

Do graffiti's benefits outweigh its cost? essay sample



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Graffiti define images drawings, writings, or symbols that are applied to a surface without the permission of the owner of the surface (Manco 47; Halsey 170). Graffiti describes any kind of public markings appearing in any form like simple written words which may be meant just to elaborate wall paintings. Los Angeles City Government's website shows that the City of LA has spent in excess of \$7 million cleaning up \$31 million square feet in more than 650, 000 locations that had been littered with graffiti images. In addition, the government asserts that graffiti comes with negative effects on the neighborhood. It also increases the cost of government's spending to clean up and restrain it, apart from stimulating crimes as gangs use it to mark territory and hence perpetuate the culture of gangs. The anti-graffiti act is not in a position to get full support from the citizens because artists, cultural scholars, and liberty supporters perceives and supports graffiti as face of arts, humanities and freedom. Therefore, they are in support of graffiti and hence try to persuade the government to preserve it. This paper is to conclude whether graffiti's benefits outweigh its cost.

Graffiti affects the community in different aspects. Graffiti destroys the public beauty and makes it untidy. Although there are few areas in which graffiti is allowed for the essence of beauty, graffiti in most public spaces are undesirable. Graffiti usurp public spaces that are supposed to be used for other useful purposes (Ganz 89). They change the appearance of public spaces by putting graffiti that few people can understand. For example graffiti can put images on an individual building destroying the beauty of other buildings. This means that rather than serving the benefits of the intended purpose of sending information about a group that is not well

affiliated to the society, graffiti turn to a sore in the public eye as not many people can enjoy the beauty of the landscape with graffiti around. According to Ferrell (1998) the growth of new forms of freight train graffiti may be meant to spread them from their source point but they destroy the natural beauty of the freight train. Graffiti images are supposed to send given information but when they are put in the wrong place, they turn nuisance. Furthermore, not many people can understand some of the graffiti image because they are complicated and meant to pass message to specific people.

Considering the benefits and cost of graffiti, it is evident that graffiti has many negative effects compared to its advantages. Graffiti is eye sore to some people who cannot stand having it in the public space. This implies that they are ready to go extra mile and commit millions of dollars every year to clean up. Rarely will individuals get money from their pocket to fund the clean up exercise but they are likely to turn to the local authority and demand cleaning up of their neighborhoods. Therefore taxes, which I and you contribute, will go to clean graffiti instead of being committed to other useful development projects.

For example in Anonymous (2010) NSW uses millions of dollars every year to clean up graffiti in public spaces. NSW spends about \$100, 000 to clear up graffiti every year. This money could be committed to other projects that are likely to assist the residents. Campbelltown Council spent an average of \$280, 000 in 2009 to clear up graffiti. On the other hand, McGillivray and Curwen (2007) assert that California spends more than 7. 8 million dollars every year to clean up graffiti in public and private places. It is therefore evident that <https://assignbuster.com/do-graffitis-benefits-outweigh-its-cost-essay-sample/>

graffiti comes with economic effect to the local authorities and since local authorities depend on taxes contributed by resident, it is evident that graffiti eats into the pockets community members. Graffiti has no economic value that can match the amount of money spent every year to clean them up. It is only practical that while fighting graffiti appears like an endless fight that may not be won soon, efforts should be directly towards avoiding graffiti as this would save the community thousands of dollars used to clean up graffiti.

Gangs who draw graffiti are also a threat to the society. Graffiti has been associated with gangsta which means they try to explain their existence to the rest of the society. As a mark of identity, it acts to instill psychological fear to the community members but this fear is in one occasion or another confirmed (Austin). Several incident of attack from graffiti gang members have been recorded in major cities. In Orange County, a Garden Grove gang member was handed a 40 years imprisonment for attempted murder of a father of five who say him tagging a block on cul-de-sac (Austin). Ivan Garcia, a 26 years old Garden Grove gang member was doing graffiti with his friend when they realized that Mr. Pugh, a father of five had spotted them. Even through he had not alerted the authority on what the gang members were doing, Ivan Garcia decided on him and shot him on neck, leg and hand. Mr. Pugh suffered major injuries as some parts of his brain had to be removed.

He was left with loss of memory, lack of motor and verbal functions, and confined to a wheel change. Although the gang member has handed a 40 years jail sentence he left behind a devastated family which would struggle to meet its daily needs with incapacitation of its bread winner. Mr. Pughs
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wife and children will live with the pain of an incapacitated father who had provided for them for all those years. This would be a social and economic loss to the society as well because in one way or another, the society will have taken care of the incapacitated Mr. Pugh. This is not justifiable since it resulted from irresponsible actions of gang member who did not want to be disclosed to the authority for doing graffiti. Evidently, gang members who do graffiti are not only sore to the eyes of the public but they are also a danger since they can attack any member of the society. For Mr. Pugh, he has to live with increased cost of medical care which means he may have to deprive his family comforts of life. It was not his will, neither did he wish it but it happened due to graffiti. The cost of associated with the graffiti is more than what the society is likely to benefit. In consideration of the danger posed by gang members to the society members, there is not way that benefits of graffiti outweighs its cost.

The beauty of the environment reflects how people value themselves. The more well kept the environment the more it reflects the care people accords to their surroundings. People can judge more about you by the place you live rather than whom you are. This means that the surrounding environment reflects the wellbeing of the people. An environment that is filled with graffiti images all over the place reflects type of people who are not careful about their environment. It reflects people who do not care about their surrounding. The need for a beautiful environment may be the reason why people go an extra mile to clean up the environment since it reflects who they are. In this regard, it can evident the benefits of graffiti does not align with the needs of the community to have a beautiful environment (Ganz 76).

It increases the cost to the society to maintain their environment since no one wants to live in a filthy environment. NSW is recorded to spend more than \$100, 000 to clear up graffiti every year while Campbelltown Council spent an average \$280, 000 in 2009 to clear up graffiti (Anonymous).

McGillivray and Curwen (2007) shows that California spends more than 7. 8 million dollars to clean the environment and rid it of graffiti. This money could be used to finance other important public program which will be beneficial to the community.

Graffiti also incur cost of research. According to Rosie high technology graffiti clean up teams are testing where Darth Vader can really clear up LA of graffiti. Although they have provided revenue of research or researchers, through which they have documented important information about the gangs, the cost incurred in these researches is enormous and could be directed to research on other important matters affecting the public.

Research is expensive and one of the limitations of research is that not many people are able to meet the cost of research. Governments and local authorities have used money to research the most appropriate ways to control graffiti. Although there is no documented evidence which shows the accurate amount of money that has been committed to research on graffiti, it is evident that graffiti cost a lot of money on research.

Although graffiti is considered a form of art that is misused in the public space, the cost of graffiti is enormous compared to the benefits (George 19).

Graffiti images are drawn as a way of expressing information of a group that has not access to public mainstream media through which they can give their idea (Landers). However, graffiti is a form of deviance because even <https://assignbuster.com/do-graffitis-benefits-outweigh-its-cost-essay-sample/>

when the authority puts clear warning against drawing graffiti images, they keep on appearing in public spaces (McGillivray and Curwen). Graffiti has few, if any, benefit to the society but to clean them, it takes a fortune for most local authorities.

In conclusion, the fact given above shows that graffiti is most costly to the society. Authorities use millions of dollars every year all over the world to clean graffiti images. Graffiti also destroy the natural beauty of the environment. It makes a given community appear irresponsible especially if there are graffiti images in most public spaces. Thousands of dollars have been used in research on graffiti and enforcement of laws against graffiti. In addition, the gangs that draw graffiti pose great danger to the society since graffiti acts as identity that perpetuates the gang culture. The society incurs more cost than benefit for due to graffiti.

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