

The decision of Bradsea Council to generate funds for the employment of more graffiti removers has sparked a furore. George Williams, in his website post “Art on our walls” (Bradsea Voice, 1/1/17) asserts the futility of removing graffiti due to its financial advantage and creation of the town’s warm atmosphere. As the Chairman of the Bradsea Art Action Group, he starts in a fervent tone which later shifts into a forward-looking, optimistic tone, whilst also employing two images. Unlike Williams, James Rodway’s admonishing comment in reply to William, as the Councillor, contends the dire necessity of removing graffiti to nullify the detrimental effect it has on the town’s appearance and its direct repercussions on Bradsea residents. Albeit as a mother, Short also emphatically argues, in a colloquial tone, that street artists must be controlled lest they continue to mistakenly believe in their artistic talent.

William initially accentuates the stark difference between graffiti and tagging. He juxtaposes Rodway’s harsh condemnation of a town rampant with graffiti walls against the benefits they have brought to Carlisle Street. The adjective “boring” in the phrase “[graffiti transformed] a boring part of a car park into a space full of energy and enjoyment” underlines the town’s dullness, devoid of any excitement. By intimating that the car park requires a transformation to liven up the environment, William challenges readers who doubt the merits of graffiti to recognise its positive influence in creating a spirited atmosphere. Fulfilling his role as the Chairman of the Bradsea Action Group, Williams compounds this by the percussive “e” in the alliterative “energy and enjoyment”, which underlines how graffiti brings life to a bleak carpark. Hence, concerned readers, in acknowledging the extraordinary power of graffiti, may advocate for graffiti walls to transform Bradsea into a dynamic town. This notion is corroborated by the image of the supermarket wall. The bright colours symbolise the vibrance of Carlisle Street resulting from the graffiti wall. Consequently, Bradsea residents are impelled to recognise that this wall is far from a blight/ eye-sore and improves, rather than removes, the beauty of the town. Additionally, the skilful piece of art insinuates that graffiti is not vandalism. Like Williams, who challenges the stereotypes of graffiti, the cartoonist inspires Bradsea residents to acknowledge the positive consequences in leaving the graffiti as it is. Simultaneously, they subtly hint at the unfairness of labelling graffiti artists as “criminals”, urging readers to dismiss such unfounded aspersions due to their artistic talent.

William moves on by emphasising the preposterous claims of those who champion the removal of graffiti. He invites fellow community members to share his frustration at those, who “simply [call] everything graffiti”. Through the depiction of their habitually pessimistic views, exemplified by the noun “everything”, readers are galvanised to admonish their negative behaviour which perpetually cast down on any situation. Furthermore, the verb “actually” in “[those who welcome the removal of graffiti remove] the art that actually makes Bradsea a place that people want to visit” spotlights the unfounded nature of their argument as taxpayers’ concerns are supposedly of utmost priority. Thus, upon realising that the graffiti removal is a financial burden, taxpayers are prompted to lambast the Councillor’s proposition given its economical repercussions, and applaud William’s instead.

Williams concludes his blog through a didactic, yet inspiring call to action. The repetition of the first-person plural pronouns such as “we” and “as” shifts the onus of the germane issue and responsibility of Bradsea onto its community members. The image to the left supports this notion. The enormous, capitalised and red text “GRAFFITI REMOVAL” alludes to its

imposing nature. Bradsea residents are prompted to consider such an obtrusive sign could be replaced by the animated graffiti art, as shown in the first image where the latter makes proper use of the huge, blank wall. Furthermore, the photo captures the displeased facial expression of a stick figure, the epitome of street artists, and the brown drudge-laden road. The artists' wariness in painting, exemplified by his nervous clutch of the paint brush, galvanises readers to recognise the overbearing nature of those who advocate for graffiti removal, whilst also sympathising with the artists' vulnerability and predicament.

Contrastingly, Rodway lampoons graffiti artists and their work. The repetition of "fools" and "foolish" foregrounds how unwise and imprudent, albeit, well-meaning, the graffiti artists are. Thus, in his role as a councillor, Rodway instills a sense of urgency in the reader to remove the graffiti. Indeed, unlike Broadway, he coerces Bradsea residents to realise that their potential fears will be allayed if they share Rodway's drive in ensuring that incompetent artists do not tarnish the city's pristine walls. Moreover, the noun "mess" and the phrase "scourge of graffiti" to describe the graffiti walls alludes to the great trouble and immense suffering that they cause. Simultaneously, Rodway intimates that taxpayers must expend great efforts in cleaning up the mess that is the graffiti walls. In addition, imbued with sarcasm, the phrase "[I] was very interested to see what [Williams] didn't include from the Melbourne city Council" may spark the readers' outrage at William's deliberate and tactful exclusion of information. Thus, Bradsea residents are spurred to castigate William for his inherently dishonest behaviour, which by extension, diminishes his credibility. At the same time, Broadway's extensive research, epitomised through the reference of the "Melbourne City Council Website", bolsters her credibility in front of local community members. This appeal to ethos adds gravitas to Broadway's argument by painting him in a benevolent hue, as a Councillor who has Bradsea's best interests at heart, garnering their trust.

Sheri J supports Rodway in his advocacy of graffiti removal. The verb "trashed" in "[I] hate the way our town is being trashed by a group of criminal teenagers" insinuates that Bradsea is a total wreck due to the deliberate actions of graffiti artists. Hence, readers, who are expected to have an affinity/ connection to their town, may admonish those who permit such abhorrent, atrocious behaviour which utterly destroys their previous town. This is coalesced against her naming of graffiti artists as "criminal teenagers", which is similar to Broadway's label. The association of graffiti with criminal activities may evoke Bradsea's residents' shock at the unlawful nature of the former. Consequently, through the appeal to fear, Sheri manoeuvres Bradsea readers to recognize the dire repercussions to ensure if they were to advocate for this socially damaging act. In addition, the highly exclamatory remark "As a mother, I don't let my 3-year-old draw on the walls... and we shouldn't be telling teenagers...any different" is punctuated by two exclamation marks. Through this syntax, she not only renders the two akin, but unlike Broadway and Rodway, she also appeals to fellow mothers. Indeed, Sheri coaxes them to apply the same horror felt when their children vandalises their walls to the public act. Hence, Sheri conditions mothers to recognise the sheer magnitude of the damage we conducted on a wider level, pressuring them to acknowledging the aftermath of such a destructive action.

In essence, Williams targets major stakeholders such as public space users, encouraging them to champion for the myriad of financial, social and tourism benefits graffiti holds. However, Rodway denounces William's idea by inviting Bradsea residents to recognise the unaesthetic and financially troublesome nature of graffiti. In a similar vein to Rodway, who

admonishes the dishonesty of Williams and the likes, Sheri spurs Bradsea mothers to berate the criminality of teenage artists who destruct their beloved town.

