
Capturing Creative Visual Responses to Hate Speech

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Abstract

This paper will focus on the graffiti and street art produced during the 2017 postal plebiscite for same sex marriage in Australia, including activists' creative visual responses to the hate speech that proliferated in urban and suburban areas during this highly charged period. This study employs longitudinal photo-documentation, a form of repeat photography that allows street art and graffiti to be examined as visual dialogue. By capturing everyday forms of public mark making alongside both more recognizably 'artistic' images, and more visually 'offensive' tags, I attend to graffiti and street art's existence within a field of social and affective interaction, as a form of asynchronous, yet sequential, visual communication. This form of analysis departs from existent forms of visual analysis in that it is not concerned with the semiotics or iconography of decontextualized individual photographs. In this paper, I will present a series of worked analytic examples of visual responses to homophobic graffiti, which demonstrate a concerted community resistance to visible hate speech.

Keywords: Graffiti, Social Justice, Street Art and Visual Methods

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