

Title:

Don't Look Past Graffiti Art

Word Count:

471

Summary:

Ever since I was little I have loved going to different cities and countries to learn from people and places that were different than what I was familiar with. My love for travel and for learning about different cultures only grew as I got older and eventually I went to university to study Urban and International Development. I chose this major simply because it would teach me about two of my favorite things: cities and other countries. I will never forget entering my first u...

Keywords:

graffiti art

Article Body:

Ever since I was little I have loved going to different cities and countries to learn from people and places that were different than what I was familiar with. My love for travel and for learning about different cultures only grew as I got older and eventually I went to university to study Urban and International Development. I chose this major simply because it would teach me about two of my favorite things: cities and other countries. I will never forget entering my first urban studies class and looking at the chalk board that said "Don't Look Past Graffiti Art." on it.

I rolled my eyes and wondered what kind of crazy situation I had gotten myself into with this class. I was intrigued that any real professor whose expertise is in urban studies would encourage let alone mandate that his students pay attention to the graffiti art that practically ruined the look and feel of many major cities in our country and around the world.

After a brief introduction of himself, the professor of that class began the semester by showing us a slide show of graffiti art from around the world. He played the entire show without saying a word of explanation. When it was finished he simply walked over to the chalk board and wrote another line underneath what he had already written about paying attention to graffiti art. He wrote: "Because it reveals the major issues of that culture's youth."

I got out my notebook for the first time that semester and wrote those two

phrases onto the top of the first page. I was still hesitant about where the professor could possibly be taking an introduction like this, but I was more intrigued than before after watching the slide show of graffiti art and realizing just how artistic it truly was.

Our first assignment for that urban studies class was to find a photograph of graffiti art that was from a major U.S. city and to write a two page reflection on what we thought the graffiti art revealed about that particular city's youth. I had no idea when I chose a picture from Chicago and wrote about it just what I was doing to shape the rest of my life.

To make a long story short, that urban studies class and specifically our discussion of graffiti art revolutionized my thinking about the peoples of the world. I learned that a culture is revealed by small things like graffiti art that we usually take as annoying when we visit somewhere. All that to say, the next time you travel don't discount a city's graffiti art as something ugly or offensive. Instead, see what you can learn about the youth of that city through the graffiti art because I guarentee there is much to be learned.