abjection, political resistance, liberation, eroticism or gender difference (Chapman).

Something about the crucifix itself is that Christians treat it like a fashion accessory. When somebody sees it, he or she is horrified by it. However, in the real sense, it represents the crucifixion of a man.

This controversial photo is not recommended for public displays. Being a photo that displays genitals, it can be viewed by children when displayed in public. Therefore, its display in public places would corrupt children’s minds. In addition, they can grow up having a poor spiritual mentality since they have seen a photographic display of Christ’s genitals.

With many attacks made on the photo in public places, this photo is not good for public displays. Many Christians find the photo deeply offensive. For instance, Serrano’s work led to a congressional debate on United States’ public arts funding, which was held in France. During the debate, the photo was physically attacked. Also, a group of Catholics who gathered outside Edward Tyler Nahem gallery in midtown Manhattan opposed this work when the exhibition was opened (Chapman).

According to Chapman, artists communicate identity through abstract or conceptual means. It therefore means that it is the responsibility of the artist to communicate through conceptual means such as photographs. Despite, using this means of communication, it should not trigger controversy among the intended audience. The artist needs to avoid using a photo that exposes nudity since the photo may lead moral decay among children who get to it. In addition, ethics should dictate what the artist does. He should be obliged not to knowingly or unknowingly insult Christianity as a religion. It is also his utter responsibility not to create irrational beliefs in other religions. Making people believe in other things about their religion is a big danger to the religion they believe in (Chapman).

The photo is displayed in public places, especially in public toilets. In public toilets, this photo to some extent signifies a homosexual kind of portrait. In case the artist was a female, the photo would have been a bit different from this one that has caused controversies. A female artist would not have used urination in this photo. In fact, all urination photos that have been drawn and ignited controversies are the work of male artists.

Using tax-payers' money to fund this type works is a total disgrace to religion. Organizations and government should not waste tax-payers' money on projects such as this one which cause a lot of controversies to religion as well compromises the moral dignity.

#### Works cited

Chapman, Christopher. *Piss Art: Images of urination in 20th century art*. New York: Routledge Publishers, 1998. Print