

Art is versatile. It can come in many forms and meanings, often overlapping and being a point of controversy. A common theme throughout all types of artwork, however, is that it strives to have meaning - that is it's moral purpose. It's what we, the audience and creators, consider to be important and worthwhile. It's natural for artwork to possess a message, but rarely do we think about how those messages held in art have shaped our societies. Art has a responsibility to have a moral purpose, without it there'd be no reason for it to be appreciated, there'd be a shortage of introspective thought, and we'd lack insight to our past.

Analogous to neglecting other responsibilities, there are consequences if art does not carry nor convey value. Similar to receiving a bad grade for not doing homework, artwork fails to retain an attentive audience without a moral purpose. Artwork that has portrayed compelling values, especially if they are applicable to sequential generations, are some of the most valued art pieces. For example, the Mona Lisa's central motif is the idea of happiness, and Van Gogh's starry night can be interpreted as finding the good in the overwhelming darkness of life. Other artwork like statues demand our attention, but the ones that encapsulate a nation's ideals are immensely popular and have the potential to become (and some are) national monuments. The Statue of Liberty has come to stand as a representative for freedom and democracy, similar to how the Christ the Redeemer statue in Brazil upholds the values of Christianity and symbolizes protection. Artwork can be interpreted in a multitude of ways, and one interpretation almost always reveals our own beliefs.

Introspection is inevitable when considering the magnitude of beliefs different artworks contain. Part of art having a moral purpose is the ability to provoke thought and emotion because the message means something to the audience. Considering that we interact with artwork everyday, whether that be through literature, architecture, drawings, or sound - it is influencing/reinforcing our previously held ideas or suggesting new ones. Even smaller and lesser known art fulfills that obligation. Fanart and fanfiction upholds its moral purpose in regards to bringing life to characters it's artist values, and those characters are always representative of something through their story and the position the artwork depicts them in. Even a simple flower doodle reconstructs the beauty of nature. Despite how inconsequential this type of expressiveness may seem, that art is still providing one more situation where you are thoughtful about why you value what you value compared to if artwork wasn't expected to have meaning behind it.

Art is omnipresent in society, and if it didn't show moral purpose through a multitude of mediums we'd have a lesser understanding of what life was like before us. Art with moral purpose gives us an opportunity to look at the thoughts, dreams, realities, and idealisms of the people that got us to where we are now. For example, the Sistine Chapel's ceiling reveals it's primary message (the interpretation of the development of spirituality) but it also tells us what the artist, and probably others of his time, felt like their relationship with their God was. We also know that the Eiffel Tower was constructed to be a main attraction at Paris's World Fair in 1889, which tells us at the time that impressions were incredibly important. Knowledge of our history is commonly

told through artwork, especially historical texts, and it's been crucial for building an accurate reconstruction of our past. If art refused to convey meanings by refusing to have a moral purpose, we would know a lot less.

Art is capable of many things, and much of that is possible through it fulfilling its responsibility to have a moral purpose. Without doing so, art lacks meaning and becomes incapable of retelling history. Furthermore, the moral purpose of art allows it to have and retain an appreciative audience because the art communicates our beliefs. Art is everywhere we look, and if art wasn't held accountable to hold any sort of meaning, we'd be surrounded by meaningless things - but that is not the case.